

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF
THE DC CITY COUNCIL

Testimony presented by
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My name is Tom Prewitt, and I am the Executive Director of the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative.

The Collaborative represents over 70 cultural institutions in the DC region, and together we work to bring arts education and experiences to over 120 DC Public and Public Charter Schools, reaching over 25,000 young people in all eight wards this year. We also provide extensive teacher training opportunities for DCPS teachers.

I am here today to support the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and its efforts to ensure that arts education opportunities are available to all DC Public and Public Charter Schools.

I am also here today to make the case that a successful economic development plan for the 21st century must include an arts component—and more specifically, an arts education component.

We will fail our students if we do not provide them with comprehensive arts education as part of a plan to educate the whole child.

Without adequate schools and curriculum, our workforce will be inadequately prepared to meet the challenges of the new, creative economy. Without a prepared workforce, we will be unable to develop DC into the creative community it deserves to become.

A recent New York Times article quotes software manufacturers complaining about American students who, deprived of whole-child education, particularly in the arts, often cannot solve problems or imagine solutions in this increasingly high-tech world.

We urge you to fulfill the social, economic and creative potential of our young people by voting for better schools, more complete education, including the arts, and a more promising future for our city. Please support the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities in its efforts to ensure quality arts education for every student in the District of Columbia.