



NATIONAL  
ART EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION

# OPPORTUNITIES *to* LEARN **STANDARDS**

Elementary Visual Arts Education



# ELEMENTARY VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION

The following **Opportunities to Learn (OTL) Standards for elementary visual arts** are essential conditions required for a high-quality program that enables educators and students to engage in deep learning, as outlined in the 2014 National Standards for Visual Arts. They align with the **National Art Education Association (NAEA) Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators**. These standards also incorporate guidelines set by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

OTL Standards are a tool for ongoing program evaluation and advocacy. OTL Standards often rely more on innovation and commitment than funding alone. OTL Standards provide direction for a quality elementary visual arts program, covering curriculum, personnel, scheduling, budget, facilities, materials, equipment, resources, and professional learning/development. Educators, supervisors, and the community should utilize OTL Standards to inform decisions and identify areas of improvement to move the visual arts program to a high-quality program.

For General PreK–12 Visual and Media Arts Program Standards, view the **PreK–12 Visual and Media Arts Programs** document.





CHECKLIST FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION:

# ELEMENTARY VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION

Specific indicators are provided below to help administrators, teachers, and parents—with or without an arts background—judge the quality of a school or school district’s visual arts education program.



## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

STANDARDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	Comments
1. Elementary art educators have opportunities to meet with other visual arts educators, as well as arts educators in other disciplines (e.g., music), for the purpose of developing and aligning curricula, and for developing interdisciplinary learning activities.			
2. Art educators have opportunities for professional development and participation in professional learning communities.			
3. Art educators have shared planning time with classroom educators.			
4. The curriculum adequately prepares students for visual arts courses at the middle school level.			

## PERSONNEL

**Background:** All students have a minimum of one 50-minute art class per week throughout the school year. The Association recognizes ratios of personnel to students differ from state to state (or province to province) and district to district. For quality education (teaching and learning experiences) to take place, it is recommended that at the elementary level personnel for visual arts education classes should meet the following guidelines:

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	Comments
1. Elementary art educators have opportunities to meet with other visual arts educators, as well as arts educators in other disciplines (e.g., music), for the purpose of developing and aligning curricula, and for developing interdisciplinary learning activities.			
2. At the elementary level, the number of certified art specialists is sufficient to provide art experiences for a total of at least 50 minutes per week per class, throughout the school year.			
3. At the elementary level, the teacher-to-pupil ratio in regularly scheduled art experiences is no greater than 1:300–400 students per school.			
4. All students have a minimum of one art class per week.			
5. Art educators teach no more than six classes per day.			
6. At the elementary level, supplementary art experiences are conducted by classroom teachers with guidance from the certified art specialist.			

## TIME & SCHEDULING

STANDARDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	Comments
1. Art instruction, taught by a certified visual arts educator, is provided throughout the year for all students for at least 50 minutes weekly.			

## BUILDINGS & FACILITIES

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	Comments
1. One permanent art room is established within each school for every 300–400 students. Each area is equipped for group work and for independent self-directed study.			
2. There are facilities for teaching specialized art media included in the curriculum (e.g., clay, fibers, drawing, painting, technology, etc.) in each elementary school.			
3. Schools with over 500 students have one or more specialized art room for work not possible in the general art room in accordance with these ratios:			
a. Schools with 501–999 students have one “two-dimensional art” room and one “three-dimensional art” room or two multimedia art rooms (two-dimensional and three-dimensional media) according to the art and design curriculum offered.			
b. Schools with 1,000 or more students have three specialized studios (two “two-dimensional art” and one “three-dimensional media”) or three multimedia art rooms (two-dimensional and three-dimensional media) according to the art and design curriculum offered.			
4. Adequate in-class storage, accessible to students, is needed, as well as at least 350 square feet of lockable storage space for art supplies, equipment, and student artworks. This latter space should be connected to the art room.			
5. The height of display space should be consistent with the accessibility needs of students within the elementary grade levels and provide accessibility for students with special needs.			
6. Elementary school art rooms often have a common area used as a gathering space, which might provide seating on the floor if this is a carpeted area.			



## MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT & RESOURCES

STANDARDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	Comments
1. The school provides consumable and nonconsumable curriculum resources appropriate to the elementary level as outlined above in Standards District-Wide Item 2.			
2. The school provides current and emerging technology resources appropriate to the elementary level as outlined above in Standards District-Wide Item 3.			
3. Print and digital resources supporting curricular content are housed within a media or learning resource center available for both educator and student use.			
4. Furniture, materials, equipment, and technology needs are planned and budgeted for each art educator and/or art room.			
5. Every educator and every student have convenient, equitable access to needed materials and equipment.			
6. Each elementary school site has equipment and space dedicated for ongoing display and exhibition of student work.			
7. Each room in the school where art instruction takes place has convenient access to the internet and hardware and software to support audiovisual equipment for classroom presentations, student research, and the like.			

## BUDGET

STANDARDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	Comments
1. The budget is administered directly by the district coordinator and/or art educators (for detailed information see PreK–12 Visual and Media Arts Program Standards OTL–PreK–12 Visual and Media Arts Programs).			



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