

**New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards
for
Visual and Performing Arts
INTRODUCTION**

Arts Education in the 21st Century

Creativity is a driving force in the 21st century global economy, with the fastest growing jobs and emerging industries relying on the ability of workers to think unconventionally and use their imaginations.

The best employers the world over will be looking for the most competent, most creative, and most innovative people on the face of the earth ... This will be true not just for the top professionals and managers, but up and down the length and breadth of the workforce ... Those countries that produce the most important new products and services can capture a premium in world market ...

(2007, National Center on Education and the Economy)

Experience with and knowledge of the arts are essential components of the P-12 curriculum in the 21st century. As the state of New Jersey works to transform public education to meet the needs of a changing world and the 21st century workforce, capitalizing on the unique ability of the arts to unleash creativity and innovation in our students is critical for success, as reflected in the mission and vision that follow:

Mission: *The arts enable personal, intellectual, social, economic, and human growth by fostering creativity and providing opportunities for expression beyond the limits of language.*

Vision: An education in the arts fosters a population that:

- Creates, reshapes, and fully participates in the enhancement of the quality of life, globally.
- Participates in social, cultural, and intellectual interplay among people of different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds through a focus on the humanities.
- Possesses essential technical skills and abilities significant to many aspects of life and work in the 21st century.
- Understands and impacts the increasingly complex technological environment.

Intent and Spirit of the Visual and Performing Arts:

The intent and spirit of the New Jersey Visual and Performing Arts Standards builds upon the philosophy and goals of the 1994 [National Standards for Arts Education](#) and [National Coalition for Core Arts Standards \(NCCAS\) National Arts Standards](#), anticipated for final publication in 2014. Equitable access to arts instruction is achieved when the four arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, and visual art) are offered throughout the P-12 spectrum. Thus, the goal of the standards is that all students have regular, sequential arts instruction throughout their P-12 education.

The expectation of the New Jersey arts standards is that all students communicate *at a basic level* in each of the four arts disciplines by the end of fifth grade, using the vocabulary, materials, tools, techniques, and intellectual methods of each arts discipline in a developmentally appropriate manner. Beginning in grade 6, student instruction in the arts is driven by specialization, with students choosing one of the four arts disciplines based on their interests, aptitudes, and career aspirations. By the end of grade 12, students are expected to communicate proficiently in one or more arts disciplines of their choice. By graduation from secondary school, all students should, in at least one area of specialization, be able to:

- Define and solve artistic problems with insight, reason, and technical proficiency.
- Develop and present basic analyses of works of art from structural, historical, cultural, and aesthetic perspectives.
- Call upon their informed acquaintance with exemplary works of art from a variety of cultures and historical periods.
- Relate various types of arts knowledge and skills within and across the arts disciplines by mixing and matching competencies and understandings in art-making, history, culture, and analysis in any arts-related project.

2014 Visual and Performing Arts Standards

In view of the pending publication of the [National Coalition of Core Arts Standards \(NCCAS\) National Arts Standards](#), anticipated for fall 2014, no revisions were made to the 2009 Visual & Performing Arts Standards.

The 2014 visual and performing arts standards align with the 1994 National Standards for Arts Education. In addition, they correlate structurally to the three arts processes defined in the [2008 NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework](#): creating, performing, and responding. When actively engaged in these processes, students not only learn about the arts, they learn through and within the arts. The NCCAS National Arts Standards have four clusters (Create, Present, Respond & Connect) as their focal points. This difference will be reconciled in future iterations of New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content standards in Visual and Performing Arts.

The state and national standards are deliberately broad to encourage local curricular objectives and flexibility in classroom instruction. New Jersey's visual and performing arts standards provide the foundation for creating local curricula and meaningful assessments in the four arts disciplines for all children. They are designed to assist educators in assessing required knowledge and skills in each discipline

by laying out the expectations for levels of proficiency in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts at the appropriate level of study.

Currently, Media Arts is a component of New Jersey state theatre and visual arts standards. However, the new NCCAS National Arts Standards have expanded the definition, content and approach to media arts to be more comprehensive, and have presented it as a new stand-alone art form. While every state will examine the licensing/certification issues related to Media Arts standards, we recognize the media arts are being taught by a variety of authorized personnel, and standards serve to improve instruction and clarify student outcomes.

