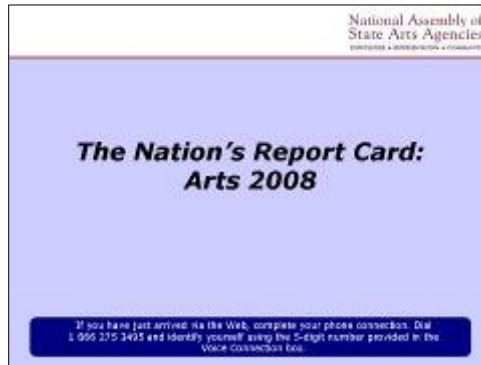


The Nation's Report Card: Arts 2008
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies Web Seminar
June 30, 2009
Abridged Transcript



<u>Introduction</u>	2
Angela Han, Director of Research, NASAA	
<u>Introduction to the Nation's Report Card</u>	2
Mary Crovo, Interim Executive Director, National Assessment Governing Board	
<u>Highlights from the Nation's Report Card: Arts 2008</u>	8
Angela Han, Director of Research, NASAA	
<u>Q & A Break</u>	14
<u>Implications for State Arts Agencies</u>	16
Doug Herbert, Special Assistant-Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education Jim Hull, Policy Analyst-Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association Kim Leavitt, Director of Arts Education, Tennessee Arts Commission	
<u>Advice for State Arts Agencies</u>	22
Jonathan Katz, Executive Director, NASAA	
<u>Resources</u>	24
Angela Han, Director of Research, NASAA	

Introduction

Angela Han, Director of Research, NASAA

Angela: Welcome everyone, and thanks for joining us. I'm Angela Han, Director of Research at the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. I'll be your moderator during today's web seminar on [The Nation's Report Card: Arts 2008](#). We know that arts education is an important area of focus for state arts agencies, so it's not surprising that a lot of members signed up for this session – we've got registrants representing over 40 state arts agencies.

Let's turn to today's agenda. We're going to start off with Mary Crovo, who's going to provide us with a general introduction to The Nation's Report Card. The Nation's Report Card is also known as the NAEP, or the National Assessment of Educational Progress, so you will hear all those phrases used interchangeably. She's going to talk about what the NAEP is, who administers it, and a little bit of the history of assessments in the arts. After this introduction, Mary will continue and share results from the most recent assessment. As many of you know, these results were published just two weeks ago by the U.S. Department of Education. Following Mary's remarks, I'm going to take some time to expand on some points that are of particular interest to you, our members. And then, I'm going to pause for a question and answer break. You can submit questions at any time through the "chat to" box, but we wanted to take a few minutes at this point to address any issues that might have come up. We're then going to move on into a discussion on the implications that this information has for state arts agencies. Doug Herbert, Jim Hull, and Kim Leavitt will serve as a "virtual panel" for this part. We've got a few questions lined up to kick off this discussion, but we're also really interested in hearing questions from you, our audience. Following our discussion, we'll hear some "advice for state arts agencies" from Jonathan Katz, NASAA's CEO. And then finally to close out the session, we're going to leave you with some resources – a couple of websites that you can go to learn more about the information you've heard today.

Now I'd like to hand things over to Mary Crovo. Mary is currently the Interim Executive Director with the National Assessment Governing Board.

Introduction to the Nation's Report Card

Mary Crovo, Interim Executive Director,
National Assessment Governing Board

Mary: Thank you very much, Angela and Eric. I appreciate this opportunity to meet with you all this afternoon. For those of you who are not quite as familiar with NAEP or the National Assessment of Educational Progress, we are a national survey assessment. We test in grades 4, 8, and 12. We do not test every child, but it is a very rigorous scientific sampling. It's also known in the media and in the public as the

Agenda National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
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Introduction to the Nation's Report Card (NAEP)
Mary Crovo, National Assessment Governing Board

Highlights from the Nation's Report Card: Arts 2008
Mary Crovo, National Assessment Governing Board
Angela Han, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies **Q&A**

Implications for State Arts Agencies
Doug Herbert, U.S. Department of Education
Jim Hull, National School Boards Association
Kim Leavitt, Tennessee Arts Commission **Discussion**
(more Q&A)

Advice for State Arts Agencies
Jonathan Katz, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Resources

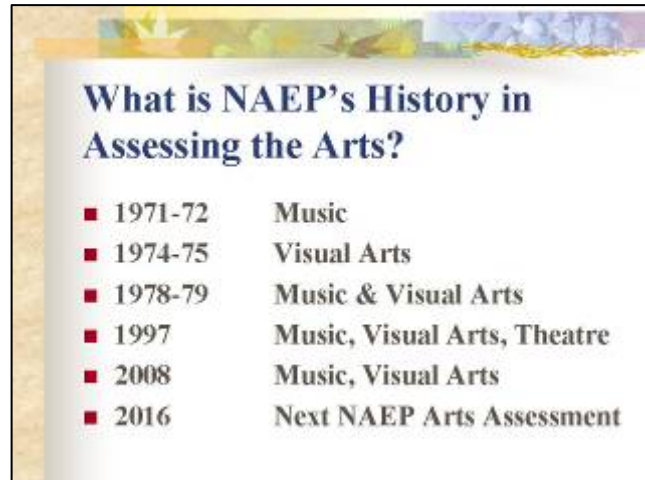
If you have just arrived via the Web, complete your phone connection. Dial 1.800.275.3495 and identify yourself using the 5-digit number provided in the Voice Connection box.

What is NAEP?

- National survey assessment of student achievement in grades 4, 8, and 12
- Known as "The Nation's Report Card"
- Nationally representative and continuing assessment of what U.S. students know and can do in various subjects
- Congressionally mandated project of the U.S. Department of Education

Nation's Report Card. NAEP has been around since 1969, is mandated by Congress, and is really the only common achievement yardstick that our nation has. It's the same assessment given across the country under the same conditions at the same time, so we can make very strong statements about what our students know and can do.

The Nation's Report Card contains a wide range of subjects. Most frequently people talk about reading, writing, math, and science. We cover a lot of the social studies, but the arts have always been an integral part of our Nation's Report Card. In fact, many people don't know that the arts were some of the first assessments. As you can see from the chart, music and visual arts were assessed twice in the early and then later in the late seventies. And after quite a long hiatus, at the encouragement and funding of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Getty Center, we created a framework - or a blueprint - for a brand new and very exciting assessment. Many of you may be familiar with the one that we did in music, visual arts, and theatre. That assessment was reported out from the 1997 school year. The framework also covers dance, although we were not able to assess dance because of low incidence of dance programs in our schools. We again were able to bring the arts back to our Nation's Report Card in this most recent assessment in 2008. As Angela reported, we released those results just two weeks ago. The next scheduled assessment for NAEP is in 2016, and the scope and content of that in terms of the number of arts disciplines and grade levels will be determined by Congressional funding.



What is NAEP's History in Assessing the Arts?	
■ 1971-72	Music
■ 1974-75	Visual Arts
■ 1978-79	Music & Visual Arts
■ 1997	Music, Visual Arts, Theatre
■ 2008	Music, Visual Arts
■ 2016	Next NAEP Arts Assessment

The framework was quite an interesting document. It occurred in the early nineties. We were conducting our project at the very same time that the National Standards for Arts Education were developed, and I mentioned the funders for that and the disciplines. The focus here is on creating, performing, and responding. Many people think, "Oh, NAEP, that's a standardized test with a bunch of multiple choice items." In arts and other subject areas that could not be further from the truth. We did actually have students engaging in all three of these aspects of the arts. For those of you who want to download a copy of the framework, it is available on our website.



What are Key Features of the NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework?	
■	Developed in parallel with the <i>National Standards for Arts Education</i>
■	NAEP Framework funded by the NEA, in collaboration with the Getty Center
■	Framework covers dance, music, theatre, and visual arts at 4 th , 8 th , and 12 th grades
■	Focus on creating, performing, and responding in each arts discipline
■	Framework available at www.nagb.org

What I'd like to do now is to share some of the slides from the press conference, held on June 15, presented by the National Center for Education Statistics. We had various commentators including Patrice Walker Powell from the National Endowment for the Arts; one of our own board members who is an accomplished pianist, Eileen Wiser; and some other folks. We were very excited to have that release in an arts school here in Washington, D.C.

I'd like to hit a few highlights of these results for you now today.

We tested all across the country, public and private school students in the 8th grade, almost 4000 across the country in music and the same number in visual arts. We focused on, in this case, “responding” in both music and visual arts and the “creating” component. There were some adjustments we had to make in the assessment, because we did not get the funding from Congress that we had anticipated for theatre or more components of the arts assessment. But we still feel that it is quite comprehensive and rigorous.

