Arts Integration in an Era of Accountability

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During the past twenty years, the accountability movement and its attendant testing have raised fears in the arts education community that schools will feel pressure to divert instructional time and resources toward tested areas of the curriculum, such as reading and math (Eisner 2000). Recently, there have been similar concerns voiced within the general public that the arts and other untested areas would be undermined (Rose and Gallup 2004), and testing policy experts have theorized that untested areas, such as the arts, will be reduced under high-stakes testing (Koretz and Hamilton 2003; Linn 2000; Madaus 1988; McNeil and Valenzuela 2001). Some have even argued that the mere perception of high stakes can have negative impacts on instruction (Darling-Hammond 1991; Frederiksen and Collins 1989; Koretz and Hamilton 2003; Madaus 1988; Madaus and Clarke 2001). For example, eighth-grade teachers in Massachusetts, whose students did not face high stakes, were as likely to feel pressure to raise scores as tenth-grade teachers, whose students were subject to the state's high-stakes MCAS exams (Koretz and Hamilton 2003).

Although since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Council on Excellence in Education 1983) politicians have highlighted the need to improve instruction and performance in traditional academic subjects, relatively little thought has been given by policymakers to the impact of this testing on untested areas, such as the arts. Arts policy thinkers have often cited the harm in reduced quantity and quality of arts education, however. For example, Boughton (2004) has argued that what might be lost in such a redirection of time and resources are the core values of the arts, "the freedom for students to pursue independent learning pathways and the autonomy of their expression" (585). This independence and autonomy can only be developed with a substantial investment of time and resources by schools.

A Mixed Empirical Picture

Despite such concerns by arts educators, testing policy researchers, and the public, there has been relatively little empirical research on the impact of high-stakes accountability, specifically on the arts. Often, studies have reported a "narrowing of the curriculum" without specifying which subjects are receiving less emphasis (Clarke, Shore, Rhoades, Abrams et al. 2003; Jones and Egley 2004; Jones, Jones, Hardin, Chapman et al. 1999; Koretz, Barron, Mitchell, and Stecher 1996; Smith 1991; Smith and Rottenberg 1991; Corbett and Wilson 1991). The empirical evidence that does specify which subjects are receiving more or less emphasis generally supports the hypothesis that instruction in the arts is being reduced under high-stakes testing policies. However, the loss of time and resources for the arts does not always appear to be dramatic. For example, in Maryland, only 14 percent of teachers reported a decrease in the visual arts, whereas 11 percent reported an increase. In music, 11 percent reported a decrease, whereas none reported an increase (Koretz, Mitchell, Barron, and Keith 1996).

On the other hand, some research has shown marked decreases in time allotted for arts instruction. In a report by the Center for Basic Education (von Zastrow 2004), one-quarter of the principals surveyed in Illinois, Maryland, New Mexico, and New York reported a decrease in arts instruction, whereas just 8 percent reported an increase. The situation was more pronounced in high-minority schools, where 36 percent of principals reported decreases in arts instruction, and a third of these principals reported large decreases. Only 11 percent reported increases, and just 1 percent indicated large increases. Moreover, the future of arts instruction was perceived as imperiled. A third of all principals, and 42 percent of principals in high-minority schools, predicted

decreases in the arts, whereas only 7 and 10 percent, respectively, predicted increases. These findings subvert the stated intent of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act by creating or exacerbating unequal access to the arts, which are considered a core academic subject.

Although such surveys capture views about increases and decreases in arts instruction, they fall far short of providing information about what such changes in arts instruction look like. For example, although there may be a small to moderate decrease in the actual amount of arts instruction, what may be equally, if not more, important is the nature of the arts instruction that is provided and the ways in which high-stakes testing may modify that instruction, even when resources such as time and money have not been significantly altered. In our research, it appears that efforts to prepare students for the state exams in Virginia may (but do not always) foster arts integration practices; some of these are detrimental to arts learning.

