

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS IMPORTANT PENDING LEGISLATION

Title: HB 10-1273 Concerning Improved Workforce Development Through Increased Participation in Arts Education in Public Schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Merrifield, Rice, Ryden; Senators Hudak, Spence, Steadman, Newell

What the bill does:

- Recognizes the value of visual and performing arts in public education.
- Requires all schools to provide education in the visual and performing arts.
- Requires demonstration of proficiency regarding the visual and performing arts standards as a condition of graduation.
- Requires all students' Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) to include progress in visual and performing arts.
- Amends several provisions of the "Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act" to specifically incorporate visual and performing arts education into the standards, assessments, and postsecondary and workforce readiness programs adopted by the state board of education and local education providers.
- Recognizes the importance of visual and performing arts in preventing student dropouts and re-engaging students in school.
- Specifies visual arts and performing arts education as education services for which a local education provider may seek grant moneys under the student re-engagement grant program.
- Conforms the definition of arts-based activity in the dropout prevention activity grant program with the definitions of visual arts and performing arts created in the bill.
- Clarifies that career and technical education for which a school district, board of cooperative services, or charter school may receive funding includes visual arts and performing arts education.
- Promotes innovative and efficient partnerships in the delivery of instruction.

Reasons to support HB 10-1273

- Currently there are no graduation requirements for arts education in the State of Colorado. With all of the discussions, dialogue, and controversy surrounding the debate over education reform at both the national and state level, there has been no discussion in Colorado regarding the topic of arts education and its importance to the success of developing 21st century learners.
- Numerous studies over the last decade continually demonstrate that students actively engaged in arts education have higher test scores, are less likely to drop out, experience a higher level of self-confidence, and develop the critical thinking, creative problem-solving, effective communication, and teamwork skills they will need to be successful in the 21st century.
- The arts are included as a core subject in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Both the General Assembly and the State Board of Education have adopted resolutions in support of comprehensive, sequential, P-20 arts education.
- Colorado's Lt. Governor released a comprehensive study on the impact of arts education in March of 2008 that supports this already overwhelming body of research.
- Colorado and Alaska are the only two states where no arts education requirement is found in either a state statute or code.
- Research shows that students actively engaged in arts education are likely to have higher test scores than those with little to no involvement.
- The arts keep students engaged in school and less likely to drop out.

- The arts are among the most important things we learn about in school. They provide a well-rounded education not based on a test's requirements.
- The Colorado Council on the Arts published a comprehensive study in February 2009, identifying over 186,000 full-time equivalency positions in Colorado's Creative Economy, which require an arts education.
- The arts best develop skills needed by the 21st century workforce: critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, teamwork and more.
- Maintaining a strong arts program will help not only the students to succeed, but it will strengthen the community in which they live.
- The arts prepare students for the real world by exposing them to culture, and teaching critical thinking skills that test-score classes don't teach.
- The arts teach students to be more tolerant and open.
- The arts allow students to express themselves creatively and bolster their self-confidence.
- Governor Ritter has endorsed legislation recognizing the Creative Economy as the 5th largest categorical employer in Colorado.
- Statewide surveys show that a large proportion of Elementary and Middle School students indicate a preference for Creative Careers.
- Multiple career pathways exist in Colorado's P-20 system, Career and Technical Education and WorkForce Development for students showing interest in and aptitude for Creative Careers.
- Standards are already in place, and assessments are being developed, to ensure the rigor and relevance of arts education P-20.
- Colorado's Graduation Guidelines Development Council emphasized the need to ensure participation in arts education P-12.
- For all these reasons, it is imperative that appropriate and necessary steps are taken to preserve and protect arts education in Colorado schools from a difficult state fiscal climate, as history indicates that these disciplines will be the first to suffer reductions, thereby critically damaging the effective education of our children.

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