Overview of the 2008 Arts Assessment

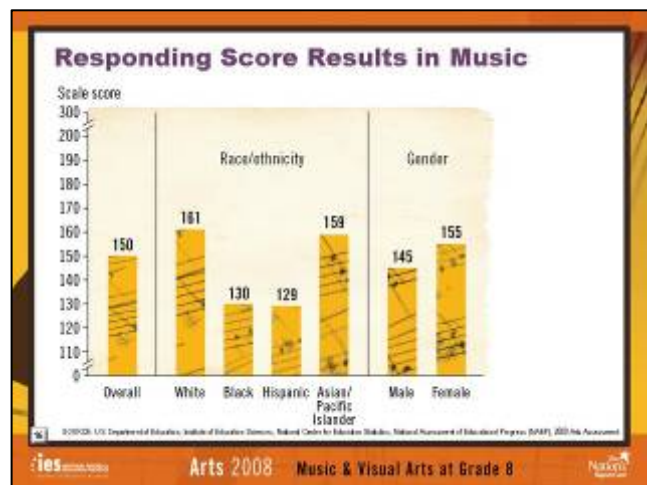
- Students assessed in music or visual arts
- Nationally representative sample of over 3,900 eighth-graders in each discipline
- Administered January–March 2008
- Questions measured students' abilities in the arts
 - Responding to music and visual arts
 - Creating visual arts

We report on a 0 to 300 scale for music and visual arts. For the creating tasks, it’s a different type of scale - the average percentage of the maximum possible score. I’ll talk about those numbers in a few minutes. We were able to make some limited comparisons between the 1997 arts assessment on the multiple choice questions only as well as some background questions which I will highlight in a few slides.

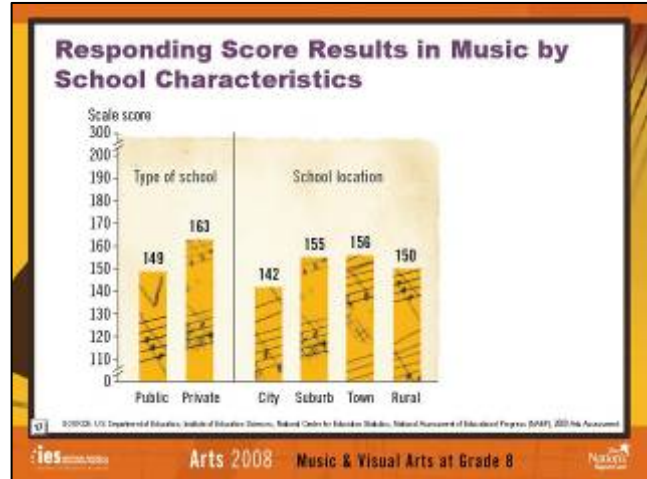
Reporting Arts Results

- Average responding scale scores
 - Separate 0 to 300 scales for music and visual arts
- Average creating task score
 - Average percentage of the maximum possible score in visual arts
- Comparisons to the 1997 arts assessment made for
 - Students' performance on multiple-choice questions
 - Students' participation in arts activities

Let’s move on to the music results. Here we have the responding score in music. Again, this is for a nationally representative sample of students in 8th grade. The students are randomly selected; schools are randomly selected. So we’re not just testing students who are currently in music education. You can see that the overall average is set at 150. We have differences by race/ethnicity and by gender and some large gaps, as you can see, between White and Asian-American as opposed to Black and Hispanic students and also gender differences. This is a very similar pattern to what we find in many of our subject areas.



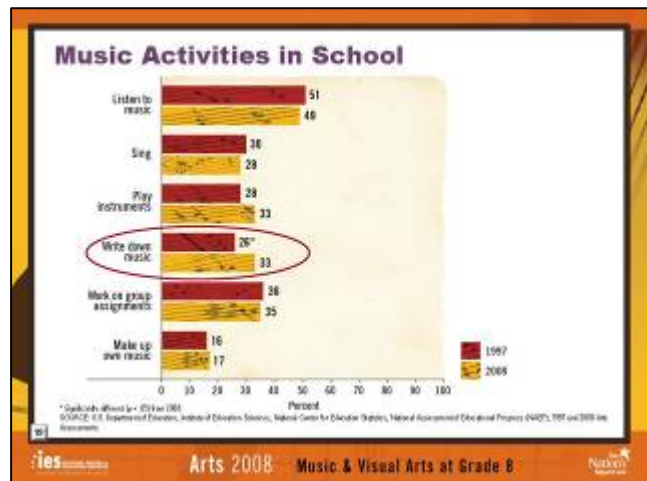
We also break down the type of school. We assessed both public and private schools. We can see differences here. And in school location, the significant differences were between the cities and the other types of school locations in terms of suburban, town, or rural.



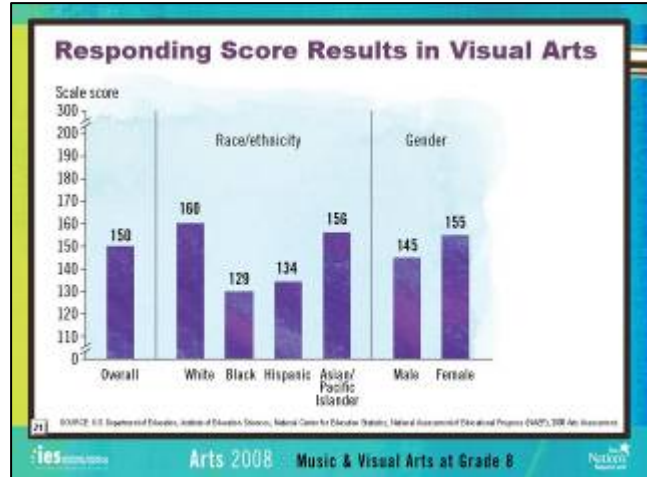
We had a lot of background questions that were asked of students and school administrators. In this case, principals responded that at least 3 or 4 times a week students were offered music instruction. Even though the difference is seemingly large, statistically that was not a significant increase from the 43% in 1997 to the 2008 data.



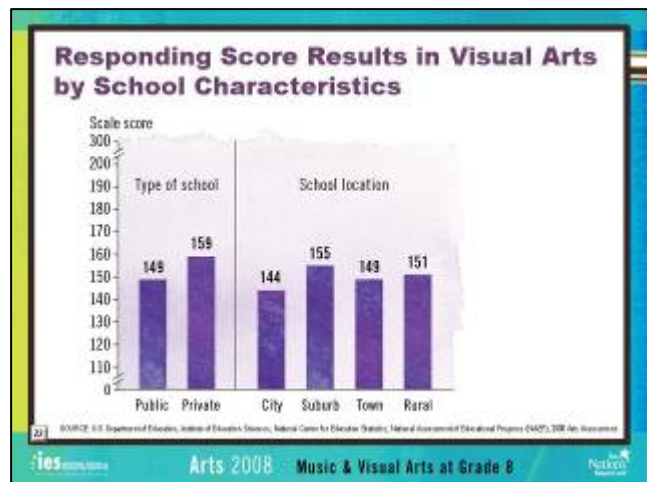
We had one significant difference here, and that is students being asked to write down music as part of their instructional program. That was a significant increase. We have no change in the other background variables, such as singing or playing instruments. So over that 11 year period, we saw mostly no change.



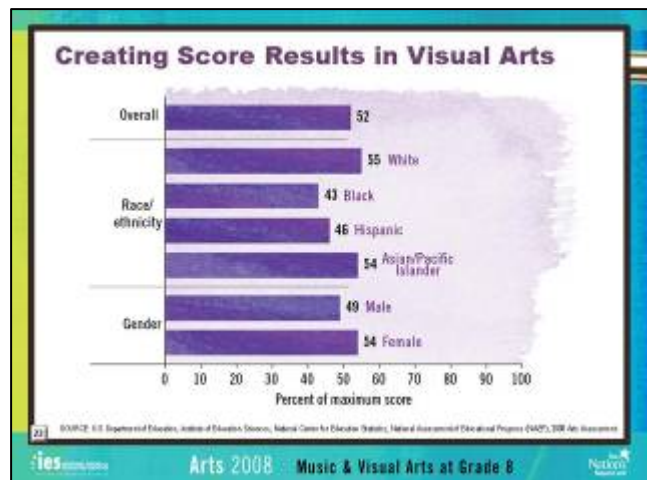
Now we'll move onto the visual arts data, very similar patterns to what we saw in music in terms of breakdowns by race/ethnicity and gender. Let me also mention that in four areas of the Nation's Report Card – reading, writing, math, and science – we have sufficient numbers of students in our sample to report out at the state level and also by large urban districts. In the arts with just 4000 students, we were only able to report out for the nation. We do not have state-by-state results that you may remember seeing as part of the Nation's Report Card in, for example, mathematics.



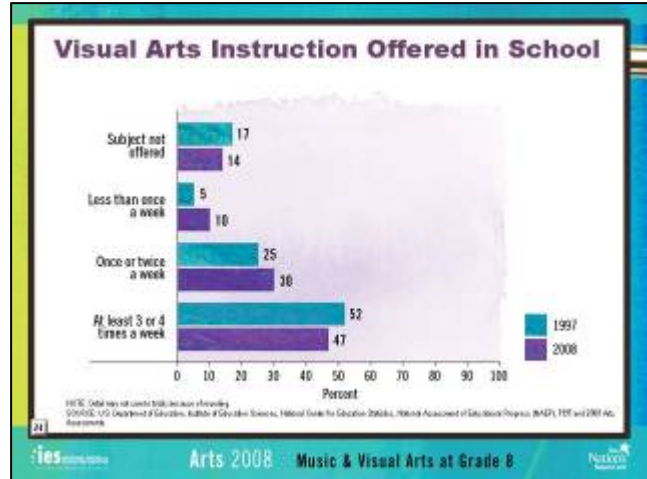
On the next slide - again similar pattern with the visual arts with type of school, public versus private, and then with school location - the difference there between the city schools versus the other school locations.