Arts Integration

"Arts integration" is a contested and confusing term. This is not surprising given that arts educators do not have any shared agreement on what arts integration should look like, or even whether arts integration should be a goal of arts education. There are many possible meanings of this term: the use of project-based learning to address community problems or issues (Wolk 1994); thematic instruction (Ackerman and Perkins 1989); multiple intelligences (Gardner 1983); transfer of knowledge across artistic and nonartistic disciplines (Darby and Catterall 1994; Fiske 1999; Hamblen 1993); the use of arts to enhance the study of academic disciplines (Catterall and Waldorf 1999; Fiske 1999); or interdisciplinarity among different art forms, such as painting and music (Roucher and Lovano-Kerr 1995). Arguing for arts integration instead of a purely discipline-based art education, Efland (2002) asserted that "the purpose of art education is *not* to induct individuals into the world of the professional art community. Rather its purpose is to enable individuals to find meaning in the world of art for life in the everyday world" (77, emphasis added). Efland's view highlights the value of art learning as part of a comprehensive, liberal arts education. Another conception of arts integration was put forward by Davis (1999), who supported increased arts integration by arguing that in education there is currently a rigid disciplinarity that does not reflect the ill-structured problems of the workplace, and that integration is crucial in multidisciplinary fields such as design or engineering. In each case, the arts exist side-by-side the other academic disciplines, helping to prepare students for life beyond school.

In contrast, others have been wary of any movement toward integrating the arts into nonarts subjects. This wariness is spurred partly by the already precarious position of arts education in schools and the fear that the arts will become "dangerously diffused" into the curriculum (Smith 1995, 24). The National Art Education Association (NAEA), the leading national advocate for arts education, generally endorses this view, believing that the arts must maintain their integrity and not be used as an aid to other disciplines (NAEA 1992).

Empirical studies of arts integration fall into two general categories: general surveys of the state of American arts education, in all its forms, and descriptions of successful arts integration programs. One large-scale study of arts education in the United States found that schools promoting arts integration often used arts as "topical enhancements" and "motivators for learning basic skills objectives" (Stake, Bresler, and Mabry 1992, 304). Typical instances of arts integration included singing the names of the U. S. presidents or designing murals for a social studies unit on westward expansion. Stake, Bresler, and Mabry concluded that the integration they encountered "appeared to us to be of little value in learning authentic arts goals" (304). Other large-scale studies of arts education have come to similar conclusions about both the state of arts education generally and the often-poor arts learning that occurs in arts integration programs (Day et al. 1984).

On the other hand, a study of the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) sought to describe and understand a well-designed, comprehensive arts integration program with significant district and foundation support (Catterall and Waldorf 1999). To carry out effective arts integration, the authors found that the following were needed:

1. Students should see connections and walk away with bigger ideas.
2. Students should take their work seriously.
3. The expressions and activities in the arts should genuinely speak to important areas of the academic curriculum. This also means that the content is seen through more than one form, for example, beyond the traditional written and spoken word.
4. The content lesson and the artistic lesson should be of equal importance.
5. The experience should have a planned assessment with rubrics and scoring guides.
6. The lesson plan should grow from state curriculum standards in both content areas and the arts. (Catterall and Waldorf 1999, 58)

Catterall and Waldorf also noted that teachers (along with the artist helping to plan and carry out the lesson) were more likely to integrate the arts with reading and social studies than science and mathematics. In a comparison between CAPE and non-CAPE schools, the authors found that student achievement, at least at the elementary school level, was significantly higher, as measured by standardized tests.

