



Governor Mike Huckabee
adapted from website

Education And The Arts

- I believe that every child should have the opportunity for a quality education that teaches the fundamental skills needed to compete in a global economy.
- Music and the arts are not extraneous, extra-curricular, or expendable - I believe they are essential. I want to provide every child these "Weapons of Mass Instruction."
- Our future economy depends on a creative generation.

I believe that every child should have the opportunity for a quality education that teaches the fundamental skills needed to compete in a global economy. As I traveled the country and the world over the last decade bringing jobs to Arkansas, the business leaders I met weren't worried about creating jobs, they were worried about finding skilled and professional workers to fill those jobs.

In addition, I want to provide our children what I call the "Weapons of Mass Instruction" - art and music - the secret, effective weapons that will help us to be competitive and creative. It is crucial that children flex both the left and right sides of the brain. We all know the cliché of thinking outside the box: I want our children to be so creative that they think outside the cardboard factory. Art and music are as important as math and science because the dreamers and visionaries among us take the rough straw of an idea and spin it into the gold of new businesses and jobs. It is as important to identify and encourage children with artistic talent as it is those with athletic ability. Our future economy depends on a creative generation.

Music has always been an important part of my life. I still play bass guitar in my band, Capitol Offense.

As Governor of Arkansas, I undertook several initiatives to encourage arts in education. I passed landmark legislation to provide music and art instruction by certified teachers for all Arkansas children in grades one through six, forty minutes a week. As Chairman of the Education and Arts Commission of the States, I created a two-year initiative called "The Arts - A Lifetime of Learning," which promotes the benefits of arts education to all fifty states.

Students with strong art and music programs have higher academic achievement overall, are far more likely to read for pleasure and participate in community service, and are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior. These programs have a powerful effect in leveling the academic playing field for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The study of music improves math scores, spatial reasoning and abstract thinking.