

Dear Mr. Holwegner,

I have only recently learned of the plans to commission a mural for the state capitol building that will commemorate the Brown vs Board of Education decision of 1954. As an artist and former Director of the Exhibition Program at the Lawrence Arts Center, I have taken an interest in the work submitted for your consideration for both their depiction of history and also their artistic styles and approaches.

I am writing to support the application of Wayne Wildcat whose work has been known to me for over twenty-five years. Mr. Wildcat's approach to the documentation of historical events, particularly regarding matters of social justice, is well known and respected. As a native American he has a point of view on these matters that is less inclined than some to yield gauzy illustrations that gloss over what were, in fact, difficult conflicts. In my view, his proposal pays closer objective attention to the antecedents relevant to the Brown case and effectively puts into visual perspective the events leading to the historical legal decision. The other proposals seem to me romanticizations of the event and utilize artistic styles that recall the public murals of the early twentieth century rather than of our own time.

I encourage you to consider choosing Mr. Wildcat's proposal. It reflects our time in terms of its unvarnished representation of important historical facts as well as its more contemporary artistic style.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Rick Mitchell  
2804 Tomahawk Dr.  
Lawrence, KS 66049

Retired  
Professor of Photography, Rutgers University Adjunct Professor of Art, Baker University and University of Kansas  
Director of the Exhibition Program, Lawrence Arts Center