

My name is Jane Dewey and I am speaking for a new organization, the Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education. We represent the Kentucky Music Educators Association, the Kentucky Art Educators Association, the Kentucky Theatre Association, and the Kentucky Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. Together our constituent organizations represent thousands of music, art, drama, and dance teachers across the Commonwealth from primary grades through the college/university level. We have formed this Coalition to provide a unified voice to support high quality arts education for all.

As a result of Senate Bill 1, 2009, we are experiencing a new way of looking at school and district accountability. Our membership supports the development of the program review and supports the concept of balanced accountability. It is exciting to see this innovative accountability model where measurement goes beyond pencil and paper testing to include the daily work being done at building and classroom levels. Our new Coalition appreciates any opportunities to support and assist in making the program review for the arts the very best it can be.

Having read chairman Karem's October response to COMEK and feedback from leaders at the Kentucky Department of Education, we are encouraged that there appears to be consensus among all decision makers that program reviews should carry enough strength to hold educators accountable not only for providing opportunities to learn but ensuring that quality learning is taking place in the arts.

However, during the past year and a half when there have been no consequences built into school accountability for the arts, actions by teachers and administrators have led us to

conclude that many stakeholders do not believe there is a real commitment in the law to maintain meaningful arts instruction in our schools.

There are two areas about which we feel there may be a disconnection between what is intended and the current status. The first is that although it has been our understanding the arts are to be part of school accountability in a meaningful and measurable way, and that authentic accountability must carry with it consequences for schools that do not fulfill expectations, to date, it has been difficult to gage the progress or get a defined direction for any such consequences. Second, we are concerned as to whether there is a defined strategy for funding on the state level for what always has been part of the Program Review plan—to have KDE auditors scrutinize the Program Reviews of schools on an established schedule.

In addition, we have forwarded you a letter addressing some concerns regarding a more accurate title for the arts program review and our opposition to the proposal for including world languages in this review. We hope you accept our thoughts in the spirit of collegiality. We, like you, have the best interests of our students at the forefront of our thoughts and actions.

We are confident that these concerns will be addressed as you continue the challenging work on this innovative accountability model. Again, we stand ready as your partners and represent a large membership that can provide much in the way of grassroots support and input toward making arts education the best it can be.