

Introduction to the Visual Arts Standards

Visual Arts include the traditional fine arts such as drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, and sculpture; media arts including film, graphic communications, animation, and emerging technologies; architectural, environmental, and industrial arts such as urban, interior, product, and landscape design; folk arts; and works of art such as ceramics, fibers, jewelry, works in wood, paper, and other materials. (National Art Education Association)

The Visual Arts Standards provide learning progressions from Prek-12. Please read the conceptual framework narrative to learn more about the additional materials which provide a context for the grade level visual arts Performance Standards. These include:

- Philosophical Foundations and Lifelong Goals for Artistic Literacy;
- Definitions of the artistic processes of Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting;
- Anchor Standards which are common across all five of the arts disciplines.

The glossary provides definitions for those terms which the writing team felt would benefit from explaining the context or point of view regarding the use of the term within the standards.

1. The standards provide the foundation for visual art education for all students.

The standards support student-learning outcomes through big ideas – enduring understandings and essential questions. The concepts embedded in the standards reflect the scope of learning – the knowledge, skills, and understandings - taught through study of the visual arts. By including all aspects of creating, presenting, responding, and connecting in study of the visual arts, student learning through these standards explores the full scope of what it means to be an artistically literate citizen. While presented chronologically the processes are best designed and taught in a blended fashion to support rich artistic skills and behaviors.

2. The standards provide ways to address the content of visual art education within the school year.

There are 15 Enduring Understandings with 15 correlated grade-by-grade (preK-8 and three levels for high school) Performance Standards. Art educators will be able to cluster group standards using more than one within a given instructional unit. The Performance Standards offer a practical system for teachers to use to inform their instruction.

3. The standards emphasize deep learning in the visual arts creating higher expectations and support college, career and citizenship readiness for all students.

The performance standards offer learning progressions for students. Embedded in the standards are ideas about how arts learning can be broadened and deepened to support students in making meaning of their lives and their world. Essential questions are provided for teachers as thought starters promoting inquiry based teaching and learning. They support communicating and learning in art by providing language needed for students and stakeholders alike.

4. The standards provide opportunities for educators to reflect on their practice.

The visual arts performance standards are fundamentally grounded in collective beliefs about what constitutes effective teaching and learning. Individual educators are encouraged to review

and use the standards in achieving the goal of continuous improvement.

Whether it means updating curriculum or adapting an individual art lesson or curriculum unit, the new visual arts standards inspire and support the ways in which art educators keep their teaching fresh and dynamic.