

# VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY

A VISION FOR THE  
21ST CENTURY



*A Summary of the White Paper presented by the  
Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education.*  
Kentucky Art Education Association

Kentucky Association of Health, Physical Education,  
Recreation and Dance

Kentucky Music Educators Association

Kentucky Theatre Association

The Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education calls upon the Kentucky General Assembly, the Kentucky Board of Education, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Educational Professional Standards Board, and the Kentucky Council on Post-secondary Education to work together in developing an **overarching vision and a set of specific goals** for visual and performing arts education in Kentucky. That vision must ensure that every child has access to a sequenced, standards-based visual and performing arts curriculum taught by qualified arts specialist teachers who can effectively develop the artistic literacy and skills that contribute directly to the development of 21st Century Skills.

The vision should rest upon the principles set forth in *The Value and Quality of Arts Education* that were developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations and endorsed by a cadre of national school associations including the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National School Board Association.

“In my own philanthropy and business endeavors, I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities....the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning discovery, and achievement in our country.”

—Paul G. Allen, Co-Founder, Microsoft



# THE VALUE AND QUALITY OF AN ARTS EDUCATION



**Every child should have an education in the arts:** Time must be protected in the school day for the specific study of the arts disciplines.

**Arts classes are core:** Visual and performing arts study must be considered serious study, the same as other academic pursuits. This includes a sequenced, standards-based curriculum **delivered by qualified arts-specialist teachers** who have the skills to ensure the kind of rigor in arts study that leads to artistic literacy and artistic independence.

**Arts education should be grounded in rigorous instruction** and meaningful assessment that reflects research-based standards.

**Community resources** that provide exposure to the arts should be used to enhance and support in-school, sequenced, standards-based arts education, but should not take the place of it.

**The arts should be valued in the curriculum not only for their intrinsic value, but for the added benefits they provide** in developing intellectual strength, creative thinking, and empathy toward others, as well as developing self-confidence and increasing student engagement in school.

*We further believe a vision for arts education must ensure that:*

**The power of the arts to enhance learning in other subjects is never confused or substituted for education “in” the arts that builds artistic literacy and independence.**

**Secondary arts education provides a sufficient amount of diverse and sequenced specialized courses in each art form to adequately support college and career readiness.**

**More colleges and universities develop degree programs for training theater and dance specialists for P–12.**

Recent collection of data indicates that arts education is losing ground in Kentucky’s schools despite statutes identifying the arts as core subjects and requiring schools to develop students’ talents and abilities in the arts.

In 2014, 65% of Fayette county teachers delivering the high school course, History and Appreciation of the Visual and Performing Arts, had majors in subjects outside the arts and had little to no arts education training in their degree program.

Of five elementary schools in the Covington Independent School District, none have a sequenced-based music program taught by a music specialist.

Fayette County has experienced an 8.35% decline in certified music specialists from 2008 to 2014.

Forty three percent of Appalachian region respondents to a 2013 KMEA survey reported that they have no music at all in at least one school in their district.

Seventy-four percent of schools across the state have no theater teachers.

Less than one-third of the elementary schools in Jefferson County have both a music and art specialist teacher in their school.

*Arts Education in the South Phase I:* data revealed that 73% of responding elementary principals reported that a music specialist teaches music, while 63% reported that the classroom teacher teaches dance.

