

DATA BULLETIN

The State of the Arts, 1999-2000

The arts are an essential part of the core curriculum for all students. For this reason, the Governor, the Commissioner of Education and the Connecticut Commission on the Arts have jointly declared 2000-2009 the Decade of Arts Education in Connecticut. During this time, improving the quality of arts education received by all students is a statewide priority. This bulletin is an expert from the 1999-2000 *Condition of Education* and is designed to provide citizens and policy makers with information about the current status of arts education in our state and to establish a baseline to track improvements in quality during the Decade of Arts Education. For further information please refer to the 1999-2000 *Condition of Education* or visit the Department's web site at www.state.ct.us/sde.

The Connecticut State Board of Education believes that every student needs and deserves a high-quality, comprehensive education in all of the arts, including dance, music, theatre and the visual arts. The arts play an essential role in the daily lives of citizens in our society, and are essential to the expression of human experience. An understanding and appreciation of the arts, as well as the ability to participate in creating and performing the arts, are essential attributes of an educated person. There is also strong evidence that students educated in and through the arts achieve at higher levels in other areas of the curriculum and in their adult lives . . .

A quality arts education should therefore be an integral part of the core curriculum for all Connecticut students, including those at every age and grade level, living in every type of community, and receiving every form of schooling — public and private, comprehensive and vocational, standard and special education.

- Connecticut State Board of Education's Policy Statement on Arts Education, adopted in 1999

This bulletin addresses the extent to which students in Connecticut are receiving an arts education that meets the Board's expectations. In the following pages, data are presented on key arts opportunity-to-learn indicators such as staffing, instructional hours, facilities, course and activity offerings and the availability of arts technology. These data provide important clues to the general condition of and trends in arts education in Connecticut's public schools.

Overall, Connecticut schools are doing an excellent job of providing quality learning opportunities in some key areas of arts education, and doing far less well in others. Some general trends include the following:

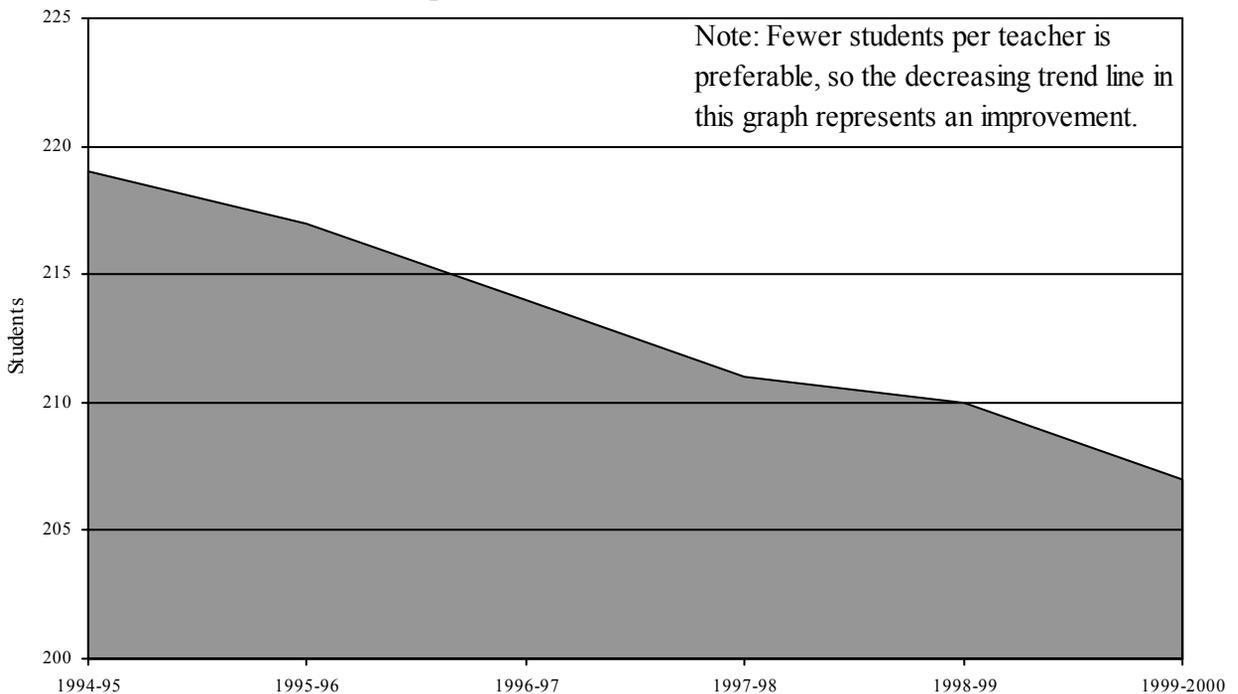
- The overwhelming majority of Connecticut students study art and music with certified teachers every year from kindergarten through Grade 8. Continuity, or regularity of instruction over time, is very important to sustain student learning. The level of continuity of instruction was high across all ERGs.
- The amount of arts instruction provided by most schools still falls short of state and national recommendations. The amount of expert instruction students receive is arguably the most critical factor in arts learning, and over the last decade Connecticut schools have made little progress toward providing adequate arts instructional time.
- The number of students enrolled in high school courses in every arts area has increased dramatically. Forty-one percent of 1999 high school graduates had completed two or more years of arts study, continuing a trend toward increased study of the arts among Connecticut secondary students.
- While there has been an increase in the number of schools offering programs in contemporary arts media such as video/film, electronic music composition and digital art, there are still wide disparities in students' access to appropriate arts technology. Although high school theatre offerings have increased, most students do not have access to sequential instruction in theatre. Very few students have access to any instructional opportunities in dance.
- There are wide differences in students' access to quality arts instruction statewide. While there are general differences between ERGs in arts education resources, there are individual schools and districts within each ERG that have made a commitment to providing their students with a quality arts education by providing quality staffing, instructional time, technology, facilities and other resources.