Given the varying degrees of success for such programs, Bresler (1995) developed a typology of arts integration that categorized programs as "co-equal, cognitive integration," "subservient integration," "affective integration," or "social integration." Citing the fact that "the hard-nosed, down-to-earth examination and description" of arts integration was much less in abundance than ideas and theories of integration, Bresler looked at qualitative studies that had examined arts integration in action

(32). She found that most examples of integration were "subservient," where the "arts served to 'spice' other subjects" (33). An example of the subservient approach would be having students sing the names of the American presidents in a song. The least common observed arts integration practice was the one many supporters of arts integration would like to see—coequal, cognitive integration. Bresler cited an example of an eighth-grade teacher giving a social studies unit on musical composers. The class explored the historical eras in which the composers lived, leading students "to engage with musical compositions actively and meaningfully as they represented the trends and values of their time" (Bresler 1995, 34). This engaged students in both the aesthetic qualities of artistic work (in this case, music), as well as "higher-order cognitive skills" (34). Bresler noted that teachers used affective integration as background noise to relax students or help them concentrate, to quickly expose students to art without critical reflection, or to produce art as self-expression. Bresler also noted that this style of integration is most common in the primary grades. Finally, the social integration style used art to promote conceptions of school community, such as the performance of a program of holiday songs and skits to which the entire community was invited. These artistic works and performances existed mostly outside of class, and sometimes were used to make up for a loss of arts education time in the classroom.

Bresler's typology came out of her own work, as well as the work of others studying arts education under different local pressures. Since that article was published in 1995, the testing and accountability movement has grown stronger, culminating in the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2002. Although there is a great deal of concern in the arts education community that the arts will be diminished, no work that we are aware of has examined the state of arts integration under exams that hold high stakes for schools, teachers, and students. Has there been a shift from coequal, cognitive integration to subservient integration due to test pressures? Under what conditions might a style of integration change or remain the same? Our study, described below, may give some insight into these questions.

Arts Education and the Standards of Learning in Virginia

In fall 2002, we began a pilot study to investigate the influence of Virginia's high-stakes Standards of Learning (SOL) exams on the arts, both in schools with a self-identified strong focus on the arts, as well as schools without such a focus. We chose Virginia for several reasons. First, it has had a strong accountability system, thus providing a context in which to study the influence of high-stakes testing on arts integration. The Standards of Learning, a name given to both the standards and the exams, has been in place since 1995. Under the SOL, standards were developed for language arts and English, mathematics, science, history and social studies, computer technology, foreign languages, health, physical education, and the fine arts. Within the fine arts, there were separate standards for visual arts, music, and theater. There are tests given in language arts and English, mathematics, science, and history and social studies, but not in fine arts. Test scores can be used to make decisions about retention in grades three, five, and eight, and, beginning in 2004, "end-of-course" SOL examinations in high school, combined with "verified credits," earned through course completion, are used to make decisions about student graduation. These stakes for students in high school were not in place during our study, although the specter of their introduction was noted many times. Schools are also granted accreditation based on their SOL scores. Although the accreditation criteria have shifted over time, at the time of data collection (2002–2003), schools had to have 70 percent of their students pass each SOL exam. Schools that did not meet this passing score were warned, although accreditation was not denied. Beginning in the 2005–2006 school year, however, schools may be denied accreditation (Virginia Department of Education 2003). In essence, the SOL exams carry stakes for schools and for students.

> Students should see connections and walk away with bigger ideas.

The second reason for choosing Virginia for the study was its relatively small number of schools with a strong focus on the arts. We were able to identify twenty-three schools with an arts focus and contacted all of them. In the end, we interviewed ten principals, or occasionally arts coordinators, in these arts-focused schools. In a second round of data collection, we interviewed principals at eight non-arts–focused schools. We matched the latter to the arts-focused schools for district, school level (elementary school and high school), and demographic characteristics, including percentage of free or reduced-price lunch students and racial or ethnic breakdown. We matched eight arts-focused schools with nonarts focused schools; we did not match the other two. As a result, we ended up with a sample of eighteen schools with a wide range of student indicators and strength of arts instruction, listed in table 1.

