

Your Question

A national organization asked how many states explicitly named the arts in their approved state ESSER plans and what arts-related activities those states proposed.

Our Response

Of the 52 plans [approved](#) by the U.S. Department of Education, 28 (54%) explicitly include the arts:

- Alaska
- California
- Connecticut
- District of Columbia
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- South Carolina
- Utah
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wyoming

Within the plans, states include the arts most frequently in two sections: summer and after-school programming and enrichment (15), and staffing and retention (11).

Stakeholder feedback

Six states and a U.S. territory – **Alaska, Connecticut, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico** and **South Carolina** — identify arts education as a stakeholder priority when reporting on the feedback gathered as part of their planning process. Of these seven entities, six include arts education in their final plan.

Summer and after-school programming and enrichment

Fourteen states and a U.S. territory – **Alaska, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Puerto Rico, South Carolina** and **Wisconsin** — include the arts in funding for summer and after-school programming and enrichment. **Alaska** allows districts to use funds to purchase arts-related supplies, such as art materials or musical instruments, and to contract with experienced, qualified Alaska teaching artists listed in the Alaska State Council on the Arts' STAR roster. **Kentucky** plans to use the funds to support a second site for its Governor's School for the Arts. **Montana's** Office of Public Instruction will partner with the Montana Arts Council, Department of Labor, Chamber of Commerce and Reach Higher to develop student film festival workshops in digital media/communication.

Staffing and retention

Eleven states — **Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Utah** and **Wyoming** — include the arts in their list of certification areas experiencing a critical shortage. Examples of strategies for using ESSER funds to address all shortage areas include supporting salary increases, advancing educators more quickly through the salary schedule, paying for application fees for recertification or investing in programs for students and staff to become educators (**Michigan**); changing guidelines for issuing temporary certificates and emergency permits (**Pennsylvania**); and retaining staff by providing counseling or mentorship and supporting professional development (**Wyoming**).

Curriculum and instruction

Five states — **Georgia, Hawaii, New Jersey, South Carolina** and **West Virginia** — and the **District of Columbia** include the arts in their plans for curriculum and instruction. The **District of Columbia** proposes to use ESSER funding for grants to encourage the development and adoption of high-quality coursework in subjects including the arts and museum education. **Georgia** will expand the number of certified or endorsed teachers in, and provide grants for, areas that contribute to a well-rounded education, including fine arts and STEM/STEAM.

Teacher training and professional development

Four states — **Montana, Nevada, Ohio** and **West Virginia** — include the arts in their plans for teacher training. Examples include using funds to support collaboration with external experts, contributors and facilitators for innovative professional development for arts educators (**Ohio**) and creating a Teaching Assistance Center for grades 6-12 STEAM educators (**West Virginia**).

Creating and expanding programs

Four states — **Georgia, Hawaii, South Carolina** and **Washington** — proposed creating or expanding arts programs. **Hawaii** will use funds to expand Hawaiian education, arts, computer science, STEM and project-based learning to reengage students, especially those in middle school. The **South Carolina** Department of Education will provide funds to the South Carolina Arts Commission to establish a fine arts career pathway. **Washington** will create a Foster Care Arts Academy, a week-long arts experience for students in foster care.

Other

Four states and a U.S. territory — **Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, Puerto Rico** and **West Virginia** — include STEAM education in their plans.

Hawaii and **Ohio** outline plans to include the arts in their remote learning efforts to increase access and personalize learning for students.

Georgia and **Louisiana** include grants and other funding for the arts in their plans. Georgia will provide grants to schools to fund fine arts and STEM/STEAM, while Louisiana identifies the arts as one priority area to fund both state-level activities and incentives to local education agencies.

Connecticut and **Nebraska** explicitly name the arts in their plans for a safe return to school. Connecticut outlines specific mitigation strategies for music programs, and Nebraska's guidance for return to in-person instruction included information for fine arts.

Maine's Department of Education proposed working with groups, including visual and performing arts educators, to further plan for using ESSER funding.

The **Ohio** Department of Education will monitor changes in access to arts education statewide throughout the funding period via Ohio's Arts Education Data Dashboard.