

The Effects of the Senate Bill 1 – 2016 on Quality Arts Education in Kentucky

The recently filed SB1-2016 proposes significant statutory changes that allow more local control of education and reduce the burden of standardized testing on schools and districts. The KCAE supports efforts to reduce the amount of time consumed by testing and highly complicated accountability structures, and the regrettable instructional practice of “teaching to the test.” However, any assessment and accountability system defined by assigning rewards for high-performing schools, or requiring corrective measures for underperforming schools causes schools to prioritize the accountability components that lead to those rewards. Under that system, subjects not supported by any form of statutory accountability will be marginalized.

KCAE and its member organizations—the Kentucky Music Educators Association; the Kentucky Art Education Association; the Kentucky Theatre Association; and the Kentucky Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance—respectfully remind members of the General Assembly that arts education must have statutory support that will ensure students can apply core concepts in the visual and performing arts, and express their creative talents and interests in the arts (KRS 158.6451). Further, it must provide a sufficient grounding to help children appreciate their cultural and historical heritage (KRS 158:645).

If Kentucky is to provide equal access to visual and performing arts instruction as part of a well-rounded education for Kentucky’s children, the following foundational components of a quality arts education that are currently lacking in legislation and regulation must be provided for by the General Assembly and governing agencies and institutions that direct the educational system of the Commonwealth:

- **Protect time** for the specific study of the visual and performing arts in the school day.
- **Provide support** for a sequenced, standards-based, K–12 visual and performing arts curriculum.
- **Hold schools accountable** for providing adequate staffing, resources, facilities, and instructional support for arts education.
- **Ensure that certifications** support truly qualified arts teachers delivering instruction.
- **Remove all language that confuses the study of the Humanities** (all studies other than math and science) with the explicit study of the Visual and Performing Arts as defined by KY Learner goal 7: music, visual arts, dance, dramatic arts.

The Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education holds that multiple proposed changes in the statutory language put forth in SB1 2016 fail to support the Commonwealth’s capacities and learner goals that set forth an expectation for the development of the talents and artistic understandings of our children.

We recommend the following changes to the current Senate Bill 1 to ensure a well-rounded education, which provides standards-based arts education in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts (as identified by ESSA 2015) for all students.

KCAE's analysis of Senate Bill 1 2016 and recommendations for strengthening the bill to support arts education.

ARTS CAPACITIES

**SB 1 2016
Section 4**

KRS 158.645 (6)

"Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage"

would be amended to read:

*"Sufficient grounding in the arts that: (a) Enables each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage; **or (b) is a result of an application experience in coursework that incorporates design content, techniques of creativity, and interpretation**"*

**What would
change?**

Adding the "or" clause would change the artistic definition of "grounding in the arts" by providing options that non-visual and performing arts courses would also satisfy the "sufficient grounding" capacity expectation. Further, there is dangerous implication that one course experience would provide sufficiency rather than a K-12 sequenced arts curricular experience.

**How this change
would affect
students**

Under this broadened definition, students might never have access to a visual or performing arts class during their K-12 education. The "or" clause could allow elementary, middle, and high schools to substitute courses containing no artistic content and only a portion of artistic processes for courses that ground students in the visual and performing arts. Students with minimal or no access to visual and performing arts courses would be unable to "apply core concepts in the arts" or "Express their creative talents and interests in visual arts, music, dance, and dramatic arts" as directed by the KY Legislative goals for Commonwealth Schools (KRS 158.6451). The added language would compromise a well-rounded education as defined by the ESSA (music, arts), and diminish the value and integrity of arts education in a child's curriculum.

**KCAE
Recommendation**

Leave the seventh capacity as is.