Our interview with school principals or arts coordinators followed a semi-structured interview guide. Interviews

included questions about the school's history and mission; student, teacher, and neighborhood characteristics and demographics; the relationship between the state's test and any changes in curriculum, assessment, staffing, staff development, and the use of time and resources; and state test results and how results are used. Interviews lasted between forty-five and ninety minutes. We transcribed the interviews verbatim. Coding proceeded from our initial questions and in an emergent fashion. It was in the emergent coding that the issue of arts integration in Virginia became salient.

Findings

Although our interview guide did not specifically ask about arts integration, fifteen of the eighteen principals or arts coordinators interviewed mentioned "arts integration." More important, these principals and arts coordinators often described an increase in activities designed to integrate the arts with tested subjects in response to the SOL testing. These integration activities were often cast in positive terms. These spontaneous comments raised interesting questions. How was integration defined by these principals and arts coordinators? And, are these examples of what we think of as robust (that is, Bresler's coequal cognitive) arts integration?

Nine principals or arts coordinators gave detailed enough responses to allow us to categorize their conception of arts integration. As described in table 1, these nine schools are highlighted: schools A, C, D, F, J, K, L, N, and Q. These schools include five arts-focused and four nonarts focused schools. Six are elementary schools and three are high schools. Their poverty level (as measured by percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches) ranges from 10 to 73 percent, with one school not reporting due to its federal magnet status. That school is located in an urban area and has an African American student population greater than 80 percent.

Multiple meanings for the term "arts integration" emerged from the interviews. Some of the descriptions of arts integration given to us clearly were instances of strong arts instruction, what Bresler (1995) called "co-equal, cognitive" arts integration (34). On the other hand, many instances of arts integration, developed in response to high-stakes testing, created a situation in which the arts became "subservient" to tested areas of the curriculum (Bresler 1995). These subservient examples were enacted to prepare students for the state exams, even though these changes were often characterized by the principals as positive developments for arts instruction in their schools.

To summarize these nine interviewees' responses, we have created two graphical representations. Figure 1 categorizes the schools along two dimensions—school type (arts or nonarts) and type of arts integration (coequal or subservient)—whereas figure 2 organizes schools according to type of arts integration and poverty level (set at greater or less than 30 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch). Two trends emerge. First, the arts schools we examined were far more likely to engage in a coequal, cognitive

TABLE 1. School Descriptions

School name	Arts or nonarts	School level	Socioeconomic status (% of free or reduced-price lunch)
School A	**Arts**	**Elementary**	**21**
School B	Arts	Elementary	42
School C	**Arts**	**Elementary**	**13**
School D	**Arts**	**Elementary**	**57**
School E	Arts	Elementary	15
School F	**Arts**	**High**	**Not reported (federal magnet in urban area)**
School G	Arts	High	10
School H	Arts	High	33
School I	Arts	High	40
School J	**Arts**	**High**	**10**
School K	**Nonarts**	**Elementary**	**23**
School L	**Nonarts**	**Elementary**	**26**
School M	Nonarts	Elementary	69
School N	**Nonarts**	**Elementary**	**73**
School O	Nonarts	Elementary	25
School P	Nonarts	Elementary	11
School Q	**Nonarts**	**High**	**30**
School R	Nonarts	High	32

	Arts	Nonarts
Coequal Arts Integration	School C School D School F School J	
Subservient Arts Integration	School A	School K School L School N School Q

FIGURE 1. Arts integration by type of school.

style of arts integration, whereas non-arts schools used a subservient approach. Second, although we have a limited number of cases, the schools with higher levels of poverty were more likely to use a subservient approach. If this holds true for a larger sample, this would align with research indicating a greater pressure toward using direct instruction for test preparation among high poverty schools (McNeil and Valenzuela 2001). Finally, in figure 3, it appears in our sample that coequal arts integration is less available in higher poverty schools.

