



# Providing a Balanced Curriculum Where the Arts are Core

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<p><b>Are your arts programs ready to take the stage?</b></p>	 <p><b>Beginner</b></p>	 <p><b>Virtuoso</b></p>	 <p><b>Maestro</b></p>
<p><b>Access</b></p>	<p>Our schools offer classes in visual art and music. Few offer dance or theatre. Some students may not be allowed to participate based on performance in other core subject areas.</p>	<p>Our schools offer classes in theatre, visual art and music, but not dance. Student access to the arts depends largely on what school s/he attends.</p>	<p>Our schools have teachers in dance, theatre, visual art and music. All of our students have the opportunity to study these core subjects.</p>
<p><b>Teacher quality</b></p>	<p>Elementary visual art and music are taught in many of our schools by the regular classroom teacher. Dance and theatre are taught by whoever has a free class period.</p>	<p>All visual art and music teachers are endorsed in these subjects. Dance and theatre are usually taught by P.E. or English teachers.</p>	<p>All visual art and music teachers are endorsed in these subjects. Dance and theatre teachers have those endorsements, or have other professional preparation in those subjects.</p>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>Teachers may use their faculty senate funds for their programs.</p>	<p>Some funding is provided to programs from the county level, but fundraising provides the working budget for most arts instructional materials.</p>	<p>All arts programs have regular funding to support the extensive costs of high-quality programs. Performing arts programs have access to quality performing facilities.</p>

**The Research**

- A recent report from the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (2011) indicates that comprehensive arts education is key in raising student achievement in many areas, including increasing attendance, improving motivation and reducing the number of dropouts.
- Mahoney and Cairns (1997) found that among 392 high school students, the dropout rate for those who did not participate in extracurricular arts activities was significantly higher than those who did – 27% versus 7%.
- The use of dramatic play and creative movement has been shown to improve reading comprehension and motivation among younger students (Goodman, 2002; Page, 2002; and Moore and Caldwell, 2002).
- One noted study indicated that students enrolled in band or orchestra throughout their secondary careers outperformed their peers in math during grade 12. The results were even more pronounced among low SES students (Catterall, Chapleau, and Iwanaga, 2002).

**Helping Students Achieve**

- For many West Virginia students, the arts provide their *sole connection* to the school culture and their *only reason* for coming to school.
- The arts form *habits of mind* that are unique and promote creativity and other higher-order thinking skills. They are also defined as *core* academic subjects by both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510.
- West Virginia has produced such noted artists as actors Sam Trammell and Jennifer Garner; nationally-known wildlife artist Ray Harm; musicians Bill Withers and Brad Paisley; Tony-award winning choreographer Rob Ashford; and Pulitzer-prize winning composer George Crumb. Today’s West Virginia students are tomorrow’s world-class artists.

### Support for Building a Strong Arts Program

- The Office of Instruction is happy to recommend members of The 'A' Team to provide professional development for arts teachers in your county. The A Team is a cadre of master teachers of dance, theatre, visual art and music who can provide technical assistance in content areas as well as standards-based instruction, strategies to support student engagement, arts integration, higher-order thinking skills and more.
- The WVDE will begin piloting a new elementary dance program in 20 Title I schools in the 2011-2012 school year. The schools will be paired with teaching artists in dance who will work cooperatively with classroom teachers in teaching creative movement and using this to promote student engagement and achievement in other core content areas.
- The WVDE General Music Task Force piloted four project-based learning plans in the middle grades during the 2010-2011 school year. The projects were focused on innovative and engaging approaches to delivery of the grade 6-8 music curriculum. During the next school year, the Office of Instruction will be providing professional development to interested secondary music teachers. Grade 6-8 music teachers who attend may apply for further professional development on the General Music Task Force projects, along with half funding for equipment bundles. Counties or schools will be expected to pay half the costs of the bundles.
- The Office of Instruction has partnered with the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation to offer a series of 18 performances and workshops by the West Virginia Dance Company. The company, the state's only professional touring dance company, has performed extensively across West Virginia, 14 other states and Brazil in its 33-year history. The cost to each school for the performance and workshop is \$416, a 75% reduction in cost. Schools in the six-county region of Boone, Clay, Fayette, Kanawha, Lincoln and Putnam counties may inquire about scheduling a visit.
- Please contact the WVDE arts coordinator at [jdeskins@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:jdeskins@access.k12.wv.us) if you are interested in any of these opportunities.

### Places to Visit

There are *many* exemplary arts programs around the state. The following should not be considered an exhaustive list, but simply a few places where you may see excellent teaching:

#### Dance

Capital High School, Kanawha County

#### Music

New Haven Elementary School, Mason County

Horace Mann Middle School, Kanawha County

Jefferson High School, Jefferson County

Cabell Midland High School, Cabell County

Wheeling Park High School, Ohio County

#### Theatre

Fairmont Senior High School, Marion County

Jefferson High School, Jefferson County

Musselman High School, Berkeley County

#### Visual Art

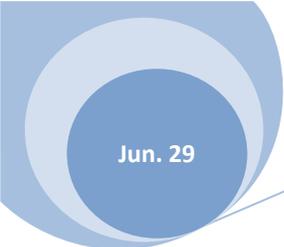
North Elementary School, Monongalia County

Mineral Wells Elementary, Wood County

Jackson Middle School, Wood County

Lincoln High School, Harrison County

Tyler Consolidated High School, Tyler County



**Resources:**

- The West Virginia Department of Education’s Office of Instruction is preparing Exemplary Arts Program Guides, outlining the characteristics of successful dance, theatre, visual art and music classes. These address exemplary practices in *scheduling*, *resources*, and *teacher efficacy* and are written to provide guidance to superintendents, principals and teachers in these areas. When these are completed, you may access these at the WVDE arts webpage:  
[http://wvde.state.wv.us/instruction/visual\\_and\\_fine\\_arts.html](http://wvde.state.wv.us/instruction/visual_and_fine_arts.html)
- The Office of Instructional Technology will begin offering e-Learning courses in theatre this fall. These courses are designed to build content knowledge and would be ideal for teachers with limited background in the subject. Interested teachers may visit the e-Learning site for more information: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/elearning/>.

**Implications:**

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