

# Arts Education is Essential

It is imperative that all students have **access to an equitable delivery of arts education** that includes music, visual arts, theater, media arts and dance taught by certified professional arts educators.



The arts, with their strong emphasis on **team building and self-reflection**, are extremely suited to ignite students' interest in learning through **collaboration**, while simultaneously fostering **creativity, critical thinking, problem solving** and **communication**. These are the skills that 21<sup>st</sup> century employers are looking for when hiring employees.

Celebrating our ability to come together as educators and students is vital to creating a **healthy and inclusive school environment**. The arts play a valuable role in helping students and their families build and sustain **social and cultural connections**. They also support **civic engagement** and provide skills for effecting change in our local communities.

According to a 2013 study by Kenneth Elpus, evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health shows that, by age 30, students who had pursued fine arts education in high school were 55% more likely to have attended college than their non-arts peers. Therefore, **students who engage in fine arts learning in high school are more likely to be Future Ready than those who do not.**

As defined in the "Every Student Succeeds Act", the arts are part of a well-rounded education that all students deserve. Every state in the nation recognizes the importance of the arts as reflected in rigorous PreK-12 state arts standards. As noted in *Arts Education for America's Students: A Shared Endeavor*, "An education without the arts is inadequate." Arts education must remain central to the **complete education of our students** and be fully funded to support their well-being.