Arts Staffing

Expert arts staffing plays a key role in delivering a quality program. Adequate instructional time depends on having a sufficient number of staff members to provide more frequent instruction and to provide students with more individual attention. Since 1994, districts have added arts teachers at a faster rate than student enrollments have increased, reversing the decline in arts staffing that the state experienced during the early 1990s. This has resulted in a desirable decrease in the number of students per arts teacher from 219 in 1994 to 207 in 1999. In 1989 the statewide number of students per music teacher was 363; in 1994, this number had ballooned to 403 students per music teacher; by 1999 it had improved to 388. For comprehensive public schools (i.e., excluding Regional Vocational-Technical High Schools and charter schools), the average number of students per teacher is 381 in music and 445 in art. The overall average number of students per arts staff person ranges from 166 in ERG A to 249 in ERG I.

Staffing, 1999-2000		
	Art	Music
Number of Full-Time Teachers	1,121	1,307
Number of Part-Time Teachers	164	147
Full-Time Equivalent	1,199	1,388
Percent Female	79.3	57.2
Percent Minority	3.5	4.7
Percent with Advanced Degree	71.1	67.5
Percent trained as Mentors, Assessors or Cooperating Teachers	22.4	19.8
Median Age	48	42
Median Experience	16	16

Students per Arts Teacher, 1994-95 to 1999-2000



While the students per arts teacher ratio has improved over the last few years, a teacher shortage in music poses a potential threat to these gains. In 1999, 32 music positions went unfilled because a qualified certified teacher could not be found. Thirty-six and one-half percent of Connecticut schools reported supplementing regular arts instruction through artists-in-residence, volunteers and/or other staff members who possess relevant art training or experience. Such assistance does not replace instruction by certified staff members, but can enhance the instruction that certified staff members deliver.

The percentage of arts staff members trained as BEST mentors and cooperating teachers increased slightly from 1993 to 1999, but the percentage of teachers with advanced degrees declined.

Instructional Hours

During the period from 1991 to 1999, the overall amount of elementary instructional time in music and the visual arts remained stable. The average elementary student receives 29 hours per year, or an average of 48 minutes per week, of instructional time in music and in visual arts. Hence, the average Connecticut elementary student receives only 54 percent of the 90 minutes per week in music and art (54 hours per year) that is the national standard published by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations*. Across the state, less than two percent of elementary and middle schools meet the national time recommendations for art and music instruction in Grades 1 through 5. Schools in ERGs A and B offered instruction noticeably closer to the recommended time levels than schools in other ERGs.

