NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
SHAPING HUMAN POTENTIAL

Position Statement on the Impact of High Stakes and Standardized Testing on Visual Arts Education
[Adopted March 2016]

When high stakes testing jeopardizes access to visual art instruction, either partially or entirely through pull out or loss of instructional time and focus, it impedes not just visual arts learning but the education of the whole child.

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 education depends on students engaging in rigorous visual arts learning experiences consistently, over time. Art education instruction needs to be sufficient, 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 arts education is necessary for students' growth in creativity, higher order thinking, problem solving, and other 21st Century skills.

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

- loss of access to and/or opportunity for time in visual arts classes due to test preparation, remediation/intervention, or pull-out tutoring
- removal from visual arts education classes entirely or partially due to preparation for testing, remediation, and test taking
- loss of opportunity to enroll in introductory and/or advanced visual arts classes due to test prep obligations and/or additional required classes in tested subjects
- loss of instructional time directly impacts student growth, and assessment/teacher accountability

NAEA advocates for:

- visual arts classes to have proportional instructional time at all levels in comparison with all other curricular areas during the school/district testing window, including test preparation time
- visual arts classes should remain a constant opportunity for all students
- visual arts classes not to be rescheduled during the art educator's preparation time and/or cancelled
- visual arts teacher(s) having equal input with other academic areas in the design and decisions relating to the testing schedule at the school site

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