

**ARTS EDUCATION FUNDING AND RESEARCH THROUGH
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
IMPROVING ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS**

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to:

- **Appropriate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY 2009 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.**
- **Require the U.S. Department of Education to produce timely and comprehensive reports on the status of arts education in America’s public schools, when implementing the *Fast Response Statistical Survey* and the *National Assessment of Educational Progress*.**

Arts in Education Annual Appropriations, FY01 to Present (in millions of dollars)

Fiscal Year	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08
Appropriation	28.0	30.0	33.8	35.1	35.6	35.3	35.3	37.5

Note: Figures above are not adjusted for inflation. Source: U.S. Department of Education

TALKING POINTS

- ***With increased funding, the Arts in Education programs will support newly emerging models in high-poverty schools that improve arts learning, and findings from model projects may be more widely disseminated.*** The Model Development and Dissemination program has funded a total of 105 projects, identifying models of excellence in arts education that impact schools and communities nationwide. The Professional Development grants program has supported 56 projects that serve as national models for effective arts education professional development. Increased Arts in Education funds will provide unique federal support for:
 - ***Model Development and Dissemination projects*** that strengthen student learning through standards-based arts education and integration of arts instruction into other subject areas.
 - ***Professional Development for Arts Educators grants***, identifying innovative models that improve instruction for arts specialists and classroom teachers.
 - ***Evaluation and National Dissemination***, multiplying the impact of this federal investment. State and local education agencies can adapt these models to provide rigorous arts instruction for all students.
 - ***The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts’*** ongoing national arts education initiatives, and the efforts of ***VSA arts***, to ensure the participation of people with disabilities in arts programming in schools and communities.
- ***As Congress intended, projects funded through the Arts in Education programs are being successfully implemented as models in communities beyond the original grant recipient.***
 - Supported by a Model Development grant, ***Opening Minds through the Arts***, an arts integration project in Tucson, AZ, influenced the Arizona Department of Education to take the program to scale state-wide using federal Title I and Title V education funds.
 - A Professional Development grant supported an innovative project for the Stockton, CA Unified School District, a large urban district that serves low-income families. Designed to provide comprehensive and sequential visual and performing arts training and experiences for both district and classroom-level educators, the program also enriched the educational experiences of students. The project has served as a resource for surrounding school districts and has been featured in state-wide education conferences.

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TALKING POINTS (CONT'D)

- ***Funding to VSA arts and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts supports national networks that ensure the inclusion of students with disabilities and other underserved populations.*** These networks provide for the expansion of model programs in all 50 states involving over 16 million students. National initiatives include: educational programs from early childhood through grade 12, strategies to include students with disabilities, professional development for teachers and administrators, and documentation of the social and academic progress from learning in an arts-rich environment.
- ***Congress has fully funded a national survey on arts education. It must be carried out in the 2008–2009 school year and must provide comprehensive, reliable information about student access to arts instruction.*** The Fast Response Statistical Survey (FRSS) report *Arts in Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools* is the only research report produced by the U.S. Department of Education on the status of how arts education is delivered in America's public schools. The last report was for the 1999–2000 school year, and the next round of data collection for an *updated report is long overdue*. In the FY 2008 appropriations bill, Congress provided full funding for an arts FRSS in the 2008–2009 school year. Congress can act to ensure that the U.S. Department of Education implements the survey as soon as possible and issues a high-quality report.
- ***The 1997 Arts Report Card was the most comprehensive of its kind. The next report should be of the same quality.*** The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the national arts "report card," provides critical information about the arts skills and knowledge of our nation's students. The next NAEP is scheduled to be administered in 2008, but only in music and visual arts. While the U.S. Department of Education says it lacks sufficient data in dance and theater to measure student learning, the NAEP report should include comprehensive information about the status and condition of dance and theater education.
- ***The U.S. Department must include the arts in all research and data collection regarding the "core academic subjects."*** In public statements, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings has said, "Art, dance, music, and theater are as much a part of education as reading, math, and science." And yet, the Department has told Congress that among the "many tough choices" made in the area of research, the arts did not rate as a priority. It is time for the arts to be included in all of the Department of Education's research regarding subject-specific data.

BACKGROUND

Congress has a record of supporting the Arts in Education programs, despite their elimination in the administration's budget proposal. Last year, for the first time in seven years, the House approved arts funding in its education appropriations bill. With continued strong support from the Senate, Congress has funded the Arts in Education programs each year, currently providing \$37.5 million.

In an April 27, 2007 letter, authored by Reps. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Christopher Shays (R-CT), 74 members of the U.S. House of Representatives signed their names in support of increasing Arts in Education funding to \$53 million. Sens. Thad Cochran (R-MS), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Edward Kennedy (D-MA), and Arlen Specter (R-PA) have led efforts in the Senate to sustain and increase Arts in Education funding.

Meaningful research is needed to determine the status of dance, music, theater, and visual arts education. The last FRSS dedicated to the arts was *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1999–2000*. The FRSS reports on the status and trends of how arts education is delivered in public schools. The FY08 omnibus funding bill allocated \$2.16 million for an arts FRSS to be administered by the U.S. Department of Education during the 2008–2009 school year, and Congress can now act to ensure that the survey is conducted on time.

The NAEP is designed to measure students' knowledge and skills in dance, music, theater, and visual arts. In 1997, the NAEP was administered to grade 8 students in music, theater, and the visual arts. The next NAEP arts assessment is currently being conducted in grade 8 in music and the visual arts. Results will be reported in 2009.

Both of these quantitative studies are essential to improving access to the arts as a core academic subject.