



## TESTIMONY FOR HEARING ON EDUCATION

Lucy Sexton, Executive Director, New Yorkers for Culture & Arts, [Lucy@NY4CA.org](mailto:Lucy@NY4CA.org), 646-662-6890

FEB 1, 2024

Dear NY State Legislators,

There is a critical need for support for the arts and culture sector of NY State in the FY25 budget. In particular we need to invest arts in our education system in every locality so that all New York students can benefit from the proven impact of arts in our schools. Schools with arts in the classroom have improved outcome in reading, scienc, and math scores. And indeed arts in secondary schools raises graduation rates and the percentage of students contining to college.

Our kids are suffering from historic levels of anxiety and depression. We hear story after story of otherwise disengaged or disruptive students getting excited about school thru their experience in dance, music, theater, storytelling, or visual arts. It is shameful that NY State, renowned for its culture and art, is one of only 3 states in the entire Northeast and Midatlantic that does NOT include arts as part of its core cirriculum. This must change, for the sake of our children's education and mentail health.

We urge the legislature to recognize the historic omission of the arts in the state's education statute by passing S285/A1502, adding "music and the arts" to the state's list of core subjects.

We also need proper support for arts curricula at NYSED. While the Regents have recognized the value of universal P-12 arts education, there is just one staff associate to oversee the delivery of arts education in 5 disciplines (art, music, theatre, dance, media arts) to over 2 million students in 732 school districts - down from pre-recession staffing of each discipline. We urge the restoration of at least one arts associate to NYSED staff.

Finally NY Summer School of the Arts suffered a pandemic cut and we support the Regent's request for \$2M to restore Summer School of the Arts while sustaining access to local and regional summer arts programs.

Investing in arts in education is one which pays back many times over---with more kids staying in school, more kids thriving and continuing to college, and more communities lifted by the improved educational and life outcomes that engagement in the arts brings.

Sincerely,

[New Yorkers for Culture & Arts](#)

Sources

[UPSTATE'S CREATIVE SPARK: HOW THE ARTS IS CATALYZING ECONOMIC VITALITY ACROSS UPSTATE NEW YORK](#)

\*[New York State Comptroller DiNapoli's 2023 Creative Economy Report](#)

\*\* [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Creative Economy State Profiles](#)

\*\*\* Brookings, Lost Art: Measuring Covid-19's Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy, August 2020

\*\*\*\*Source: Americans for the Arts, Arts & Economic Prosperity 5, 2017

\*\*\*\*\* [New York State Comptroller, New York City's Tourism Industry - Igniting the Return, April 2021](#)