

Supporting Structures

For Arts Education in the 21st Century

Arts education has immense power to help students attain 21st Century Skills. But arts education, like education in all the disciplines, is not a theory to be considered but a reality to be provided in schools across America. The reality of an arts program that truly delivers to our students will include the following supporting structures.

21st Century Standards:

National content and achievement standards for the arts have been in place since 1994 and influenced curriculum development and implementation in every state. The standards focus on appropriate technologies, provide a foundation for student assessment, and point beyond mere exposure to in-depth learning in and through the living, vibrant, and valuable art disciplines involved. In addition, the professional associations for the disciplines have developed “Opportunity-to-Learn Standards” to explore the implications of the content and achievement standards in terms of facilities, equipment, staffing, professional development, and scheduling.

The National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts (Reston, VA: MENC, 1994). Developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, *The National Standards for Arts Education* outlines basic arts learning outcomes integral to the comprehensive K-12 education of every American student. Content and achievement standards for dance, music, theatre, and visual arts; grades K-12.

More about the Standards in Music:

From MENC: The National Association for Music Education (www.menc.org)

- **National Standards for Music Education.** Available online.
- ***Performance Standards for Music: Strategies and Benchmarks for Assessing Progress Toward the National Standards, Grades PreK–12*** (Reston, VA: MENC 1996). Provides help to individuals and organizations in assessing the extent to which students are meeting the National Standards for Music Education. For each achievement standard in the National Standards, this book includes a sample assessment strategy with a description of student response at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels.
- ***Opportunity-To-Learn Standards for Music Instruction: Grades PreK–12*** (Reston, VA: MENC, 1994). Information on what schools should provide in terms of curriculum and scheduling, staffing, materials and equipment, and facilities. Available online.
- ***Opportunity-To-Learn Standards for Music Technology (1999)***. Available online.
- ***The School Music Program: A New Vision*** (Reston, VA: MENC, 1994). The K-12 National Standards, Pre-K Standards, and what they mean to music educators. Available online.

More about the Standards in Dance:

From the National Dance Association (NDA) (www.nda.org)

- ***Implementing the National Dance Education Standards (2010, published in cooperation with Human Kinetics)***. Benchmarks, lesson plans, and assessments, is written to complement NDA’s National Dance Standards and serves as a framework for developing state educational requirements and local curriculum.
- ***Estándares Nacionales para la Educación en la Danza (2010)***. Spanish edition of the classic National Dance Standards; translated by Maria Carolina Vélez Gaitá and Iliana Aljure (Colegio Rochester en Bogotá, Colombia)
- ***Opportunity-to-Learn Standards in Dance Education (1997)***. Information on what schools should provide in terms of curriculum and scheduling, staffing, materials and equipment, and facilities.

From the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) (www.ndeo.org)

- ***Standards for a K-12 Model Program: Opportunities to learn in Dance Arts Education.*** Minimum criteria expected of model dance programs in K-12 schools.
- ***Standards for Dance in Early Childhood.*** Outline what children ages birth-5 years should be able to know and do in dance.
- ***Standards Learning and Teaching Dance in Arts: Ages 5-18.*** Outline what students at the benchmark years of 4th, 8th, and 12th grade should be able to know and do in dance.

More about the Standards in Visual Arts:

From the National Art Education Association (NAEA) (www.arteducators.org)

- ***The National Visual Arts Standards*** (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1994). Available online.
- ***Purposes, Principles, and Standards for School Art Programs*** (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1999; under revision in 2010).

More about the Standards in Theatre:

From the Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) (www.edta.org) and the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (www.aate.com)

- ***The National Standards for Theatre Education*** (1994). Available online (www.aate.com).
- “**Creating Standards and Assessment,**” *Teaching Theatre*, Vol. 4, no. 3 (1993).
- “**Standards for Reform,**” *Teaching Theatre*, Vol. 5, no. 4 (1994).
- “**Using the Standards to Improve Theatre Programs,**” *Teaching Theatre*, Vol. 9, no. 4 (1998).

Assessment:

On a national scale, the practicality of large-scale assessment in arts education was demonstrated by the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress in the Arts, which provided assessment tasks in performing, creating, and responding for each of the four art disciplines discussed in the National Standards for Arts Education. On a district and state level, a handful of localities have adopted mandatory or suggested evaluation instruments for use by all arts teachers within a given area. In classrooms across America, teachers in the arts have long been in the forefront of effective, authentic assessment of student progress through strategies including portfolios, projects, and evaluation of performances. In each of these cases, arts education evaluations consistently involve strong feedback to students so that they fully understand and are fully invested in the process of evaluation.

