



Platform: Assessment

Position Statement on the Impact of High Stakes and Standardized Testing on Visual Arts Education [Adopted March 2016; Reviewed and Revised March 2019; April 2024]

NAEA supports student success in all facets of academic achievement; advocating for excellence, opportunity, and equity for all students studying the visual arts. Quality visual arts, media arts, and design education depends on students engaging in rigorous visual arts learning experiences consistently, over time. Art education instruction needs to be uninterrupted, and include time for art production/creation, reflection/response, presentation and assessment in order to support high-level learning in the visual arts. A sequential, high quality visual arts education is necessary for students' growth in creativity, higher order thinking, problem solving, and other essential college and career readiness skills.

“When high stakes testing impacts access to visual art instruction, either partially or entirely through pull out or loss of instructional time and focus, it not only undermines the holistic education of the learner, but also hampers the crucial arts learning essential for pursuing a successful career in the arts.”¹

Consequences of a high stakes testing culture on students include, but are not limited to:

- loss of access to and/or time in visual arts classes due to test preparation, remediation/intervention, pull-out tutoring, and test-taking.
- loss of opportunity to enroll in introductory and/or advanced visual arts classes due to test preparation obligations and/or additional required classes in tested subjects.
- loss of instructional time directly impacts student growth and assessment as well as teacher accountability.
- elimination of programming, removal of visual art content, and diminished quality of art equipment and media²
- Loss of post-secondary opportunities for students who are interested in pursuing visual arts.

NAEA advocates that

- visual arts classes have proportional instructional time at all levels in comparison with all other curricular areas during the school/district/state testing window, including test preparation time.
- visual arts classes should remain consistently accessible for all students throughout their educational career, especially during testing windows.
- visual arts classes should not be canceled during testing, but should be rescheduled.

- the visual art educator's preparation time should not be disrupted for testing.
- visual arts teacher(s) have equal input with other academic areas in the design and decisions relating to the testing schedule at the school site.

RESOURCES

1 Arts for Life's Sake, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2021 -
<https://www.arteducators.org/research/articles/107-no-child-left-behind>

2 No Child Left Behind: A Study of its Impact on Arts Education, Sabol, 2010 -
<https://www.arteducators.org/research/articles/107-no-child-left-behind>