



Every Student. Every School.

ArtsEd Washington is a statewide not-for-profit that creates enduring system-wide change to ensure that the arts play an integral role in the education of every student in every school. We take a three-pronged approach to improve student learning through the arts, centered on Policy, Public Participation, and Programs for Schools, the essential pillars of lasting change.

Arts Education Quick Facts

Arts education is the law in Washington State.

- Arts education, as defined by Washington State law, includes all four disciplines: dance, music, theater, and visual art.
- Arts education is *not* an optional enrichment activity. In accordance with the *Basic Education Act*¹, arts education is a *mandated* core subject and required to be taught in Washington State schools.
- Despite this mandate, 75% of elementary students in Washington State receive only two hours or less of arts education each week².

Arts learning is essential to success in school, work and life.

- The arts empower students with vital capacities and strengths like creativity, collaboration, communication, and confidence.
- Learning in and through the arts supports an understanding across multiple academic disciplines, supporting overall school engagement. The arts nurture the critical thinking and complex problem solving that are essential in fostering a deeper understanding by applying knowledge, and making meaning of the material, rather than just memorizing.
- Credible research³ has demonstrated consistently better outcomes for students highly involved in the arts including better grades, less likelihood of dropping out, and more positive attitudes about school. These same studies show that high levels of arts participation make the greatest difference for economically disadvantaged students.

Arts education should be provided fairly to all students.

- Curriculum and instruction in the arts must be provided during regular school hours and build on learning each year, in the same way that teaching and learning happens in other core subjects.
- Schools integrating the arts are better positioned to address achievement gaps, while schools without the arts are perpetuating educational inequities, denying students proven pathways to success.

Creative attributes are the cornerstone for achievement in the 21st Century.

- In Washington State, creative occupations between 2006-2008 increased by 2.5%, and 100,000 creative sector jobs were reported in 2008⁴.
- Companies are seeking innovative employees⁵ who have the ability to imagine new services, create new opportunities, and develop inventive solutions to solve problems.
- A Global CEO Study⁶ commissioned by IBM found that more than 1,500 CEOs from large and small companies in 60 countries, representing 33 different industries, noted as their top answer that the most important leadership competency needed to manage in an increasingly complex world was CREATIVITY.

¹ RCW 28A.150.210 - Basic Education Act (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.150.210>).

² Arts Education Research Initiative, 2009. Washington State Arts Commission (www.arts.wa.gov/education/aeri.shtml).

³ Critical Evidence, AEP (<http://bit.ly/ekHVpt>).

⁴ *Creative Vitality Index* (extracts), 2010, Washington State Arts Commission

⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/21/opinion/21friedman.html>.

⁶ <http://www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/pressrelease/31670.wss>.

Arts Education: An Overview

The issue: Washington students are not receiving the complete education they were promised.

Washington State law *requires* that all school districts in the state teach⁷ and measure⁸ student progress in the arts. But in many schools young people are not getting the arts education they are entitled to. According to Washington State Arts Commission's 2009 study⁹ on the status of arts education throughout the state, **1/3 of elementary students get less than one hour of arts instruction per week and 1 out of every 10 schools offers no formal arts instruction at all.**

Most people agree that one hour per week is not enough for students to learn what they need from the arts, and yet schools – struggling with time and money – lack a “roadmap” showing them how to incorporate arts into the curriculum.

As a result, arts learning varies from district to district, and from school to school. While all schools face economic limitations, some of this disparity is due to priorities; some schools aren't aware that arts education greatly enhances the learning environment; and some don't know that it helps children to flourish.

"If the 3rd grade teacher loves the arts, the children get a lot of arts exposure. Then that child goes to 4th grade, and if that teacher doesn't like the arts, they'll get no exposure. We don't teach any other subject that way. Imagine if your children came home from school to say 'We're not doing any math this year because my teacher doesn't like it.'"

~Michael Kaiser, Kennedy Center president as quoted during his 2009 Arts in Crisis tour

The answer: Arts in schools = equitable access to all students.