Organization of the Standards

The organization of the visual and performing arts standards reflects the critical importance of locating the separate arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, and visual art) as one common body of knowledge and skills, while still pointing to the unique requirements of individual disciplines. There are four visual and performing arts standards, as follows.

Standards 1.1 and 1.2, respectively, articulate required knowledge and skills concerning the elements and principles of the arts, as well as arts history and culture. Together, the two standards forge a corollary to the NAEP Arts process of *creating*. Standard 1.1 includes four strands, one for each of the arts disciplines: A. Dance, B. Music, C. Theatre, and D. Visual Art; standard 1.2 includes a single strand: A. History of the Arts and Culture.

Standard 1.1 The Creative Process: All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Standard 1.2 History of the Arts and Culture: All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.

Standard 1.3 is rooted in arts performance and thus stands as a corollary to the NAEP Arts process of *performing/interpreting*. Like Standard 1.1, standard 1.3 is made up of four arts-specific strands: A. Dance, B. Music, C. Theatre, and D. Visual Art.

Standard 1.3 Performing: All students will synthesize skills, media, methods, and technologies that are appropriate to creating, performing, and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Standard 1.4 addresses two ways students may respond to the arts, including (1) the study of aesthetics and (2) the application of methodologies for critique. Standard 1.4 provides a corollary to the NAEP Arts process of *responding*. This standard pertains to all four

arts disciplines, and is comprised of two strands related to the mode of response: A. Aesthetic Responses and B. Critique Methodologies.

Standard 1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies: *All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment, and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.*

Proficiency Levels and Grade Band Clusters

The grade-band clusters for the visual and performing arts standards correspond to federal definitions of elementary and secondary education, which may have implications for instructional delivery according to licensure. The expectations for student achievement increase across the grade band clusters as follows:

- **Preschool:** All students should be given broad-based exposure to, and be provided opportunities for exploration in, each of the four arts disciplines. The goal is that preschool students *attain foundational skills that progress toward [basic literacy](#)* in the content knowledge and skills delineated in the K-2 and 3-5 grade-level arts standards, as developmentally appropriate.
- **Grades K-2 and 3-5:** All students in grades K-5 are given broad-based exposure to, and are provided opportunities for participation in, each of the four arts disciplines. The expectation at this level is that all students *attain [basic literacy](#)* in the content knowledge and skills delineated in the K-2 and 3-5 grade-level standards for the arts.
- **Grades 6-8:** In grades 6-8, student instruction focuses on one of the four arts disciplines, as directed by student choice. The expectation at this level is that all students *demonstrate [competency](#)* in the content knowledge and skills delineated for the selected arts discipline.
- **Grades 9-12:** Throughout secondary school, student instruction continues to focus on one of the four arts disciplines, as chosen by the student. By the end of grade 12, all students *demonstrate [proficiency](#)* in at least one chosen arts discipline by meeting or exceeding the content knowledge and skills delineated in the arts standards.

Teaching the Standards: Certification and Highly Qualified Arts Educators

The visual and performing arts are considered a "core" subject under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB-2001). Therefore, all visual and performing arts teachers must meet the "Highly Qualified Teachers" standards within their certificated arts discipline(s). State licensure is the initial gatekeeper for highly qualified status.

Education in the Arts: National and State Advocacy:

- The [Arts Education Partnership](#) provides research information and other guidance to assist in advocating for arts education at the national, state, and local levels. The Partnership also provides information on government funding at the federal and state levels, including the grant programs of two federal agencies: the U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for

the Arts.

- At the state level, the [New Jersey Arts Education Partnership](#) was established in 2007 as a clearinghouse for information and best practices in arts education, and calls attention to the contribution arts education makes to student achievement. The report, [Within Our Power: The Progress, Plight, and Promise of Arts Education for Every Child](#), is the NJAEPs response to the New Jersey Arts Census Project, the most comprehensive survey ever compiled on the status of arts education in New Jersey's public schools.
- A [Glossary](#) of arts terms used in the 2009 visual and performing arts standards was designed to support implementation of the arts standards.

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