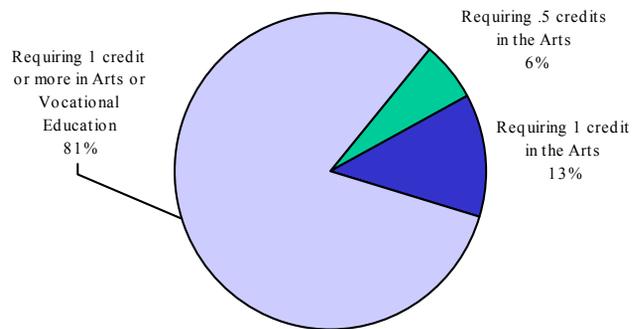
In Connecticut, the average middle school required 30 hours of music instructional time per year and 32 hours in visual art, or 47 percent and 50 percent, respectively, of the national standards of 64 hours. Since 1991, the amount of required music instruction has remained stable, but the amount of visual arts instruction that all students receive has dropped significantly. The shortfall in music is less problematic because many middle grade students participate in ensemble classes, with the result that the average Grade 8 student receives 62 hours of music instruction.

Responding appropriately to Connecticut General Statute Sec. 10-16b, which requires that public schools offer “planned, ongoing, and systematic” instruction in “the arts” (i.e., at least art and music), 52.6 percent of all Connecticut districts and charter schools require *both* visual art *and* music instruction in *all* of their grades kindergarten through Grade 8.

* Consortium of National Arts Education Associations. *Opportunity-to-Learn Standards for Arts Education*. Reston, VA: NAEA, 1995

Estimated Hours of Instruction Per Year						
	Art			Music		
	1991	1995	1999	1991	1995	1999
Grade 2	30	29	29	30	29	29
Grade 5	30	30	30	31	32	32
Grade 8	40	38	36	N/A	52	62

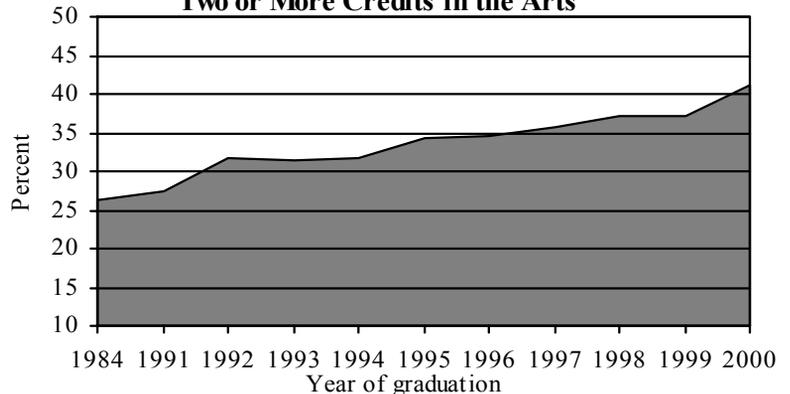
Arts Credits Required for Graduation



Among Connecticut’s high schools, 19 percent require students to complete at least a semester in the arts for high school graduation, and most of those require a full year of study.

The state has seen a steady rise in the percentage of high school graduates who complete at least two years of arts study, from 26 percent of 1984 graduates to 41 percent of 2000 graduates. This parallels national trends toward more high schools requiring arts study and more secondary students electing arts courses. Nationally, 49 percent of all high school graduates have completed courses in visual arts. Within our state there exist sizable disparities between different ERGs in arts participation. In ERGs A and F, for example, more than 57 percent of all students complete two or more years of arts study; in ERG I, only 31 percent do so.

Percent of High School Graduates Completing Two or More Credits in the Arts



Facilities

A large percentage of Connecticut’s elementary schools lack a classroom in art and/or music, which has a serious impact on the quality of curriculum. For example, students who receive art- or music-on-a-cart are limited in the media they can study, and typically lack access to important arts-related equipment and technology.

The overwhelming majority of secondary schools provide dedicated classrooms for art and music.