For the kids in our state to have the best chance of fulfilling their potential, learning in and through the arts must be part of their education. To achieve this, *we must all work together* to provide our children with the complete education they are entitled to. Math, science, reading, social studies, health/fitness *and* the arts function together to effectively educate the “whole child.”

A quality education in and through the arts is critical for children – especially those that are considered “hard to reach” – academically challenged or unmotivated, with emotional and/or behavioral problems. While some children can access arts education readily, other children go without perhaps because their parents can't afford it or because their school doesn't provide it. This is not fair.

ArtsEd Washington: Creating enduring system-wide change to bring arts education to every student in every school.

A standard K-12 curriculum, that includes arts education as part of everyday learning, fosters well-rounded graduates who enter college and the workforce with creative skills and a competitive edge.

This is why **ArtsEd Washington...**

- Advocates for **schools** as *THE* best place to provide an **equitable** and **dependable** delivery of arts education through teaching and learning, guided by **rigorous standards - the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts.**
- Empowers schools and districts with the tools, training, and resources to improve their capacity to teach the arts sustainably.
- Works extensively with parents, policymakers, and the broader universe of community members and businesses to educate, inform, and catalyze change.

To learn more about ArtsEd Washington or for more information to support you in your work, please visit www.ArtsEdWashington.org or call 206.441.4501.

⁷ RCW 28A.150.210. Basic Education Act (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.150.210>).

⁸ Essential academic learning requirements and assessments, verification reports (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.230.095>).

⁹ Arts Education Research Initiative, 2009. Washington State Arts Commission (www.arts.wa.gov/education/aeri.shtml).



School Board Resources

Thank you for your commitment to serve on your school district's Board of Directors! Your service to the students in your community will impact lives for decades to come and can improve the quality of life for many people in your community. ArtsEd Washington knows that a creative and well-informed School Board is critical to this work. We prepared this page as a resource to help you become more familiar with the value of a complete education – one that includes the arts.

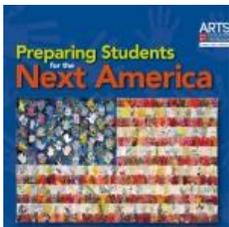
What does [the law say](#) about arts education?

According to RCW 28A.150.210, The Basic Education Act, the goals of each school district shall be to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills essential to:... Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation representative government; geography; **arts**; and health and fitness.

Current arts education research can be found [here](#).

Arts Education Resources:

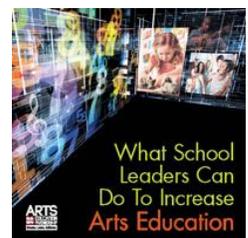
- [Arts Education Research Initiative 2009, Washington State Arts Commission](#): This report is based on a survey of K-12 principals and provides information about the vital role that arts learning plays in K-12 education and identifies the gaps and strengths in our system. Most importantly, it outlines steps for improving arts learning for Washington State students.
- [NCLB Year 5: Choices, Changes, and Challenges: Curriculum and Instruction in the NCLB Era 2007, Center on Education Policy](#): This report, based on a nationally representative survey of nearly 350 school districts, examined how many districts made room for additional curriculum and instructional time in reading and math by reducing time in other subjects that are not the focus of federal accountability.
- [ArtsEd Search](#), a program of the Arts Education Partnership, is the nation's first online research clearinghouse focused entirely on student and educator outcomes associated with arts learning.



- [Preparing Students for the Next America: 2013, Arts Education Partnership](#): This latest research bulletin from AEP offers a snapshot of how the arts support achievement in school, bolster skills demanded of a 21st century workforce, and enrich the lives of young people and communities. It draws on the research in AEP's ArtsEd Search.

Other Useful Links:

- [Arts Education Navigator \(Americans for the Arts\)](#): This study illuminates how arts education helps students stay and succeed in school, succeed in work, and succeed in life.
- [What School Leaders Can Do to Increase Arts Education \(Arts Education Partnership\)](#): This guide includes several suggested steps for fortifying arts education opportunities for students.



We hope you will consider ArtsEd Washington as a resource on arts education and its role in a complete education. We are here to support your leadership with arts education programs and resources and to keep you well informed about issues that advance or adversely impact the equitable and sequential provision of arts learning during the school day.