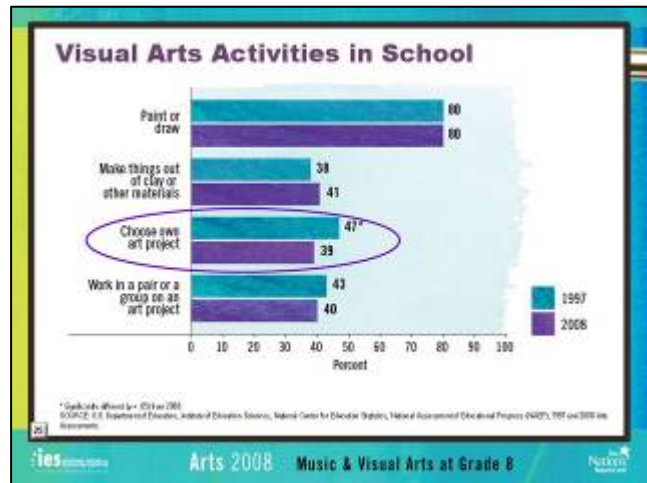
This is the creating score, the maximum possible points, and breakdowns between various race/ethnic students and by gender.



Again, this question was asked of school principals, and they responded, “How many times a week was visual arts instruction offered?” And here again we have no statistically significant differences. We do note that in 14% of the schools sampled, they reported absolutely no visual arts instruction. Again, these are for 8th grade middle school students.

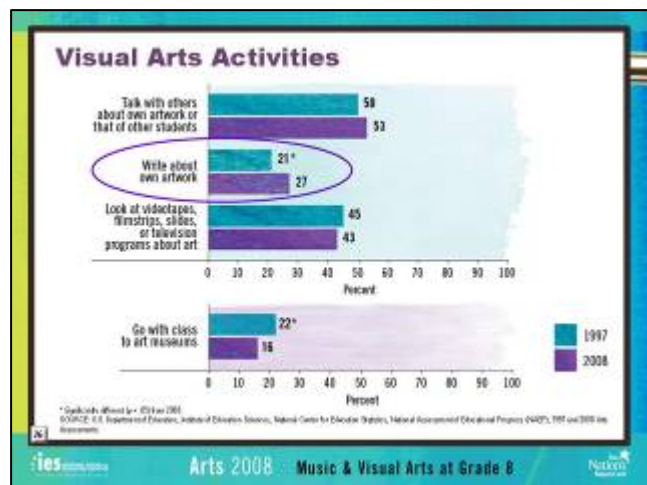


In terms of activities, we asked students what they do if they are taking a visual arts class. There was a significant decrease in the number of students responding that they were able to choose their own art project.



Then we go to the next slide, and we see that writing about their own artwork showed a significant increase. This is a mirror image, so to speak, of the same question asked about music. So students are actually writing about their visual arts and music experience. Then we also have, unfortunately, a significant decrease in the percentage of students who go to art museums with their class, dropping from 22% in 1997 to 16% in 2008 data.

Angela: Okay. Mary has shared with us some of the headlines from the NAEP. Mary, is there anything else you'd like to add ?



Mary: I do want to mention one thing. I know you'll bring up a slide with the website. The report itself is really geared toward the general public. It's just about 40 pages in length. As Angela said, I've hit some of the key findings. There is a tremendous amount of data on the web; lots of sample questions are released with samples of student work and performance and a great deal of background questions. These are all available on very easy to use software. That website will come up shortly, but we really do encourage folks to go in there and mine the data. I know a number of the arts groups are already planning activities related to this very rich resource of data on arts education. Thank you, Angela.

Angela: Thanks, Mary. As she mentioned there is a lot of data available, and she really did only touch on the highlights of the information that came through this assessment. Over here at NASAA, we've spent the last two weeks poring over this information and analyzing the data. We want to share with you today some of the key takeaways that we've come up with in looking at this information. You're always more than welcome, as Mary mentioned, to go to the website and look at the information yourself. You can also always contact NASAA. It's part of our job to offer you services like this in terms of looking at this type of information and offering help with analysis or interpretation.

Highlights from the Nation's Report Card: Arts 2008

Angela Han, Director of Research, NASAA

I want to touch on some of the key takeaways that we've found. The first couple of points that I want to touch on are applicable to advocacy. One thing I want to underline is that it has been many years since any kind of assessment of arts education has occurred at the national level, so it's really important to take advantage of this information when promoting the value of the arts. As important as this is from an advocacy perspective, I do also want to point out some limitations in this data. When it comes to using this information in order to make policy decisions, there are some caveats you should keep in mind.

Further Highlights

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Advocacy Points

- Room for improvement in student achievement
- Room for improvement in school arts offerings
- Persistence of gaps

Limitations

- Achievement comparisons not possible
- Incomplete assessment
- Limited trends over time
- Be aware of statistical significance

The first point I want to make is that it's important to realize that there is room for improvement with regard to student achievement. In looking at the music scores, for example, which is what we've got up on the screen, even students who were relatively high-performing only scored 194 out of a possible 300.

Further Highlights

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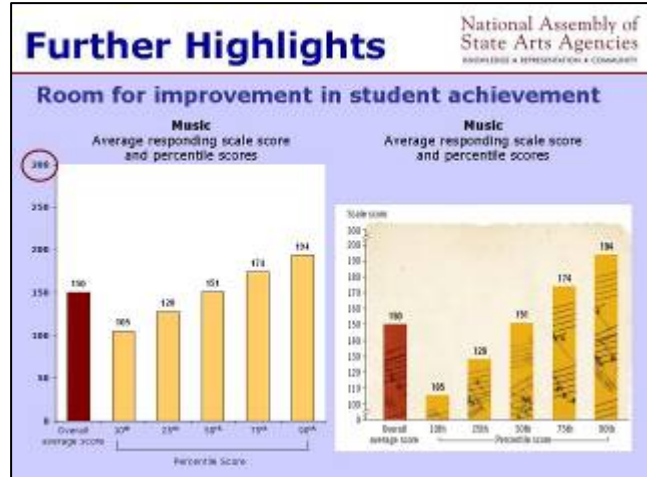
Room for improvement in student achievement

Music

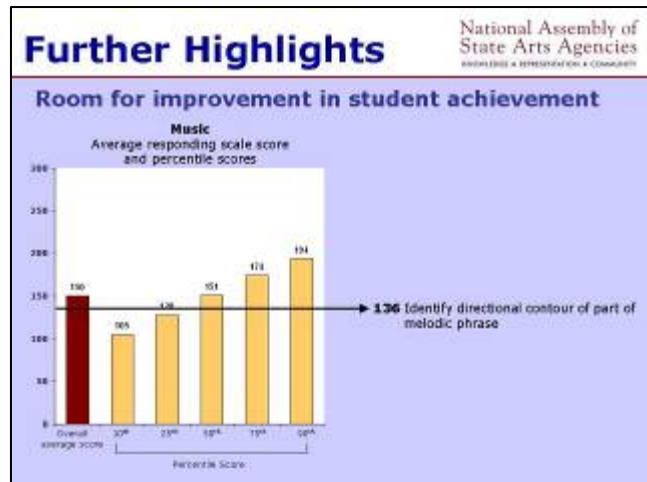
Average responding scale score and percentile scores

Percentile Score	Scale Score
Overall average score	190
10th	105
25th	128
50th	150
75th	174
90th	194

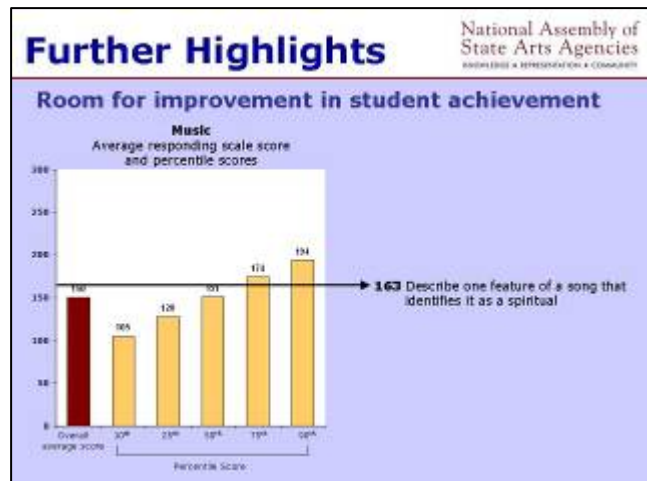
One thing to note in the graph we've got up, which I took directly from the NAEP highlights report, it reduces the score scale at both the top and the bottom. That's useful when publishing information in a report. But if we were to actually extend the scale out to the proper length, you'll notice that it's much more obvious that even the high-performing students with a score of 194 falls far short of the maximum score.



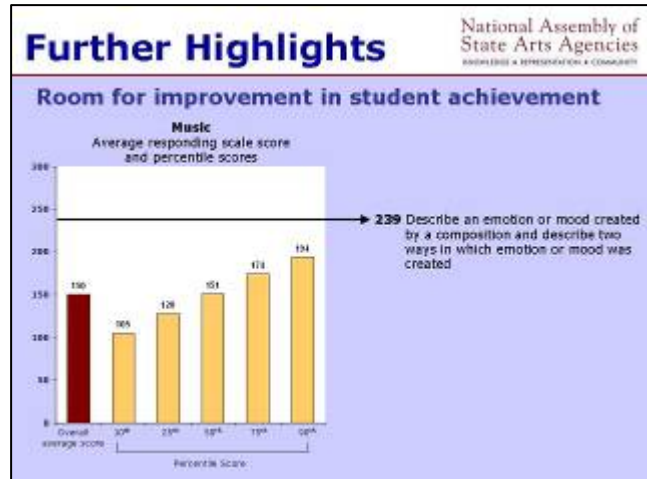
To help understand these scale scores, the NAEP provides examples of knowledge, content, and skills that are typical of students at certain scores. For example, students who score at 136 - which is a little bit below the average of 150 - are capable of identifying the directional contour of a melodic phrase.



