

ARTS EDUCATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN MISSOURI SCHOOLS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY OF FINE ARTS EDUCATION IN MISSOURI SCHOOL DISTRICTS

MISSOURI ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION RESEARCH

The Missouri Alliance for Arts Education, with funding from the Missouri Arts Council, embarked on a three-year analysis of school district data submitted by 514 districts to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The study explored the relationships between student participation in fine arts courses (music, visual art, theatre/drama and dance) and attendance & graduation rates, disciplinary infractions, and statewide tests in language arts and mathematics in the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Attendance rates are higher** for districts with higher levels of student enrollment in the arts when compared to districts with lower levels of arts participation.
- **Levels of student participation in fine arts classes are significantly correlated to student proficiency in mathematics**, with higher arts participation equaling higher math scores on standardized tests (the MAP) at the district level.
- **Standardized test scores are significantly higher in communication arts**, for students in grades six through eight, in districts with more arts participation.
- Missouri school districts with higher levels of student participation in the arts showed **higher graduation rates and fewer disciplinary infractions** than districts with lower levels of arts education.
- When controlling for the percentage of **minority students**, the link between arts education and graduation rates, test scores, and disciplinary rates was still significant.



In a school district with an enrollment of about 12,000 students, a 1% increase in the average daily attendance equals an additional \$430,000 annually for the district.



WHAT THE STUDY MEANS TO SCHOOLS, STUDENTS AND THE STATE

Attendance Rates: The MAAE Study of Arts Education in Missouri Schools showed a 1% difference in the average daily attendance (ADA) of districts with lower levels of arts participation (94.1%) compared to those with the highest levels of participation (95.1%). In one Missouri public school district, the state pays about \$3,620 ADA per pupil. With almost 12,000 students enrolled and a 93.3% attendance rate, a 1% increase equals an annual increase of \$430,890 in state funding.

The financial impact may be more significant in districts with a high per-pupil ADA rate compared to those with a lower rate; however an increase in attendance means more students are in school each day with a greater opportunity to learn.

Disciplinary Infraction Rates: The higher the number of fine arts courses and the student enrollment in these courses, the lower the rate of infractions that require student removal from the classroom such as in-school or out-of-school suspensions.

MAP Scores: The higher the number of students in grades 6-8 enrolled in fine arts classes: the higher the percentage of students in these grades who scored at the proficient or advanced levels on the Math MAP, the higher the average Math MAP scale score, and the higher the median Math MAP score.

The higher the number of students in grades 6-8 enrolled in fine arts classes, the higher the percentage of students in these grades who scored at the proficient or advanced levels on the Communication Arts MAP, the higher the mean MAP score in Communication Arts, and the higher the median Communication Arts score on the Terra Nova.

Graduation Rates: The study showed a 3.3% difference in the graduation rates of districts with lower levels of arts participation (87.9%) compared to those with the highest levels (91.2%). The statewide graduation rate in 2009 was 85%. An increase to 91.2% will mean an additional 6,539 students will graduate. More high school graduates will increase state revenues through increased employment rates and higher wages.

THE MAAE RECOMMENDS

The State Board of Education supports a middle school fine arts requirement of 3,000 minutes per year taught by arts specialists and defines the arts as a core subject in Missouri schools.

The Missouri Legislature passes the Fine Arts Professional Development Initiative.

The Missouri Arts Council continues support of arts education research.

Download your copy of the complete study report, *Arts Education Makes a Difference in Missouri Schools*, at www.moaae.org.

Deborah Fisher, Executive Director, 3825 Federer Place, St. Louis, MO 63116 | phone 314.753.5805 | fax 314.849.3056