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Research on the Aesthetic Education Function and Implementation Strategies of Higher Calligraphy Education

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Abstract:
The core of aesthetic education lies in cultivating people's comprehensive literacy in recognizing beauty,experiencing beauty,appreciating beauty,and even creating beauty.Based on the era background of the cultural confidence strategy and the popularization of aesthetic education,this paper focuses on the aesthetic education functions and implementation strategies of higher calligraphy education,and conducts research using a multidisciplinary interdisciplinary approach.At the theoretical level,the paper analyzes the essential characteristics of higher calligraphy education,namely"professionalism,cultural nature,aesthetic nature,and practicality",and clarifies that it possesses four core aesthetic education functions:cultivating aesthetic perception,shaping aesthetic judgment,stimulating aesthetic creation,and fostering cultural identity and personality. Ultimately,it provides a theoretical reference and practical path for realizing the transformation of higher calligraphy education from"teaching techniques"to"educating people with beauty and cultivating people with culture".

Keywords:
Architecture colleges,Calligraphy major,Art education

1.Introduction

As the most crucial platform for implementing education in China's outstanding traditional culture, higher education calligraphy education will inevitably face intensified challenges and new development opportunities under the strategic context of cultural confidence and aesthetic education popularization. First, documents such as the Ministry of Education's "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era" emphasize "researching and elucidating the aesthetic value of China's outstanding traditional culture, and incorporating calligraphy education into school aesthetic curricula" as the core content for building an integrated aesthetic education system across primary, secondary, and higher education. Second, current higher education calligraphy programs still predominantly prioritize "skill training over aesthetic education," with some institutions reducing calligraphy instruction to mere "writing skill drills," severely neglecting the profound aesthetic significance of cultivating personality and cultural identity through calligraphy education. Third, contemporary young students in the digital age no longer passively accept traditional culture but require its presentation through art forms they enjoy. Therefore, how to better

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leverage the aesthetic education function of higher education calligraphy has become an urgent contemporary challenge.

Theoretically, this research addresses gaps in interdisciplinary studies between higher calligraphy education and aesthetic education, elucidating calligraphy's role in aesthetic perception, judgment, and creation, thereby advancing aesthetic theory in the new era. Practically, it provides insights for curriculum reform and pedagogical innovation in university calligraphy programs, helping students enhance their humanistic literacy and aesthetic sensibility while mastering calligraphy, thus cultivating high-caliber dual-qualified calligraphy professionals. Furthermore, the study explores a contemporary approach to revitalizing China's traditional culture, strengthening confidence and fostering identity through calligraphy's aesthetic education.

2. Literature Review

Research on calligraphy education in China predominantly focuses on pedagogical models, technical training, and the relationship between calligraphy and education. For instance, Qiu Zhenzhong's *The Form and Interpretation of Calligraphy* primarily analyzes calligraphic forms through an aesthetic lens, yet rarely explores aesthetic education functions in higher calligraphy education. [1] In recent years, with the advancement of aesthetic education, more studies have begun to link calligraphy education with aesthetic cultivation. Ye Lang, for example, highlights calligraphy's aesthetic value in his *Principles of Aesthetics*, though most analyses remain theoretical rather than practical strategies for implementing aesthetic education in calligraphy. Moreover, these studies often remain fragmented, lacking a systematic framework for defining functions, developing implementation strategies, or establishing safeguard measures. [2]

Abroad, research on Chinese calligraphy mostly focuses on cultural dissemination and artistic appreciation. For instance, American scholar Sullivan's "The Art History of China" regards calligraphy as the core of Chinese art. However, due to differences in cultural background, there are limitations in recognizing the aesthetic education function of calligraphy education, making it difficult to deeply explore its unique value in personality shaping and cultural inheritance. [3] Moreover, foreign aesthetic education research often takes Western art as a vehicle, leaving the study of aesthetic education pathways for traditional art forms like Chinese calligraphy almost blank, which cannot provide targeted references for China's higher calligraphy education.

