

DESIGN- ED FOR THE FUTURE

**BUILDING THE FRAMEWORK FOR
K-12 DESIGN EDUCATION**

**CREATED BY
THE DESIGN-ED COALITION
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It is well accepted that students learn in different ways. Some learn best from hearing, some from seeing, and some by doing. The best methods of teaching incorporate all three learning methods with approaches that may be placed on a continuum of memorization at one end and self-exploration at the other. Research studies have shown that a large majority of students, regardless of their ability levels, learn identified concepts effectively through design education. Teaching design integrates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning in a holistic manner. Design education incorporates all of the learning styles and approaches through research, brainstorming, prototyping, presentation and reflection. In addition, research has shown repeatedly that important elements to authentic learning are engagement and enthusiasm. These elements are present when students learn through design projects, which increases their ability to retain major learning concepts successfully.

We are Design Educators, and this is what we believe:

- We believe that one of America's greatest strengths lies in its diversity and that the differentiation between learning styles strengthens all students, just as it strengthens the country.
- We believe that to address differentiated learners, all three learning methods must be utilized for a teacher to be effective. There is no one effective method of teaching and standardized tests cannot completely evaluate a student's capabilities or progress.
- We believe that the inclusion of visual literacy promotes authentic learning for the large segment of the population that is visually oriented.
- We believe that core academic areas such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Math are best taught if they are integrated using basic studies in design. STEM area instruction is enhanced when the students are able to conceive, plan, prototype, revise and execute their STEM concepts (just as designers do), rather than just read about them with no foundation or relevance.
- We believe that studying art and design prepares students to better understand that design aesthetics plays a significant role in the effectiveness of the objects and environment that surround them in their daily lives.
- We believe that studying design in coordination with core academic areas such as language arts and history is a more effective way of teaching and learning than more book-centered methods.

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- We believe that design education teaches students to better understand the role that design has toward social responsibility and strengthening the economy
- We believe that “21st Century Learning” is a fully integrated learning experience that embraces technologies but keeps its foundations in traditional hands-on modes of learning.
- We believe that teaching design skills should be an essential part of the K-12 learning experience in the 21st Century because the skills that design education includes are directly in line with traditional expectations but are more tuned to future needs.
- We believe that teachers who support these ideals should be respected and supported in their efforts and that all available resources to advocate for them should be made accessible.
- We believe that the formation of a national advocacy group is necessary for teachers who support the inclusion of design into their lessons and classrooms.

The Design-Ed Coalition

To this end, we support the establishment of the Design-Ed Coalition, a collaboration of K-12 teachers, schools, administrators, universities, organizations, businesses, museums, institutions, individuals, and others supporting design education initiatives in K-12 schools.

The Design-Ed Coalition will support all disciplines of design education in K-12 schools and in teacher education programs. The purpose of Design-Ed is to develop policies of support for design education at the international, national, state, and local school district levels.

Vision

The vision of the Design-Ed Coalition is:

1. To change education and student learning by imbedding design education in K-12 schools and assuring that every student receives regular instruction by qualified design educators;
2. To create design education curricular and professional development materials for teacher preparation programs and school districts;
3. To provide support and recognition for students engaged in design education; and
4. To further the missions of our partner organizations to teach students about social responsibility and improving the economy through design, allowing us to accomplish more as a collective than as individual entities.

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Mission

The mission of the Design-Ed Coalition is: (1) to initiate the implementation of design education licensure at the appropriate governing levels; (2) to encourage K-12 design students and their teachers to become more aware of and ideally become active members of their communities; and (3) to create the fostering of worldwide partnerships with design, education, and business organizations to better support the efforts of K-12 design educators around the globe.

Goals

The overarching goal of the Design-Ed Coalition is to develop a policy of support to promote the awareness of teaching design for social responsibility and as a way to strengthen the economy.

The policy of support will be used to educate business leaders, politicians, school administrators, teachers, and parents about the benefits of design education as being interdisciplinary, supporting brain-based learning principles, and having relevance to students' lives.

Objectives

1. Develop a policy of support for inclusion of design education in schools
2. Implement licensure for design education at the appropriate governing levels
3. Build pre-service programs for the preparation of teachers to teach design education as a multidisciplinary subject
4. Facilitate high quality design education programs through professional development.

Distinctiveness

1. The Design-Ed Coalition is an alliance of educators and designers in all design disciplines and is meant to include architecture, graphic design, product design, game design, media design, fashion, etc., as well as business and government representatives that support this effort.
2. We will focus on getting design education into schools as part of regular instruction by qualified teachers. There are many excellent programs helping provide after-school or supplemental programs at museums, etc. but it its time to get design into the formal curriculum and instruction of regular education.

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3. We believe design is a “third culture” in the 21st century that builds on the “two cultures” of the sciences and the humanities. The third culture will focus on inventing the future to create a world worth living into. This makes it very different from the role of the arts in the schools and is different from just adding another subject-

We are arguing for a whole new paradigm for education in the 21st century.

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