

GOOD SCHOOLS REQUIRE THE ARTS



ARTS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP



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PARTNERSHIP

# CREATIVITY

The Arts Education Partnership (formerly known as the Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership) is a private, nonprofit coalition of education, arts, business, philanthropic, and government organizations that demonstrates and promotes the essential role of arts education in enabling all students to succeed in school, life, and work.

The Partnership is administered by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, which represent state departments of education and state arts agencies in the 56 states and extra-state jurisdictions. The Partnership is supported by a cooperative agreement with the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education and by the contributions of its participating organizations.

For a directory of organizations participating in the Partnership, visit our Web site at <http://aep-arts.org>

*"The process of studying and creating art in all of its distinct forms defines those qualities that are at the heart of education reform in the 1990's—creativity, perseverance, a sense of standards, and above all, a striving for excellence."*

-U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

## Looking for answers about arts education?

*The Arts Education Partnership answers and acts on questions such as:*

### Is there evidence that arts education helps students succeed in school and life?

The Partnership identifies and distributes important research on the role of the arts in learning and development. As recommended in its 1997 report *Priorities for Arts Education Research*, the Partnership is working with the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education on a new compilation of arts education research to follow up on *Schools, Communities and the Arts: A Research Compendium* released in 1995. *Eloquent Evidence*, a brochure created and distributed for the Partnership by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, summarizes some key findings in the Research Compendium.

In cooperation with the American Educational Research Association and private and corporate funders, the Partnership will convene scholars and

researchers to review and evaluate research findings that demonstrate the importance of the arts.

Partnership organizations as wide ranging as the National Alliance of Business, the national associations of elementary and secondary school principals, the National PTA, the American Educational Research Association, and the GE Fund believe that the content and skills learned in the study of the arts are critical to a young person's personal, academic, and career development.



## How well are the arts being taught?

Partnership organizations, in cooperation with the National Assessment Governing Board, the

National Center for Education Statistics, and the Educational Testing Service, have designed new methods for determining if students are learning to create original works of art; perform works of music, dance, and theater; and respond intelligently and critically to all forms of art.

Through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a

sample of eighth grade students from across the country was assessed in 1997 using these methods. The results, released in fall 1998, give

objective information on how well we are nurturing the creative and artistic potential of all students. Partnership organizations are making the results of the NAEP Arts Assessment known to the public and to policy makers.

A consortium of state departments of education convened by the Council of Chief State School Officers is exploring how the new assessment methods can improve arts instruction in classrooms.

The Partnership is working with the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education to produce a new version of the 1995 statistical report *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*. The new report, planned for release in 1999, will allow an analysis of trends in the conditions of arts teaching and learning.

## Where are the best arts education programs?

Partnership organizations including the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National School Boards Association, and the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network systematically identify school districts and schools that have strong arts programs.

A 1998 report of the Partnership, in cooperation with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, examines school districts across the country with effective arts programs for all students. The report gives guidance to local school boards and superintendents on how to create and maintain comprehensive programs in their districts.

The Blue Ribbon Schools program of the U.S. Department of Education, in cooperation with the Partnership and the National Endowment for the Arts, has developed a set of criteria defining excellence in arts education programs. Schools meeting the criteria are being honored by the President of the United States and the Secretary of Education in 1998 and 1999.

Formal evaluations commissioned by Partnership organizations such as the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, the Lincoln Center Institute and the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts identify the characteristics of effective programs in the schools and communities with which they work.

Information on effective programs is shared by the Partnership through its meetings, publications and Web site.

## Are the arts important in the learning and development of young children?

In 1998, the Partnership released *Young Children and the Arts: Making Creative Connections*, the report of its Task Force on Children's Learning and the Arts: Birth to Age Eight. The report summarizes the importance of the arts in the learning and development of young children and provides guidance on how to provide appropriate arts experiences for children from birth to age eight. Resources and information about programs exemplifying appropriate practice are being collected into a database accessible through the Internet for use by schools, parents and care givers.

Partnership organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education of the U.S. Department of Education, the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, the American Library Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals are identifying the research and practices that show how arts experiences are essential in nurturing the full development of a child from birth through the early school years.



New knowledge on the importance of stories, music, movement, and color to the development of a healthy brain in young children is being used by Partnership organizations, such as Head Start, the National Dance Association, the Music Educators National Conference, and Very Special Arts to develop new video, audio, and print materials for instructional use with young children.

## Is there funding support for arts education?

The Partnership provides help in tracking government funding opportunities at the federal and state levels. The Partnership cooperates with the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in maintaining a database of arts education legislation and policies in every state. Information for the database is developed through surveys conducted by NCSL, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Art Education Association, the American Music Conference, and the Partnership staff.

The Partnership monitors how each state is implementing the federal Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which defines the arts as part of the core school curriculum. Partnership organizations have helped local school districts obtain millions of dollars in grants to include arts education in their school improvement plans and programs.

The Partnership distributes reports on the funding opportunities for arts education in federal legislation supporting elementary and secondary education.

