



CONTEXT The National Art Education Association is committed to ensuring that all students have access to a high quality, certified visual arts educator in every K-12 public school across the United States, recognizing that effective arts instruction is a core component of 21st-century education.

Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators represents the knowledge, skills, and attitudes art educators should possess to provide high-quality art instruction for all students. They represent the threshold that all art educators—whether new to the profession or veterans—can pass, and as such can guide and support meaningful instruction and the continued development of arts educators. In addition, the *Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators* are inclusive of those of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

THE STANDARDS The following Standards represent the professional judgment of the art education field about the knowledge and skills all visual arts educators should possess in order to provide high-quality instructional studies in the arts for every student. The Standards apply to both elementary and secondary art teachers, as well as arts educators who teach in museums, early-childhood programs, and other community settings. Users of the Standards should be careful to apply the standards that are appropriate for their setting.

CONTENT OF ART

Standard I: Visual Arts Educators Have a Thorough Understanding of the Visual Arts

Visual arts educators:

- Have strong studio skills and a well-developed understanding of their own artmaking processes, qualities, and techniques. They are able to express their ideas, feelings, and values through the meaningful creation of artworks using different media, styles, and forms of expression;
- Make meaningful interpretations and judgments about their own artworks and the works of other artists. They are able to interpret and make meaning of art, and to critically evaluate art through oral and written discourse. They recognize that informed discussion of art is an essential component of art education;
- Are knowledgeable about the cultural and historical contexts surrounding works of art and visual culture in general. They understand that art and other forms of visual culture communicate, challenge, and shape cultural and social values;
- Are knowledgeable about aesthetic and artistic purposes of art. They are able to explore philosophical and ethical issues related to the visual arts. They recognize that the making and study of art can be approached from a variety of viewpoints, such as feminism, formalism, postmodernism, and political perspectives;
- Are knowledgeable about contemporary art and the art world, and recognize the value of studying artworks from popular culture, folk cultures, and various cultural groups;
- Are knowledgeable about the use of traditional and new technologies within the visual arts. They are cognizant of the roles that digital media and the Internet serve within the visual arts and educational settings;
- Recognize that art exists in multiple contexts, including museums, galleries, schools, and homes, as well as other settings of public and private life;
- Are able to organize a safe, interesting, and psychologically positive environment that is conducive to creativity, expression, and making art; and
- Recognize that learning about the visual arts is a life-long endeavor and is a valuable component of human experience.

KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENTS AS LEARNERS

Standard II: Visual Arts Educators Understand Student Characteristics, Abilities, and Learning Styles

Visual arts educators:

- Demonstrate an understanding of artistic development as a complex multidimensional process affected by psychological, experiential, and social factors. They know that creative instruction can enhance student motivation and curiosity;
- Recognize the importance of helping students learn how to make, manipulate, and modify symbols as an integral part of the arts education curriculum;
- Recognize that stages of development in artmaking and response to art are general models, and that each student, regardless of age, progresses on an individual basis in achieving art competencies;
- Insightfully probe and observe students and student work to understand individual differences that exist in the classroom. They respect and value the unique backgrounds, abilities, and interests of all students; and
- Know the importance of acquiring information about students' needs through observations and formal and informal conversations with students, their families, other teachers, counselors, school psychologists, and administrators. They provide opportunities for students to learn content and demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways.

UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Standard III: Visual Arts Educators Understand Diverse Social and Cultural Constructions of Identity

Visual arts educators:

- Understand that individuals' identities can be shaped by the social and cultural groups to which they belong. Such groups include gender, ethnicity, economic class, sexual identity, and geography, as well as other aspects of identity;
- Embrace diversity of peoples, philosophies, and cultural histories in instruction, consistently modeling for students the importance of understanding and valuing others;

- Are aware of and knowledgeable about their students' cultural backgrounds; and
- Are sensitive to differences in artistic and aesthetic responses of students to works of art and to the varying artistic and aesthetic philosophies and values of different cultures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Standard IV: Visual Arts Educators Make Informed Selections of Art Content and Curricula

Visual arts educators:

- Develop curricula that address students' ability to respond and interpret art content, and to create meaning through artmaking;
- Understand that individual approaches to artistic problems must be explicitly encouraged and nurtured through thoughtfully developed curriculum and instruction;
- Promote student experiences in art by equipping students with a knowledge base that includes concepts related to presentation and exhibition as well as historical, critical, and aesthetic concepts;
- Consider national, state, and local curriculum standards and frameworks while planning strategies for learning and teaching;
- Make accessible to students the traditional, popular, and contemporary art worlds, and art from a wide range of cultures; and
- Are familiar with the wide range of curriculum resources produced by museum education departments and professional publishers, and are able to make selections appropriate for their own curricular goals.

Standard V: Visual Arts Educators Use Knowledge of Students as Learners to Plan Appropriate Instruction

Visual arts educators:

- Develop a repertoire of teaching strategies appropriate to the needs of all students. They know that students have different cultural backgrounds and learning styles;
- Know that students may take different paths to the understanding and creation of art and are able to plan instruction that allows for these differences;
- Help students create, experience, and understand art relevant to their experiences and interests;
- Provide opportunities for students to work cooperatively as well as individually; and
- Have high expectations for all students appropriate to individual levels of artistic, cognitive, emotional, moral, physical, and social development.