3.Research Methods and Innovations

The study adopted a multidisciplinary research methodology, including: Literature review: Collecting and analyzing Chinese and international literature on calligraphy education and aesthetic education to identify research trends and provide theoretical foundations;Case studies: Examining calligraphy programs at institutions like the Central Academy of Fine Arts and China Academy of Art to analyze how aesthetic education is integrated into calligraphy curricula, while identifying existing shortcomings.

The innovation of research perspective: Breaking the limitation of the traditional calligraphy education which is "technology-oriented", from the dimension of aesthetic education, systematically deconstructing the function system of higher calligraphy education, constructing the research framework of "technique train-

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ing-aesthetic cultivation-cultural inheritance".

Innovative Practice Path: To address the 'digitalization' trend, we propose an 'online + offline' approach for aesthetic education, such as using VR technology to recreate calligraphy creation scenarios and designing calligraphy-themed cultural and creative products, thereby enhancing teaching interactivity and innovation.

Reform of the evaluation mechanism: to build a three-dimensional aesthetic education evaluation mechanism composed of aesthetics, culture, personality and other aspects, to reform the current rigid situation of calligraphy teaching "only paying attention to the evaluation of techniques", and to evaluate students in an all-round way.

4.Theoretical Analysis of the Aesthetic Education Function of Advanced Calligraphy Education

4.1The Essence and Characteristics of Advanced Calligraphy Education

4.1.1The Essence of Higher Calligraphy Education

Higher calligraphy education transcends mere 'writing instruction' to become a comprehensive art education rooted in the art of calligraphy. It aims to convey emotions, promote cultural heritage, and cultivate aesthetic sensibility and moral character. Through studying Chinese character forms, brushwork rhythms, and compositional structures, students develop aesthetic appreciation and understand the cultural expressions of Chinese aesthetics, thereby achieving the educational goals of 'aesthetic education' and 'humanistic values.' Unlike primary and secondary school calligraphy education, higher-level programs emphasize specialization and academic rigor, while also fostering students' independent aesthetic judgment and creative thinking.

4.1.2Characteristics of Advanced Calligraphy Education

Professional skills: Based on systematic study of calligraphy theory (e.g. calligraphy history, aesthetics) and professional techniques (e.g. imitation and creation of five scripts: seal, clerical, regular, running, and cursive), students develop a professional skill system.

Cultural: Calligraphy is connected with Chinese characters, literature and history. In the process of learning, students should also read ancient books and know history, which has strong cultural characteristics.

Aesthetic education: Calligraphy produces beauty by the changes of curves and straight lines, density and sparseness, yielding and yielding. The calligraphy education in normal universities focuses on students' feeling and creating beauty, which has strong aesthetic education function.

Practicality: Emphasizing the unity of knowledge and practice, transforming aesthetic perception into artistic expression through more copying and creative practice.

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4.2The Core Connotation and Educational Goal of Aesthetic Education

4.2.1The core connotation of aesthetic education

Aesthetic education, or aesthetic cultivation, aims to enhance learners 'abilities to perceive, appreciate, and create beauty through teaching. More profoundly, it cultivates aesthetic awareness of natural beauty and the technological, material, and spiritual dimensions of social progress. It emphasizes integrating artistic, natural, social, and technological beauty within holistic education to foster a morally and aesthetically refined character. The current emphasis on' holistic education' in aesthetic education signifies its integration into academic curricula, achieving comprehensive development across disciplines.

4.2.2The educational objectives of aesthetic education

According to the Opinions on School Aesthetic Education in the New Era, the paper puts forward that the educational objectives of aesthetic education can be divided into three levels:

1)The primary level is to improve students' aesthetic intuition, and to distinguish the form rules and emotional representation of artistic images correctly.

2)The overall goal is to cultivate students' aesthetic appreciation, make them have correct aesthetic view, and cultivate their own unique aesthetic view.

3)The higher goal is to cultivate students' aesthetic consciousness, to let them carry out artistic creation activities according to the changes of the times, and to cultivate their noble moral feelings and sound personality with aesthetic education.

