

KAC Arts Education Survey

In partnership with the state Department of Education, and with support and assistance from the Kansas National Education Association, Kansas Arts Education Association, Music Teachers Association, Association for School Superintendents, Museum Education Association, Juvenile Justice Authority and the Kansas National Association of Social Workers, the Kansas Arts Commission (KAC) delivered a web-based needs assessment survey on arts education in the state. The survey was followed up by focus groups held across the state, to focus understanding and implement changes in KAC's Arts in Education Program structure to better and more effectively support arts education in the state.

The results of the survey demonstrate the value Kansas teachers and school administrators place on arts in education. The findings also help to inform the Commission on future arts education initiatives.

The online survey was conducted between January and May 2009, with teachers, principals, school superintendents, community arts organizations, school arts educators and the general public as participants. A total of 504 responses were received. For the survey, "the arts" were identified as visual arts, music, theater, dance and literature (including poetry).

Key Survey Results:

- There was clear agreement from respondents that the arts are very important for the cognitive (88%), emotional (80%) and social (72%) development of children.
- 81% of respondents indicated that the arts are a very useful vehicle for teaching other subjects. 17% reported that the arts are often used as such in their schools, and 57% reported that the arts are sometimes used. However, 24% reported that the arts are rarely used to teach other subjects in their schools.
- Respondents reported that the top three obstacles to having more arts activities in schools were: funding (85%); time (49%); and other academic priorities (42%).
- According to survey responses, the top three ways to increase arts teaching in Kansas schools were: funding for arts-based school programs (69%); support for teacher training and professional development (55%); and funding for equipment and facilities (35%).
- Education professionals reported that they wanted the following services in their schools: professional development and teacher in-services in the arts (91%); visiting artist workshops (61%); arts-based afterschool programs (48%); arts-related field trips (46%); and access to creative arts therapies (40%).
- Most respondents (96%) reported personal experience in the arts, with visual art leading the type of experience.

Art Discipline Findings:

- The top three types of arts specialists employed by schools were full-time general music teachers, full-time visual art teachers and full-time band instructors.
- 99% of those responding reported arts activities occurring in their schools. The top three types of activities, with over half of the respondents reporting each type, were: standards-

based art classes (67%); standards-based music classes (59%); and performances and concerts (52%).

- Instruction time per week was led by music, with 87% of schools offering an hour or more of instruction, followed by visual art, with 77% an hour or more of instruction time.
- Teachers reported that students had a high-level of interest in the visual arts and music, correlating with the amount of instruction time students receive in those subjects.

Additional Findings:

- Most schools had a full-time visual art teacher (88%) and a full-time music teacher (89%).
- The majority of schools did not have a dance instructor, nor did they have standards-based dance instruction. When schools did have a dance instructor, the position was part-time.
- Slightly over half of the schools (58%) have a full-time theatre instructor, but less than a quarter (22%) employed standards-based theatre instruction.
- The types of arts activities that occurred the least in schools were: standards-based dance classes (5%); creative arts therapies (5%); and artists-in-residence (9%).
- 18% of respondents reported that students in their schools do not receive instruction in literature and poetry.
- Respondents reported that the top three obstacles to having more arts activities in schools were: funding (85%); time (49%); and academic priorities (42%).
- The most important community arts partnerships reported by respondents were: museums (54%); historical organizations (44%); and professional associations (41%). Arts and cultural organizations ranked near the bottom (13th out of 15 choices) in partnerships, behind “none” and only one percentage point above national chain businesses.
- However, arts and cultural organization ranked at the top in providing information on the arts (64%), along with websites (61%) and museums (43%).