

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, STANDARDS, AND ARTS INTEGRATION

In 1992, a Consortium of National Arts Education Associations published a *Joint Statement on Integration of the Arts with Other Disciplines and with Each Other* that served as a position statement for the American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE), the The National Association for Music Educators (MENC), the National Art Education Association (NAEA), and the National Dance Association (NDA).

While affirming that all students should be provided with sequential and comprehensive instruction in all specific art disciplines and that these programs should be taught by qualified art, music, theatre, and dance teachers, this position statement also noted that “integrated” courses may be “valid and useful when well designed and well taught” (1992). The document offered cautions regarding integrated programs that have little coordination or synthesis, and affirmed that such programs cannot substitute for discrete programs of high quality. *The Joint Statement* does endorse the possible appropriateness of arts instruction as a means of enriching the teaching of other subject matter but

cautions against the exclusive use of the arts for this purpose, to the detriment of arts-specific instruction.

The development of the *Arts Education Assessment Framework* by the National Assessment Governing Board (National Assessment Governing Board, 1997) marked the third time that music and the visual arts had been addressed in a national assessment (in this case, as part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress). The framework team considered a series of questions, including one particularly relevant to this literature review: Should the definition of the arts be cut sharply into four strands (dance, music, theater, and visual arts)? The proposed assessment consists of a series of exercises

for all students in the sample, at least one special study, and a series of background questions. Both processes (creating, performing/interpreting, and responding) and content were considered to be “applied” in combination and “integrated” at various levels.

In 2001, the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, including AATE, MENC, NAEA, and the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO), published *To Move Forward: An Affirmation of Continuing Commitment to Arts Education*. This policy statement commented on the balance of needs for standards-based arts education with respect to the generalist teacher and the arts specialist, as follows:

## 1 THE GENERALIST TEACHER

**A** While many elementary school teachers serve as a general source of instruction in their schools, they should not be relied upon to serve the role of an arts specialist effectively.

**B** Where generalist teachers are serving this role, their preparation needs to involve an understanding of all four of the arts fields. Their training should also include instruction on how to effectively work with arts specialists when those opportunities arise.

## 2 SPECIALIST ARTS TEACHER PREPARATION

**A** Specialist teachers in the four fields are best served by a preparation that involves work with faculty in their arts discipline as well as faculty familiar with teaching methodologies.

**B** Recognize that expansion is necessary in teacher preparation, especially in dance and theatre, if the standards of NSAE are to be met. Arts specialist teachers must work to become more proficient at communicating their art to their fellow faculty. Additionally, the arts specialist teachers must learn to work with other curriculum specialists. (pp. 2-3)

Then, in 2002, the Consortium published a document titled *Authentic Connections: Interdisciplinary Work in the Arts*. The stated purpose of the document was to “assist and support educators in interdisciplinary work and to clarify how the arts can be taught with integrity through the interdisciplinary arts content standards” (p. 3). Despite the intentional use of the term “interdisciplinary,” the Consortium’s work in this document affirmed “meaningful connections, high quality examples from the arts and other disciplines,” and “in-depth learning,” and addressed similar goals associated with the literature regarding arts integration. The definition posed for interdisciplinary education also echoes definitions for current arts integration practice: “Interdisciplinary education enables students to identify and apply authentic connections between two or more disciplines and/or to understand essential concepts that transcend individual disciplines” (p. 3). The *Authentic Connections* publication represents a collective initiative across arts education professional associations to publicly acknowledge the presence of **interdisciplinary** curriculum projects, programs, and curricula in schools. The document affirmed the importance of the national standards in arts disciplines and urged planning and implementation of programs that utilized these standards as norms for practice.

Because this Consortium chose to use the term **interdisciplinary**, arts specialists have used the term for programs and curriculum that could also be labeled **integration**. This is especially true of articles published

in arts association journals and books. We have therefore included some of those references using the term **interdisciplinary** in this review.

Many non-arts professional associations offer standards consistent with curriculum integration designs. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) document notes Standard 4: Knowledge of Mathematical Connections: “Candidates recognize, use, and make connections between and among mathematical ideas and in contexts outside mathematics to build mathematical understanding” (<http://www.nctm.org>). The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Program Standard B includes the following: “The program of study must emphasize student understanding through inquiry. The program of study in science should connect to other school subjects” (<http://www.nsta.org>). The National Council for the Social Studies organizes standards by strands, one of which is culture and diversity. The Standard and Indicator relevant to this review state,

**STANDARD:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity, so that the learner can: **(INDICATOR)** describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture (<http://www.socialstudies.org>).

The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association jointly issued a set of 12 standards, 1 of which pertains to this review. Standard

11 reads: “Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities” (<http://www.ncte.org>).

