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# Alaska Arts Education Data Project

In 2023 the National Endowment for the Arts and the Alaska State Council on the Arts awarded funds to the Alaska Arts Education Consortium (AAEC) to explore the current state of arts education in Alaska. To accomplish this task, the AAEC initiated the **Alaska Arts Education Data Project**. Work began with a review of what was deemed to be constitutionally mandated by the State of Alaska for Arts education. Upon review of recent court cases, it was determined that Arts was a constitutional standard, as identified by Judge Sharon Gleason in the *Moore* lawsuit (2007). As she stated: ***"Access to a meaningful education is an Alaskan constitutional right. An essential part of a meaningful education are the arts, along with cultural arts, for which Alaska has established statewide standards"*** (emphasis added).

The AAEC's historical review revealed that each of many educators who testified in the seminal 2007 *Moore* case acknowledged that an Alaskan student who received instruction solely in math, reading, writing and science was not receiving a meaningful education. The state had established standards for a great many areas beyond reading, writing, math and science, thus defining its vision of a meaningful education. As the court said in *Moore*, "The extensive evidence presented on the State's standards led readily to the conclusion that these standards are thorough and appropriate educational standards for Alaska that meet or exceed the constitutional threshold of an *adequate* education." But the court further ruled in *Moore* that the State's efforts to ensure *meaningful* exposure to these other content standards had been inadequate. The Court also added, *"the State must insure that each school district has a demonstrated plan to provide children a meaningful opportunity to achieve proficiency in the State's performance standards, and meaningful exposure on the remaining content standards - and insure that the district's plan is fully implemented and actually in use in the district's classrooms"*. (pg. 189)

In response to this identified constitutional right, the goal of the Alaska Arts Education Data Project is to gather data and analyze the accessibility, equity and quality of arts education today across our state, nearly 20 years after the *Moore* decision. Arts education focuses on children, youth and communities, and encompasses teaching and learning in and through the arts, both during and outside of school days.

AAEC conducted a survey, designed by a cross-sector working group, from April 8 – June 28, 2024. Complete data were received from 18 out of 54 school districts (33%), accounting for 47% of students pre-K – grade 12, from across all regions of the state.

***The data below gives a quick snapshot of some of highlights from the survey:***

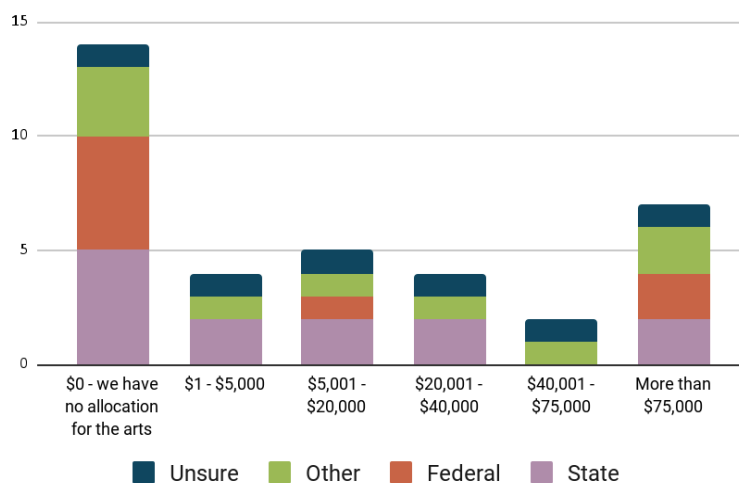
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Number of districts reporting the minimum number of arts credits required for graduation:

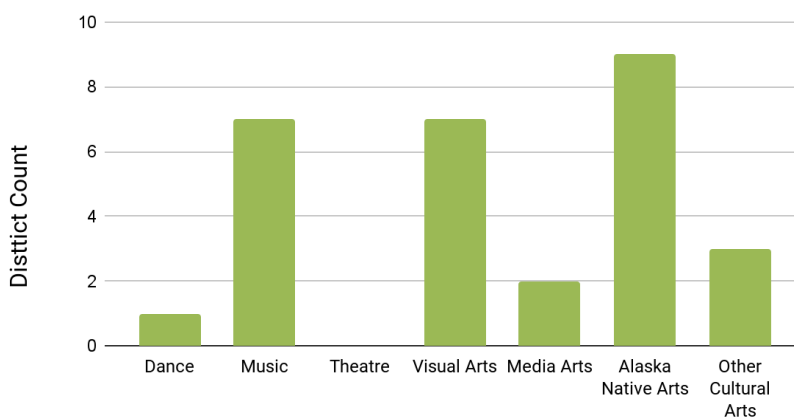
CATEGORY	DISTRICT COUNT
0 credits	11
0.5 credits	2
1.0 credits	1
1.5 credits	1
2.0 credits	1

## Allocation for arts education outside of staff salaries

(5 out of 18 districts report arts ed allocation of general funds)



## Number of districts reporting that ALL elementary students have opportunities to receive arts instruction



## Number of districts reporting approved or adopted arts curriculum:

CATEGORY	PRE-K	GRADES K-2	GRADES 3-5	GRADES 6-8	GRADES 9-12
Dance	0	0	0	1	2
Music	1	5	5	6	8
Theatre	0	0	0	2	4
Visual Arts	0	4	4	5	7
Media Arts	0	1	1	2	5
Alaska Native Arts	2	3	3	3	4
Other Cultural Arts	0	1	1	1	2

Alaska Arts Education Data Project members will continue to collect, analyze and share data through June 30, 2025, and recommend further action and outcomes that will insure the constitutional right of all Alaskan students to a meaningful education. For a copy of the full Data Report and/or with questions or ideas contact Dr. Barbara Adams, Data Project Evaluator: [badams.aas@gmail.com](mailto:badams.aas@gmail.com)