

Massachusetts Art
Education Association

P.O. Box 171297
Boston, MA
02114

Mr. Dennis Inhulsen
Patterson Elementary School
3231 Grange Hall
Holly, MI 48442

March 19, 2015

Dear Dennis,

Over the past two years, the members of the Massachusetts Art Education Association (MAEA) have been very vocal regarding their concerns about the changes made to the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Beyond the logistical challenges that came with the change in state affiliate status, the concerns we are hearing from our members seem to be rooted in a philosophical shift within the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers. Because our members' concerns are growing rather than lessening, the MAEA Board of Directors has decided it is time to request action from both the NAEA and the Alliance.

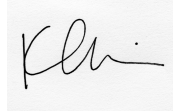
The biggest concern we hear from our members is that by allowing any student to submit work without the input of an art educator, 'art education' has been taken out of the equation. Allowing students to submit an unlimited entries, and paying a fee to do so, truly diminishes the spirit of the 'awards' therefore places it into the category of a 'contest'. As you are aware, the NAEA has a very clear position on contests, in which it is stated repeatedly that the art teacher be involved throughout the process. We also know that due to the nature of the adjudication procedure the judges cannot view portfolio statements during the process or view information that attests to the originality of the piece. In its current state, art educators have been completely bypassed, and even encouraged by state affiliates to sign off on student work whether they were involved in the creation or not.

There is no denying that the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards has in the past provided a strong competition in the arts, and has highlighted many accomplished students and their respective art education programs. It has been clearly documented, that when Mr. Robinson conceived of the program, it was intended to celebrate the young artists and art educators from across the country in their achievements as displayed through student artwork. The awards were created to level the playing field. Today the inequity is great due to the capability of wealthy students to submit multiple entires, which logically increases their odds for winning awards and scholarships.

At this time, the MAEA is asking the NAEA to take action and support us in advocating for the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards to be brought back in line with the program's original intentions. Intentions focused on highlighting the importance of art educators and art education, as a vital and necessary piece of this endeavor, while honoring the exceptional, original work of young artists. We encourage NAEA to pull all endorsements

of the program until such time that the art educational aspects of the program have been restored. MAEA will be issuing a statement directly to the Alliance which will be posted on our website and sent to all MAEA members. We look forward to continuing this discussion further and hope that you share in our passion for restoring this program to its once dynamic capacity.

Sincerely yours,



Kristi Oliver
President, MAEA



Alice Gentili
President-Elect, MAEA

on behalf of the MAEA Board of Directors

Coni Moore, Past President, Winthrop Public Schools

John Michael Gray, Treasurer, Newton Public Schools

Helen Downey, Secretary, Marlborough Public Schools

Laura Marotta, Elementary Division Director, Smith Elementary School, Danvers

Stacy Lord, Middle Level Division Director, Worcester East Middle School

Sue Gallagher, Secondary Division Director, Gardner High School

Dr. Kathy Miraglia, Higher Education Division Director, UMass Dartmouth

Alyssa Champagne, Museum Education Division Director, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Diana Adams Woodruff, Supervision/Administration Division Director, Acton-Boxborough

Mary Geisser, Early Childhood Division Director, Bunker Hill Community College

Carol Vogel, Retired Representative, Medway Public Schools

Peter Curran, Special Needs Representative, Wayland Public Schools

Billy Claire, Independent Schools Representative, Fay School, Southborough

Jessica Daviso, NAHS Representative, Andover High School

Cc: NAEA Board of Directors

Attachments: NAEA Policy on Contests and Competitions, NAEA Policy Statement on Involvement in Art Contests and Competitions for Students at the Secondary Level
