

Arts Assessment Practices in the United States

As we celebrate the continued assessment, analysis and reporting of the arts (music and visual arts) by the National Assessment Governing Board as part of the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), many states and districts across the nation have been embarking on arts assessment strategies, tools and infrastructures over the past decade.

In 2016, the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) undertook an extensive survey of the current practice and status of arts assessment across the nation. Here are the topline findings from that survey, which was shared at the SEADAE Arts Assessment Institute (2016) in Grapevine, Texas:

- **Educator accountability is currently the most consistent driver of arts assessment in the nation.** As the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is implemented across the country, it will be interesting to see if this driver changes as ESSA no longer requires that states connect educator accountability to measures of student growth in the classroom.
- In the absence of state policy and funding, **local control plays an important role in the provision of arts-specific professional development for educators and in the creation of valid and reliable arts assessments of student learning.**
- **Professional development in arts assessment** is most often provided online and/or at cost to the consumer.
- The efficacy of **technology in arts assessment is little-known** and its power underused.
- **Policy, funding and time remain the greatest needs for consistent, high-quality, research-based assessment of student learning in the arts.**

Examples of Other National Assessment Tools in the Arts

With the creation of the 2014 National Core Arts Standards, the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards created Model Cornerstone Assessments. Based on the work of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, these assessments are meant to be curricularly embedded and connected to the new national standards. The Coalition piloted these assessments and created illustrative student examples of students meeting the new, national standards via the pilot. Assessments and evidence of student work can be found [here](#).

Examples of State-Level Assessment Tools and Strategies in the Arts

Michigan

Michigan invested in creating assessments through working with practitioners and researchers. Available for public use, their assessment models can be found [here](#).

Colorado

Colorado invested in creating an extensive review of other state and local level assessments that arts educators in their state could use and Colorado educators are currently building their own assessment ideas into practice through professional learning communities. You can learn more about Colorado's work [here](#).

New Hampshire

With its competency-based graduation model, New Hampshire is undertaking the creation of competency-based assessments in the arts. You can learn more about their work and models [here](#).

Washington State

For more than a decade, Washington has invested in designing and using classroom-based performance assessments. Those assessments can be found [here](#).