## Building a Vision for Arts Education in Kentucky—A Proposed Five-Step Action Plan

1. **KCAE representatives meet with KDE leadership** to share its White Paper, “Visual and Performing Arts Education in Kentucky: A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” discuss current KDE initiatives related to the ideas and recommendations presented, request the department’s investigation of the other recommendations in the white paper, and recommend an action plan.
2. **Collect “Hard Data” on the status of Arts Education Programs** that includes the qualifications of those delivering arts instruction, the amount of time allotted in the school day for arts instruction, a description of course offerings, arts facilities, and arts resources. (This data cannot clearly be retrieved from Program Review data and no data of this sort has been available since 2005). KCAE recommends using a revision of the 2005 Kentucky Arts Council 2005 survey report: Status of Arts Education in Kentucky Public Schools, available at: [http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Research/Key-Topics/Arts- Education/KentuckyArtsEducSurvey05.pdf](http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Research/Key-Topics/Arts-Education/KentuckyArtsEducSurvey05.pdf)  
It is recommended that the KDE administer the survey and that data collection should be completed and collated by the end of the 2014-2015 school year.
3. **The KDE Arts Advisory Council reviews the KCAE White Paper “Visual and Performing Arts Education in Kentucky: A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”** in the spring of 2015 in order to ascertain its usefulness to decision-makers in guiding positive change in arts education policy.
4. The KDE Arts Advisory Council will identify the issues and recommendations it finds valid and credible, **and will recommend to the KDE leadership that the council serve as the core group for a Kentucky Arts Education Summit in the summer of 2016**, comprised of additional representatives from all policy-making stakeholders. The goal of the summit will be to identify the collaborative efforts needed to address the issues and take actions based on recommendations of the Arts Advisory Council. Those actions may include:
  - a. **Adopt rigorous standards** that establish solid benchmarks for helping students master artistic processes and arts content, and provide training for unpacking those standards.
  - b. **Develop legislation and/or regulation that establishes a minimum weekly time requirement** for discipline specific, standards-based arts instruction in music, visual art, dance, and theater in the elementary and middle school.
  - c. **Continue to require one credit in the visual and performing arts at the high school level and ensure that high schools offer multiple levels of specialized courses** in music, visual art, dance and theater in order to provide career pathways in the arts. **Develop a timetable for having certified specialists in music, visual art, dance and theater in every high school.** Ensure that other career pathways allow students to participate in arts classes throughout their high school career.
  - d. **Strengthen the validity and reliability of Arts Program Reviews** by revising the rubric to include expectations for qualified arts teachers, instructional time, resources, and adequate facilities. Provide better training for self-evaluation and develop a reliable auditing system. **Ensure there is sufficient motivation for schools to improve their arts programs. Identify appropriate models to define performance levels.**
  - e. **Remove language in course descriptions and other policy documents that opens the door for certifying non-qualified teachers to deliver arts instruction.** This includes phasing out the confusing “Arts and Humanities” terminology in all statutes, regulations, and state documents.
  - f. **Revise certifications to ensure that qualified arts specialists teach students at all grade levels.** Phase out old certifications that allow non-arts certified teachers to deliver arts instruction.
  - g. **Increase the number of colleges and universities that offer degree programs leading to specialized certifications in dance and theater.**
  - h. **Establish policy that requires every elementary and middle school to have, at minimum, a certified visual art specialist and music specialist, and develop a time table for requiring certified dance and theater specialists in those schools.**
5. **As a result of the Kentucky Arts Education Summit, a formal report will be presented to the Kentucky Board of Education with a proposed plan of action** for changing public arts education policy to achieve a vision of high-quality, 21st Century arts education in Kentucky.

## Kentucky Statutes Related to the expectations for Arts Education in the Public Schools

### [1990] The arts Listed in two Kentucky Learner Goals:

KRS 158.6451 Legislative declaration on goals for Commonwealth's schools –  
<http://www.lrc.ky.gov/statutes/statute.aspx?id=3552>  
Model curriculum framework

- (1) The General Assembly finds, declares, and establishes that:
  - (a) Schools shall expect a high level of achievement of all students.
  - (b) Schools shall develop their students' ability to:
    2. Apply core concepts and principles from mathematics, the sciences, the arts, the humanities, social studies, and practical living studies to situations they will encounter throughout their lives;
    7. Express their creative talents and interests in visual arts, music, dance, and dramatic arts.



### [1990] The firm grounding in the arts listed in Capacities:

KRS 158.645: <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/Statutes/statute.aspx?id=3551>  
Capacities required of students in public education system

- (6) Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage;

### [2008] The arts Listed as a core discipline:

KRS 159.035: <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/Statutes/statute.aspx?id=3630>  
Referring to school absences:

- (2) Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this subsection, a public school principal shall give a student an excused absence to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the principal to be of significant educational value, including but not limited to participation in an educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and the arts.



A Copy of the Kentucky Coalition White Paper,

*Visual and Performing Arts Education in Kentucky  
A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

may be retrieved at:

<http://www.kmea.org/VisionPaper.pdf>

To contact the Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education

[ContactKCAE@gmail.com](mailto:ContactKCAE@gmail.com) or any of KCAE's partner associations