



NATIONAL
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FOR THE
HUMANITIES

PRESS RELEASE

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OVER 1,400 NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO RECEIVE NEH'S PICTURING AMERICA

Free Education Initiative Brings Great American Art Directly to New York Classrooms and Libraries

NEW YORK, NY (April 29, 2008) – Today at the Scholastic Auditorium, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) will announce that the New York City public schools system's over 1,400 schools will receive Picturing America. Picturing America is a free initiative that helps teach American history and culture by bringing some of the country's great art directly to classrooms and libraries.

"The Endowment believes that Picturing America should be in every school and public library in the United States. As a result of our first round of applications, thousands of schools and millions of people all around the country will have the chance to view and learn from this collection in their own communities," said Bruce Cole, Chairman of the NEH. "Here in New York City, this hope is being realized. As a result of the strong support of the community, students and teachers at over 1,400 schools in the New York City public schools system will benefit from this wonderful learning resource."

"NEH's Picturing America is a rich resource that will provide our public schools with a unique opportunity to integrate the arts into the teaching and learning of American history," said Marcia V. Lyles, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning at the New York City Department of Education. "These works of art provide a thought-provoking perspective for our elementary, middle, and high school educators and students and perfectly complement our newly launched social studies curriculum."

Picturing America Pilot Program

In January 2008, the NEH distributed Picturing America materials to over 1,500 participating pilot schools nationwide. **One hundred schools in the state of New York** participated in the pilot program, **including fifteen New York City schools**. Feedback from the New York City educators has been tremendous.

"I love the images and the resource book is so easy to use," said Cheryl Wolf, Librarian from PS 63 William McKinley School, which currently does not have any art programs. "I used the Picturing America images in a lesson with fifth graders where we looked at Bingham's *The County Election* and the *Selma-to-Montgomery March for Voting Rights in 1965*, which are especially relevant today in relation to the election. Some students, who don't ordinarily participate, were clearly drawn into the discussion by the visual element."

The Application Process

From January 7 through April 15, 2008, schools and libraries across the country applied to receive Picturing America in the program's first nationwide application period. **Nearly 30,000 schools and public libraries across the country submitted applications** to be part of the program. **In the state of New York, over 3,000 institutions**, including public, private, and parochial schools as well as public libraries, applied during this time. Successful applicants will receive forty large, high-quality reproductions of great American art and a comprehensive teachers resource book to assist educators using the works of art in core subjects. Delivery of these materials is scheduled for August 2008. Additional education resources are also available through the Picturing America Web site (PicturingAmerica.neh.gov).

The NEH will offer Picturing America to more schools and libraries through a future enrollment opportunity beginning in August 2008. All eligible schools and public libraries in the US and its territories who have not previously received Picturing America may apply for the program **from August 4 through October 31, 2008** at PicturingAmerica.neh.gov.

Partnership with Head Start

In addition to schools and libraries, through an interagency agreement, NEH and the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will work together to make Picturing America available to the **20,000 Head Start centers** around the nation. This partnership will provide for the development of materials to supplement Picturing America and ensure that the program will enhance early childhood development and family literacy.

“Picturing America helps the next generation of Americans understand the amazing events that built our great civilization,” said Health and Human Services Deputy Secretary Tevi Troy. “By exposing young children to the iconic images of our past, we’re encouraging them to help build a wonderful future.”

Today’s Event at the Scholastic Auditorium

Educators from some of the participating pilot schools in New York City will attend today’s event at the Scholastic Auditorium, where several of the Picturing America images will also be on display. During the event, remarks will be given by:

- **The Hon. Bruce Cole**, Chairman of the NEH
- **The Hon. Tevi Troy**, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- **Margery Mayer**, President, Scholastic Education
- **Merryl H. Tisch**, Vice Chancellor, New York State Board of Regents
- **Marcia V. Lyles**, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, New York City Department of Education
- **Leslie Burger**, Immediate Past President, American Library Association

The NEH wishes to thank the following organizations: the American Library Association, HHS Office of Head Start, Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Park Service, The History Channel, and the National Trust for the Humanities. The NEH is grateful for the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Smith and, in addition, wishes to thank the Honorable William D. Rollnick, the Honorable Nancy Ellison, and the New York Council for the Humanities for local support, as well as Scholastic Inc. for hosting today’s event.

Picturing America is distributed by the NEH in cooperation with the American Library Association (ALA). For information about the ALA, please visit www.ala.org.

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About Picturing America

Public, private, parochial, and charter and home school consortia (K-12), as well as public libraries in the US and its territories, are eligible to receive Picturing America materials. Interested schools and public libraries will be able to apply through the NEH for the second round of Picturing America awards, beginning August 4 through October 31, 2008 for receipt of the materials in spring 2009. Detailed instructions for submitting an application can be found in the ‘Apply Now’ section of the Picturing America Web site, PicturingAmerica.neh.gov.

Picturing America comes with a comprehensive package of materials that includes:

- Forty large, high-quality color reproductions of the selected masterpieces (24” x 36”)
- A comprehensive teachers resource book providing a wide range of ideas and background information to support educators using the works of art in core subject areas
- Additional resources and lesson plans available through the Picturing America Web site, PicturingAmerica.neh.gov

About the National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. The study of the humanities — history, literature, philosophy, and the arts — helps us explore what it means to be human. The humanities enable us to understand the world and our place in it.

Because “democracy demands wisdom,” NEH serves and strengthens our Republic through promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. Through its programs, NEH provides opportunities for all citizens to embrace the humanities and benefit from their wisdom. For more information about NEH, visit www.neh.gov.