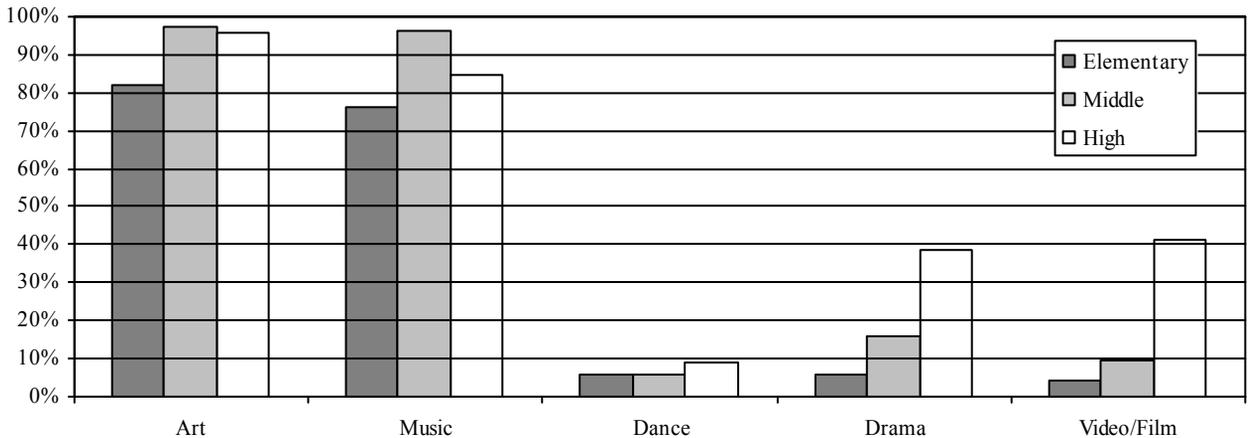
Of Connecticut’s high schools, 81 percent reported having an auditorium with a stage and some degree of acoustical treatment. The average high school auditorium accommodates slightly more than 76 percent of the school’s population, short of the ideal of 100 percent but large enough to offer reasonable student and community access to performances. A scant majority – 54.5 percent – of high schools reported that their auditoriums had the amount of flyspace above the stage (for scenery, lights, etc.) that is necessary for successful theatre productions.

Schools Without Dedicated Classrooms for Art and Music

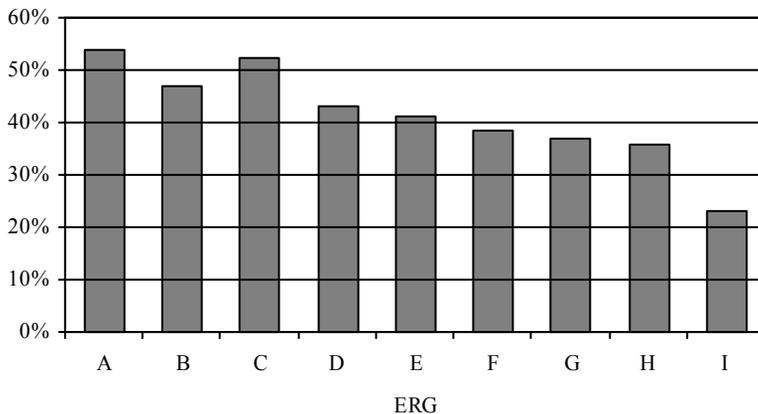
	<u>Art</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Both</u>
Elementary Schools	17.5%	23.5%	14.4%
Middle/Junior High Schools	2.4%	3.5%	1.7%
High Schools	4.0%	15.3%	2.8%

Dedicated classrooms improve arts curriculum by enabling students to use instructional materials and equipment that cannot be transported from room to room (three-dimensional art media, music keyboards, technology, scenery and lighting, etc.).

Schools With Dedicated Arts Classrooms



Percentage of Schools with Arts-Equipped Computers by ERG



Technology

To develop literacy in the multimedia forms of communication that play such an important role in the 21st century, students must have opportunities to express their own ideas through those media. Quality arts programs teach students to use multimedia computers to do arts-based design, music composition, multimedia creation and editing, and other technology-based arts work. Only 41.5 percent of Connecticut schools have computers equipped for use in the arts. Students in ERGs A, B and C are more than twice as likely to have access to multimedia computers, and therefore to arts technology learning, than students in ERG I.