The visual and performing arts must be defined as those disciplines that, at their core, include visual and performing arts content and all of the artistic processes: creating; producing, performing, or presenting an artistic product; responding affectively to dance, theatre, visual art, and music; and connecting artistic experiences to one's human heritage and culture.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING STANDARDS

**SB 1 2016
Section 5**

KRS 158.6453 (2) (f):

.. the Kentucky Department of Education in collaboration with the Council on Postsecondary Education shall plan and implement a comprehensive process for revising the academic content standards in reading, language arts including writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, and practical living skills and career studies

would be amended to read:

Section (2)

(a) Beginning in fiscal year 2017-2018, and every six (6) years thereafter, the Kentucky Board of Education shall implement a process for reviewing Kentucky's academic standards and the alignment of corresponding assessments for possible revision or replacement to ensure alignment with postsecondary readiness standards necessary for global competitiveness.

(b) . . .

1. The Kentucky Board of Education shall establish four (4) standards and assessments review and development committees. . .

2. One (1) of the four (4) committees shall be assigned to focus on the review of language arts academic standards and assessments, one (1) on the review of mathematics academic standards and assessments, one (1) on the review of science academic standards and assessments, and one (1) on the review of social studies academic standards only.

What would change?

The Kentucky Board of Education adopted the National Core Arts Standards in June 2015 providing districts a year to become familiar with the standards, and then moving to full implementation.

Under this bill, there would no longer be any statutory support for implementing maintaining, or revising statewide standards in arts education.

How this change would affect students

There would be no statutory support for providing that all Kentucky students have standards based instruction in the visual and performing arts, and no support for standardized expectancy.

Excluding the arts standards from an on-going revision process means that students will not have access to the most up-to-date pedagogy in the visual and performing arts. Kentucky students would not have access to the same innovations through on-going standards revision as students in other states and would not have access to the same standards-based instruction as students in other states.

KCAE Recommendation

Do not delete visual and performing arts standards from statutory support.

Sequenced, standards-based instruction in the arts is essential for students to achieve the artistic capacities and learner goals set forth by the General Assembly. *Every* core subject, among which by Kentucky statute are the visual and performing arts (KRS 158.035), must have the statutory support for developing, implementing, maintaining, and reviewing its standards. Any statute that addresses the selection of standards and sets a system for on-going review and revision must include the visual and performing arts.

HIGH SCHOOL VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CREDIT

SB 1 2016 Section 2

KRS 156.160 (1)3 regarding courses that meet the graduation requirement for the "History and Appreciation of the Visual and Performing Arts" would be amended to include:

If a high school offers a foreign language course, application-oriented career and technical education course, or a computer technology or programming course that incorporates the design content techniques of creativity, and interpretation, the course shall be accepted as meeting the arts and humanities requirement for high school graduation, notwithstanding other provision of law.

What would change?

Currently, fulfillment of this course requirement is limited to the visual and performing arts: music, visual art, theatre, dance, and media arts; that address the visual and performing arts standards for that discipline.

This statutory change would allow students to meet the visual and performing arts graduation requirement with the following non-visual and performing arts content courses: *a "foreign language course, application-oriented career and technical education course, or a computer technology or programming course that incorporate design content, techniques of creativity, an interpretation.*

How this change would affect students Many students would have no visual and performing arts coursework during their high school experience.
This fails to support Kentucky’s learner goals that students will develop core concepts in the arts and that they will develop the creative talents and interests in music, visual arts, dance, and dramatic arts. Further, it is not consistent with the tenets of a “well-rounded” education as described in ESSA.

KCAE Recommendation **Do not expand the courses that satisfy the arts credit requirement to non-arts courses. Retain that it must be fulfilled with the standards-based History and Appreciation of the Visual and Performing Arts course or a standards-based course in a specialized arts discipline (dance, music, theatre, or visual arts) that genuinely addresses ALL of the artistic processes, which collectively represent the visual and performing arts experience.**
The high school credit in the “History and Appreciation of the Visual and Performing Arts” (or a specialized arts course) addresses the four processes of creating and performing in the arts, responding to the arts, and connecting those artistic experiences to a child’s understanding of his or her world. The arts are distinct disciplines with their own bodies of processes, content, and concepts. They are a unique way of understanding our world and communicating ideas that must be developed through a sequenced curriculum addressing ALL of those processes and content. To only address one process of these vast disciplines, as this section of the bill would, falls far short of meeting the intent of this regulation in providing experiences in the visual and performing arts at the high school level.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES PROGRAM REVIEW ACCOUNTABILITY

