

**From:** [Lorinda Rice](#)  
**To:** [University Governance](#)  
**Cc:** [Lorinda Rice](#)  
**Subject:** KU Art Education Program  
**Date:** Monday, October 11, 2021 3:28:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [Screen Shot 2019-04-16 at 12.55.26 PM.png](#)  
[Screen Shot 2019-02-21 at 9.21.43 AM.png](#)

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Dear KU Faculty Senate,

I am writing today to ask that the Art Education Department at Kansas University stay as a part of the course offerings. I recently heard about the possibility of the program being cut from your campus and I hope you will reconsider.

As the Visual Art Curriculum Specialist of the second largest school district in Nebraska, I can tell you there is a need for art educators and art education programs. I have hired an alumni from KU and was impressed with her up-to-date knowledge of curriculum changes and her willingness to continue to grow as an artist and in her pedagogy. During my board tenure as the National Art Education Association Supervision and Administration Director, one of the most discussed problems was lack of art education applicants and dwindling university programs.

The arts play a vital role in education and are needed more now than ever before. Visual arts programs support the development of empathy and understanding of our world for young people. Exploring media and themes allows young people to spend time thinking through a variety of lenses to understand the complexity of our world. Through a strong Visual Art K-12 program, students can learn to carefully analyze the bombardment of visual imagery. A strong visual art program, lead by a well trained KU art educator, can be the space where future leaders will be able to use the creative and critical thinking skills developed in art classrooms to help solve tomorrow's problems through art exploration of big ideas and themes.

My district is currently seeking two unfilled art positions and will be opening 3 new schools in the next 3 years. I am not alone in the search for strong art educators. Many of my colleagues, from across the nation, are also seeking art teachers. Not to mention, the current climate to remove art education programs from larger institutions also creates a level of inequity as many districts are looking to hire a diverse workforce.

I hope you will take these thoughts and my request into consideration as you make the decision and will vote for keeping the KU Art Education program.

With appreciation,  
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**Lincoln Public Schools**

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“We do not learn from experience...we learn from reflecting on experience.” - John Dewey

"There must be inevitable controversy and debate because old ideas by their very nature, cannot and do not change unless and until they are challenged by new ones." Manuel Barkin, Art Ed Prof Emeritus @ University of Ohio

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