4.3The Core Aesthetic Education Function of Advanced Calligraphy Education

4.3.1The function of aesthetic perception in cultivating one's abilities

Lines serve as the fundamental language of calligraphy. Through variations in length, thickness, dryness, richness, lifting, pressing, and modulation, visual lines gain depth and activate students 'aesthetic perception. Calligraphy copying from models involves prolonged observation of stele rubbings to discern brush techniques, artistic intent (e.g., "central-tip stroke" and "balance of restraint and release"), structural composition (e.g., "horizontal-level and vertical-straight" and "arranged with rhythm"), and spacing (e.g., "primary-secondary coordination" and "coherent unity"). This immersive learning method enables students to perceive subtle artistic details through meticulous observation, thereby enhancing their appreciation of formal beauty. For instance, when copying Wang Xizhi's "Preface to the Orchid Pavilion," students can experience the lines' aesthetic quality described as "floating like clouds, agile as startled dragons," intuitively grasping the formal beauty and rhythmic harmony of calligraphy, thus cultivating their aesthetic perception.

4.3.2The shaping function of aesthetic judgment

Advanced calligraphy education cultivates aesthetic discernment by analyzing and comparing works of different styles across historical periods. Through studying the ancient oracle bone script's rustic grandeur, Han dynasty clerical script's majestic vigor, Tang dynasty regular script's meticulous precision, and Song dynasty

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running script's refined elegance, students grasp that 'styles are not inherently superior or inferior, but aesthetics have varying levels of sophistication.' This approach prevents the fallacy of 'technique-only' or 'style-only' thinking while empowering teachers to guide students in evaluating contemporary calligraphy. It fosters independent judgment and the ability to make informed aesthetic comparisons. For instance, when assessing 'ugly calligraphy,' students can be encouraged to evaluate it through the lens of traditional aesthetics and contemporary innovation.

4.3.3The creative function of aesthetic appreciation

Calligraphy art creation embodies the unity of aesthetic perception and creative expression. Through the teaching methodology of "imitation, reference, and innovation," higher education institutions cultivate students 'aesthetic creativity in the creative process. During the imitation phase, students master traditional techniques and aesthetic paradigms. In the reference phase, they reinterpret and adapt traditional works according to their personal aesthetic tastes. The innovation phase sees students integrating modern aesthetic concepts and multicultural elements into calligraphy, forging distinctive artistic styles. For instance, some universities offer interdisciplinary courses like "Calligraphy and Modern Design," guiding students to apply calligraphic elements in graphic design and spatial decoration. This not only expands the expressive forms of calligraphy but also unleashes students' creative potential.

4.3.4Cultural Identity and the Function of Personality Cultivation

Calligraphy is a "living fossil" of China's excellent traditional culture, embodying the philosophy, aesthetics, and morals of the Chinese people. The calligraphy education in normal universities explores the cultural background behind calligraphy based on teaching techniques. For example, explaining the historical context behind the creation of "Elegy for My Nephew" to cultivate students' sense of patriotism and family values, analyzing the calligraphy theory of "calligraphy as a reflection of the heart" and its relationship with personality, helps students enhance cultural identity and national pride while developing patience, focus, and perseverance through cultural immersion. For instance, calligraphy creation requires a long-term accumulation process and repeated practice. Through the process of copying and revising calligraphy works, students gradually develop excellent qualities such as a pursuit of excellence and persistent dedication.

5.The Present Situation and Problems of the Implementation of Aesthetic Education Function in Higher Calligraphy Education

5.1Case Study of Successful Practices

The Calligraphy Department of China Academy of Art: The highlights of its aesthetic education integration lie in the teaching model that combines "technique, aesthetics, and culture" into a unified curriculum, with the addition of aesthetic courses such as "Research on Calligraphy Aesthetics" and "History of China Aesthetics." The content of aesthetic education is carefully designed to integrate with technical courses (for example, when studying the "Preface to the Poems Composed at the Orchid Pavilion," its aesthetic characteristics and cultural context are introduced). Secondly, the integration of aesthetic education adopts a "museum immersion method," allowing students to appreciate ancient calligraphy works at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum,

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enhancing their aesthetic experience through physical appreciation. Thirdly, a multi-dimensional quantitative evaluation system is implemented, assessing students 'writing performance based on "technical proficiency," "integration of aesthetics and creativity," and "cultural interpretation." Case studies show that targeted curriculum design and effective methods have successfully integrated aesthetic education, leading to improvements in students' aesthetic appreciation and cultural understanding.