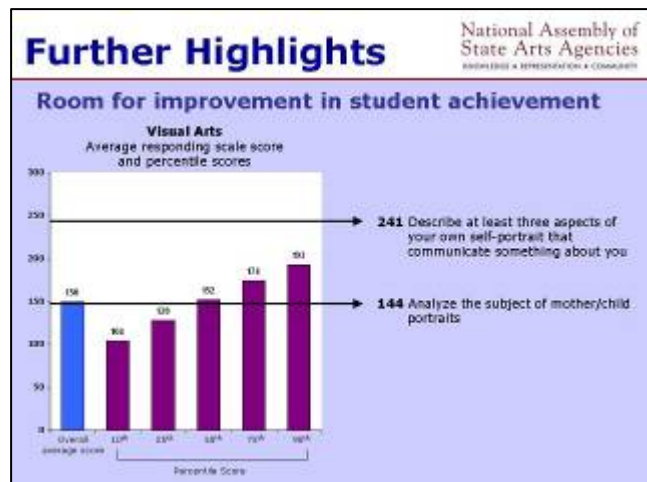
Students scoring at 163 - which is a little bit above the average - can describe at least one feature of a spiritual.



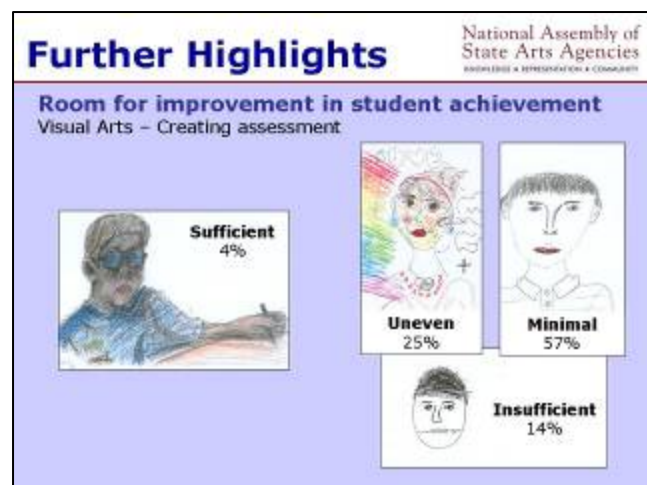
If we were to go up to the high end of the scale score, note that even the highest performing students could not, in general, do something like provide a description of how emotion or mood was created in a musical composition.



Similarly for the visual arts scores, students performing about average could do things like analyze the subject of a series of mother/child portraits. Again if we look at the high end of the scale, even the highest-performing students could not provide a description of several aspects of their own self-portraits.



When we move onto examining results for the creating portion of the visual arts assessment, note that only 4% of students were rated “sufficient,” and “sufficient” in this case was the highest rating possible. Students that were rated “sufficient” demonstrated that they were able to produce works where they could show clear and specific observations that communicated something important about themselves, that they could incorporate identifying detail in terms of personal features, and that they could make purposeful use of compositional elements and sophisticated use of materials.



For both music and visual arts, what students are capable of doing falls far short of the entire breadth of this particular assessment. That is an important advocacy point to keep in mind.

Not only is there room for improvement in terms of student achievement, there's actually room for improvement in terms of school arts offerings. When the NAEP was administered in 1997, it was discovered that it was not possible to conduct a representative assessment in dance or theatre because not enough schools offered instruction in these subjects. Consequently, as Mary mentioned, the national assessment was only conducted in music and visual arts, and then there was a targeted assessment in theatre. The most recent U.S. Department of Education statistics that we have show that less than half of secondary schools offer any sort of theatre instruction and only 14% offer dance. For this last NAEP, understand that many factors went into deciding the extent of the assessment. But it was eventually decided that it was most appropriate and affordable to assess only music and visual arts. I've actually had several conversations already with people about the lack of assessment in theatre and dance. Keep in mind that this information in and of itself is actually an advocacy statement: we don't currently have enough dance or theatre education going on in this country for a national study to be feasible. That's an advocacy point that's important to let people know about.

Further Highlights National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
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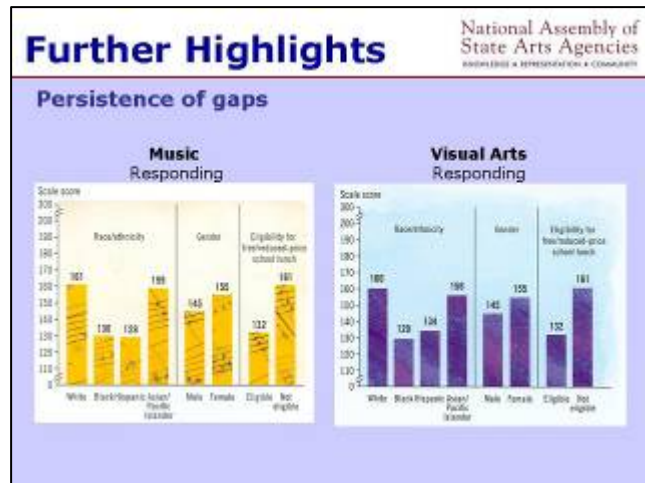
Room for improvement in school arts offerings

"...small percentages of students were exposed to comprehensive theatre programs in the nation's schools."

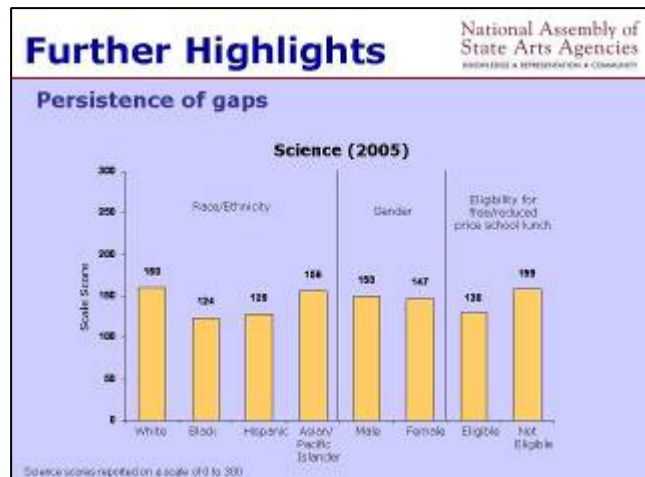
"...after considerable effort, a sample suitable in size and national distribution could not be found [for dance]."

From the 1997 Assessment

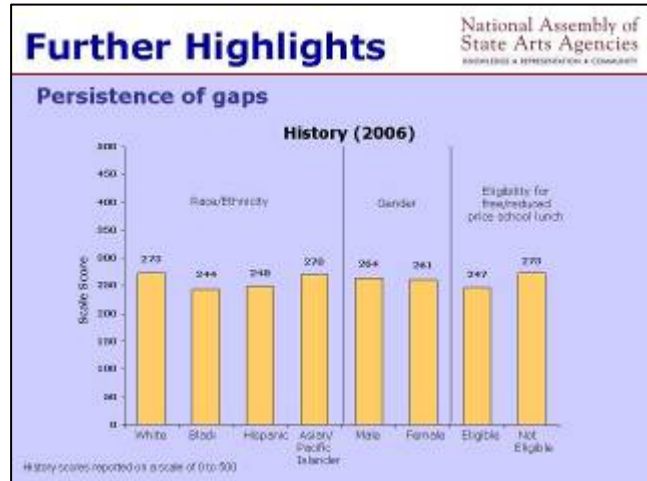
I also want to talk a little bit about the persistence of gaps. That's one of the points that Mary touched on earlier, and I want to reiterate this. You can see that gaps exist in both music and visual arts scores in terms of race and ethnicity, if scores are broken down by gender and there are also gaps, and then also by poverty level which here we've got demonstrated by looking at students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.



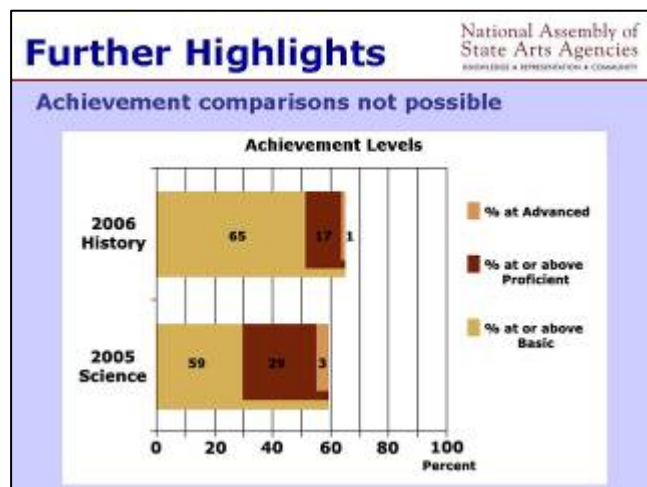
To put this in context, let's take a look at some of the other subject assessments. For example, if you look at the science assessment, you can see that similar gaps exist when looking at scores broken down by these groups.



