

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 2011 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 Assessments of Educational Progress*.

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

Fiscal Year	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10
Appropriation	30.0	33.8	35.1	35.6	35.3	35.3	37.3	38.1	40

Note: Figures above are not adjusted for inflation. Source: U.S. Department of Education

TALKING POINTS

- ***As reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is in progress, immediate action by the U.S. Department of Education can improve arts learning opportunities.*** The following actions by the U.S. Department of Education and the Obama administration can improve arts learning opportunities:
 - ***Provide leadership in support of arts education*** through 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.
 - ***Maximize the impact of the direct federal investment in arts education*** by disseminating information about the outcomes of projects funded by the Arts in Education grant programs, which cultivate innovation in arts education and spur increased local support for equitable access to arts education.
 - ***Include the arts in all research and data collection undertaken by the U.S. Department of Education regarding "core academic subjects."***
- ***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 125 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.
 - ***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 more than 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.
 - ***Timely and comprehensive national data collection regarding arts education is long overdue.*** When the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the nation’s “report card,” was administered in 2008, it only partially measured learning in music and the visual arts and omitted dance and theater. The report has the potential to provide 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. Likewise, more than 10 years have passed since the U.S. Department of Education has implemented a Fast Response survey regarding the status of arts education in our nation’s schools. While a survey is currently being implemented, such data should be gathered more frequently.

BACKGROUND

As Congress and the administration work towards rewriting the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), support for arts education can be strengthened by immediate action taken through the annual appropriations process and by leaders at the U.S. Department of Education.

The president’s budget request proposes consolidating the Arts in Education program into a new, broader funding pool entitled “Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education.” The budget proposal does not indicate exactly how or how much of this funding would be available to support arts education, as the fund would also support other subjects of learning. (The proposal does indicate that previously awarded Arts in Education competitive grant projects would continue to receive funding to support the remaining years of their programs.) Congress has a record of supporting the Arts in Education programs, despite their elimination in the Bush administration’s budget proposal. Congress has funded the Arts in Education programs each year, currently providing \$40 million. Arts advocates seek to keep the Arts in Education programs intact for FY 2011 and recommend that any major restructuring of the Arts in Education programs be considered in the context of ESEA reauthorization.

According the 2007 Conference Board report “Ready to Innovate,” 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. Federal support is 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.