Standard VI: Visual Arts Educators Use Contemporary Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning

Visual arts educators:

- Create curricula that include artmaking in new forms and media;
- Create learning environments that use current and emerging technologies as instructional and learning tools; and
- Provide opportunities for students to document and display their artwork through the use of new media.

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND REFLECTION

Standard VII: Visual Arts Educators Conduct Meaningful and Appropriate Assessments of Student Learning

Visual arts educators:

- Develop a repertoire of assessment strategies consistent with instructional goals, teaching methods, and individual student needs;
- Use multiple methods of assessment, both formal and informal, formative and summative, and a range of assessment strategies such as portfolios, journals, class critiques, and discussions;

- Practice assessment as a joint venture through which both student and teacher understanding is enhanced;
- Provide opportunities for students to assess their own knowledge and skills and demonstrate an understanding of standards;
- Ensure that all students have many equal opportunities to display what they know and can do in art;
- Provide recognition of a variety of student accomplishments and positive habits of mind; and
- Evaluate student progress in relation to both short- and long-term instructional objectives.

Standard VIII: Visual Arts Educators Systematically Reflect on their Own Teaching Practice

Visual arts educators:

- Reflect on their teaching practice to extend their knowledge, improve their teaching, and refine their evolving philosophy of education. They recognize that they will gain expertise with experience and will continue to improve their effectiveness;
- Are open to new ideas for teaching and continually seek to broaden their teaching skills;
- Observe and analyze the teaching practices of others, and seek and accept qualified advice and constructive critiques of their teaching practice from arts supervisors, administrators, and colleagues;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction on students; and
- Search for patterns of student accomplishment and behavior in their classrooms that reflect on the impact of their teaching practice.

Standard IX: Visual Arts Educators Assess Program Effectiveness

Visual arts educators:

- Formulate questions that address the effectiveness of art programs with regard to program, school, district, and cross-district goals;
- Know the importance of reporting results of assessments in appropriate ways to students, families, administrators, and the public; and
- Develop assessment strategies to deal with broad issues of program effectiveness. They use effective forms of communication to convey results to various audiences, including exhibits, portfolios, test scores, and so on.

COLLABORATION, PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT, AND LEADERSHIP

Standard X: Visual Arts Educators Collaborate with Other Educators

Visual arts educators:

- Identify topics and art resources that can be pursued in an interdisciplinary manner with other educators while maintaining the integrity of each discipline. They encourage colleagues to incorporate the arts as essential components of interdisciplinary study;
- Seek to learn about the pedagogical practices and instructional programs of other educators to collaborate and form interdisciplinary connections to make art an articulated and central part of the school curriculum; and
- Work to break down stereotypes about art and learning that may exist among administrators, parents, and faculty in other subject areas.

Standard XI: Visual Arts Educators Serve Their Schools and Communities

Visual arts educators:

- Are involved and contributing members to the school community, being part of policy committees and educational councils and involved in collaborations with other educators and colleagues at all levels;
- Provide leadership for administrators, decision makers, policy makers, and other stakeholders about the value of the visual arts in a student's comprehensive program of studies;
- Are willing to work with colleagues to improve and evaluate professional development plans and practices;

- Take student art into the community where it becomes a positive influence within the community;
- Work with colleagues in the schools to foster a professional culture that has a significant place for the arts; and
- Regularly attend art shows in other schools, galleries, universities, and museums and demonstrate the value of working with educators from other schools, districts, colleges and universities, arts organizations, and museums.

Standard XII: Visual Arts Educators Continue Their Professional Development throughout Their Careers

Visual arts educators:

- Participate in seminars, workshops, and conferences to further their professional development and encourage colleagues to do the same;
- Understand the history of the profession and current philosophical foundations of visual arts education;
- Continually examine their assumptions and thinking about themselves, their students, and the field of visual arts education;
- Clearly articulate their teaching philosophies and the unique ways in which art learning can contribute to cognitive, emotional, moral, and social growth;
- Maintain a professional resume and teaching portfolio, and understand the importance of continuing to document their teaching effectiveness throughout their careers; and
- Remain aware of current research in the field and continually seek out and implement varied instructional strategies.

Standard XIII: Visual Arts Educators Contribute to the Growth of Their Profession

Visual arts educators:

- Are active members of associations, museums, and organizations connected to their profession;
- Continue to develop the capacity to be leaders in various educational and professional roles;
- Understand the importance of making presentations at professional, school, parent, and community meetings;
- Contribute to the literature of the profession; and
- Serve as peer coaches or mentors to student teachers, new teachers, and other colleagues.

HOW THIS DOCUMENT WAS DEVELOPED

Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators was developed by a broad group of educators representing a wide range of discipline-based knowledge and pedagogical experience in art education. The document was created and reviewed by national committees that included K-12 teachers, district and state arts supervisors, and museum and university educators.

All NAEA members were offered the opportunity to provide input by contributing research, commenting on drafts, and suggesting additions and revisions.

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Advancing Art Education

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1916 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191
www.arteducators.org

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