

# Tool P: Sample Message Map for State X

Use this message map to develop the core statements that define your initiative and assemble those statements into a framework that can be used to guide all public discussions (media interviews, speeches and presentations) as well as printed and electronic collateral (publications, websites and emails). **Please note that all data describing State X are fictitious.**

**CORE STATEMENT:** All students deserve a high-quality arts education to support their success in school, work and life. That is why State X policy mandates that all students have access to and enroll in quality arts education courses.

## KEY MESSAGE 1 – CONFIRMED VALUE OF ARTS EDUCATION

Research confirms that arts education is valuable to students’ future success in school, work and life.

**Americans understand the value of arts education. In a recent poll, 71%** of Americans rated classes in the arts as very or extremely important to school quality. According to research assembled in the Arts Education Partnership’s [ArtsEdSearch](#) research clearinghouse:

- Participation in arts classes improves students’ attendance and graduation rates, boosts their empathy and resilience and sharpens their critical thinking skills.
- Participation in arts education correlates with academic performance.

In addition, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) [encourages states](#) to incorporate multiple measures of school success in their accountability systems to foster a well-rounded education, which includes access to classes in the arts.

## KEY MESSAGE 2 – POWER AND POTENTIAL OF DATA

Policymakers, school and district leaders, parents and community members can use arts education data to shine a light on what is working and identify opportunities for improvement so that more students can have access to a well-rounded education.

- While almost every state requires all schools to offer instruction in at least one arts discipline, only seven publicly report any information on arts enrollment. Policymakers can use this information to track the impact of state policies to boost access to arts education.
- While almost every state has developed data systems to help track and improve access and quality in education, most do not use these systems to assess student access to and participation in courses like music, theater, dance and visual arts. District and school leaders can use this information to direct resources to schools that lack robust arts education programs and address inequities in access to or participation in arts courses.
- Parents and students can use arts education data to find schools or programs whose arts offerings best suit their interests.



### KEY MESSAGE 3 – STATE X’S DATA REVEAL EQUITY GAPS IN ARTS EDUCATION

Certain populations of State X students are more likely than their peers to miss out on the benefits of arts education. We must do better for our students.

- There are significant gaps in enrollment among racial and ethnic groups, with only 74% of African American students and 68% of Hispanic or Latino students enrolled in at least one arts course.
- There are also gaps that affect students from low-income families. More than half of students (57%) who receive free or reduced-price lunches attend schools that do not offer any arts courses.
- Roughly one-third of students attending rural schools (32%) lack access to any arts courses.