ARTS EDUCATION RESEARCH INITIATIVE

K–12 Arts Education
EVERY STUDENT
EVERY SCHOOL
EVERY YEAR

Measuring the Status of Arts Education in Washington State Public Schools

WASHINGTON STATE ARTS COMMISSION
“The arts can help students become tenacious, team-oriented problem solvers who are confident and able to think creatively.”

– Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education
Every Student, Every School, Every Year

Though the arts are recognized as a core academic subject in Washington State and across the nation, K-12 arts education is fraught with inequities.
AERI – Rationale

**Current Status:**
- WA has good arts policy
- There is a gap between policy and practice

**Needs:**
- Students need more & better arts education
- Education stakeholders and policy makers need more & better data to collectively work towards this goal
Primary Areas of Inquiry

- Frequency and Intensity of Instruction
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Staffing and Professional Development
- Collaboration with Arts Organizations
- Funding
Survey Demographics
Findings

- 33% of elementary students are getting an average of less than one hour of arts instruction per week

- 47% of schools offer instruction in only of the four primary arts disciplines
  - 8% of elementary schools and 4% of secondary schools provide formal arts instruction in all four arts disciplines
  - 34% of 8th graders attend a school where there is no instruction in visual arts
Findings

- 63% of principals are dissatisfied with the quantity of arts education in their schools.
- 42% of principals say statewide testing gets in the way of meeting arts learning goals.
- 9% of schools offer no formal arts instruction.
Availability of Arts Education

- Decrease in K-6 hours since 2005
- Focus on state testing a possible influence
Arts Curricula

- Disciplines and grade levels with *written* curriculum
- At best: 40% for upper elem. music
Arts Assessments

Since 2005, significant change in assessment practice:
The Middle School Challenge

- WA is below the national average of numbers of 8th graders taught by FT arts specialists
- Most districts in WA do not require any arts credits at the middle school level

### Eighth Graders Who Were Taught by a Full-Time Arts Specialist in Music and Visual Arts (NAEP 2008 v. AERI 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>NAEP</th>
<th>AERI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music</strong></td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Arts</strong></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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Staffing

- Arts teachers account for an average of 6% of school’s teaching staff
- Average FTEs:
  - Music = 1.16
  - Visual Arts = .71
  - Theatre = .12
  - Dance = .05
District funds are most common and most important, but limited; many other funding sources are required.
Markers of Quality & Action Agenda

- Elements of Effective, Sustainable Practice
- Examples of Best Practices
- Yard Stick

- Practical options for moving forward
- Best next steps vary from district to district
- Everyone can play a role
From Research to Action

- What’s going on locally?
- Catalyst for conversation
- Work needs to be done at all levels
Key Arts Education Partner

www.artsedwashington.org

A nonprofit organization devoted specifically and exclusively to advancing and increasing arts education in K-12 schools.
More Information:

www.arts.wa.gov/education/aeri.shtml

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