

# Principal Planning Guidance - Arts Education (PreK-8)

## Planning Expectations Synopsis

### K-8 Weekly Instructional Minutes and Staffing:

- A minimum of 120 minutes of arts instruction per week at every grade level
- Taught by Illinois licensed/endorsed arts instructors on staff

**Beginning in SY18-19, the district adopted the updated [Illinois Arts Learning Standards](#).** These new learning standards encompass Visual Arts, Music, Theatre, Dance, and Media Arts. CPS arts curriculum must be aligned to these learning standards. In SY20-21, the Department of Arts Education identified [Prioritized Arts Learning Standards](#) in Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theatre to guide and focus arts curriculum development.

The Department of Arts Education has also created a [Standards Toolkit](#) to support educator understanding and implementation of the Illinois Arts Learning Standards. These tools are accompanied by [yearly standards-focused professional learning sessions](#). Principals are strongly encouraged to allow arts teachers to attend these sessions.

## Overview/Rationale

The arts are a core subject area and align with the Common Core State Standards and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS). Schools must have Tier II and Tier III academic supports in place for students in the arts, as well as a structured process for referral and monitoring of these supports. Academic interventions will be most effective when high-quality, arts-integrated, and Common-Core-aligned best practices are in place at Tier I.

A vital element of a 21st century education, arts instruction is critical to engaging students in innovation, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. Research shows that exposure to—and education in—the arts significantly decreases dropout rates, improves college entrance, increases civic engagement, and promotes financial success throughout a person's lifetime.

## Governing Policy/ Regulatory Implications

- **The November 2012 CPS Arts Education Plan Board Resolution ([12-1114-RS1](#))** recognizes the arts as core curriculum, dedicates a minimum of 120 minutes of weekly arts instruction for K-8, and expands the Fine Arts HS Graduation Requirements to include dance and theatre as well as visual art and music. The Board Resolution values the critical role of licensed arts instructors and states that every student deserves to receive a comprehensive and sequential study of every art form, including visual art, music, dance, and theatre from pre-K through 12th grade. [Read the CPS Arts Education Plan Goals and Recommendations](#).
- **State of Illinois policy** requires school districts “to ensure that each school makes available to all students instruction in the six fundamental learning areas, which include the fine arts.” ([Illinois Administrative Code Title 23, § 1.10](#))
- As identified in the **U.S. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015)** the arts are part of a core curriculum that provides a well-rounded education to all students.

## Staffing Considerations

**Personnel:** Schools are responsible for providing instruction in Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and/or Theatre by Illinois licensed/endorsed instructors on staff to provide a **minimum of 120 minutes of instruction in K-8**. Licensed or endorsed teachers provide long-term, consistent, and sequential arts instruction from year to year that contributes to overall student success.

Per the CPS Arts Education Plan, schools should staff a minimum ratio of **1 full time arts teacher per 350 students**.

## Space and Scheduling Considerations

- **Dedicated space:** Arts instruction should be scheduled in a dedicated classroom space, ideally modified for the specific artistic discipline being taught there (e.g. dance instruction in a dance studio). Occasionally, arts teachers may request different instruction spaces (e.g., auditorium, stage, multi-purpose room), and should be placed there only when requested.

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- **Accessibility to all learners:** Principals should ensure that all learners’ arts education is accessible and consistent with students’ learning considerations (e.g., IEPs or ELL programs). Any accommodations and staff supports provided to those students in other courses should be provided in their arts courses as well.
- **Class size:** Optimal class sizes should be *less than or equal to* district guidelines. Be mindful of “push-in” services or students added to the roster of arts classes.
- **Time between classes:** Provide 2-5 minutes of passing time to/from arts classes. Travelling can impact transition times in arts courses. Classes scheduled back-to-back create challenges for both students and teachers in terms of art-making, cleanup, and storage of artwork, especially when arts teachers are serving multiple grades and ability levels.
- **Production/Rehearsal/Exhibition time:** Allow arts educators additional preparation time during or outside of school hours for planning, preparation, and implementation of performances and exhibitions of student work.

## Budgeting Considerations

**Budget and materials:** In accordance with the CPS Arts Education Plan, the CPS Department of Arts Education recommends a minimum budget of **at least \$5.00 per student** for each arts discipline.

- Example: A PreK-8 school serving 700 students receiving instruction in both music and visual art should budget \$3,500 for each arts program (totaling \$7,000).
- *Note: Plan ahead for more costly equipment purchases on a non-annual basis (e.g., kilns, sound systems, sprung floors).*

## FREE additional funding for the arts at your school:

- **Arts Essentials:** Principals should designate an arts teacher as the [Arts Liaison](#) to complete the annual Creative Schools Survey. Survey completion ensures that the school receives [Arts Essentials Funding](#), a yearly per-school award of \$1,000 from the district for the purchase of arts supplies and materials. Principals should nominate or renominate their Arts Liaison each school year using this [Nomination Form](#).
- **Creative Schools Fund Grants:** Once an Arts Liaison completes the Creative Schools Survey and a school receives its Creative Schools Certification, that school may be eligible to apply for a [Creative Schools Fund \(CSF\) Grant](#) awarded by [Ingenuity](#) and the Department of Arts Education. Grants up to \$10,000 can be spent on the development of arts programs across a range of disciplines.

## Additional Resources/Opportunities

- **CPS District-wide Arts Programs:** The Department of Arts Education offers a number of district-wide arts programs that are free to any CPS student:
  - Students in grades 3–12 may participate in [All-City Performing Arts](#) (Music, Theatre, and dance).
  - Students in grades PreK–12 may participate in [All-City Visual Arts](#) (visual/media arts exhibitions).
  - CPS juniors and seniors may enroll in the [Advanced Arts Program](#), an off-campus program in which students participate in AP, honors, and/or dual-credit courses in the arts.
- **Professional Learning:** A range of professional learning sessions are available for administrators and teachers on best practices in arts instruction, curriculum development, and assessment throughout every school year.
- **External partners:** Arts partnerships may supplement existing arts education during in- and out-of-school time through artist residencies, assemblies, or field trips. *Note: Partnerships should not replace arts instruction provided by licensed/endorsed teachers.* For a searchable list of arts partners, see [chicago.artlookmap.com](http://chicago.artlookmap.com).

## Contact Information

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