The most definitive statements with respect to integration come from the National Middle School Association (<http://www.nmsa.org>). The 2005 *National Middle School Association’s Position Statement on Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment* describes three elements of quality curriculum for the middle grades. NMSA supports curriculum for students that is **relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory**. According to the website, an integrative curriculum “focuses on coherent ideas and concepts irrespective of arbitrary subject boundaries and enables students to see connections and real-world applications.” More specifically,

Integrative learning opportunities:

- Engage students in rigorous, in-depth study.
- Address reading, writing, and other fundamental skills within all subject areas.
- Enhance critical thinking, decision-making, and creativity.
- Require students to reflect on their learning experiences.
- Enable students to apply content and skills to their daily lives.
- Cultivate multiple intelligences and students’ individual learning styles.

Since 1995, state and federal budgets have made it possible for districts and state departments of education to develop and implement standards in the arts. To date, every state except for Iowa has adopted standards for the arts. Twenty-seven states have mandated standards for arts education and twenty have set voluntary standards (see Tables 1 and 2 on p. 9).

The practice in schools, however, does not always make scheduling and structural accommodations

for interdisciplinary implementation (Detels, 1999). Instead, as Detels notes, “they assign all responsibility for teaching the arts to single-disciplinary specialists in the various arts disciplines, as if schools commonly have specialists in all four disciplines, and as if students commonly take courses in each of those areas at every level—which is far from the case” (p. 121).

Many disciplinary specialists do see how standards can support cross-disciplinary boundaries while still maintaining instruction within an art form. Rosenbloom (2004) cites music standards 8 and 9 as a rationale for studying high school social studies topics, such as the French Revolution, as an interdisciplinary project in which the music teacher engages students in listening to and analyzing “La Marseillaise.” Music scholar Janet Barrett (2001) further explains:

Interdisciplinary connections can open up possibilities for comprehensive study while preserving the integrity and validity of musical experience.

It is not surprising, then, to find many examples of “relationship standards” in national, state, and local proposals for curricular reform.

The National Standards for Music Education include two versions of this idea: “Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts” (Content Standard 8) and “Understanding music in relation to history and culture” (Content Standard 9). Similar

standards from other disciplines also address music, such as this excerpt from the Curriculum Standards for the Social Studies that applies to the early grades: “Describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in that culture.” These statements remind us that, although educational institutions segment knowledge into separate packages called “subjects,” deep understanding often depends upon the intersections and interactions of the disciplines. (p. 27)

In all four major arts disciplines—visual art, drama, dance, and music—there are seven states with explicit standards and indicators that underscore the importance of interdisciplinary connections among the arts and other disciplines (see Tables 3 and 4). Arizona offers one example of options for integration, as described in state standards (see Table 5). ■

## » STATE STANDARDS FOR ARTS EDUCATION (2006)

### » Arts Standards (Not Mandated)

Alaska	Massachusetts	South Carolina
California	Michigan	South Dakota
Colorado (theater & dance)	Minnesota	Virginia
Connecticut	New York	Wisconsin
Hawaii	North Carolina	
Idaho	North Dakota	
Illinois	Ohio	
Indiana	Rhode Island	

TABLE » 1

### » Arts Standards (Mandated)

Alabama	Maryland	Tennessee
Arkansas	Mississippi	Texas
Colorado (music & art)	Missouri	Utah
Delaware	Montana	Vermont
Florida	New Jersey	Washington
Georgia	New Mexico	West Virginia
Iowa	Ohio	Wyoming
Kentucky	Oklahoma	
Louisiana	Oregon	
Maine	Pennsylvania	

TABLE » 2

### » States with Arts Integration in Limited Disciplines

Washington, DC (art, music)	Nevada (music, theater, art)
Kansas (music, theater, art)	

TABLE » 3

### » States with Arts Integration Standard

Arizona	Indiana	Louisiana
Idaho	Kentucky (high school level)	New Mexico
Illinois		

TABLE » 4

Tables 1–4: *The 2005-2006 State Arts Education Policy Database*, [www.aep-arts.org](http://www.aep-arts.org)

### » Arizona State Standards Related to Arts Integration

<p><b>CREATING ART</b> Students know and apply the arts disciplines, techniques, and processes to communicate in original or interpretative work.</p>	<p><b>ART IN CONTEXT</b> Students demonstrate how interrelated conditions influence and give meaning to the development and reception of thoughts, ideas, and concepts in the arts.</p>	<p><b>ART AS INQUIRY</b> Students demonstrate how the arts reveal universal concepts and themes. Students reflect upon and assess the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.</p>
---	---	--

TABLE » 5

(Arizona State University & the Arizona Board of Education, 2007. Available at: [http://www.mpsaz.org/arts/perf\\_arts/performing\\_arts.htm](http://www.mpsaz.org/arts/perf_arts/performing_arts.htm))