SB 1 2016 Section 5 **KRS 158.6453 (1) (h) and KRS 158.6453(7)(a)(1-4)**
Would remove all language for including Program Reviews in the Accountability system including the following:
The Kentucky Department of Education shall provide guidelines for arts and humanities programs and for integration of these within the curriculum to all schools.
KRS 158.6453 (17) substitutes weak, non-accountable language for Program Reviews
(17) The Kentucky Department of Education shall provide to all schools recommendations for integrating arts and humanities, practical living and career studies, and an effective writing program within the curriculum.

What would change? Program Reviews would no longer be required, yet there are no alternative provisions to hold schools accountable for ensuring students have access to sequenced standards-based instruction in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts.

How this change would affect students Based on the effects observed from the removal of the visual and performing arts from the statewide testing in 2009, we can reliably project that removal of Program Reviews with no substitute accountability for opportunities to learn in the arts will result in further decline in visual and performing arts instruction and the quality of that instruction for our students.

KCAE Recommendation **Program support for the visual and Performing Arts must remain part of school accountability and a stronger, simpler, more efficient program accountability measure must be implemented.** Regardless of its complexity, any statewide assessment and accountability system that compares performance by schools will drive curriculum. Subjects not included in that accountability system will be marginalized.
KCAE further recommends that a task force of arts educators, school administrators, and other stakeholders be appointed to develop a fair, reliable, and manageable accountability measure that holds schools responsible for providing **arts educators with education or**

certification in their art form(s), resources, instructional time and adequate facilities that will ensure all students have opportunities to create, perform, respond and connect in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts.

POSTSECONDARY READINESS

SB 1 2016 Section 6

KRS 158.6455 (2)(b) 6.b would be amended to read as follows:

Student achievement of dual credit, postsecondary articulated credit toward a credential or associate degree, and any industry-recognized certifications, licensures, or credentials, with more weight in accountability scoring for industry-recognized certifications, licensures, or credentials identified as high demand in accordance with the process described in paragraph (c) of this subsection.

What would change?

Extra weight would be given in the accountability score for students that achieve licensures in careers identified as “high demand.”

How this change would affect students

This regulation would perpetuate problems caused by the .5 CTE bonus point (when students in a school achieve both college *and* career-readiness in the current accountability system) by incentivizing schools to counsel students into career pathways and away from visual and performing arts and other enrichment courses in order to improve the school’s accountability scores.

It would devalue student participation in courses that contribute to well-rounded education resulting in enriched student learning and adult life experience despite considerable language in the newly authorized ESSA that supports a well-rounded curriculum that includes the arts.

It would create an equity issue for artistically gifted students with strong career possibilities in the visual and performing arts, as they are not currently provided career path choices for those careers.

KCAE Recommendation

Remove this language from the bill. Kentucky must move toward developing students who will succeed in a global economy where only people who have the knowledge and skills to negotiate constant change and reinvent themselves for new situations and a changing job market will succeed (Preparing 21st Century Students for a Global Society, NEA).

We fully support that students graduating from Kentucky high school must be postsecondary ready. However, giving extra weight to students who earn licensures or certificates, or credentials in what are defined as “high demand” industries today, promotes a narrow view of the philosophical purpose of education and does not work towards developing all the capacities expected of today’s students. Our children will live in a global economy and need to develop 21st centuries skills that can be applied to a wide variety of careers.

A copy of this analysis may be retrieved at:
www.kmea.org/SB1Analysis

To contact the Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education write to
ContactKCAE@gmail.com or any of KCAE’s partner associations.

The Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education has published a white paper outlining a vision for arts education in Kentucky that may be accessed here: www.kmea.org/VisionPaper.pdf

The Coalition has also developed a five-point plan for achieving that vision that may be accessed here:
www.kmea.org/VisionPamphlet.pdf