

IMAGINATION

INNOVATION

CREATIVITY

Do You Know What Maryland Children Are Entitled To? **IT'S THE LAW!**

- Maryland State regulations (COMAR-Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations) require arts instruction in public schools.
- The Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) for Fine Arts (accepted by the State School Board in 2008), defines the content and performance standards of arts instruction for Pre K-8th grade students. Visit the VSC website to learn what students should know and be able to do in music, visual art, dance and theatre at http://mfaa.msde.state.md.us/source/MDFAEducation_1a_2.asp
- One high school credit in the Fine Arts is required to graduate from Maryland schools.
- The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) defines the arts as one of 10 core academic subjects, on equal footing with math, science and reading. However, NCLB's focus on standardized testing in math and reading has led to less, not more, arts education in many schools.



ASK FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) Alliance mission is to build support for high-quality, systemic arts education—dance, music, theatre and visual arts—for all Maryland schoolchildren.

AEMS Alliance actively advocates local and statewide policy to ensure that every child in Maryland has high-quality opportunities for learning both in and through the arts.

Add your voice to ours. The best advocate for arts education is YOU.

For detailed information about effective advocacy, please refer to the **AEMS Parents Tool Kit**— available in print and online as a PDF document at the AEMS website www.aems-edu.org (*Programs and Publications*).

Arts **E**ducation in **M**aryland **S**chools Alliance

What You Can Do:

- **Contact the principals, school superintendent and school board members in your local school system.**
 - Request details about the curriculum, fine arts courses, and program opportunities offered in your local schools.
 - Ask for information about the school system's arts education policy. Advocate for program sustainability and ask if adequate resources are in place for program continuation and expansion.
 - Share research about the impact of the arts and concerns about access and equity. Visit the AEMS website and click on "Advocacy" to review the *Arts Education Research* brochure for information about the benefits of arts education for children. A comprehensive list of Arts Education Research Resources is provided by the *Creative Learning and Imagination Community* at www.mpacarts.org/documents/clic_arts_education_resources02.pdf.
 - Discuss state and local requirements (available at <http://aems-edu.org/programs.php> *Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts*) for high-quality opportunities for learning in & through the arts.
- **Become active in ensuring that individuals that are selected as school board members are supportive of the arts. How? Find out whether your school board members are elected or appointed by visiting http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/schoolsystems/System_Links_County.htm. Click on your school system and access "Board" for complete school board information. Advocate and campaign for appropriate candidates—or volunteer! Exercise your rights by attending meetings and speaking before your school board in support of providing each Maryland child with the arts education to which he/she is entitled.**
- **Participate in School Improvement Teams. Encourage other arts education supporters to become active.**
- **Promote arts education in written correspondence and personal contacts with elected officials, policymakers, the media, the PTA, and civic organizations.**

Talking Points:

School Focused Messages and Business/Industry Focused Messages

- **The arts provide the skills and knowledge students need to develop the creativity, discipline, and intellectual capacities necessary for success in today's global information age.**
- **Learning in and through the arts contributes to better school attendance and student behavior, enriches the personal and educational experience of students, and actively engages the individual in his/her learning process.**
- **A comprehensive arts education fosters the imagination, creativity, and innovation needed to create a more competitive workforce. Today's students who are learning in and through the arts will become tomorrow's workforce of creative individuals who can communicate and collaborate effectively, problem solve, conceptualize, and think critically.**
- **Research confirms that the arts make a significant contribution to helping all students achieve success in school, work, and life. *Comprehensive research information is detailed in the publication Critical Links available at <http://www.aep-arts.org/files/publications/CriticalLinks.pdf>.***

You are invited to join the AEMS list serve to receive email alerts and the AEMS Alliance newsletter. (www.aems-edu.org)



The AEMS Alliance is a Member of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network

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