

The New York Times

The Power of Arts Education

December 1, 2007

To the Editor:

“New York Grades Set Off Debate on Judging Schools” (news article, Nov. 27) touched on some very tough questions about how best to evaluate city schools.

In addition to the shortcomings of the report cards mentioned in the article, one other element that the report cards fail to assess is the ability of a school to provide a well-rounded education, including learning in social studies, science, physical education and the arts.

Based on more than 10 years working inside schools, we have witnessed the power of arts education in engaging students in learning and providing avenues for achievement that may otherwise not exist.

While the Department of Education has launched ArtsCount, with a focus on holding principals accountable for meeting the minimum state requirements in arts education, it is not at all clear how this, which is separate from the report cards, will ensure that every child receives the minimum arts education required by the state.

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