Coequal Arts Integration

The schools where arts integration could be described as coequal tended to have a strong arts focus and a relatively low poverty student population. In these schools, there is little or no sacrifice of arts education to teaching concepts in tested areas of the curriculum. For example, school J, a high school, was a regional center for the arts, with tough, arts-based admissions standards, a high percentage of instructors with specialized arts training, and low student poverty (around 10 percent). At this school, the principal indicated that most of the integration consisted of letting arts experts, who might be unfamiliar with the tested content, "modify what we did slightly to make sure that our students saw connections between the arts and the SOL tested areas." However, the core focus on the arts remained fundamentally unchanged by the SOL exams.

	Low SES ≥ 30%	High SES < 30%
Coequal Arts Integration	School D	School C School F School J
Subservient Arts Integration	School K School N School Q	School A School L

FIGURE 2. Arts integration by socioeconomic status (SES [free or reduced-price lunch]).

	Low SES ≥ 30%	High SES < 30%
Coequal Arts Integration	School D*	School C* School F* School J*
Subservient Arts Integration	School K School N School Q	School A* School L*

FIGURE 3. Arts integration by type of school and socioeconomic status (SES).
Note. *arts-focused school.

At school F, another arts-focused high school with stringent, arts-based criteria for acceptance, the principal described a situation where the academic areas of the curriculum were, in some ways, subservient to the arts. The school is aware of the SOL exams and does react to them, but in such a way that, according to the principal, the students "understand that arts learning is not isolated from academic learning and that academic learning and art learning are two things in our culture that go hand in hand. That we have dependency for each other, we are not arts in absence of culture." Here, arts integration serves broader cultural understanding and a movement for cultural change, while keeping arts as the primary driver of learning. In this case, a very strong arts mission may help explain how the arts are not made subservient to the academic areas of the curriculum. By organizing the school around arts learning, tested content can be introduced into the curriculum without displacing the arts.

Some elementary schools also created situations where the arts and tested subjects were integrated in a coequal way. The principal of school C, an elementary school with an arts focus and relatively low poverty, championed a coequal integration model as a school philosophy, while deriding the surface-level integration at other schools:

> [O]ur philosophy is . . . and this isn't in every lesson, but to teach dual objectives rather than teach "50 Nifty States in Song" and say we are integrating music in social studies. You know, we actually have a music objective along with a social studies objective or an arts objective along with a language arts objective.

At school C, "art is an academic area" rather than window dressing. Creating formal structures—in this case, school-level objectives for all subjects, including nontested ones—has served the purpose of cementing arts education firmly in the curriculum. It has done so using the language of the standards-based accountability movement ("objectives").

Another elementary school principal, this one at arts-focused school D, talked about how she describes the mission of her school to parents:

> We talk a lot about our belief in an integrated approach to the curriculum, that we do teach the Virginia Standards of Learning. We do teach the . . . County Program of Studies. But it may not look like it looks at another school because we have a real strong belief that the curriculum and the content of the curriculum have to be relevant to the children. And so to do that, that's where we bring in the arts and science, and ways for the kids to become critical thinkers and problem solvers. Those are our goals for the kids. They overarch the curriculum goals. We as a staff are more concerned about kids learning than to spout facts.

Despite school D's higher level of poverty (57 percent), the principal's emphasis on integration as part of the school's mission, combined with strong professional development opportunities and a county supportive of arts integration, has created an atmosphere where strong, coequal arts integration can take place. Raising test scores through arts integration, according to the principal, is incidental to students becoming critical thinkers and problem solvers.

Subservient Arts Integration

Some principals or arts coordinators were rather vague about the nature or purposes of the integration activities at their school. For example, the principal at school K, a non-arts–focused elementary school with low poverty, mentioned the integration of the arts and history, in which collaboration occurred between music teachers and academic area teachers. However, when asked to describe the integration of music and social studies, the principal said, "I think that there is just a real effort on the part of the general music teacher to relate music to cultures, and more instruments and things like that. I don't think [the SOL exams] have harmed [music instruction] at all." From this response, it appears that the onus is on the music teacher to make the connections between music and cultures. The social studies and music teachers are not engaged in developing and realizing coequal educational objectives.

