



**New York City Public Advocate Candidate Questionnaire  
Arts Education Public Policy  
Election 2009**

The following questions are designed to determine candidates' positions on a number of issues related to the delivery of arts education in New York City public schools. Questionnaires are being delivered to all certified candidates for the Office of Public Advocate. Responses will be posted on The Center for Arts Education's website and provided to the public and press. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

*The Center for Arts Education is a 501 (c)(3)nonpartisan organization that neither supports nor opposes any candidate or political party for office.*

Candidate Name: Mark Green

Signature of Candidate: *Mark Green*

Date: 8/19/09

**Candidate Questions:**

- 1. If elected Public Advocate, what policies or initiatives, if any, would you pursue to improve access to arts education in the city?**

Explain:

Ours is a campaign about real experience and new ideas, with a firm commitment to growing jobs for New Yorkers in this difficult economic time. In my policy paper on economic development, "Our Next Economy: THE Creative City," I emphasized education and facilitating the "creative class" in order to restore our City's economy. Part of this includes a commitment to education as an economic development engine and where we prioritize creativity and place specific emphasis on arts programs.

We must ensure that the Department of Education complies with the mandates of No Child Left Behind Act, the Campaign for Fiscal Equity decision that found a New York State Constitutional right to a "sound basic education," and New York State Education Law which mandates arts education, through investigation, working with parents to keep track of arts education in their local schools, and facilitating out of school time options for children allowing them to explore and cultivate their creative talent. These initiatives and others are explained below and will be further detailed in our education policy paper to be released later in the campaign for you to comment at [MarkGreen.com](http://MarkGreen.com).

**2. How can the cultural resources of New York City be leveraged to positively impact the lives of school children?**

Explain:

This City is a magnet to the brightest and most creative people in the information, culture, and education (“ICE”) sector with information publishers from Time Warner to Condé Nast and McGraw Hill, cultural institutions from the MET to the MOMA, and educational institutions from Columbia and NYU to the world class Fashion Institute of Technology. The resulting talent pool allows for cross pollination across the ICE sectors and situates New York City as the perfect place to become “THE Creative City.” These vast resources can also benefit New York City school children through various programs such as:

- Cultural Out School Time (C.O.S.T.) – which would match public school students with existing programs at various cultural institutions like the Natural History and others throughout the City to provide cultural learning activates regularly after school and on weekends.
  - Artists for Education – which would model Assemblyman Jonathan L. Bing’s “Women-in-Design” program which allowed young women to meet with founders and CEOs from some of New York City’s top fashion and design firms to learn about career opportunities and meet role models, by providing opportunities for some of the world’s most talented artists who live here to give back to the community by going into our public schools to discuss their work with students.
  - Arts for Public’s Sake – proposed in “Change for New York: 100 Ideas for a Better City” (available at [http://www.markgreen.com/100\\_ideas\\_part\\_1\\_html](http://www.markgreen.com/100_ideas_part_1_html)), would help revitalize New York's connection to the arts, as well as our City's artistic potential and talent, by creating a rotating collection of local art through a private-public partnership fund called "Art for Public's Sake". Artists would be paid very modestly to let their work be displayed in the public areas and government buildings. After a period of time the art would be moved to a new building, for a new set of people to see and appreciate. Every few years we would return the work to the artist and update our collection. Public schools should be included in this initiative.
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**3. What policies or initiatives do you propose to prevent drop outs and increase the city's graduation rates?**

Explain:

We cannot put the cart before the horse by raising test scores or graduation rates at the expense of real learning. Instead of squeezing kids through loopholes such as "credit recovery," post-graduate changes to grades, the issuance of multiple credits for passing the same course and incentives to undercount the number of students who drop out, as is occasionally now done, we must increase the power of the stakeholders in the system – parents, teachers and students. A truly working education system is one where the stakeholders feel that they are part of the decision-making process. What truly matters is less the diploma but what a student leaves school having learned.

As a parent, I will admit that it was sometimes a challenge to motivate my children to work through the various subjects that didn't seem like they would have a material effect on their lives. I could not seem to provide a good argument for why a quadratic equation was important and how it might come up as a necessary skill in life. What keeps many in school will be providing students with courses that they enjoy, like arts, cultural and technical education, because of the intrinsic value of what they are learning and how it applies to life.