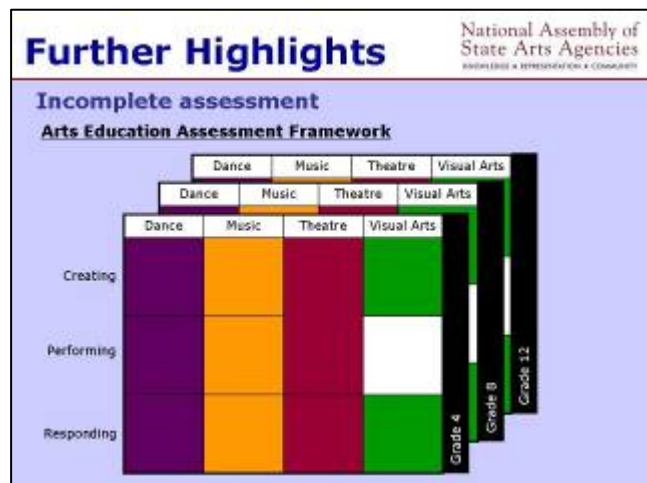
If we were to look at the history assessment, you can see that similar gaps exist as well. In fact, if you were to look at other subjects, you would see a similar pattern. In this way, that we're demonstrating equity gaps, the arts are like every other subject that are being assessed.



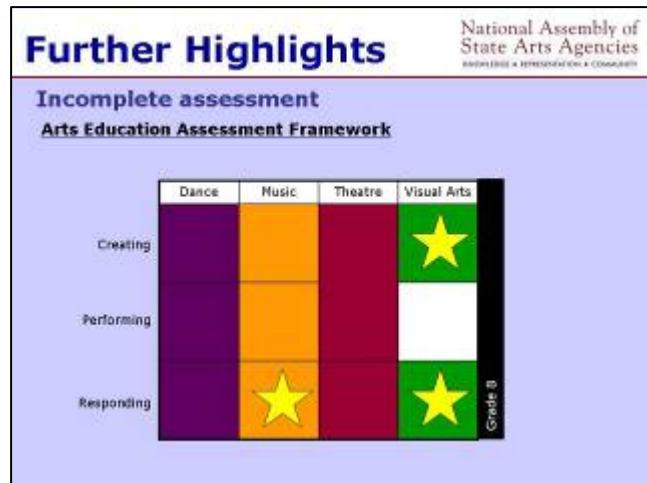
Looking at other subjects leads us to one of the limitations that I wanted to touch on about this information. Unlike other subjects, achievement levels were not set for the arts assessment. These achievement levels are performance standards that show what students know and can do. In other subjects, specific achievement levels are established for each grade in order to provide a context for interpreting student performance. They are widely used by national and state officials to help understand trends. Keep in mind that there's a variety of reasons why achievement levels don't exist in the arts, but what it means is that we're without a tool for understanding these results that other subjects have.



Another limitation I want to point out is that the framework that was developed and used for both the 1997 and 2008 NAEP wasn't actually implemented fully in this last assessment.



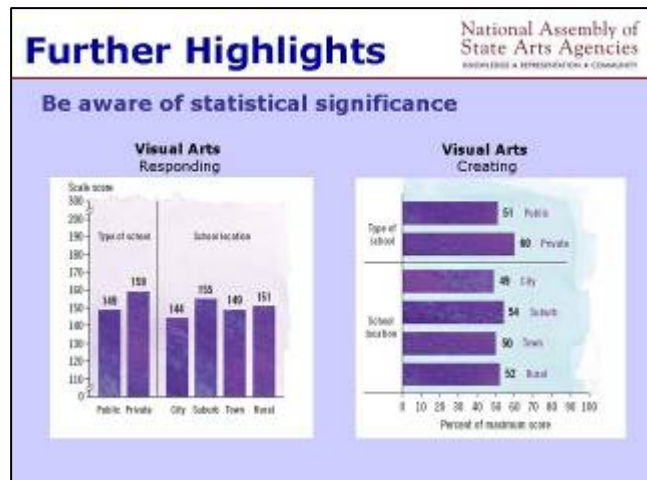
The framework describes the skills and knowledge that should be measured with regard to creating, responding, and performing across four arts disciplines and at three grade levels. This last assessment only covered a small portion of the framework.



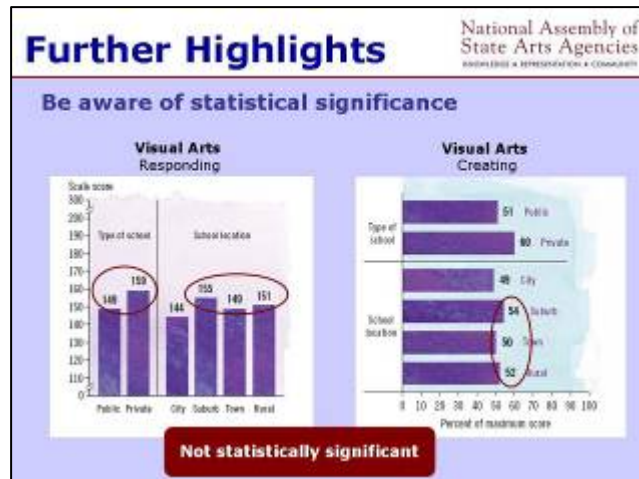
I also want to touch on the limited use of trends over time. Although the assessment was similar to the one administered in 1997, it's important to note that only a portion of the results can be compared over time. So it's important to note that overall scores cannot be compared because of differences in scoring procedures. While both assessments contained a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions, it's only the multiple choice questions that are comparable as well as some of the questions about participation.



When Mary was pointing out some of these results and pulled up some results that showed trends over time for participation, you'll notice that some of these results were stated as having "no change" even though that actual numbers that showed participation rates were different. This leads me to the final point I want to make, which is about a phrase that you hear quite frequently when you read education research. That phrase is "statistical significance."



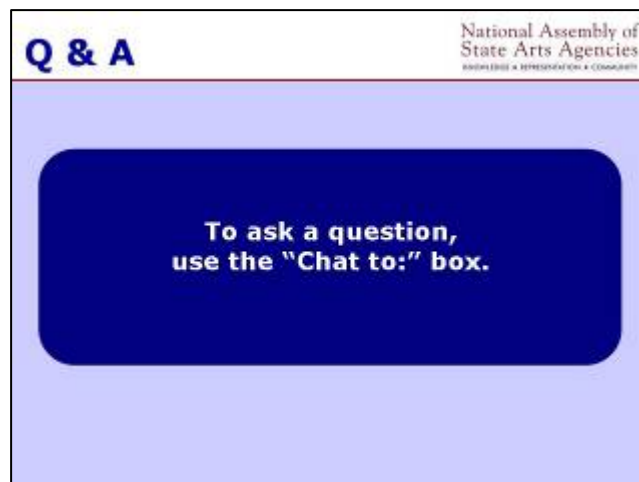
All of the numbers that we've talked about today contain some margin of error, and that's inherent to this type of research. You're always going to read about "margins of error" and "statistical significance" in education research. When comparing different numbers, it's important to understand that one number may not actually be lower or higher than another if it falls within this margin of error. For example, the graph on the right shows creating scores for the visual arts assessment, and it's broken down by different types of schools and school locations. The apparent differences between the scores for suburb, town, and rural schools are actually not statistically significant. And Mary did point that out when she put up the slide earlier. These scores actually fall within a margin of error, so these scores are considered to be equal to each other. Even seemingly large differences can fall within a margin of error and are therefore not considered statistically significant. Please keep this in mind when you read through this or any other type of research.



Q & A Break

What I want to do right now is to pause here to take a few questions about the results you just heard. I see a couple of questions have come through the queue.

I was hoping that Mary could answer a question first. She mentioned first that in 1997 when this assessment was developed, a lot of people had a lot of questions about whether or not you could actually assess in the arts. Mary, I'm wondering if you could address that a little bit: the fact that you can assess in the arts and maybe how this changed the way that the National Assessment Governing Board does their assessments in other subjects.



Mary: Thank you, Angela. That's exactly right. When we convened the large panels in the early nineties to develop the framework for the 1997 assessment, we had folks in the room from dance, theatre, music, and visual arts representing a wide range of constituencies including teachers, curriculum people, researchers, practicing artists, policy makers, and of course testing folks. There was a great deal of discussion about how to develop authentic performance-based assessments in the arts to assess arts activities in addition to obviously factual knowledge. The group came up with some amazing guidelines that are actually detailed in the framework, and then there is a larger set of what we call specifications or a detailed blueprint. It talks about, for example, theatre improvisation that was not assessed in 2008. But there are some very specific criteria for creating those assessment tasks, and we actually had groups of students in 1997 engage in some theatre improv. We video taped it, and there were specific criteria for scoring. Arts people point out that the arts have been evaluating themselves for millennia. This is not new. What was groundbreaking, I think, was putting these sets of criteria in very explicit writing so that when we did this assessment we felt very confident that we would have a sound, objective, well-designed

measure. It wasn't just "what people thought" or "art appreciation." They were very good guidelines. That played a huge role in informing professional development across the country in the arts and also in how we're doing assessments in other areas – performance-based assessments, for example, in science.

Angela: We've got a couple of questions in the queue now. Mary, we've got two that maybe you could best address. The first one is from Maya Nye, and she's wondering if the Appalachian region is represented in the data or if there's any kind of regional data available.

