

ARTS EDUCATION FUNDING AND RESEARCH THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IMPROVING ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to:

- **Appropriate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY 2010 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.**
- **Require the U.S. Department of Education to produce timely and comprehensive reports on the status of all arts education disciplines in America’s public schools, when implementing future *Fast Response Statistical Surveys* and *National Assessment of Educational Progress* assessments.**

Arts in Education Annual Appropriations, FY 2001 to present (in millions of dollars)

Fiscal Year	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09
Appropriation	30.0	33.8	35.1	35.6	35.3	35.3	37.3	38.1*

Note: Figures above are not adjusted for inflation. Source: U.S. Department of Education *Pending Congressional approval of Omnibus appropriations bill

TALKING POINTS

- ***The U.S. Department of Education must include the arts in all research and data collection regarding the “core academic subjects.”*** President Obama’s arts platform statement included support for arts education, stating that: “In addition to giving our children the science and math skills they need to compete in the new global context, we should also encourage the ability to think creatively that comes from a meaningful arts education.” The platform statement also noted that many schools are cutting instructional time for art and music. The following actions by the Department of Education and the Obama administration can improve arts learning opportunities:
 - ***Retain the arts in the definition of the core academic subjects of learning and ensure equitable access to arts education when re-authorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.***
 - ***Provide administration support for arts education*** with policy action and public statements confirming the value of the arts and arts education, with particular emphasis on the benefits for students from disadvantaged circumstances and those needing remedial instruction.
 - ***Expand public/private partnerships between schools and arts organizations*** by increasing resources for the Arts in Education funding and model grant programs, which cultivate innovation in the history of arts education and spur increased foundation and corporation support.
 - ***Create and fund a corps of young artists*** trained to work in low-income schools and their communities, and encourage research that confirms the value of initiatives that link arts across the curriculum.

- ***With increased funding, the Arts in Education programs will support newly emerging models in high-poverty schools that improve arts learning, and findings from model projects may be more widely disseminated.*** The Model Development and Dissemination program has funded a total of 121 projects, identifying models of excellence in arts education that impact schools and communities nationwide. Since 2004, the Professional Development grants program has supported 52 projects that serve as national models for effective arts education professional development. Increased Arts in Education funds will provide unique federal support for:
 - ***Model Development and Dissemination projects*** that strengthen student learning through standards-based arts education and integration of arts instruction into other subject areas.
 - ***Professional Development for Arts Educators grants***, identifying innovative models that improve instruction for arts specialists and classroom teachers.

(continued)

TALKING POINTS (CONTINUED)

- *Evaluation and National Dissemination*, multiplying the impact of this federal investment. State and local education agencies can adapt these models to provide rigorous arts instruction for all students.
- *The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts'* ongoing national arts education initiatives, and the efforts of *VSA arts*, to ensure the participation of people with disabilities in arts programming in schools and communities.
- ***Arts in Education programs have continued to create model initiatives and partnerships that are significantly impacting large numbers of students and educators.***
 - Supported by a Model Development grant, the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) launched a program in 2008 designed to improve the academic achievement of 3,000 low-income, English Language Learner (ELA), third- and fourth-grade students in North San Diego County. Partnering with other area arts and professional organizations, SDCOE is training teachers from 70 eligible schools to increase educator proficiency using visual arts and theater in statewide ELA standards.
 - A 2008 Professional Development grant is supporting the formation of a new fine arts partnership between the Wichita Public Schools and Wichita State University. The partnership will provide arts educators staff development focused on standards-based music instruction for students in Wichita public schools with 50 percent poverty or more. Ninety-one teachers serving an estimated 23,000 students are expected to become active participants.
- ***Funding to VSA arts and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts supports national networks that ensure the inclusion of students with disabilities and other underserved populations.*** These networks provide for the expansion of model programs in all 50 states involving over 16 million students. National initiatives include: educational programs from early childhood through grade 12, strategies to include students with disabilities, professional development for teachers and administrators, and documentation of the social and academic progress from learning in an arts-rich environment.
- ***The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the nation's "report card," was administered in music and visual arts in 2008, but not in dance and theater.*** The report provides critical information about the arts skills and knowledge of our nation's students. Future NAEP arts tests should include comprehensive information about the status and condition of music, visual arts, dance, and theater education.

BACKGROUND

Congress has a record of supporting the Arts in Education programs, despite their elimination in the past administration budget proposal. In 2007, for the first time in seven years, the House approved arts funding in its education appropriations bill. With continued strong support from the Senate, Congress has funded the Arts in Education programs each year, currently providing \$37.3 million.

There is, however, a pressing need for more federal policy beyond simply declaring the arts as a core academic subject. In order for visual arts, music, theater, and dance education to be an essential subject of learning, students, educators, and the public need Congress to improve national data collection and research in arts education, make a substantial investment in professional development opportunities for arts educators, and require states to issue annual reports on the status condition of all arts and other core academic subjects.

Secondly, arts education needs to be deployed as an economic development strategy. According to a 2007 Conference Board report, there is overwhelming support from school superintendents (98 percent) and corporate leaders (96 percent) that creativity is of increasing importance to the U.S workforce. Further, a Lake Research poll of 1,000 likely voters revealed that 83 percent of voters believe that a greater emphasis on the arts, along with math, science, and technology would better prepare students for the demands of the 21st century. Therefore, more federal initiatives are needed to encourage the inclusion of arts learning in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), as well as a full range of projects that advance workforce development, such as Department of Labor programs, that provide training in the arts-strong skills of creativity and imagination.