

Milestones in the History of the Arts Education Partnership

- 1988:** The National Endowment for the Arts issues its Congressionally-mandated report, *Toward Civilization*, that finds the arts in jeopardy in America's schools and makes a series of recommendations for improving arts teaching and learning.
- 1989:** President George Bush and the nation's Governors agree on a set of National Education Goals, but exclude the arts. Advocates unite in a nationwide campaign to have the arts added to the goals.
- 1991:** The National Assessment Governing Board approves inclusion of the arts in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. A national assessment is scheduled in 1996.
- 1992:** U.S. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander announces an "America 2000 Arts Education Partnership" to act on the recommendations in *Toward Civilization*. He also encourages the formation of the Arts Education Partnership Working Group, led by the Kennedy Center's then chairman, James Wolfensohn, and the Getty Trust's then president, Harold Williams. The Group issues the report, *The Power of the Arts to Transform Education*.
- 1994:** The Clinton Administration adds the arts to the core subjects in the National Education Goals as part of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act passed by Congress and signed by the President. The Consortium of National Arts Education Associations directed by the Music Educators National Conference publishes *The National Arts Education Standards*. *The Arts Education Assessment Framework* for the National Assessment of Educational Progress is published by the National Assessment Governing Board. The *Framework* is the outcome of the National Assessment Consensus Project, coordinated by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Following a conference co-sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education, the report, *Arts Education Research Agenda for the Future*, is jointly released to stimulate arts education research.
- 1994:** U. S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley and NEA Chairman Jane Alexander convene more than 100 national organizations in a Goals 2000 Arts Education Planning Process to address three objectives: to affirm the arts as fundamental to quality education and reform, to articulate how the arts can contribute to achieving the National Education Goals, and to identify how individuals and organizations could work together to assure that the arts become a central component of state and local education reform plans. Participants produce a plan: *The Arts and Education: Partners in Achieving our National Education Goals*. They recommend "the development of an ongoing partnership among the participating organizations." The U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Arts agree to support the development of this "Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership."
- 1995:** The U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Arts in June enter into a cooperative agreement with the Council of Chief State School Officers and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies to provide administrative support for the Partnership. The Partnership begins operations and holds its first meeting of participating organizations in October, 1995. National forums on critical issues and trends in education and the arts become a central Partnership activity.
- 1998** The Partnership conducts a national teleconference, *Arts Literacy for a Changing America* in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education to discuss the findings of the 1997 arts assessment conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress
- 1999:** The Partnership is renamed the "Arts Education Partnership."

The Partnership releases the first of its seminal reports and research publications *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts that Value Arts Education* at an event in a New York City public school with Hillary Clinton and Jane Pauley. The report offers case studies and profiles of 91 school districts across the country that offer arts education throughout the K-12 levels.

The Partnership releases *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* that compiles seven major studies that provide evidence of the of enhanced learning and achievement when students are involved in a variety of arts experiences.

2000:The Partnership Steering Committee adopts a new strategic plan for 2000-2003. It sets a precedence for future activity as it establishes a series of goals and outcomes, priorities for collective action and guidance as to how partners can play an active role in the Partnership.

2002:The Bush Administration and Congress enact the “No Child Left Behind Act,” and include the arts as a core academic subject. The U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Arts continue their commitment to the Partnership through a cooperative agreement with the Council of Chief State School Officers and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

The Partnership and its partnering organizations publish *No Subject Left Behind*, an analysis of the opportunities to support arts education in NCLB. The guide is updated annually with appropriation figures and featured on AEP’s web site.

The Partnership releases *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*, a groundbreaking compendium of research, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Many major news outlets featured stories on the research including USA Today.

2003: The Partnership releases its Strategic Plan for 2004-06 which identifies priorities for collective action in public support, standards and assessment, pursuing available data, securing federal and state funds, identifying and disseminating research, increasing partnerships, targeting higher education and national education associations, and focusing on promising practices in professional development.

2005: The Partnership celebrates its 10th anniversary in October in Charleston, SC.

The Partnership releases *Third Space: When Learning Matters*, a book discussing the findings of a three year study of the role of the arts in transforming high poverty schools, described by commentators as “an alternative vision of both the process and result of school reform.”

2006: The Partnership Steering Committee of more than forty organizations develops the AEP Strategic Plan: 2007-2009 and the AEP Strategic Communications Plan: 2006-2008. The plans adopt assumptions that the arts can play a crucial role in the public concern for a more comprehensive educational experience for all students that prepares them for success and contributions in complex, diverse, and technologically driven global societies and economies.

The Partnership in cooperation with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies releases *Critical Evidence: How the ARTS Benefit Student Achievement*, a summary of its prior research findings, placing them in the context of current policy debates and public attitudes.

The Partnership publishes *From Anecdote to Evidence: Assessing the Status and Condition of Arts Education at the State Level*, based on the principles and practices of five states where data collection has influenced state arts education policy and funding.