Mary: We have regional data. It is basically Northeast, South, Midwest, and West. The Appalachian region - of course - transcends South and Northeast, depending on which part of the Appalachians you're speaking about. But we don't break it down in that level of detail by region.

Angela: Okay. So for example, if someone wanted to go and explore the data on the website, they could break it down by those four major regions?

Mary: Right. So if you're from Tennessee, for example, you would look at data from the South. That would be where Tennessee students would be included.

Angela: Okay. We've also got a question from Lisa Jaret. Lisa is wondering whether the students who were assessed in the arts were the same students who were assessed in other subject areas. If so, were any correlations observed?

Mary: No, we only assess students on one subject area at a time so that we reduce the burden. We're only in schools for about 50 to 90 minutes in terms of the actual assessment time. So they don't test in other subjects such as reading or math. Unfortunately, we don't have correlations like that.

Angela: Okay. We've also got a question from Karen Anderson. Karen is wondering about Native American data.

Mary: I believe there are some Native American data on the web. I'm not sure if the sample sizes were large enough to report out separately, however. That's something we could check into. Whatever is on the web would be things that we could report.

In most of the other subject areas, because we had such large samples, say in reading and math, we do report out Native American students as a separate racial/ethnic category.

Angela: Okay. We have a question from Mandy Buscas, who was wondering if there is any data showing the difference participating in the arts in terms of thought process and developing key intelligence traits.

Mary: No, we do not collect that information.

Angela: Okay. I'm actually wondering if that's a question we can repeat when we have our virtual discussion panel. I think some of our panelists might have some thoughts on that. There's also a question from the National Arts Endowment; there's a couple of folks on staff who are listening in. They're wondering if there's any discussion on how the 2016 methods will differ from 2008.

Mary: We haven't begun those discussions. We will be doing that very soon. I like the graphic that Angela showed about which portions of the framework we have been able to assess most recently in 2008. There were a lot of components of that framework that were not assessed. A lot of that does rely on the amount of Congressional appropriations that we do get in the coming years. We're also looking at

potentially moving to computer-based assessments in the arts. We're already going in that direction for science and writing. So there are many opportunities for some very innovative types of questions even well above and beyond what we had in 1997 and 2008, particularly with visual media.

Angela: Okay. We've got a second question from Lisa. She was wondering, when I pointed out the other achievement gaps that are present in other subjects as well as in the arts, it looked to her that the gaps in the arts were much more significant than those other subjects. Any thoughts on this? I'm actually not quite sure if that's true. And I don't know, Mary, if you've got that information off the top of your head.

Mary: It really does range. As you can see in some of the social studies, the gender gaps are very minimal. In some grades and some subjects, in say reading, you do have a large gender gap. So it really does range. I wouldn't say that they are larger than any of the others.

Implications for State Arts Agencies

Doug Herbert, Special Assistant-Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education

Jim Hull, Policy Analyst-Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association

Kim Leavitt, Director of Arts Education, Tennessee Arts Commission

Angela: These are all really great questions. I want to move on to our next section of this web seminar, and that's where we're going to have our panel talk about some of the implications for state art agencies. First of all, I'd like to introduce our panelists.

We've got with us today Doug Herbert who is currently with the U.S. Department of Education, serving as a Special Assistant in the Office of Innovation and Improvement. Many members are very familiar with Doug because of his history with the National Endowment for the Arts where he was the Director of Arts Education for many years.



We also have with us Kim Leavitt, and she is the Director of Arts Education with the Tennessee Arts Commission. Kim also currently serves as the chair for NASAA's Arts Education Advisory Group.

Finally, we have with us today Jim Hull who is a Policy Analyst with the Center for Public Education, an initiative of the National School Boards Association. The Center is a national resource for accurate, timely, and credible information about public education. It is intended for a variety of audiences including state and local policymakers, educators, community leaders, parents, and really everyone and anyone concerned with public education.

I'd like to thank these folks for being with us today. As I mentioned in the beginning, I've got a few questions to start off this discussion, but we're really encouraging participants to submit their own. If you'd like to ask your question in person, just send me a chat message saying so, and we'll unmute your phone line. If you'd prefer to have me read your question, that's perfectly fine since that's what we just did in the last Q&A, and you can just send the question itself to me via chat.

My first question has to do with the national media attention that the arts assessment has received in the past few weeks. What we've got up on the screen here are some of the headlines that have appeared in the press. You can see we've got *USA Today*, *New York Times*, and *Christian Science Monitor*; they've all put out articles about the arts assessment. There were also articles from *Education Week* and the Associated Press that came out in the last few days. I wanted our panelists to first just comment on this media attention. I'm hoping Doug could start us off. Doug, what's your reaction to all of this press?

Doug: Well Angela, I was personally very impressed with the attention given by the national press. I was impressed by the fact that the takeaway for the press in almost every coverage in these papers was that kids are doing poorly. I think the words were “mediocre,” “middling,” and “lackluster.” I think we really need to take heed in terms of the fact that we don't have kids performing at the kinds of levels that we would consider to be proficient, even though we don't have the same levels in the NAEP arts as we do in the math and reading. We need to be concerned about that, not only as arts educators and arts advocates, but as parents and policy makers in the schools. It's one thing to say the arts are there, but it's another thing to say that they're there and they're robust. I don't think we can say they're robust at this point, at least not at the 8th grade.

Angela: Thanks, Doug. Kim, do you want to respond next about this national media attention?

Kim: I think I shared Doug's surprise and pleasure that it actually was covered in major media outlets, but he makes a good point about the student responses to the assessment. For state arts agencies, most of us do professional development for educators. I think it really shows us an area where we can really shore up the training that we provide to arts specialists in understanding how to teach the arts as rigorous academic subjects in addition to opportunities to create and perform. It's a crucial combination. Also strengthening partnerships with higher education pre-service programs to make sure there's exposure to national arts standards for emerging teachers. One of the interesting things in the assessment was that there was more time spent in visual art and music classes writing. I think that is relevant to the end-of-the-year state tests that students take, that more of that instructional time during arts classes is being devoted to skills that help increase writing skills for those end-of-the-year tests. That may have some impact on the quality of that instruction or the depth of that instruction.

Angela: Jim, I'm wondering if you could comment now for a few minutes about this national media attention. You've got a slightly different perspective that I think our members would really benefit from hearing, because you're not purely focused on arts education but you rather tend to look at public education at large. So can you just talk a little bit about this media attention and how that compares to, maybe, other research or reports?

Jim: Absolutely. I think the national attention really goes to the fact that many are concerned both at the local and national level that there's a narrowing of the curriculum, that the kids are not getting as rich, in-depth, and well-rounded an education as they once were, especially since No Child Left Behind with its focus on math and reading. So I think the press is very interested in subjects like the arts and whether it's reaching all students, or whether we're concentrating too much on math and reading. The fact that these

national papers have been picking up the arts results is really encouraging and helps keep those policy makers cognitive of the fact that art is part of a well-rounded education.

Other NAEP results sometimes don't get the same type of media attention, at least not the national results, because many newspapers are so focused on state level results. They love those comparisons. So when a report just comes up with the national results like the NAEP's arts and it gets this much media attention, it really gets down to the fact that people are really concerned out there that students are not going to get the well-rounded education that they want or they deserve.

Angela: That's really great and interesting to hear that other national studies in other subjects maybe don't get quite the attention that we've been able to get in the arts. So you touched on something that I wonder if you can expand on and if you could maybe comment on more, and then I'll ask Doug and Kim to jump in, and that's the implications for education policy. How can we help policy makers understand the value of arts education? How can we take this information and present it in a way that policy makers would find useful?

Jim: Taking national data at its face value is kind of challenging to apply to how you influence local policy and local curriculum. What this really shows is that kids are getting a dab of arts education here and there. Kids are getting some arts, as Doug has talked about, but there's a real question on the rigor of the arts education that they're actually getting. And that can have real implications.

As Kim talked about, kids are starting to write more about the arts. That raises the question: Are schools now integrating arts with other subjects and really enhancing skills in both of those areas? Each individual school district can look at what's going on in their schools and what's going on with their arts curriculums. How it is not only a part of the curriculum, but how it supports the rest of the curriculum, with every other subject, trying to get out of these silos of just one subject, where teachers can teach beyond their one subject and really create that more well-rounded education.

There's a whole lot of data here, and you can find out where the holes in the arts education are. One of the examples is from NAEP math. Over the years of taking the NAEP math assessment, they've come to realize that students who take Algebra in 8th grade are better performing in math, not only in the 8th grade but beyond. So that really was the apex of the push to get Algebra in 8th grade or at least in 9th grade for all students to really keep on track for math. The arts NAEP assessment can be that engine that pushes the arts curriculum in the future.

Angela: Doug or Kim, would either of you like to jump in and comment a little about the implications for education policy or decision makers?

Kim: I think one thing we have to acknowledge is that we're just looking at 8th grade here. Had the full assessment been done with the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades, we might be looking at a different picture. Eighth grade is such a black hole in terms of arts education, and it was really interesting in the study to see that principals reported students had arts experiences three or four times a week. I think if that poll had been done of the arts specialists, there might have been a different response. In terms of the scope of arts education being offered in schools, we're only getting a partial picture in 8th grade. But for policy makers, really until there is accountability for offering the arts as part of the core curriculum, I don't know that much change is going to happen.