Envisioning Arts Assessment (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership and the Council of Chief State School Officers, 2003). A guide to help design large-scale arts assessment decisions, this publication also provides informational support and activities to be used as both a practical tool and reference. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Assessing Expressive Learning: A Practical Guide for Teacher-Directed Authentic Assessment in K-12 Visual Arts Education, by Charles M. Dorn, Stanley S. Madeja, and F. Robert Sabol (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004). A practical guide for teacher-directed authentic assessment in K-12 visual arts education, *Assessing Expressive Learning* is the only book in the art education field to propose and support a research-supported teacher-directed authentic assessment model for evaluating K-12 studio art, and to offer practical information on how to implement the model. This practical text for developing visual arts assessment is based on and supported by the results of a year-long research effort involving 70 art educators and 1,500 students in 12 school districts in Florida, Indiana, and Illinois. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate that creative artwork by K-12 students can be empirically assessed using quantitative measures that are consistent with the philosophical assumptions of authentic learning and with the means and ends of art, and that these measures can reliably assess student art growth. Use as a text for undergraduate and graduate classes in assessment, and highly relevant for college professors, researchers, and school district personnel involved in the education and supervision of art educators, and researchers interested in performance measurement. Available from National Art Education Association (www.arteducators.org).

Curriculum and Instruction:

Arts educators work with students at all developmental levels in ways that lead to mastery of key 21st Century Learning Skills and enhancement of learning in other core academic subjects. Standards-based teaching is well embedded in the practice of arts teachers, who routinely work with topics and techniques that are both rigorous in terms of the longstanding traditions of the arts and relevant to the students' needs and experiences. Delivery systems, and systems for students' exploration of the arts, increasingly involve the use of current digital technologies – of which arts teachers are often among the first and most effective users.

Teaching Theatre, Volumes 1-20 (1989-2009). Published by the Educational Theatre Association, the *Teaching Theatre* journal regularly publishes middle and secondary standards-based instructional articles on a wide variety of theatre curriculum skills and topics. Many are archived on EdTA's website (www.edta.org).

Arts Integration Frameworks, Research & Practice: A Literature Review, by Gail Burnaford with Sally Brown, James Doherty, and H. James McLaughlin (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, 2007). An essential resource for anyone involved in the research, theories, or methods and practices of arts integration. It covers what has been written between 1995 and 2007 in the U.S. and abroad and includes an historical overview, definitions and theoretical frameworks for arts integration, research and evaluation studies, as well as methods and practices for each of the arts forms. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Creating Quality Integrated and Interdisciplinary Arts Programs: Report of the Arts Education Partnership National Forum (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, 2003). Offers some reflection on arts integration while examining a diverse group of partnerships and a set of new important tools to aid efforts in improving arts teaching and learning across the classroom. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

The Art of Collaboration: Promising Practices for Integrating the Arts and School Reform, by Andrew L. Nelson (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, 2008). Describes promising practices for building community partnerships that integrate the arts into urban education systems. The publication, the result of a roundtable conversation among the directors of eight of the demonstration sites participating in The Ford Foundation's Integrating the Arts and Education Reform Initiative, details the sites' early strategies and successes in the areas of organizational infrastructure; partnership development; integrated arts education; and communications and advocacy. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Learning in a Visual Age: The Critical Importance of Visual Arts Education (Reston, VA: National Art Education Association, 2009). White paper about what high-quality arts education provides, how high-quality arts education can prepare students for the future, what high-quality arts education looks like, how to infuse the arts into learning environments, and ensuring excellent visual arts education for every student. Available online (www.arteducators.org).

Professional Development:

Arts educators must be, and generally are, individuals with considerable expertise in their art forms and in the issues of child development, communication, and evaluation so essential to successful educational programs. Ongoing development in teaching the art forms is typically available through professional associations and other venues (offering both professional development conferences and ongoing mentoring opportunities), but time and funding for such development can be as constrained for the arts as it is for other disciplines. The educators' professional effectiveness is often assessed in part by means of widespread and highly developed systems of performance adjudication and juried evaluation of the student work produced within individual school programs. The evaluation data from these events becomes useful where the school district has on staff a curriculum specialist qualified to observe teaching behaviors and collaborate with teachers on refinements to their planning and execution of arts education programs.

Professional Teaching Standards for Dance Art (Silver Spring, MD: National Dance Education Organization). Criteria expected of accomplished dance educators. Available through NDEO (www.ndeo.org).

Standards for Art Teacher Preparation (Reston, VA: National Art Education Association, 2009). Represents the characteristics that high-quality programs for preparing arts educators should possess to ensure that all art educators are capable of providing excellent art instruction for all students. It includes the content and pedagogical practices of the preparation programs as well as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the faculty in such programs. In addition, the Standards for Art Teacher Preparation are inclusive of those of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Available online (www.arteducators.org).

Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators (Reston, VA: National Art Education Association, 2009). Represents the knowledge, skills, and attitudes art educators should possess to provide high-quality art instruction for all students. They represent the threshold that all art educators—whether new to the profession or veterans—can pass, and as such can guide and support meaningful instruction and the continued development of arts educators. In addition, the Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators are inclusive of those of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Available online (www.arteducators.org).