It would not be surprising to see subservient integration in a nonarts environment such as school K. However, respondents from arts-focused schools described similar notions of arts integration. School A, an elementary school with relatively low poverty, as well as an explicit mission to incorporate arts integration, used practices that would be considered subservient to the tested areas. For example, students would "artistically" represent vocabulary words that might be tested on SOL exams to help remember their meaning. The principal asserted that instruction is driven by "best practices," not by the SOL exams, and there is also a partnership between the school and a regional arts organization that gives professional development in the areas of arts integration. However, the form that the arts integration took is one where the arts are used as a reinforcement technique, or a different way of learning, to retain information needed for the SOL exams. Although this may not represent all integration practices at the school, this particular activity appears to place the arts in a subsidiary role to the tested areas.

Most of the subservient arts integration occurred at nonarts schools with high rates of student poverty. Of the five schools with subservient arts integration, four were not arts-focused and three served higher-poverty populations. The two most obvious examples of "arts integration" being modified into a "subservient" approach show how the term "integration" can be applied to satisfy both the increased emphasis on tested areas of the curriculum and the state mandate to provide a minimum number of hours of arts instruction. At school L, an ethnically diverse elementary school with a high level of student poverty, the principal had encouraged his arts and music teachers to work with teachers in the tested areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics and social studies, to prepare for the tests. The principal noted, "I stress upon my [arts and music] staff that I want you to cover those SOLs that we can't incorporate into your instruction program." When asked whether this meant that arts and music teachers were being asked to not teach their subjects, but rather tested content, the principal said, rather opaquely, "Covering the materials that we can—we feel we can—are incorporated." This "incorporation" was less an integration, and more of an imposition, of tested content on arts teachers. Thus, it appears that the principal is asking teachers, whenever possible, to cover tested areas of the curriculum. The principal promoted the formats of tested topics and indicated that, to measure student learning on the tested areas, multiple choice tests were being given in music and arts classes.

Another clear case of subservient arts integration was found, predictably, at a high school with high poverty and low test scores. School Q, which had received a warning from the state due to low scores in mathematics, was examining ways to "teach mathematics across the school's curriculum," according to the principal. The principal described the situation:

> So we are depending on these elective areas—we call them expanded core areas—to help us teach algebra to our students because we see algebra as being the gateway course for mathematics. Because if you learn algebra, we figure that you can certainly learn geometry and trigonometry and so on and so forth. So we are depending upon the expanded core area—health and physical education, technology education, art, music—to help us teach mathematics. And we have had our math teachers sit down and work with the expanded core teachers to sort of develop teaching strategies, activities, that they can infuse into their current curriculum to teach math concepts. In this infusion approach, the arts are used to try to raise scores. A description of what infusion looks like (according to the principal) makes the subservience of the arts to tested areas clear: Well, one example that might come to mind is that—I forget—the students are working on some type of graphic design. Obviously, you would have geometric shapes in there, whether they are triangles or whatever. Special emphasis would be placed on helping the student to recognize that these are triangles, that a triangle has three sides, and how a triangle might be used, and how that might be integrated into a geometry class.

The principal understood that art teachers are "probably somewhat uncomfortable with this," but pointed to numerous staff development activities to acclimate teachers to concepts covered by the state tests "in order to raise student achievement" in the tested areas. Even

here, however, the principal admitted that the tested curriculum-based professional development came at the expense of professional development in the arts, with "nowhere near as much as we had in the past. I think just about any teacher in the school district would agree with that statement."

At school N, an elementary school with 73 percent of its students on free or reduced-price lunch, the arts were expressly used to support the tested areas. The principal indicated that over time, the most significant change in response to the Standards of Learning has been that school arts educators "have been encouraged more and more to determine ways that they can support content area instruction." For example, to "support content area instruction" the music teacher was expected to be "doing songs and dances and et cetera in music that talk about Virginia history . . . I want them singing songs about the Civil War, you know what I mean? Because that's directly related to what they're going to be tested on." Professional development for the arts teachers at the school, provided at the county, encouraged integration activities that "help support content area instruction."