One of the things that No Child Left Behind taught us, if anything, is how schools respond to accountability at a national level. That message was clear from the top down: schools will be held accountable for math, reading, and science or there will be dire consequences. And districts and state departments of education responded to that. So how do we get that kind of response to the arts? I'm not

advocating for the strict demands of No Child Left Behind to be applied to arts education. But it does show that when there is accountability in place, things happen. While at the national level we do hear acknowledgment of the arts as part of the core curriculum, it is up to the districts to recognize, fund, and implement the arts as part of the school day. So until there's some sort of accountability to make sure that happens, I don't know that we'll see much change in 2016.

Angela: Doug, do you have anything that you want to add?

Doug: I would just piggyback on something that Kim said. I'm not a visual art educator, but I was very intrigued that only 4% of the 8th graders could do a sufficient self-portrait. And I wondered if behind that statistic is a real paucity - to be nice about the term - of instructional opportunities for those kids that weren't sufficient, the 96%, in the formative years K-5. We want more kids to take pre-algebra at 8th grade, they wouldn't be able to perform very well if they weren't getting a foundation toward that in basic computation, multiplication, addition, subtraction, and so on in those early grades. That only 4% of students on the arts assessment could do a sufficient job on their portraits is very troubling - what was then happening in the seven years before the assessment when that portrait was rendered?

Angela: That's a great point. There's something else that Kim mentioned that I have a question about. Kim mentioned that 8th grade is kind of a black hole, and you mention there's the first seven years of instruction, and I'm wondering: What do you think is going on or what do you guess is going on with arts learning at the younger or maybe the older levels? Are there any conclusions that we can draw from looking at just the 8th grade assessment?

Kim: Primarily, in middle schools or 8th grade for music, students have the choice of band or choir, if they have a choice. In visual art, it's usually a general visual art class. Where in elementary schools, they'll have more general music education courses where there's more of an opportunity for specialists to work in academic standards. Where by the time they get to 8th grade, when they have 45 minutes a week to get the "Star-Spangled Banner" for the Homecoming game, that music specialist is going to use every spare minute they have to make sure that the end product is of quality. I think the process gets lost in that because there's not enough time to really go into depth with the arts. They get math and science and language arts every single day. But if you have a specialist that has one shot at music during the week, or visual art, your hands are tied.

Doug: I'll jump in and say one of the other things I was thinking about. Because we don't have a lot of statistical data on what the conditions are at the elementary grades, I should put a plug in for the fact that we are going to have another of what we call a Fast Response Survey - the instrument that's used by the Department of Education in gathering that data. That's going to happen this fall with a thousand principals each at the elementary and secondary level. Then next spring we're going to hear from arts specialists from music and visual arts, that is, at the elementary and secondary as well as classroom teachers. So it's a year to two years off before we have a partial and then a complete picture, respectively, of that data.

The thing that I was thinking about was that we need to have a discussion with policy makers about the foundational nature of arts education that must happen in those K-5th grade years. It's so critical to put that foundation in place. I've always believed that if you do that, you build a demand within the system on the part of parents for the most part. In other words, if they come to expect sequential arts education by the end of 5th grade, they're likely to ask where it is when the kids get into middle school.

The other thing I would love to hear more about are some of the principals that we hear from in the A+ Schools in places around the country. You say to them, "How did you manage to have this arts-focused curriculum in the face of this pressure to have test scores in math and reading up to Annual Yearly

Progress levels?” Almost to a person, those principals will say, “I did what was right for kids, and that included putting the arts in the center of what was going on in the school, and I knew that the test scores were going to take care of themselves.” I think we need to hear from more of those leaders who can share those stories. I know that’s not extremely rigorous in terms of that kind of evaluative data; it’s more anecdotal. But we’re looking a lot more now at the question of leadership in schools – not just administrators, that person who occupies that front office - but a leader. I believe that many of those A+ Schools have the benefit of these extraordinary leaders who understand that the arts really do play that kind of a catalytic role with the rest of the curriculum.

Angela: Thanks, Doug. I want to move onto some questions that participants have started submitting. There’s a question from Mandy Buscas. She is wondering if No Child Left Behind is being revamped to include process participation in the arts rather than linear-based. Any of you can jump in and respond if you’ve got a response for that question.

Doug: Could she clarify just a bit what she means by “process versus linear?”

Mandy: Yes. This is Mandy, I’m with the Arizona Commission on the Arts. We’ve taken this opportunity to open up this webinar to our constituents. So this is actually a question from one of our constituents. Maybe she can help clarify.

AZ Constituent: There are some examples of this kind of sampling done in other parts of the country. Dallas has a really good model in which they sample kids’ participation in the arts in a very process-oriented way, to see how the kids are doing when they sample the process the kids are using to create art. It seems like No Child Left Behind is very linear in the way it tests kids, and the way this sample tests kids is very linear - somewhat more black-and-white rather than sampling them from a process-oriented point of view.

Doug: Mary, do you want to respond to that from a NAEP standpoint? I would just interject and say we are hearing now that reauthorization of No Child Left Behind is likely to happen after the beginning of the next calendar year with the new Congress that comes in January. I don’t have a crystal ball to tell you what’s going to happen with reauthorization. I think we should all stay tuned. It’s way too early for anyone to make any prognostications, I think. To the extent that the question might also be relevant to the way that NAEP assessments are done as the national barometer, Mary, do you want to respond?

Mary: Thank you. I would agree with Doug on the No Child Left Behind. I don’t have that crystal ball in my repertoire either. But as far as NAEP goes, not only in the arts but in science and writing, we have a newly-emerging technological literacy assessment that are all very exciting in terms of process - not just linear types of thinking and learning. A lot of those questions are coming out as released questions on the NAEP website. We’ve got computer-based simulation tasks, design tasks coming out of technological literacy. So we’re definitely moving in that direction.

Angela: Great. Mary, while we’ve got you unmuted, there were actually a couple of questions specific to the NAEP that folks have put in. One is: Have there been any discussions about increasing the sample size for 2016? What’s the sample size in other subject areas? And then there’s another question. This is from the South Carolina Arts Commission wondering how students were selected to be tested. I’m wondering if you could just answer those briefly.

Mary: Sure. As I said earlier, for the 2016 we have not had any discussions about scope or sample size. We would hope to propose, maybe, more grade levels or more arts areas that would be included. But of course this is contingent upon Congressional funding. In other subjects, we have much larger samples because, for example in reading and mathematics, we have state-by-state samples. So at a given grade

level, say grade 4, three thousand students in each of the 50 states are sampled for NAEP. That results in some tremendously large sample sizes. We also test in large urban districts and report out by district level for Chicago and L.A. and New York, for example.

Students are randomly selected within schools. We look at a complete class roster and have a random sampling so that all students have an equal chance, an equal probability of selected. They are not just students who may be participating in a music or a visual arts program.

Angela: Thanks for answering those questions, Mary. I want to make sure we got to another question for our three panelists to talk about: the implications specifically for state arts agencies. I know each of you has touched on this a little bit, but I'm wondering if we could just focus in on that for a few minutes. Kim, I'm hoping you can start us off by commenting on what you see as really important in this information. What kinds of questions do you think are important for state arts agencies to ask themselves about this?

Kim: Looking at the scope of the assessment itself, and the limited funding that was provided for it, reconfirms that when there are budget restrictions funding for arts education still takes a back seat. I don't think that's going to be a shocking revelation to any of us, but it's important to acknowledge that it exists. It is part of what we live in. It's something that we have to figure out how to deal with. How can we make the arts as valuable to the core curriculum as science, math, and language arts are to people outside of the arts arena? Why should policy makers include the arts as part of the core curriculum? Clearly, when it comes to funding an assessment to figure out why, that support isn't there. So advocacy work is always crucial for arts education, but the message of "art for art's sake" doesn't work. I think Mandy touched on a really good point about when the arts are integrated into the curriculum, how does that impact higher-order thinking skills? Not just offered as part of core arts experiences but in every classroom integrated into different subjects?

So I think it's a great starting point for state arts agencies to reevaluate the existing investment they've made in arts education and the existing resources that they have devoted, whether that's programming or staff. Change will be slower coming at a national level than it will at a state or district level, but we can really make headway in our own respective states. I know many state arts agencies already have with large-scale arts integration initiatives and different arts learning programs. It's definitely a great tool for self-reflection.

Angela: Thanks, Kim. Jim or Doug, I'm wondering if you have anything to add onto that or anything that you'd like state arts agencies to think about from your particular perspective.

Doug: I seems to me that states are at point where they are starting to revisit the question of what the standards are calling for, as a result of the 42-or-so states about to embark on incorporating internationally benchmarked standards starting out with reading and math. In other cases, states have determined that it has been almost 15 years since their standards in the arts were developed.

This NAEP assessment can be a good entrée to the discussion: What do we really expect of kids? How, more importantly, are we going to develop new standards? How are we going to get to the kids performing and learning at the level of those standards? Use the 8th grade assessment as an example. Let's not say, "We failed, so let's just give up the effort." Instead let's say, as the Secretary said in his statement, "We can and should do better for America's students." I think that message has to be echoed. Maybe the place to echo it is where the state and national tables where people who can make those decisions are going to be in this dialogue about the new standards for a 21st Century.

Angela: Jim, do you have any thoughts to add?

Jim: I certainly agree with Doug on what he said. Also what I think state agencies can take away is that the results show that minority students and poor students have equal access to courses called the arts. However, the achievement gaps show these students are not getting the same quality or rigor from these courses as their white and wealthier counterparts. Just as the goal of No Child Left Behind is to close the achievement gap in math and reading, there's an important achievement gap to close in the arts as well.

