



What's on Your Shelf? Reports that Support the Arts and Arts Education

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What's on your shelf? What reports and studies do you reference and share with others to encourage support for high quality arts education programs for all students in all schools?

Recently the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE) was asked by a statewide education organization to provide those resources. This organization was preparing information about the importance of arts education for its members and wanted to know what the research says about arts education and student achievement, early childhood education, closing the achievement gap, etc.

The OAAE was delighted to respond with a packet of "standard" resources (our favorites) and some newer studies and recommendations "hot off the presses". We've listed some of these resources below, and hope that they are not just sitting on your shelf, but are being used frequently to make a strong case for supporting high quality arts education programs in all schools.

Resources for Arts Educators (Arranged by date)

*U.S. Department of Justice, National Endowment for the Arts, and Americans for the Arts, YouthARTS Development Project, 1996.

*Champions of Change, The Impact of the Arts on Learning, Arts Education Partnership, 1999.

*Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons From School Districts that Value Arts Education, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, 1999.

*The Arts Beyond the School Day: Extending the Power, Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network 2000.

*The Power of Arts Assessment in Teaching and Learning, OAAE, 2001.

*Starting Early, Starting Now, Education Commission of the States, 2001.

*Status of Arts Education in Ohio's Schools 2001: Ohio Alliance for Arts Education, Ohio Arts Council, and the Ohio Department of Education.

*State of the Arts Report 2001, Ohio Arts Council, 2001.

*Learning for the 21st Century, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, July 2003.
www.21stcenturyskills.org.

*Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development, Arts Education Partnership, June 2002.

Recent Reports on Arts Education

1) The Complete Curriculum: Ensuring a Place for the Arts and Foreign Languages in America's Schools. National Association of State Boards of Education, October 2003.

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), Brenda Welburn Executive Director, released on October 21, 2003 "The Complete Curriculum: Ensuring a Place for the Arts and Foreign Languages in America's Schools". The report was prepared by a twelve member NASBE Study Group chaired by James C. Dawson from New York, and included Ohio State Board of Education member Jennifer Stewart. The report is available for purchase on NASBE's web site at <http://www.nasbe.org/>, or by calling (800) 220-5183.

The Study Group drew two conclusions from its research on how American schools are adjusting to the increased requirements for student achievement in reading and mathematics, and made ten recommendations for policy makers. First, the Study Group found a substantial body of research about the benefits of including the arts and foreign languages in the curriculum of American schools. Second, the Study Group concluded that the arts and foreign languages were not "lost", but have been marginalized, "...and are increasingly at risk of being lost as part of the core curriculum. For example, while virtually every state has adopted standards in the arts, only a few have incorporated the subject into their state accountability systems."

To address these findings, the Study Group formulated the following recommendations for state policy makers to consider to ensure that the arts and foreign languages are integral parts of the curriculum:

- * Adopt high-quality licensure requirements for staff in the arts and foreign languages that are aligned with student standards in these subject areas.
- * Ensure adequate time for high-quality professional development.
- * Ensure adequate staff expertise at the state education agency to work in the areas of the arts and foreign languages.
- * Incorporate both the arts and foreign languages into core graduation requirements, while simultaneously increasing the number of credits required for graduation.
- * Encourage higher education institutions to increase standards for admission and include arts and foreign language courses when calculating high school grade point averages.

* Incorporate arts and foreign language learning in the early years into standards, curriculum frameworks, and course requirements. Also, encourage local school districts to incorporate the arts and foreign languages into instruction in the early years, whenever possible.

* Advocate continued development of curriculum materials for the arts and foreign languages from the textbook publishing industry.

* Incorporate all core subject areas, including the arts and foreign languages, into the improvement strategies promoted by the No Child Left Behind Act.

* Urge the National Assessment Governing Board to increase the frequency of NAEP assessments for both the arts and foreign languages.

* Urge Congress and legislatures to make a greater commitment to the arts and foreign languages.

2) The winter 2004 issue of The State Education Standard (Vol 4 No 4), published by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) is entitled "Ensuring a Place for the Arts in America's Schools". The issue features the following articles:

*Finding the Will and the Way to Make the Arts a Core Subject: Thirty Years of Mixed Progress, by Douglas Herbert, director of arts learning at the National Endowment for the Arts.

*The Complete Curriculum: Ensuring a Place for the Arts in America's Schools , by Lori Meyer.

*For Every Child the Liberal Arts, by Raymond "Buzz" Bartlett

*Developing an Arts Assessment: Some Strategies, NAEP arts assessment and field tests.

*Cutting the Arts Imperils Student Achievement, by Richard J. Deasy

*Potent Partnerships: Community-Based Resources for Arts Education by Gully Stanford.

*Young Children and the Arts: The Uneven Road to Early Childhood Arts Standards, by Susan Bolanis and Mimi Flaherty - The state of arts standards for pre-kindergarten children. Some of the articles are available on the NASBE web site at <http://www.nasbe.org/Standard/index.html>

3) The Council of Chief State School Officers and the Arts Education Partnership recently released two publications for arts educators and advocates.

The first publication is a revised edition of "No Subject Left Behind", a popular information guide about the federal "No Child Left Behind Act" (NCLB). The guide highlights how the arts are included as core subjects in the NCLB Act, describes opportunities for funding for arts education through NCLB, provides examples of arts programs that have received federal funding, and provides links to arts education research and other resources. "No Subject Left Behind" is available at <http://aep-arts.org/files/advocacy/NoSubjectLeftBehind2005.pdf>

The second publication is called "The Arts and Education: New Opportunities for Research," and urges researchers to explore the contributions that arts education makes across disciplines to close the achievement gap among students and to improve student achievement. The report is the result of a collaboration between the Arts Education Partnership and a task force chaired by the American Educational Research Institute. Areas identified for more research include

cognition and expression; personal and social development; teaching and learning environments; and community, democracy and civil society. More and improved data is also needed to analyze the impact of policy and funding decisions on arts education. The report is available online at <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/files/catterall/catterall.newopportunities.pdf>

4) The Council for Basic Education has also released a study that shows that the "No Child Left Behind Act" is narrowing the curriculum in the nation's public schools. This study, called "Academic Atrophy: The Condition of Liberal Arts in Public Schools," concludes that some schools are increasing instructional time on math, reading, and science, and reducing instructional time for other subjects, such as social studies, civics, geography, languages, and the arts. This is because the law holds schools accountable only for student performance in math, reading, and eventually science. The greatest cutbacks are in the arts. The report is available at <http://www.menc.org/information/legislationpolicy/AcademicAtrophy.pdf>

5) The January 2004 issue of the Education Commission of the States' (ECS), The Progress of Education Reform focuses on recent research studies on the role and value of education in the arts. The issue is called "An Arts-rich Education Helps Prepare Students for A Changing World" and recognizes the contributions that an education in the arts education make to student achievement and economic development.

Governor Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, 2004-06 chairman of the Education Commission of the States, will focus his tenure on arts education, and develop a web site and other ECS products. According to Governor Huckabee, "The arts are critical, not only as a link to student productivity but also as a key to a competitive workforce."

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is an interstate compact created in 1965 to improve public education by facilitating the exchange of information, ideas and experiences among state policy makers and education leaders. As a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization involving key leaders from all levels of the education system, ECS creates unique opportunities to build partnerships, share information and promote the development of policy based on available research and strategies. The report is available at <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/49/91/4991.pdf>

For more information contact the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education at 614.224.1060 or by email at dcollins@oaae.net Visit the website at www.OAAE.net