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**4. What policies or initiatives, if any, would you support to prevent the loss of arts spaces in public schools due to overcrowding or other factors?**

Explain:

Reducing class size should not mean getting rid of spaces for art in school. Instead, let's increase space by using novel public-private partnerships to create more educational spaces. We can also investigate modifying the school day using multiple overlapping schedules to provide more educational time without the cost of building more facilities. These new ideas and others will be outlined in our education policy paper that will be released shortly and available for you to comment on at [MarkGreen.com](http://MarkGreen.com).

<b>5. Do you support the reinstatement of per pupil dedicated funding for arts education in all New York City public schools?</b>	<u>Yes</u>	<b>No</b>
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Explain:

We should bring back “Project Arts.” By investing in a strong arts program we can create a new generation of more creative and innovative New Yorkers, strengthening our City economically and culturally, and give our children a more fully rounded education.

<b>6. Should the New York City Department of Education lead remediation efforts or other interventions for schools found to be out of compliance with state arts education requirements?</b>	<u>Yes</u>	<b>No</b>
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Explain:

Ultimately the DOE must layout a plan to begin addressing the fact that nearly thirty percent of public schools do not have an arts teacher on staff with only eight percent of elementary schools providing mandated arts education. The Public Advocate, parents and the arts community should work with the DOE to ensure that we all agree to the plan, that it is followed, and if not that we work together to get arts education back on track.

<b>7. Should school <i>Progress Reports</i> include reporting on a wider array of factors, such as data from the <i>Annual Arts in Schools Report</i>, compliance with state education requirements or other?</b>	<u>Yes</u>	<b>No</b>
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Explain:

I will use the Public Advocate’s position as Chair of the Commission on Public Information and Communication to make as much information collected by government available online and in real-time as possible. Included in this would be Department of Education Progress Reports as well as any other information that the DOE collected including everything from real-time absence records from teachers and students to fight epidemics like swine-flu to information relating to arts in schools, so that parents, teachers, students, and the community can learn about what is happening in real-time and do something about.

Greater collection of information regarding arts education in schools can help us find where arts education is lacking and help educators improve what is offered.

<b>8. Do you support the creation of a city-wide task force to examine access to arts education offerings in public schools?</b>	<u>Yes</u>	<b>No</b>
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Explain:

As your first Public Advocate, we knew how important it was to come out into the community, we held over 70 town hall meetings, including at least one in all 59 of New York City’s community boards and made sure to visit a school and precinct in each. We must increase public participation and am always happy to hold a forum on arts education. If necessary, we could facilitate a task force on arts education myself to investigate arts education and recommend solutions.

Our City needs to do a top-down review of access to arts education in our public schools. The task force should investigate where our City is lacking in arts education, and recommend solutions. In addition, the strength of a school’s art curriculum cannot be judged by numbers alone. A citywide task force could help the DOE grade each schools art program with greater accuracy.

<p><b>9. Should the city expand career and technical education offerings to include more creative and innovative learning opportunities?</b></p>	<p><u>Yes</u></p>	<p>No</p>
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Explain:

The lessons we instill in our children today are the lessons that they will carry with them into adulthood. And so, I think it is an important question to ask – and indeed it is a question not asked often enough – what type of City do we wish to have 5, 10, 20 years from now? As I outlined in my previous economic paper, “Our Next Economy: THE Creative City,” (available at [http://MarkGreen.com/THE\\_Creative\\_City](http://MarkGreen.com/THE_Creative_City)), I believe that the future of our City lies in our ability to think creatively and to foster the individualism and entrepreneurship that will spur the innovation that drives our City. Including more creative and innovative learning opportunities in our career and technical education is necessary to create the high quality job opportunities that are essential to help us become “THE Creative City.”

<p><b>10. Do you support more comprehensive pre-service training for principals and teachers in the area of arts education and arts integration?</b></p>	<p><u>Yes</u></p>	<p>No</p>
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Explain:

An instruction in the arts is vital to a well-rounded education, and greater integration of arts education into a school’s curriculum will broaden the number of children who may take an interest and inform what the child learns in all his or her classes.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

We will be releasing a paper on education policy shortly that will offer more ideas on how to improve education in schools and lay out my vision for our education system, which will be available for you to comment on at [MarkGreen.com](http://MarkGreen.com)

**Please return completed questionnaire by August 10, 2009 to:**  
The Center for Arts Education  
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(212) 268-5266 (fax) or [doug@caenyc.org](mailto:doug@caenyc.org)