



National Society for Education in Art & Design

3 Mason's Wharf, Corsham, SN13 9FY United Kingdom
Tel: 01225 810134 Fax: 01225 812730 www.nsead.org

General Secretary: Lesley Butterworth MA BA (Hons)
Patrons: Professor Sir Christopher Frayling MA PhD;
Professor Magdalene Odundo OBE; Sir Nicholas Serota;
Lady Frances Sorrell; Sir John Sorrell, Bob and Roberta Smith

12 May 2015

The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan
Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Nicky Morgan,

Congratulations on your re-election and re-appointment to the position of Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities.

The National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD) is the subject association and independent trade union for teachers of art, craft and design across all phases throughout the UK, and it is to your role and responsibility for education and to teachers that I am addressing this letter. You have already received copies of the *NSEAD Manifesto for Art Craft and Design Education* from NSEAD members and constituents. The content of this letter reflects the priorities of that document.

We welcomed the *Workload Challenge* and its swift and explicit responses from 43,855 teachers citing problems and offering solutions well documented in the *Workload Challenge: Analysis of Teacher Consultation Responses Document*. You are starting your tenure with a unique and vital opportunity that will make or break not only your own contribution to education, but to the careers and wellbeing of our teachers in service.

We anticipate your continued action and response to the *Workload Challenge* with great interest. It is absolutely crucial that you get this right.

Closely linked to the workload challenge is teacher recruitment and retention. You may not be aware of how policy developments in recent years have resulted in a disproportionate impact on our subject. Unlike trainee teachers in some other subjects, trainee teachers in art, craft and design have no financial incentives to support their commitment to a PGCE course. We urge you to review this as an immediate priority, so as to encourage the very highest ability art, craft and design specialists to see the value in a teaching career. Initial teacher education is increasingly fragmented and isolated. We propose that initial teacher trainees at primary, secondary and post-compulsory levels of education continue to access high-level accredited subject and pedagogical post-graduate education, training and qualifications within the preferred context of a HEI partnership model. This will enable them to gain the necessary skills and experience from a breadth of learning models and not just those directed from a single or dual placement experience.

Highly cited as a reason for teachers leaving the profession is the lack of subject-specific professional development. Our *NSEAD Educator Survey 2014*, showed that 72 per cent of art, craft and design teachers are self-funding attendance at subject-specific professional development courses and are doing so in their own time. We propose an annual entitlement to high quality subject-specific CPD that will continue to offer development and challenge to those new to the profession, alongside the more experienced. This sharing of experience and learning within a subject-specific forum, or the broadening of experience by taking on new subject content is essential for the continued promotion of the highest national standards.

School budgets are in crisis. Your proposal to protect school funding per pupil is still a cut going forward. Specialist art, craft and design teachers are being made redundant. Departmental budgets continue to be cut in real terms against ongoing inflation. At the same time, school study visits to museums, galleries to engage with the cultural capital of our heritage are becoming less frequent, diminishing the quality and integrity of learning in the subject. This remains a challenge. Education needs investment.

The existing English Baccalaureate (EBacc) has had a toxic effect on our subject and on the motivation and valuing of our teachers. The *NSEAD Educator Survey 2014* cited 52 per cent of Heads of Department registering a detrimental impact in the provision for art, craft and design in the curriculum because of the existing EBacc. Our subject, so critical to the success of the economy is rapidly diminishing in schools, in both value and capacity. We propose an intelligent accountability, assessment and progression system that supports and not restricts art, craft and design. We need a parity of esteem between all subjects; art, craft and design provides an introduction to potential careers in the visual arts as part of the creative, cultural, heritage, digital and design led industries and sectors which contribute significantly to the UK's economy and reputation on a world-class platform. Art, craft and design has a crucial role at the centre of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Moving STEM to STEAM fosters creativity, innovation and economic growth. We therefore propose the dismantling of discount codes in the endorsed GCSE art and design specifications and the existing EBacc to support freedom of choice.

NSEAD believes that a world-class art, craft and design education is an entitlement for our children and young people, and essential to our spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic wellbeing. This is in your hands now and we wish you well in your renewed role. We ask you to listen and to work with us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Butterworth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lesley Butterworth
General Secretary
NSEAD