



FIC 2010 — Arts Background

Arts Education

“Arts education offers students the opportunity to envision, set goals, determine a method to reach a goal and try it out, identify alternatives, evaluate, revise, solve problems, imagine, work collaboratively, and apply self-discipline. As they study and create in the arts, students use the potential of the human mind to its full and unique capacity. The visual and performing arts are a vital part of a well-rounded educational program for all students.” --Excerpted from the Introduction of the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards

Currently, California requires the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 12 to include instruction in certain prescribed areas of study, including visual or performing arts, which would be instruction in the subjects of art and music aimed at the development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression. In order to graduate from high school, students must take either one course in foreign language or one course in visual or performing arts.

In 2002, the State Board of Education adopted content standards for visual and performing arts that provide comprehensive guidance for schools to prepare curricula in the four disciplines of dance, music, theatre and visual arts. The standards represent consensus on the skills, knowledge and abilities in the four disciplines that all students should be able to master at each grade level, prekindergarten through grade twelve.

Evidence is growing which shows that the arts are critically important to education and learning. According to the College Entrance Examination Board, students of the arts outperform non-arts educated peers on measures of academic ability. In 1995, the Scholastic Assessment Test scores of students who studied the arts for more than four years were 59 points higher on the verbal test and 44 points higher on the math test than the scores of students with no education in the arts.

It has also been shown that strong cognitive links exist between the arts and science. Such cognitive reasoning includes the ability to explore new concepts and associations, to understand abstract ideas, to build models and recognize patterns. Further, arts education also contributes to student learning and achievement by enhancing motivation, self-discipline, and understanding of others, appreciation of diversity, a positive school climate, and preparation for the world of work.

Finally, jobs and careers that involve artistic expression are becoming increasingly important. According to the office of Governor Schwarzenegger, the entertainment industry alone contributes more than twenty-five billion dollars (\$25,000,000,000) to the state’s economy and generates more than six hundred million dollars (\$600,000,000) in state tax revenues.

CSBA supports comprehensive and sequential music, visual and performing arts programs throughout all grade levels.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

Since its inception, the NEA has provided leadership to create and sustain an agenda for arts education:

- **NEA Direct Grants:** The NEA Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth category provides direct grants for standards-based arts education programs
- **Partnerships:** The NEA collaborates in federal, state, and public-private partnerships. For instance, the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention provides additional support to the NEA national initiative "Shakespeare in American Communities" to provide disadvantaged youth with high-quality theater education opportunities and access to professional productions of works by Shakespeare
- **NEA Arts Education Leadership Initiatives:** The NEA Education Leaders Institute convenes key decision makers to enhance the quality and quantity of arts education at the state level
- **Arts Education Research:** NEA research on arts education includes "Improving the Assessment of Student Learning in the Arts," the first nationwide effort to examine current practices in the assessment of K-12 student learning in the arts both in and out of the classroom.

The NEA has produced landmark research reports that have provoked national debate on issues surrounding the arts and arts education. *Reading at Risk* (2004) and *To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence* (2007) document declines in reading rates among children and adults. Other research, including *Artists in the Workforce: 1990-2005* (2008) and *All America's a Stage* (2008), looks at employment and economic trends in the arts industry. Additional studies on creativity and aging, civic engagement, and arts education highlight the social impact of the arts in America.

National Endowment for the Arts Fact Sheet: Learning in the Arts

Since its inception in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has not only maintained support for arts education programs in and outside of school, but has provided leadership in the federal sector and among arts, education, business, and government organizations to develop and sustain an agenda for arts education improvement. The agency has led efforts to make the arts a part of the core education for all pre-K through grade 12 students and to increase opportunities outside of school settings for other arts learning. In 2002, the Arts Endowment consolidated its various arts education grant programs, leadership initiatives, and partnership efforts into a focused Arts Learning initiative.

Arts Learning Direct Grants

Arts Learning grants are awarded competitively to nonprofit organizations, including arts and cultural organizations, school districts, youth service, and other community groups for specific projects. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2003, grant applicants will focus their projects in one or more of the following areas:

Early Childhood: Projects provide arts learning activities for young children who are not yet of kindergarten age, and professional development for teachers, artists, and others who work with them.

School-based: Projects involve children and youth in grades K-12 and are directly connected to the curriculum and instructional program of schools.

Community-based: Projects occur outside of the regular school day and year in a variety of settings, offered by arts organizations or other community-based, non-arts organizations in partnership with artists and arts groups.

Federal Partnerships

The Arts Endowment partners with other federal agencies and advisory committees on projects related to arts learning. By working with these federal entities, the Arts Endowment furthers the impact of federal dollars.

President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities: Since its beginning in 1998, the Coming Up Taller Awards program has annually honored ten outstanding arts and humanities programs that provide underserved young people with learning opportunities and chances to explore their creativity.

Department of Education: The Arts Endowment partnerships with the U.S. Department of Education include co-funding programs and providing advice and coordination for other programs for which the department provides sole funding. Joint initiatives include the Arts Education Partnership, a consortium of more than 140 national organizations committed to promoting arts education in elementary and secondary schools. Department grant programs coordinated with the Arts Endowment includes the Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Program, Cultural Partnerships for At-risk Children and Youth Program, Media Literary Initiative, and the Professional Development for Music Educators Program.

Department of Justice: The Arts Endowment has partnered with the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention on several projects to bring the arts to underserved youth including the Arts Programs for Youth in Detention and Corrections, Partnership for Conflict Resolution Education in the Arts, and the Youth Arts Development Project.

Department of Housing and Urban Development: Creative Communities represents a partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Arts Endowment, and the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts to foster the development of arts instruction for children and youth living in public housing.

State Partnerships

The Arts Endowment awards funds through Partnership Agreements with state arts agencies in part to foster collaboration among the education, arts and private sectors in each state and U.S. jurisdiction. Forty percent of the Arts Endowment's annual grantmaking funds are distributed through these Partnership Agreements, of which one component focuses on arts education. In Fiscal Year 2002, the arts education component of the state partnership agreements totaled \$2.88 million.

Public/Private Partnerships

The Arts Endowment regularly works directly with nonprofit organizations through cooperative agreements to implement specific arts learning projects. For example, Arts for Learning (A4L) is an innovative initiative based on the idea that all students can meet - and exceed - learning goals while at the same time develop a lifelong affinity for the arts. Supported through an Arts Endowment Challenge America Leadership Initiative and led by Young Audiences, Inc., the initiative presents Web-based information from a range of arts disciplines and organizations to teachers and others who can integrate the arts into the curricula.

Research

In the 1980s, the Arts Endowment focused attention on arts education research, collecting and reporting statistical information on the conditions of arts teaching and learning in the nation's schools. One of the most important reports on the condition of arts education was the congressionally mandated *Toward Civilization*, published in 1988 that revealed the nationwide lack of basic arts education in American schools. The recommendations from this report have provided a road map in arts education research for not only the Arts Endowment, but for the U.S. Department of Education and other partners in the public and private sectors. Other arts education publications include:

Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium (1995) shows the benefits of making arts education an integral part of the school curriculum.

Effects of Arts Education on Participation in the Arts (1995) examines the effects of arts education in determining subsequent arts participation.

Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development (2002) published by the Arts Education Partnership with support from the Arts Endowment details the relationship between learning in dance, drama, music, multiple arts, and visual arts, and the development of fundamental academic and social skills.

Arts Education in American Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1999-2000 (2002) is the latest report on the state of arts teaching and learning administered by the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.