

Tool Q: Sample Copy for a Two-Pager on Arts Education in State X

As you communicate about the findings of your arts education data initiative, it may be helpful to distribute a brief overview of the initiative and its findings. Adapt the language below for your own document. You can find research to support claims below at [ArtsEdSearch](#), the Arts Education Partnership’s clearinghouse of research on arts education. **Please note that all the data describing State X in this document are fictitious.**

Creative Futures: The Arts Are Vital to a Quality Education

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.

Benefits of Arts Education

When students participate in arts classes, their academic performance improves, their attendance and graduation rates increase, they become more empathetic and their critical thinking skills grow sharper. Research has shown, repeatedly, that arts education is valuable to students’ future success in school, work and life.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Multiple studies have confirmed the correlation between art engagement and academic achievement in other subjects.

GRADUATION RATES

Schools with long-standing art programs have higher graduation rates; students who don’t take art classes are [five times more likely](#) to drop out of school before graduation than their peers who do.

21ST CENTURY SKILLS

Arts education develops creativity and problem-solving skills, improves judgment and encourages innovative thinking.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Arts classes are highly recommended for developing motor skills in young children and help to improve visual-spatial skills and hand-eye coordination.



EXPANDED COLLEGE ACCESS

At-risk students with a history of involvement in the arts have higher college enrollment rates than their at-risk peers who didn't pursue art education, and they are three times more likely to earn bachelor's degrees than their peers.

(Contact information and About information)

What the Data Say

(OPTION 1) EQUITY GAPS IN ARTS EDUCATION IN STATE X

Currently, 52,814 students (20%) in State X attend schools that do not offer any arts courses. *This inequity goes against State X's statewide policy mandating that 100% of students be enrolled in arts courses.* Certain populations of students are more likely than their peers to miss out on the benefits of arts education:

- Overall, 80% of students are enrolled in at least one arts course, but there is a significant gap in enrollment among racial and ethnic groups. Only 74% of African American students and 68% of Hispanic or Latino students are 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 who attend rural schools (32%) lack access to any arts courses.

It is troubling that access to arts courses decreases significantly as students grow older. Only 52% of high schoolers enrolled in at least one arts course of any discipline.

We must do better for our students.

(OPTION 2) TREND LINES ... FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW, ARTS EDUCATION IS ON THE RISE IN STATE X

State X is proud to report that each year more students attend schools offering arts courses.

- Overall, 80% of students are enrolled in at least one arts course, up from 72% in 2015.
- We've seen the greatest increases among our Hispanic or Latino students — rising from 62% to 68% in the last three years.
- After our efforts to increase access to arts in schools in our rural communities, 68% of students in rural schools have art programs — up from 63% in 2015.

While there's still more work to be done, our collective efforts are working.

(OPTION 3) COMPARED TO NATIONAL AVERAGES ... STATE X LAGS WELL BEHIND THE NATIONAL AVERAGE IN STUDENTS ATTENDING SCHOOLS WITH ARTS EDUCATION

- While across the country, an average of 94% of students attend schools that offer music classes, only 87% of students in State X attend such schools.
- Additionally, only 79% of all State X students attend schools that offer visual arts classes, significantly lower than the national average of 87%.

How We Can Support and Expand Arts Education

The good news is that most Americans understand the value of arts education. Polls show that [71%](#) of Americans believe classes in the arts are very or extremely important to school quality. Here are some steps policymakers and education leaders can take to expand access to and participation in arts education:

- Create a task force consisting of department of education staff and local arts education stakeholders to create an arts education plan for public schools.
- Provide targeted professional development for educators.
- Incorporate the arts as an essential component of all educator workforce development programs.
- Incorporate learning in the arts as part of a comprehensive definition of college, career and citizenship readiness.
- Engage and build relationships with key arts and education stakeholders invested in education improvement.
- *(Consider adding other recommendations for policy or practice in your state.)*

For more information about arts education and its importance, please visit: *(Insert the URL of your website or webpages describing your arts education data initiative.)*