5.2Primal problem

1) The imbalance of the structure of the discipline: the proportion of the specialized technical courses and the aesthetic education courses is unbalanced, the aesthetic education courses are fragmented and marginal, unable to build a continuous aesthetic education curriculum system;

2) The teaching method is monotonous: the main teaching mode is the indoctrination teaching mode, there is no new way to cultivate students' aesthetic taste, and the aesthetic education concept can not be better integrated into the whole teaching process.

3) The evaluation method is not perfect: it mainly evaluates the technique, neglects the evaluation of aesthetic ability and cultural accomplishment, and cannot reflect the comprehensive aesthetic education effect of students.

4) The level of teachers: Some teachers have profound skills in calligraphy, but lack the knowledge of art theory and painting skills, so they cannot educate students in aesthetics.

6.Implementation Strategies of Aesthetic Education Function in Higher Calligraphy Education

6.1Optimizing the curriculum system

6.1.1Adjusting the Curriculum Structure and Enhancing the Status of Aesthetic Education

Offer core aesthetic courses, such as "Calligraphy Aesthetics", "China Art Aesthetics", and "Calligraphy Appreciation and Criticism", as compulsory professional courses, accounting for 30% of the professional curriculum, enabling aesthetic education to be systematically and progressively learned and cultivated. Embedded advancement, integrating interdisciplinary aesthetic education content. Offer interdisciplinary courses such as "Calligraphy and Literature", "Calligraphy and Philosophy", and "Calligraphy and Modern Design" to broaden students 'aesthetic horizons and cultivate their cross-disciplinary aesthetic and creative abilities. At the same time, add practical aesthetic education courses, such as "Calligraphy Exhibition Planning" and "Calligraphy Cultural and Creative Design", to enhance students' aesthetic practical abilities in exhibition planning and cultural and creative development through hands-on practice, achieving the transformation from aesthetic cognition to aesthetic creation.

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6.1.2Reconstructing the Technique Course and Integrating the Elements of Aesthetic Education

Aesthetic education should be integrated into technical courses, with aesthetic cultivation embedded throughout the 'technical training' process. For instance, in 'Regular Script Copying,' instructors should not only teach brush techniques but also analyze the aesthetic qualities of regular script (its 'rules and standards' and the 'vigorous and robust' style of Wei stele inscriptions). In 'Calligraphy Creation' courses, students should be guided to focus on three key aspects: 'line expression,' 'compositional structure,' and 'emotional conveyance.' They should be encouraged to infuse their artistic creations with personal aesthetic appreciation and cultural insights, rather than merely pursuing technical demonstration.

6.2Innovative teaching methods

6.2.1Activating aesthetic perception

Implement collaborative teaching programs across school, museum, and inter-institutional settings: Museum/Gallery Joint Programs — By partnering with local museums and art galleries, we organize regular student visits to masterpieces of ancient calligraphy (e.g., the Beijing Palace Museum's "Elegy for My Nephew" copy and Shanghai Museum's "Pingfu Tie"). Through hands-on calligraphy practice, students gain direct experience with the textural lines and ink gradations of these works, thereby appreciating their aesthetic essence.

VR/AR Digital Immersive Teaching: By applying VR/AR technology to create a "Virtual Calligraphy Museum", it recreates the historical setting of Wang Xizhi writing the "Preface to the Orchid Pavilion" and Yan Zhenqing's emotional process while composing the "Elegy for My Nephew". This allows students to "time-travel" through virtual scenes, enhancing their appreciation of calligraphic aesthetics and cultural context.

6.2.2Developing aesthetic judgment

Discussion-based teaching method: Group discussion: In calligraphy appreciation classes, students are divided into groups to discuss the aesthetic style of a specific calligraphy work (such as the 'ugly beauty' characteristics of Su Shi's' Cold Food Festival Poem'). Each group presents their perspectives, which are then summarized by the teacher to foster critical aesthetic thinking.

