



**North Carolina Music Educators Association**  
Associated with the State Department of Public Instruction and  
A Federated State Association of MENC: The National Association for Music Education

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To Members of the NC State Board of Education:

The North Carolina Music Educators Association (NCMEA) supports an arts education requirement for graduation from North Carolina high schools. It is our understanding that the State Board of Education has already approved a Core Course of Study for graduation requirements; however, the exclusion of arts education as part of this core course of study gives us great concern. While an optional endorsement in arts education is certainly an avenue that some students will pursue, we are concerned that no student in our state will be required to have an arts course in one of the four arts disciplines: dance, music, theatre arts, or visual arts in order to graduate from high school. We unite our voices with the NC PTA, Arts NC, other professional associations, parents and community members in the pursuit of an arts education requirement for high school graduation and as an admittance requirement to NC colleges and universities.

This request is made in light of the following facts and data:

- The ARTS are core, academic subject areas according to the No Child Left Behind legislation;
- NC is among the minority of states in our country that does not have an arts education requirement for high school graduation nor for admittance into NC colleges and universities (Source: ArtScan Database from the Education Commission of the States);
- The majority of approved college- and work-ready plans through the American Diploma Project and Project Achieve have a high school graduation requirement: NC does not. (Source: Project Achieve, Inc);
- NC is among the minority of states in the Southeast Regional Education Board network that does not have an arts education graduation requirement (Source: ArtScan and SREB);
- NC has a Standard Course of Study for Arts Education, K-12, as mandated by the State Board of Education and General Assembly;

- Empirical data from compendium studies such as *Critical Links* (Arts Education Partnership and CCSSO) clearly demonstrate that the arts positively affect student achievement, motivation to learn, school attendance, and critical and creative thinking skills and processes, which are necessary for success in the arts and which transfer and apply to learning in other content areas;
- Data from the College Board have consistently and positively linked arts study (one or more years in any of the four arts disciplines) with higher scores on the SAT; the longer the years of involvement, the greater the gains.

For these and other reasons, our association believes it is imperative to implement an arts education graduation requirement for the children of North Carolina. NCMEA is an organization with over 2500 members representing all levels of music education and committed to providing quality music education for all children. The mission of NCMEA is to promote music as a fundamental component of education and to provide opportunities for lifelong learning by supporting teachers, students and communities in developing and fostering excellence in music. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this critical information.

Sincerely,



Constance L. McKoy, President  
North Carolina Music Educators Association