

18.37 Arts in Education

Resolution passed 2005 (combined Resolutions 5.1 and 5.2); amended 2012; amended 2019 (formerly 5.3 Arts Education in Public Schools and Washington State)

Whereas, PTA believes that the arts are central to learning and that infusing the arts into elementary, secondary, and continuing education curricula is key to the development of students; and

Whereas, the arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual, and tactile arts) are recognized as a core academic subject in Washington state, and under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and are also considered part of a well-rounded education under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and

Whereas, students succeed academically in schools (better grades and score higher on standardized tests and the SAT) with arts integration. At-risk students see the same benefits, helping to close the opportunity gap. Low income students who receive an arts education are twice as likely to attend college as those who receive no arts education; and

Whereas, data support that the populations who could benefit the most from the arts are seeing a decline in availability. Low socioeconomic status students have lower participation rates due to the lack of equitable access to quality arts instruction; and

Whereas, students succeed in social emotional learning with an arts education. The arts are critically needed for students to safely find their own voice through gender and cultural identity; and

Whereas, arts in education helps our society succeed. Studies show that students who are exposed to an arts education exhibit greater understanding of cultures other than their own and engage more in civic opportunities around them; and

Whereas, arts education helps students of all abilities succeed. Arts education provides students with disabilities increase academic, social and functional skill development and knowledge, which can play a crucial role in their overall success. All students of diverse abilities can be successful through the arts; and

Whereas, creativity is one of the top five applied skills sought by business leaders, an arts education fosters creativity and can help students become more employable adults, no matter their career choice; and

Whereas, arts education needs ample funding to be successful. Washington state is 46th in the nation in state arts funding. Washington is a local-control state, which means districts and schools make their own choices about arts education, with little consistency across the state; and

Whereas, arts education needs accountability to be successful. Arts education is not currently tracked on the OSPI State Report Card and is not currently offered in every school in the state.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for:

- ample state funding for arts education
- equitable access for all students to receive a quality and diverse arts education
- integration of the arts in school curricula as a core subject of basic education
- collection of statistically viable data related to arts education; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils encourage their school districts to:

- apply for available arts grants
- provide professional development for educators about arts integration
- hire certified teachers in the arts
- have clear and measurable arts education goals and educational standards
- collect statistically viable data related to arts education for their school district; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will continue developing public awareness of the need for arts education and equitable access to arts learning in our public schools and formally recognize May as Arts Education Month in Washington state, calling upon the community to celebrate the arts and promote the importance of arts education for every student in Washington state.