Even more telling were comments from the principal of school N. She teaches an undergraduate-level education course at a local university that is attended by a large number of aspiring music teachers. In this class, there was tension between the principal and the students over the idea that arts integration should be mutually beneficial to arts and nonarts areas. She described the interaction this way:

> These are students who haven't gotten out into the field yet. And they were like, "Well, we're not going to do that if that doesn't have anything to do with music." And "Why should we do things that support content areas? What are the classroom teachers doing to support the music program?" And I just had to laugh, because I said, "You wait 'til you get out into the real world. Nobody cares about you as a music teacher. How well are these kids going to do on this test and what did you do to help them pass the test? If I have to choose between a test-wiseness session and music class, guess what's going to be eliminated? Music class." They were not happy with me at all.

It should be noted that, in our entire sample of eighteen interviews, no music classes (or any arts classes, for that matter) had been eliminated, or even reduced, as a result of the SOL exams. Rather, the nature of arts instruction, with its emphasis on integration, had sometimes been shifted, with the encouragement of the county, toward a subservient model, where the arts serve the tested areas of the curriculum.

Discussion

The schools in our sample reveal a wide range of integration activities, from solid, coequal arts integration to situations where tested content was clearly the primary focus, creating a subservient integration situation. Looking at the data and at figures 1 and 2, several trends are apparent. First, the arts-focused, wealthy schools in our sample were usually successful at maintaining coequal arts integration curricula, or by keeping the arts and academic areas separate altogether, with only slight modifications to integrate SOL and arts content (school J). Unfortunately, one arts-focused school in our sample, with a poor student population, seems to have started to drift toward a subservient arts integration model. This is probably the most discouraging finding, given that this school was specifically designed to provide a strong and comprehensive arts education for students. Higher socioeconomic status (SES) is, of course, widely associated with higher test scores. This may leave high-SES schools practicing arts integration freer to function in a coequal way, rather than being harnessed to bolster test scores. Another finding, as figure 3 notes, is that nonarts schools, both wealthy and poor, embrace an arts integration model that places arts as subservient to tested subjects.

Integration was central to the school's mission among schools with coequal arts education. First, the school mission offered a protective effect. Integration was central to the mission, as opposed to a more general statement about a strong arts education. Second, support from the county was crucial, either through the maintenance of arts funding, or (especially) through professional development with regional arts education associations. Schools A, C, and D are engaged in a long-term professional development partnership with a regional arts center that provides ongoing and intensive training in arts integration.

In contrast, schools that used a more subservient arts integration approach tended to have lower SOL test scores. This is unsurprising, given the fact that consistently low test scores could lead to a denial of school accreditation, thus encouraging principals to push arts education to cover the tested subjects. These fear-encouraged pedagogical practices aimed solely at raising test scores, including a subservient arts education were observed in schools K, L, N, and Q. Also, schools with a subservient arts integration approach were more likely to be high schools, excepting an outstanding arts-focused academy with high admissions standards and experienced arts teachers. This general finding that high schools used a more subservient approach might be because of the higher stakes for students at the high school level. Thus, administrators and teachers may feel more pressure to harness untested areas to reach the goal of raising student scores.

Policy Implications

What do these findings mean for arts education policy? We have several tentative conclusions. First, studies of the impact of high-stakes testing on the arts (as well as other untested areas of the curriculum, such as health or physical education) have often reported only minor decreases in the percentage of arts instruction (Koretz, Mitchell, Barron, and Keith 1996). This may be deceptive. In our sample, the notion of arts integration, as described by five of eight schools, meant teaching tested content through the arts. This created or exacerbated a subservient relationship between the arts and tested areas of the curriculum. A minimum, mandatory number of hours for arts instruction set down by the state is, obviously, no guarantee of instructional quality in the arts, and measuring the impact of high-stakes

testing policies on arts education requires both quantitative measures of instructional hours and resources and more and nuanced, contextual analyses of the sort undertaken here.