Percentage of Elementary Schools Offering Music Performance

Area	Percentage
Band	67.9
Orchestra	34.8
Chorus	64.0
Jazz Band	7.1

Elementary Music Electives

Since 1991, the proportion of elementary schools offering band and chorus has remained stable at approximately two-thirds of all schools. Only 13 districts reported offering no elementary music ensemble. The long-range trend toward offering string instruction has also continued, the percentage rising steadily from 25 percent in 1991 to 35 percent in 1999. Many districts have also begun starting string instruction in the primary grades, which research studies suggest positively affects students' musical and general intellectual development.

High School Arts Offerings

Since 1991, the number of students enrolled in all arts areas has risen dramatically. An increasing percentage of high schools have begun offering video/film and – particularly – theatre instruction, to the point where the majority now offer such programs. The creation of several specially focused magnet, alternative and charter schools that lack arts programs has slightly decreased the overall percentage of high schools offering visual arts and music in comparison to 1991. The number of schools offering dance courses remains small, but the number of students participating has increased several fold.

High School Enrollment in the Arts, 1991 and 1999

Arts Area	1991		1999	
	Number of Schools Offering	Number of Students Enrolled	Number of Schools Offering	Number of Students Enrolled
Art	153	25,473	163	40,960
Music	135	23,717	141	32,614
Theatre/Drama	60	2,194	100	4,952
Video/Film	66	3,674	94	4,991
Dance	11	249	13	1,355

Reflecting a general trend toward teaching arts technology, 94 high schools now offer video/film and 31 offer television production. The number offering graphic/computer art courses almost doubled from 1991 to 1999 and now includes 31 percent of all high schools. Progress in providing access to music technology is less clear, with the number of schools offering electronic music and keyboard courses remaining unchanged.

Advanced Placement Tests

Exam	Number of Schools		Number of Students	
	1991	1999	1991	1999
Art History	2	6	8	39
Studio Art - Drawing	6	18	10	62
Studio Art - General	11	29	27	119
Music Theory	3	17	3	37

The percentage of high schools offering arts courses for college credit has also increased substantially over the past 8 years.

The number of high schools offering advanced placement courses in art and music increased significantly from 1991 to 1999, although the total number of students taking advanced placement exams is still small.

Percentage of High Schools Offering Arts Courses for College Credit

1991-1992	20.8
1999-2000	35.2

Art Courses Offered in High Schools 1991 and 1999

<u>Program</u>	Number of Schools Offering	
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1999</u>
Drawing/Painting	136	125
General Art	105	119
Ceramics	110	97
Sculpture	80	78
Photography	N/A	76
Design	84	54
Other Crafts (Weaving, Glass, etc.)	N/A	54
Graphic/Computer Art	27	53
Jewelry	N/A	25
Printmaking	59	20
Art History	31	19
Art Portfolio	82	N/A
Crafts	77	N/A
Other Art Programs	55	N/A
Computer Art	27	N/A

Although the number of high school students in visual arts programs has increased dramatically since 1991, the number of different courses being offered has remained fairly stable or even decreased, suggesting that schools may be consolidating specialized electives into multiple sections of broader-based courses. One possible explanation for the decrease in offerings is that while the specialized electives – such as photography, ceramics and printmaking – are often popular among students, they require more substantial budgets for materials and supplies than other courses. Hence, when districts cut back on arts budgets, these courses are often the first to go.

The vocational-technical high schools offer only limited electives in the visual arts and no courses in music, dance or theatre.

Music Courses Offered in High Schools 1991 and 1999

<u>Program</u>	Number of Schools Offering	
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1999</u>
Band	131	139
Chorus	133	137
Music Theory	105	89
Jazz Band	64	65
Vocal Chamber/Small Ensemble(s)	N/A	57
Orchestra and/or Strings	44	54
General Music	N/A	40
Instrumental Small Group/Private Lessons	N/A	38
Instrumental Chamber/Small Ensemble(s)	46	34
Voice Small Group/ Private Lessons	N/A	32
Guitar	28	32
Piano/Keyboard	29	29
Music Composition (Electronic)	N/A	26
Music History	21	26
Jazz/Pop Strings	N/A	22
Jazz Choir	N/A	17
Music Composition (Non-electronic)	N/A	10
Music Lessons	57	N/A
Chamber Ensemble	46	N/A
Other Music Programs	36	N/A
Electronic Music	26	N/A
Music Composition	16	N/A

The number of music offerings at the high school level has remained fairly stable since 1991, except for a positive trend toward more string offerings. The total number of music theory classes has declined, but the number of schools offering Advanced Placement theory courses has increased.