Online-offline interactive teaching: The "Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Online Platform" is established to upload high-definition images of ancient calligraphy works and expert appreciation videos. Students can share their appreciation insights online, while teachers and peers engage in cross-temporal interactive comments, thereby expanding the scope and depth of aesthetic exchanges.

6.2.3Stimulating aesthetic creativity

Calligraphy Creation Practice Project: Implement "Thematic Calligraphy Creation Projects" (e.g., "Traditional Culture Theme Creation" or "Red Culture Theme Creation") to guide students through the creative process from topic selection and conceptualization to final artwork completion. Throughout this process, teachers

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provide aesthetic guidance to help students transform their artistic vision into tangible works.

Cross-disciplinary Integration Experience Program: Collaborating with the School of Design and the School of Music, we implement interdisciplinary projects such as 'Calligraphy + Design' and 'Calligraphy + Music'. For instance, students create calligraphic works for classical music or incorporate calligraphic elements into modern posters. These cross-disciplinary practices inspire students' aesthetic creativity.

6.3Improving the quality of teachers: building a team of teachers with both professional and aesthetic education

6.3.1Strengthening the aesthetic education training for teachers

Systematic Training: Teachers are regularly organized to attend the "Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Theory Seminar", where experts in aesthetics and veteran calligraphy educators are invited to deliver lectures, thereby enhancing their theoretical knowledge and teaching skills in aesthetic education.

Academic Forum: The "Seminar on Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Teaching" was held to build an academic forum platform for communication, encouraging teachers to share their experiences in aesthetic education teaching, discuss existing problems in teaching, and update teaching concepts.

6.3.2Forming an interdisciplinary faculty team

By leveraging the faculty resources within universities, we establish an interdisciplinary teaching team comprising calligraphy specialists, aesthetics educators, literature instructors, and design professionals. Through collaborative course design (e.g., joint development of "Calligraphy and Aesthetics") and instructional implementation (e.g., cross-disciplinary student mentoring programs), this approach not only provides students with interdisciplinary aesthetic education through the dynamic interaction of multiple disciplines, but also enhances teachers' own interdisciplinary competencies.

7.The Guarantee Mechanism for the Implementation of Aesthetic Education Function in Higher Calligraphy Education

7.1Policy and Institutional Guarantees

7.1.1Implementing the national aesthetic education policy and formulating school-level implementation rules

In accordance with national guidelines such as the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era" and leveraging the school's calligraphy program strengths, universities should formulate the "Implementation Rules for Aesthetic Education in Calligraphy Programs." These rules should clearly define tasks, objectives, and implementation responsibilities for aesthetic education, including specifying the minimum required proportion of class hours dedicated to aesthetic education and the weight of aesthetic education outcomes in award evaluations. Furthermore, aesthetic education should be incorporated into the annual performance assessment criteria for calligraphy programs, with

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merit-based awards and commendations for outstanding aesthetic education practices to boost faculty motivation.

7.1.2Establish a coordination mechanism for aesthetic education

A coordination group for aesthetic education has been established, primarily composed of representatives from the school's academic affairs office, the School of Arts, and the calligraphy program. This group coordinates and advances aesthetic education initiatives in the calligraphy discipline, addressing challenges such as insufficient faculty resources leading to limited course materials and difficulties in coordinating cross-disciplinary teaching staff. Regular meetings are held to strengthen communication with other departments (e.g., the School of Liberal Arts and the School of Design), providing institutional support for interdisciplinary collaborative teaching in aesthetic education.

7.2Resource and Funding Guarantees

7.2.1Enriching teaching resources

Hardware infrastructure development: Establish a "Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Lab" with high-definition projectors, replicas of ancient calligraphy steles, and VR equipment to support immersive learning. Additionally, create a "Calligraphy Exhibition Hall" to showcase students' outstanding works and ancient calligraphy reproductions, fostering a vibrant aesthetic environment.