Second, issues of SES and access to a high-quality arts education are clearly linked in our sample. Figure 3 reveals that two of the three schools with coequal, cognitive arts integration were high-SES schools, whereas subservient arts integration nearly always took place in low-SES schools. Additionally, three of the four schools with an arts focus had low student poverty. This is unsurprising. High-SES parents and communities see high-quality arts education as part of a high-quality general education and work hard to maintain funding and resources for their children's schools (Chapman 2004a). By contrast, schools with high numbers of poor children face the twin dangers of low-quality arts education (Chapman 2004b) and teaching practices where test preparation and curricular narrowing are more likely to take place in response to the introduction of high-stakes tests than at high-SES schools (Lomax et al. 1995; McNeil and Valenzuela 2000).

In our study, only one low-SES school with an emphasis on arts integration (school D) maintained a coequal, cognitive orientation even after the SOL exams were introduced. The principal of this elementary school noted the strong school mission, saying, "We like our arts focus, and . . . we hide behind the fact that 'we are an arts school,' so we can't go back on that, and that's fine, all fine with all of us." Both the administration and staff held meetings to talk about and refine the school's vision in the "age of accountability," given that the school is "sort of swimming upstream from where the rest of the world is going." Her response to the outside policy world was for the school "to hunker down and keep doing what we know is good for kids," where the focus is "on the kids and not the test." To accomplish this, the principal said she acted as a "buffer." She explained:

> We often say we live in our own happy [school] bubble, and that's about the truth of it, and [a reading teacher] always says to me, "Well, you're the buffer." [Laughs] Well, thank you. But it's true. That's part of my role is to look at what they're doing and say, "Do I need to hit 'em more with this? Do we need to spend more time on this?" Right now, I say no, but maybe next summer that'll change.

Others have described the existence of strong arts missions in low-SES schools (Davis 2000; Wilson 2001). In a high-stakes testing environment such as Virginia, a well-defined mission and strong administrative support may help mitigate against low quality arts education, including subservient arts integration.

Finally, arts education policymakers need to continue to stress the unique qualities of receiving a strong education in the arts. Although integrating the arts with other subjects can be a positive learning experience in both the arts and other areas of the curriculum, integration that places arts as secondary to "academic" tested subjects does not serve the children's needs for a rigorous, well-balanced educational experience. Understanding the arts provides young people with additional ways of making sense of the world (Gardner 1982; Goodman 1968). These ways of making sense cannot be substituted for each other. However, it is obvious that testing and accountability policies have placed the arts in a precarious balancing act. If the arts remain independent of other tested areas of the curriculum, the arts could find themselves isolated, and, as Eisner said, "to be left out is to be disregarded, and to be disregarded is no asset when it comes to competing for time and other resources to support one's program" (2000, 4).

Existing research (Koretz, Mitchell, Barron, and Keith 1996) may not be reporting great reductions in arts education in gross numerical terms (for example, staff, class time, or resources). However, this study gives some evidence that the nature of arts education, especially with respect to arts integration, has shifted in response to the introduction of the high-stakes SOL exams to incorporate the tested areas of the curriculum. In our sample, four schools out of nine, even in the face of pressures to shift time and resources toward tested areas, maintained a coequal relationship between the arts and tested areas. This occurred most often at schools with an arts focus, where there was a strong arts mission, as well as experienced staff and committed administrators. At the other five schools, mostly nonarts focused and with low SES, integration was used to prepare students for the state exams, resulting in a subservient relationship vis-à-vis the tested areas. These uneven effects of high-stakes testing on arts education highlight the continued need for high-quality, comprehensive arts education programs, whatever their philosophical approach.

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