Teaching Partnerships: Report of a National Forum on Partnerships Improving Teaching on the Arts (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, 2003). Thirteen exemplary partnerships convened at Lincoln Center, New York, to determine best policies and actions needed to ensure that the arts are being well taught in America's education system. This report examines collaboration between colleges and universities, public education systems at the state and local levels, and arts and cultural organizations. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Creating Capacity: A Framework For Providing Professional Development Opportunities for Teaching Artists, by the National Conversation on Artist Professional Development Training (Washington, DC: John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2001). An Initiative of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, ArtsConnection, Kansas City Young Audiences, the Kentucky Center for the Arts, Lincoln Center Institute, the Music Center Education Division, the Perpich Center for Arts Education, Urban Gateways: Center for Arts Education, and the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. Available online (www.kennedy-center.org).

Learning Environments:

The quality of learning environments in the arts varies considerably across the nation. With regard to physical facilities, equipment, and access to technology, lack of appropriate resources can indeed hamper the capability of arts education to support the teaching and learning of 21st Century Skills. Of particular concern in the field of arts education is the sensitivity of arts education programs to the vagaries of scheduling: first, block, or other flexible scheduling practices are most successful when they are designed to work around large “singleton” classes such as music, dance, or theatre ensembles. Second, the significant ability of the arts to contribute to interdisciplinary learning may be compromised at the elementary level by the common practice of scheduling arts teachers’ time with students to coincide with other teachers’ planning periods. Thoughtful scheduling practices are called for in both cases.

Design Standards for School Arts Facilities (Reston, VA: National Art Education Association, 1994; under revision in 2010). Available online (www.arteducators.org).

Third Space: When Learning Matters, by Lauren M. Stevenson and Richard Deasy (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, 2005). The riveting story of the profound changes in the lives of kids, teachers, and parents in ten economically disadvantaged communities across the country that place their bets on the arts as a way to create great schools. The schools become caring communities where kids—many of whom face challenges of poverty, the need to learn English, and learning difficulties—thrive and succeed and where teachers find new joy and satisfaction in teaching. Available from the Arts Education Partnership (www.aep-arts.org).

“A New Space: The Process of Building a School Theatre,” by Tarin Chaplin, *Teaching Theatre*, Vol. 15, no. 3 (2006). The step-by-step process of building a school theatre, including the work of the building committee, how to determine space and use needs, securing an architect, the role of theatre consultant, budget issues, and more, in a special issue of *Teaching Theatre* journal. Available online from the archives (www.edta.org).

General Research

Arts Education State Policy Database, Arts Education Partnership (www.aep-arts.org).

The 2007-08 database provides state-by-state summaries of state policies and practices on the following eight policy topics:

- Arts education mandate
- Arts education state standards
- Arts education assessment requirements
- Arts requirements for high school graduation
- Arts requirements for college admissions
- Licensure requirements for non-arts teachers
- Licensure requirements for arts teachers
- Continuing education requirements for arts teachers

The database also provides users with links they can follow to get additional information about each state. To learn more about a particular state, users are encouraged to visit the State Department of Education website or contact, where available, the State Department of Education contact person.

Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, 2002). This compendium summarizes and discusses 62 research studies that examine the effects of arts learning on students' social and academic skills. The research studies cover each of the art forms and have been widely used to help make the case that learning in the arts is academic, basic, and comprehensive. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning, edited by Edward B. Fiske (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership and The President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, 1999) Compiles seven major studies that provide new evidence of enhanced learning and achievement when students are involved in a variety of arts experiences. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts that Value Arts Education (Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership and The President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, 1999). Features case studies and profiles of 91 school districts throughout the United States that are recognized for offering arts education throughout their schools. It identifies the critical factors that must be in place to implement and sustain comprehensive arts education and stresses the essential role of community involvement and partnerships. Available online (www.aep-arts.org).

Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: A 12-Year National Study of Education in the Visual and Performing Arts by James S. Catterall (Los Angeles: I-Group Books, 2009). This twelve-year longitudinal study by *Champions of Change* researcher followed 12,000 students from high school age to 26, examining achievement and values development of students deeply involved in the arts during school, versus those with little or no arts engagement, measuring specific levels of achievement in college and pro-social behavior such as volunteerism and political involvement.

Neuroeducation: Learning, Arts, and the Brain, edited by Barbara Rich (Washington, DC: The Dana Foundation, 2009). This detailed report from the 2009 Johns Hopkins University Summit details the findings of The Dana Foundation's Arts and Cognition Consortium—a group of nine investigators at seven universities exploring the relationship of arts training and transference to other cognitive abilities. This text continues the research that was reported in the 2008 publication, *Learning, Arts, and the Brain: The Dana Consortium Report on Arts and Cognition*.

Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education, by Lois Hetland, Ellen Winner, Shirley Veenema, and Kimberly M. Sheridan (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007). This text by Project Zero researchers introduces the studio thinking framework, a strategy that allows researchers to test hypotheses about precisely which kinds of instruction lead to various desired outcomes. *Studio Thinking* analyzes the underlying cognitive and social skills students learn when the arts taught well.