

Arts Education for All Act

Introduced by: Representatives Suzanne Bonamici, Chellie Pingree, and Teresa Leger Fernandez

The Problem

Participating in the arts from a young age benefits students' educational, professional, and personal lives. Arts exposure can improve academic achievement, social and emotional growth and development, workforce preparedness, and overall well-being. Unfortunately, decades of limited funding for arts education programs and an increased emphasis on core academic subjects at the expense of the arts have contributed to disparities in access to arts education programs for Black students, Latino students, and students from low-income families. We need to make critical updates for existing arts education federal programs serving early learners, K-12 students, and youth and adults involved in the justice system to reach more communities.

The Solution

The *Arts Education for All Act* will support and encourage arts education and programming for youth and adults in early learning centers, K-12 schools, and juvenile justice facilities by clarifying that certain federal programs may support arts education and requiring states to make a plan to increase access to arts education programs in K-12 schools and juvenile justice facilities. Specifically, the *Arts Education for All Act*:

- **Improves arts programming in caregiving and early education** by clarifying that Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding can be used for arts programming;
- **Provides support for arts access in K-12 schools** by expanding Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) state plan requirements to direct states to describe how they will support and encourage arts education to improve student achievement in all subjects, including by creating partnerships with nonprofit arts organizations to promote arts programming in schools;
- **Prioritizes professional development for arts educators** by amending ESEA to guarantee professional development for arts educators and for other educators about integrating the arts in their instruction;
- **Increases the usability and accessibility of data on access to arts education** by directing research activities on arts and arts education at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and reinstating the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the Arts;
- **Integrates the arts in afterschool and summer learning programs** by reinforcing the ability of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLCs) to work with nonprofit arts organizations to develop and implement arts education programs;
- **Facilitates arts education in the justice system** by requiring state plans under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) to describe how the state will coordinate services and activities for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention with arts agencies and arts organizations; and
- **Allows arts education to be used for reentry and recidivism reduction efforts** by connecting adults involved in the justice system to educational opportunities and employment after reentry.