

# Arts Education Is Essential

*This statement of support for arts education has been reviewed and endorsed by the national organizations listed on page two.*

***It is imperative that all students have access to an equitable delivery of arts education that includes dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts that supports their educational, social, and emotional well-being, taught by certified professional arts educators in partnership with community arts providers.***

Teaching and learning will never quite be the same in our post-COVID-19 world. However, our commitment to provide rich and varied educational experiences remains unwavering. The arts have played an important role in these tumultuous times and will continue to do so for all students, including the traditionally underrepresented, those with special needs, and from low-income families. Here's why:

## **Arts education supports the social and emotional well-being of students, whether through distance learning or in person.**

Self-awareness, self-efficacy, self-management and perseverance, social awareness and relationship skills are central to any arts education activity, no matter the age and ability of the student or the environment in which the learning takes place. The arts, with their strong emphasis on team-building and self-reflection are supremely suited to re-ignite students' interest in learning through collaboration, while simultaneously fostering creativity, critical thinking, and communication.

## **Arts education nurtures the creation of a welcoming school environment where students can express themselves in a safe and positive way.**

Celebrating our ability to come together as educators and students is vital to creating a healthy and inclusive school community. The arts, through a rich partnership among certified arts educators, teaching artists, and community arts providers, play a valuable role in helping students and their families build and sustain community and cultural connections.

## **Arts education is part of a well-rounded education for all students as understood and supported by federal and state policymakers.**

As defined in ESSA, "music and the arts" are part of a well-rounded education. Every state in the nation recognizes the importance of the arts as reflected in rigorous PreK-12 state arts standards. Forty-six states require an arts credit to receive a high school diploma, and 43 states have instructional requirements in the arts for elementary and secondary schools. As noted in *Arts Education for America's Students: A Shared Endeavor*: "An education without the arts is inadequate."

The healing and unifying power of the arts has been evident as the COVID-19 pandemic swept the country. We have seen and heard it play out through works of art on sidewalks, shared musical moments from porches, in plays and dance performances, and every other imaginable iteration of art making. As states and schools work through multiple challenges in the years ahead, arts education must remain central to a well-rounded education and fully funded to support the well-being of all students and the entire school community.

# Endorsing Organizations

Afterschool Alliance  
American Choral Directors Association  
American Composers Forum  
American Orff-Schulwerk Association  
Americans for the Arts  
American String Teachers Association  
Barbershop Harmony Society  
Carnegie Hall  
Casio America, Inc.  
Chorus America  
CMA Foundation  
College Band Directors National Association  
Conn-Selmer, Inc.  
D'Addario Foundation  
Eastman Music Company  
Education Through Music  
Educational Theatre Association  
Give a Note Foundation  
Hal Leonard  
Historically Black Colleges and Universities  
National Band Directors' Consortium  
Jazz at Lincoln Center  
Jazz Education Network  
KHS America  
KORG, USA  
League of American Orchestras  
Little Kids Rock  
Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation  
Music for All

Music Teachers National Association  
NAMM Foundation  
National Art Education Association  
National Association for Music Education  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
National Coalition for Core Arts Standards  
National Dance Education Organization  
National Education Association  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
National YoungArts Foundation  
Organization of American Kodály Educators  
Quadrant Research  
QuaverEd  
Recording Academy  
Save The Music Foundation  
State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education  
The Rock and Roll Forever Foundation  
United Sound, Inc.  
Varsity Performing Arts  
West Music Company  
WURRLYedu  
Yamaha Corporation of America  
Young Audiences Arts for Learning  
YOUnison

*Do you represent a national organization interested in endorsing this statement? Email [essential@nafme.org](mailto:essential@nafme.org)*