

# NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS



National Coalition for **CORE ARTS** Standards



## **N2KN: Need to Know Now**

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Support for Exceptional Students

## In what ways do the NCCAS arts standards support exceptional students?

The National Core Arts Standards and their accompanying Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs) allow the structured flexibility for meeting the needs of a diverse student audience. In addition, General Guidelines for accessibility in each arts discipline have been provided by pedagogical experts from INSERT Kennedy CTR / Very Special Arts [Hyperlink](#) This agile approach to the MCAs is necessary for including those experiencing a range of abilities from differently-abled to gifted-and-talented arts classrooms. The goals set forth in the National Core Arts Standards are achievable by most students, as long as arts educators, parents, and para-professionals work collaboratively with students.

### Why It Matters to You

- All students, regardless of abilities, have the right to the same educational goals and standards. Do we want to tease out more categories of exceptionality?
- In order to provide access to high quality arts education, educators need to know and understand the unique needs of each student.
- All teachers must cultivate knowledge and skills with the appropriate instructional methodologies and resources needed to address unique student needs.

### Things to Consider

VSA/Accessibility Arts and Special Education consultant Sharon Malley (2014) offers guidelines for arts teachers for teaching and assessing students experiencing disabilities. These include:

- Maintain high expectations
- Promote communicative competence
- Use the principles of Universal Design for Learning
- Know how to select and use appropriate accommodations for individual learners
- Make use of evidence-based practices
- Target instruction and use formative indicators of student performance.

### Reflection Questions

How do the arts contribute to a well-rounded education for all children?

In what ways can students create a pathway to success through learning in the arts?

In what ways do the arts foster creativity and self-expression for all students?

How can equitable access to arts instruction meet the unique needs of all students?

### Resources for Attending to Access

The central purposes of education standards are to identify the learning that we want for all of our students and to drive improvement in the system that delivers that learning. Every student should have access to quality instruction in all art forms, which should be represented within the curricula of every school across the nation, and students should develop competence in all four artistic processes through instruction in each art form.

Opportunity-to-Learn Standards help encourage equitable delivery of arts education by outlining the resources necessary for students to succeed, illustrating a continuum of programming, allowing for program review, and articulating the basis for a comprehensive arts education.

In addition, the National Core Arts Standards website provides guidance on attending to the instructional needs of all learners with resources for teaching exceptional children. Additional resources may be found on the National Association for Gifted Children website; which offers a Position Statement on Arts Education for Gifted and Talented Students.

### **Recommended Actions You Can Take**

- Ensure that arts educators challenge students of all abilities to excel.
- Ensure that administrators provide educators with core knowledge of a broad range of disabilities, coupled with expertise in general strategies and frameworks for inclusion.
- Ensure that schools and districts prioritize support for the achievement of all students.

## **Links**

### **Useful Resources:**

- National Center on Universal Design for Learning  
[www.udlcenter.org](http://www.udlcenter.org)
- Kennedy Center Office of VSA and Accessibility  
[vsainfor@kennedy-center.org](mailto:vsainfor@kennedy-center.org)
- National Association for Gifted Children  
<https://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Position%20Statement/Arts%20Education%20and%20Gifted%20and%20Talented%20Students.pdf>
- National Association for Arts Education Special Needs in Art Education (SNAE)  
<https://www.arteducators.org/community/articles/75-special-needs-in-art-education-snae>
- National Association for Arts Education Disability Studies in Art Education (DSAE)  
<https://www.arteducators.org/community/articles/295-disability-studies-in-art-education-dsae>
- National Dance Education Organization Professional Development Course “Teaching Dance to Students with Disabilities”  
[https://www.ndeo.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=22&club\\_id=893257&module\\_id=196444&actr=4](https://www.ndeo.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=893257&module_id=196444&actr=4)

- National Dance Education Organization Dance and Disability Special Interest Group  
[https://www.ndeo.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=11&club\\_id=893257](https://www.ndeo.org/content.aspx?page_id=11&club_id=893257)
- “Students with Disabilities and the Core Arts Standards- Guiding Principles for Teachers”  
<https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/sites/default/files/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Inclusion.pdf>



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