The number of schools offering music electives for the non-ensemble member – such as guitar, piano/keyboard and electronic music composition – has not increased as much as might be expected in light of the falling cost of the technology required to offer such important courses. Schools that offer such courses engage in lifelong music-making students who might otherwise opt out of instruction. They also help more students achieve state and national standards, which emphasize creating and the ability to make music individually.

The continuing dearth of course offerings in dance suggests that schools need to create more opportunities in this area. State and national standards in both dance and physical education emphasize the importance of dance for its artistic, recreational and fitness value.

Dance courses can take a variety of forms, from modern dance and choreography to the basics of Hip Hop, Salsa, and other forms of club or ballroom dancing.

Theatre Courses Offered in High Schools 1999	
<u>Program</u>	<u>Number of Schools Offering</u>
General Theatre/Drama	65
Acting	26
Technical Theatre	17
Drama/Musical Production	14
Play- or Scriptwriting	6

Standards for video/film, sometimes labeled “media arts,” are incorporated into theatre standards at the Connecticut and National levels. However, video/film can be viewed either as a blend of two or more art forms, such as theatre and visual arts, or arguably as its own unique and separate art form.

The pervasiveness of the media – including film, video, television and advertising – makes this a popular and important area of study, and one in which all schools should offer learning opportunities.

Dance Courses Offered in High Schools 1999

<u>Program</u>	<u>Number of Schools Offering</u>
Classical Dance	2
Folk Dance	1
Modern Dance	4
Choreography	1

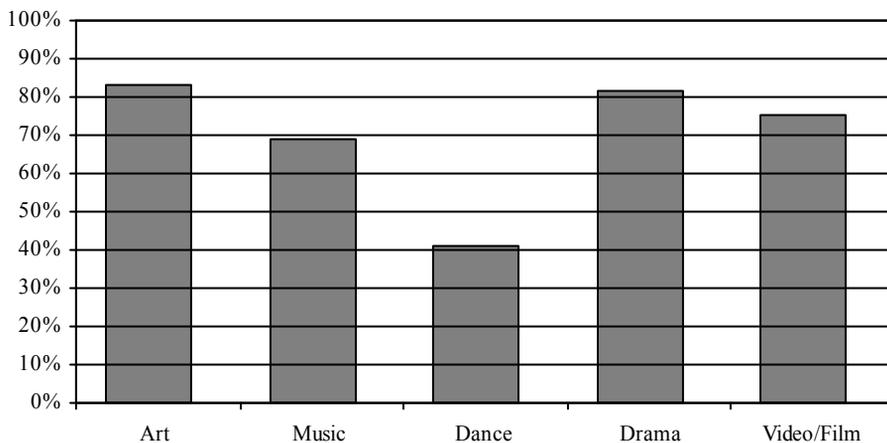
The statewide trend toward offering more theatre electives suggests that schools are recognizing theatre’s value not only as a pervasive medium in our culture, but also as a powerful and engaging means of teaching important areas of language arts – such as speaking, listening and enacting – which are not currently measured by statewide testing programs.

Some schools offer theatre courses as attractive electives to fulfill English graduation requirements.

Video/Film Courses Offered in High Schools 1999

<u>Program</u>	<u>Number of Schools Offering</u>
Video/Film Production	45
Television Production	31
Media Literacy or Criticism	9

High School Grade Weighting



College-bound students are typically concerned about their grade point average. Research suggests that students who participate in arts study tend to be more successful in school, and are therefore likely to go on to higher education. High schools that track, or assign different weightings to courses, therefore need to offer students the opportunity to elect courses in each arts area for honors or advanced credit.

The percentage of schools offering courses in the art form that weight courses in the form equally with other courses for the purposes of honor roll, G.P.A., class rank, etc.