Angela: Thanks so much to Doug Herbert, Kim Leavitt, and Jim Hull for this great panel discussion. I want to move on and give Jonathan Katz an opportunity to speak. Many of you know Jonathan. He is NASAA's CEO. He's going to take a few minutes to provide his perspective on the NAEP and what state arts agencies can and should do with this information.

Advice for State Arts Agencies

Jonathon Katz, Executive Director, NASAA

Jonathan: Thank you, Angela. Hello everyone.

We've learned a lot this afternoon about the recent arts NAEP, what it is, what it tells us, and how it relates to the work of state arts agencies. I want to share with you a few brief observations and suggestions triggered by the occasion of this assessment.

The press and constituents with various interests – in education, in workforce development, and in the arts – may contact you with questions about the NAEP and what it means. Consider it a communications opportunity. After this webinar, determine what you feel comfortable saying about the NAEP and its implications. What would you say about it in general, how it relates to issues in your state, or to what your agency does in the area of arts education? Make sure everyone on staff knows who will respond. Consider whether you want to refer an inquirer to another person or another resource for further information.

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- Be prepared to respond to questions about this research
- Be prepared to respond to questions about the arts education role of your agency
- State-specific information is crucial
- Equity gaps exist
- Understand what this research does not reveal
- Inform and affect the behavior of decision makers

It's always a good idea to have prepared a few points that you want people to know about your work. People may be triggered by the NAEP to ask you about your arts education programs. They may contact you, but not know enough about your work to ask you questions they should ask. In any case, if everyone has sitting in front of them a few talking points about what your arts education goals are, or what your programs are, or some recent accomplishments, you're set for a conversation that conveys good information about your public value.

When NASAA conducted focus groups with state legislators and legislative staff members, they told us that state-specific information, not national data or trends, influenced their decision making. In arts education, what we call "mapping," that is, knowing where education in, and through, the arts is available, who delivers it, what resources are being provided, how many and which students participate, and what is being learned, can make all the difference in demonstrating what the needs are. As you consider the information the NAEP provides, consider the information your agency needs. Consider also,

how you can use the data you will get from the Fast Response Survey System, which Doug mentioned and Angie will mention again in a moment. That does have state-specific information.

This assessment raises questions about the different levels of proficiency achieved by students living at poverty level compared to students from higher income families, by students of different race and ethnicity, by girls and boys, and by city students compared to students attending suburban, town and rural schools. The causes, implications, and costs of these equity gaps demand further attention. Whatever benefits learning in and through the arts provides, we must put in place policies and budgets that promote their provision at some level to all students on an equitable basis. You don't have to be an arts advocate to agree with that. You just have to believe in the role that public education plays in creating a democratic society.

We've had a good deal of discussion about the limitations of what the NAEP tells us. I'll only mention two of those areas. One thing it doesn't do is tell us what factors make teaching the arts effective. This is an important area of practical research. Many state arts agencies are engaged in activities that bring educators and artists together to work on the improvement of learning in and through the arts. We need to continue this work, and we need to share what we learn.

A second thing the NAEP doesn't do is tell us what success factors are related to the decisions by a school system to include the arts as basic in the curriculum and to invest the resources necessary for effective instruction to be delivered. However, there is a resource that does this, and its title is [*Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts that Value Arts Education*](#). This will be included in the resource list Angela will be giving you in a moment. This study identified 13 factors related to a school system valuing the arts. Half a dozen of these have to do with reflective practice in teaching in and through the arts, use of national and state standards, regular performance assessment for teachers and students, building parent and teacher collaboration, putting a good foundation in place in the early school years, having a district arts coordinator, comprehensive, district wide arts curriculum planning and so on. Another half dozen factors are people in key positions who are knowledgeable about the value of arts education. If you have leading teachers, principals, and a superintendent who understand the value of arts learning, it is likely the system will reflect that value. But the most important overall influence is – and I'm quoting here – “a community actively engaged in the arts politics and instructional programs of the district.” Because a group of concerned, including parents, business people and other civic leaders, they can affect the behavior of principals, a superintendent, and of the school board that ultimately determines priorities and policies.

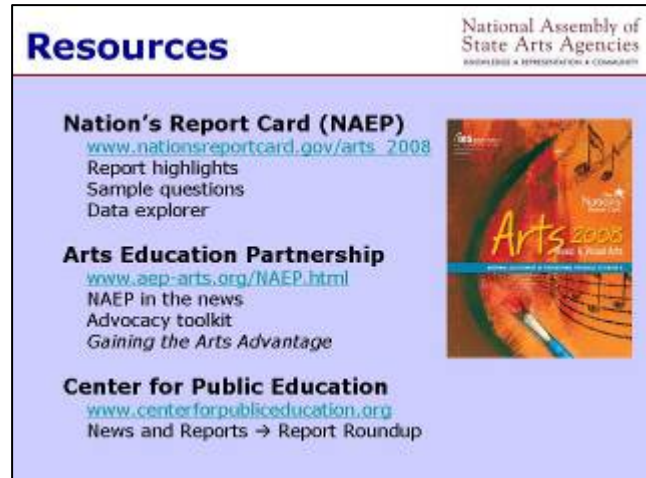
I mention this here because arts education advocates should not expect any assessment or any study to provide the silver bullet that persuades decision makers to include the arts in the curriculum along with the human and financial resources to ensure that standards actually guide practice. That will always require a relationship between decision makers who have various values and perspectives and advocates who share their experiences, identify and address the primary concerns of decision makers, and bring facts, stories, and specific requests to the conversation. The 2008 NAEP gives us new material to inform that conversation.

And now, here's Angela to suggest where we can go for further information.

Resources

Angela Han, Director of Research, NASAA

Angela: Thanks so much, Jonathan. To close out this session, I wanted to point you to resources you can go to for more information as well as to mention some related research that's going on right now. First of all, details about the arts assessment can be found at nationsreportcard.gov. Here you can download the report itself, and that's the 40-page highlights report that Mary mentioned in the beginning. You can also test yourself with sample questions from the assessment and use the data explorer to analyze this information even further.




Resources

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
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Nation's Report Card (NAEP)
www.nationsreportcard.gov/arts_2008
Report highlights
Sample questions
Data explorer

Arts Education Partnership
www.aep-arts.org/NAEP.html
NAEP in the news
Advocacy toolkit
Gaining the Arts Advantage

Center for Public Education
www.centerforpubliceducation.org
News and Reports → Report Roundup

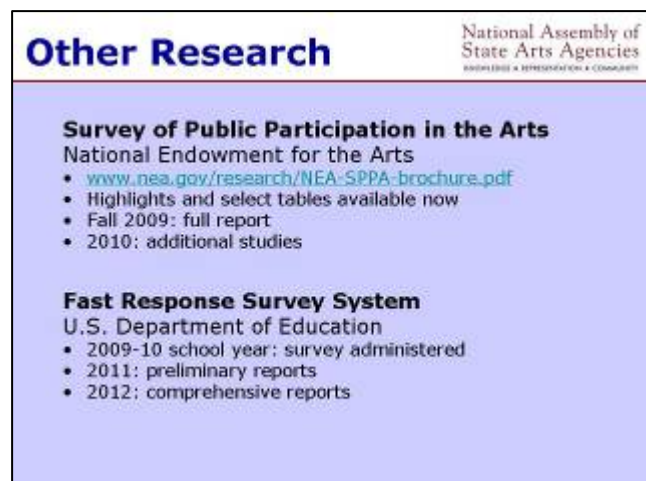


Another great resource is the [Arts Education Partnership](http://www.aep-arts.org). The Partnership has set up an area of their website dedicated to the NAEP. Currently it has up a brief summary of the results and links to national media stories. An advocacy toolkit will be up shortly. You can also find on the Partnership's website a free copy of the report that Jonathan mentioned called [*Gaining the Arts Advantage*](#).

I also want to point you to the [Center for Public Education](http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org)'s website which also has a summary of the NAEP arts assessment results. Here you can explore and compare arts assessments with research in other subjects and education-related topics.

In terms of related research going on at the national level, there are two, specifically, that I wanted to make sure you are aware of.

The first is the NEA [Survey of Public Participation in the Arts](#). The SPPA is the largest study of arts participation in the United States. Conducted in partnership with the U.S. Census, it has been administered five times since 1982, allowing for longitudinal trend analysis. Highlights from the most recent survey are now available, and a full report will be published later this year. Additional studies, including one focused on arts learning, will be published sometime in 2010.



Other Research

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
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Survey of Public Participation in the Arts
National Endowment for the Arts
• www.nea.gov/research/NEA-SPPA-brochure.pdf
• Highlights and select tables available now
• Fall 2009: full report
• 2010: additional studies

Fast Response Survey System
U.S. Department of Education
• 2009-10 school year: survey administered
• 2011: preliminary reports
• 2012: comprehensive reports

A few of our speakers have mentioned the Department of Education's [Fast Response Survey System](#), which surveys school principals and teachers periodically on a variety of subjects. During the 2009-10 school year, an arts-specific survey will be administered to both elementary and secondary schools and will include questions about arts curriculum, instruction frequency, structure, and staffing. This survey, as Doug mentioned, is going to be large enough to provide state-by-state information and will also be comparable to the survey results from 1999.

We've now come to the end of today's web seminar. Thanks to everyone for participating.