The construction of software resources includes organizing teachers to compile characteristic teaching materials such as Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Tutorial and Calligraphy Aesthetics Case Collection, building online aesthetic education courses (e.g. Calligraphy Aesthetics Appreciation MOOC), accumulating teaching resources, and striving for museum and art gallery resources to obtain high-definition digital resources of ancient calligraphy works to enrich teaching materials.

7.2.2Increase funding

At the university level, a "Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Special Fund" has been established, accounting for approximately 25% of the annual budget for calligraphy programs. This fund is dedicated to funding aesthetic education courses, purchasing educational materials and VR equipment for platforms, providing teacher training in aesthetic education, and supporting student projects such as exhibitions and cultural and creative works. Additionally, the initiative encourages social resources to participate by collaborating with cultural enterprises and art foundations to establish a "Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Scholarship," which motivates students to engage in practical aesthetic education activities.

7.3Social Collaborative Safeguards

7.3.1Strengthen cooperation with cultural institutions

Universities can collaborate deeply with cultural institutions such as museums, art galleries, and cultural centers to implement "museum-school partnerships" in aesthetic education. For instance, they may co-create "Ancient Calligraphy Authenticity Appreciation Courses" with museums, inviting museum experts to teach in

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schools. Alternatively, they could partner with cultural centers to launch "Community Calligraphy Aesthetic Education" programs, organizing students to engage in calligraphy instruction and exhibitions within local communities. This approach integrates students' aesthetic experiences into the curriculum, fostering the socialization of calligraphy education.

7.3.2Building a social exhibition platform

To provide college students with a platform for social expression, initiatives such as organizing their participation in the National Calligraphy Aesthetic Education Competition are implemented. Activities like the "College Students 'Calligraphy Aesthetic Exhibition" and "Collaborative Online Calligraphy Aesthetic Column with Mainstream Media" are conducted to gain social recognition for students' aesthetic creations, thereby enhancing their confidence in artistic expression and innovative aspirations. Simultaneously, these platforms highlight the significance of calligraphy aesthetic education to the public, fostering broader societal awareness of its value.

8.Conclusion and Prospect

This paper, grounded in theoretical interpretation and practical observation, identifies three core functions of aesthetic education in higher calligraphy education: cultivating aesthetic perception, developing aesthetic judgment, and stimulating creative expression, while fostering cultural identity and personality development. Through analyzing the current status of aesthetic education in higher calligraphy programs, the study highlights four major challenges: imbalanced curriculum functions, monotonous teaching methods, inadequate evaluation systems, and insufficient teacher competency. To address these issues, four implementation strategies are proposed: optimizing curriculum frameworks, innovating teaching methodologies, improving evaluation systems, and enhancing faculty qualifications. The paper further outlines three support mechanisms—policy frameworks, resource allocation, and social collaboration—to ensure effective implementation. This comprehensive research follows a structured approach: "function positioning → problem analysis → strategy formulation → support implementation." Ultimately, only by integrating aesthetic education into higher calligraphy programs can we transition from technical instruction to a high-quality educational model that "cultivates through beauty and nurtures through culture," thereby fostering more versatile calligraphy professionals with specialized skills, refined character, and aesthetic sensibilities.

In the historical context of the deepening implementation of the cultural confidence strategy and the vigorous development of aesthetic education, higher calligraphy education will undoubtedly gain a brand-new and vast realm. In the future, higher calligraphy education can continue to explore innovative digital aesthetic education, such as creating an "intelligent diagnostic system for calligraphy aesthetics" through artificial intelligence to provide personalized aesthetic guidance. International exchanges in aesthetic education will deepen through more initiatives like the "International Forum on Calligraphy Aesthetic Education" and "Sino-Foreign Calligraphy Joint Exhibitions," allowing the world to understand the value of China's calligraphy aesthetic education. This will enable China's excellent traditional culture to ride the fast train of cultural dissemination under the Belt and Road Initiative and "fly" across the globe. Expanding aesthetic education to serve broader goals, integrating it with rural revitalization and community cultural development, will maximize its societal

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impact. We firmly believe that through continuous reflection and experimentation, higher calligraphy education will become a crucial force in the new era of aesthetic education, contributing more to cultivating new generations capable of shouldering the mission of national rejuvenation.

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