



National Advocates for Arts Education  
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27 March 2014

**National Advocates for Arts Education**  
**March 2014 Meetings in Canberra**

Dear NAAE Members,

On 18 March 2014, the NAAE met with Federal Education Minister, Christopher Pyne, Federal Shadow Education Minister Kate Ellis and Assistant Secretary, Department of the Arts, Stephen Arnott.

At these meetings, three key agenda items were discussed. They were;

- The Review of the Australian Curriculum: Will the Arts be included in the review, and if so, what form will it take?
- Implementation of the *Australian Curriculum The Arts*: Resourcing Primary Schools; the role of specialist and the role of generalist teachers.
- Review of Teacher Education: Adequate teacher training in the Arts, including the role of the Arts in other curriculum areas.

The meetings were productive and positive and a summary of the key agenda items is below.

**The Review of the Australian Curriculum**

The Education Minister, Christopher Pyne confirmed that the Australian Curriculum: the Arts would be included in the current review, as it is in Phase 2. NAAE's understanding is that the Arts Curriculum was endorsed by COAG Ministers last July,

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with some minor details still being worked through with Western Australia. The NAAE has asked Mr Pyne for some clarification on his comments regarding the curriculum requiring further endorsement by the COAG Education Ministers after the current review. In the meantime, the NAAE has made a submission to the Review of the Australian Curriculum and we are seeking a meeting with the review panel.

### **Implementation: Resourcing Primary Schools**

The NAAE raised the issue of resourcing primary schools through professional development programs to support the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: the Arts*. NAAE members indicated that we had in fact commenced work on developing a model similar to Primary Connections (for primary science teachers) to improve primary arts teaching, called Creative Connections. We understand budgetary constraints in the first year of the new government, but we see this as a long-term strategy and were pleased that Mr Pyne showed support for its development.

Mr Pyne also encouraged the NAAE to work with State and Territory Education Ministers, and we plan to follow up about issues of implementation, offering our support where appropriate.

The NAAE also intends to meet with the Australian Primary Principals Association as soon as possible to offer our support and to address some of the concerns they have articulated in their submission to the review panel regarding a crowded curriculum. Other groups we will continue working with on implementation matters include the Australia Council for the Arts and the Australian Deans of Education.

**Review of Teacher Education: Adequate teacher training in the arts, including the role of specialists and the role of the arts in other curriculum areas.** Mr Pyne was enthusiastic about implementing a teacher education model that encourages primary teachers to specialise in particular curriculum areas, including the Arts, Science and Languages.

Mr Pyne noted that since tertiary education is a responsibility of the Commonwealth, it would be possible for him to suggest that courses are available to train specialist teachers in the Arts. The NAAE will contact Professor Greg Craven about the review currently being undertaken by the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group.

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We also noted the important issue of raising teaching standards in the Arts, especially as we see the new Arts curriculum as aspirational, setting foundational achievement standards for all young Australians, and one that we hope will provide excellent student outcomes.

The NAAE reassured Mr Pyne that we have worked closely with ACARA and our own members in the development of the new *Australian Curriculum: The Arts*. We fully support the principle of the *entitlement of every child* to an arts education, one that includes *all five artforms* – dance, drama, media arts, music and the visual arts.

The Arts curriculum represents a major cultural shift by education ministers in implementing arts education policy, and the NAAE is proud to have been involved in the sector's careful and respectful work together.

Julie Dyson AM (NAAE Chair)

Roslyn Dundas (Australian Dance Council – Ausdance)

Jeff Meiners (Australian Dance Council – Ausdance)

Marian Strong (Art Education Australia)

Tamara Winikoff OAM (National Association for the Visual Arts)

John Saunders (Drama Australia)

Sandra Gattenhof (Drama Australia)

Chris Bowen (Music Council of Australia)

Kay Hartwig (Australian Society for Music Education)

Roger Dunscombe (Australian Teachers of Media)

Derek Weeks (Australian Teachers of Media)

Richard Letts AM (The Music Trust – observer)

Colleen Roche (Drama Australia – observer)

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