## The Impact of the Partnership

Through their cooperative actions, Partnership organizations have had the following impact:

- Forty-seven states have adopted new standards for what students should know and be able to do in dance, music, theater, and the visual arts.
- In 1997, a national assessment of a representative sample of eighth graders was conducted to measure how well schools are teaching our young people to create, perform and respond to works of art. A report of the results will be published in 1998. The arts are now at the leading edge of thinking on how best to assess student achievement. An increasing number of states are considering developing assessments keyed to their arts standards.
- Support for arts education among policy makers in Congress and at the state and federal levels is growing as research on the value of the arts is made more widely available.



The Partnership has stimulated new research efforts by publishing its *Priorities for Arts Education Research*, which cites the effects of arts learning on human development, academic achievement and workforce skills.

- Millions of dollars in Goals 2000 money have been awarded in support of arts education projects as states recognize the role of the arts in improving schools and helping all students.
- A Partnership team is at work in every state promoting arts education. A state team includes representatives from state departments of education, state arts councils, and state alliances for arts education as well as the state and local affiliates of other Partnership organizations.
- Advocates in every state are using the Partnership video featuring Meryl Streep, *The Arts and Children: A Success Story*, and the related research materials to make the case for the arts in education. The Partnership Web site provides a summary of and access to the best in advocacy materials currently available.
- The role of the arts in the learning and development of young children has been the work of the Partnership's Task Force on Children's Learning and the Arts: Birth to Age Eight. As a result, the Partnership is cooperating with the national Head Start program to produce new materials for children and care givers on using the arts to help every child achieve their highest potential.

## How Does the Partnership Work?

The Partnership adopts an annual action agenda to focus the collective efforts of its participating organizations on targets of opportunity for promoting and improving arts education. The agenda focuses on needs and issues at the national and state levels and is posted on the Partnership Web site.

Task Forces of participating organizations are formed to respond to critical national needs and issues. Current task forces include the following:

The Advocacy Task Force develops themes and strategies for collective action at the national, state, and local levels. The Partnership Web site lists current advocacy materials available from Partnership organizations. A major Partnership theme has been to show the role of arts education in preparing students for the 21st Century workforce.

The Research Task Force identifies priorities for arts education research, reviews research reports, and convenes arts and education researchers. The Task Force is advising the federal government on new surveys and reports on the status of arts education in America's schools.

The Assessment Task Force supports the arts assessments in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, "The Nation's Report Card," and promotes the use of appropriate arts assessments by states, school districts, and schools. The Partnership is cooperating in national public awareness campaigns using the results of the 1997 national arts assessment of eighth graders.

The Task Force on Children's Learning and the Arts: Birth to Age Eight issued a report with guidelines to assist organizations in developing new materials for schools, parents and care givers to create appropriate arts experiences for children from birth through age eight. The Task Force also is developing a database of research and effective programs and resources.

State departments of education, arts agencies, and the arts education alliances affiliated with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts form the core of Partnership State Teams. The national Partnership staff is a "switchboard" enabling national organizations and state teams to share information and resources to advance arts education in states and local communities.

The Partnership holds quarterly meetings open to all participating organizations to report on progress in the annual action agenda and the work of the Task Forces. The Partnership communicates regularly through its Web site, e-mail, listserv and fax system.

## How Do I Join?

The Partnership is a coalition of organizations that have national scope and impact. The CEO or appropriate senior staff member should contact the Partnership office to express a desire for the organization to participate.

Participating organizations are asked to:

- support the Partnership action agenda and communicate Partnership information regularly to their constituents and affiliates;
- send senior staff to Partnership quarterly meetings;
- assign senior staff to task forces of particular concern to their organization;
- maintain active communication with the Partnership and its participating organizations through its Web site, listserv, and fax system; and
- submit an organization profile and provide access to its directory of state affiliates or chapters.



# How Do I Find Out More About the Partnership?

Visit the Partnership Web site at <http://aep-arts.org>

Discover arts education resources available for practitioners and policy makers.

- arts education advocacy resources
- tips on securing Goals 2000 and other federal funds for arts education
- contact information for participating organizations and State Partnership Teams
- highlights of joint Partnership projects
- reports and news updates generated by the Partnership and participating organizations
- instructions to subscribe to our listserv

The Arts & Children: A Success Story  
The Partnership's 12-minute video featuring Meryl Streep, demonstrates the impact of quality arts education on student success. *The Arts & Children: A Success Story* is a powerful tool for promoting inclusion of the arts as a core content area in state and local curricula. By weaving together research, conversations with business and academic professionals, and scenes of elementary and secondary school students engaged in the arts, the video is a compelling testimonial to the strong, positive relationship between arts education, student performance, workplace skills and preparation for college.

To order the video and kit containing reproducible handouts, please contact our distributors: Americans for the Arts at 800/321-4510 ext. 241 and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies at 202/347-6352.

## Publications Available

*The Arts and Education: Partners in Achieving Our National Education Goals.* (1995)

*Priorities for Arts Education Research.* (1997)

*Young Children and the Arts: Making Creative Connections.* (1998)

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## Arts Education Partnership Steering Committee Members

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American Association of School Administrators  
American Federation of Teachers  
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U.S. Department of Education  
University of Michigan, School of Music \*  
Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts \*  
Young Audiences

\* Task Force Chairs

For a full list of organizations participating in the Partnership, visit our Web site.