

AZ. School Accountability Model -2016

As a representative of the dance education community, I am advocating for and hope you will strongly consider including the arts, specifically dance, in the A-F Letter Grade Accountability System. Having access to and knowing the participation rates for dance are indicators of a well-rounded education as stated in the ESSA:

1. Provide for programs and activities that use music and the arts (*dance is an art form*) as tools to support student success through the promotion of constructive student engagement, problem, solving, and conflict resolution.
2. Involve multiple up-to-date measures of student academic achievement, including measures that assess higher-order thinking skills and understanding, which may include measures of student academic growth and may be partially delivered in the form of portfolios, projects, or extended performance tasks.

In addition, the arts (of which dance is included),

- The arts as part of a well-rounded education that opens up funding for all students to have access to English language arts and mathematics as well as traditionally “non-tested” subjects such as the arts, humanities and physical education.
- The arts as a means for achieving the goals of Title I for ensuring all students in all schools are able to have access to and succeed in a high-quality education.
- The arts as a lever to support and help develop effective educators to ensure every student has the best opportunity to succeed.
- The arts as part of a comprehensive system of education that includes the interaction of schools and community-based organizations providing learning opportunities to strengthen and support student achievement.

How does a transparent and fair accountability system define an “excellent” school in regards to:

- i. Preparing all students for College/Career readiness and Graduating students prepared for postsecondary workforce and/or education**

Dance instruction aligns with and naturally addresses 21st Century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, innovation and creativity. In today’s competitive world, these skills are paramount to success.

- ii. Improving achievement and outcomes among student subgroups.**

For many students, learning needs to be delivered in a different method and/or multiple ways. Dance is a rigorous and meaningful discipline of artistic literacy that provides active and engaging learning, and should be part of a comprehensive curriculum.

Dance has implications for learning and brain development. The link to the article here, What Educators and Parents Should Know about Neuroplasticity, Learning and Dance by Judith Hanna, outlines the benefits and necessity of dance for cognitive development.

<http://sharpbrains.com/blog/2016/01/22/what-educators-and-parents-should-know-about-neuroplasticity-learning-and-dance/>

iii. Demonstrating growth on standardized assessments aligned to Arizona's standards.

Under the guidance of the Teacher Effectiveness Division of ADE, the Arizona Dance Education Organization (AzDEO) and its dance educators have been developing Student Learning Objectives, Performance Assessments and accompanying Rubrics based on and aligned to the Arizona Dance Standards. These assessments will measure student growth and achievement in dance, and the indicators from these will be used as part of the Student Academic Progress portion of the Teacher Evaluation Model for dance educators. Performance assessments measure higher order thinking, and performance assessments for dance require students to create, the highest level on Bloom's taxonomy.

iv. Providing a high-quality, well-rounded education to families regardless of income.

Including dance in the public school system provides all students with access to and participation in dance at no cost.

List and define the metrics included in a potential accountability system which meets the needs of Arizona's various school types and uses multiple measures. Please highlight the extent to which academic achievement on Arizona's statewide assessments (i.e. AzMERIT, NCSC, AIMS, etc.) and/or results from a menu of assessment can be meaningfully integrated in the proposed system.

Arizona's Student Learning Objectives (SLO) process meets the needs of various schools because it mandates multiple measures for assessing student growth and achievement. The SLOs, performance assessments and accompanying rubrics developed for dance is an example of one such multiple measure.

Describe how the proposed metrics are aligned to college / career expectations and include any alignment studies, if available.

In any work place or career situation, we are not measured by a standardized multiple choice test. We are measured by the work we do, in essence a performance assessment. During the hiring process, we are not asked to take a multiple choice test to demonstrate our knowledge and skills. We are asked to show, through our work experience and education or via a portfolio, our knowledge and skills. Dance uses these same assessments to evaluate the growth and achievement of students-performance assessments. Dance strongly relates to real life work scenarios.

What are the advantages of utilizing this measure of growth on Arizona's statewide assessments and in Arizona's new A-F Letter Grade Accountability System?

1. **A measure of student growth for elementary, middle schools and high schools.**
 - **Involve multiple up-to-date measures of student academic achievement, including measures that assess higher-order thinking skills and understanding, which may include measures of student academic growth and may be partially delivered in the form of portfolios, projects, or extended performance tasks.**

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2. **English language proficiency for non-native speakers.**

Dance is a form of literacy. Movement is a universal form of communication that transcends language. Through dance, students learn how to identify, interpret, analyze and create meaning through movement. The recommended instruction for non-native speakers is aligned to how we instruct in dance- use of visual cues, modeling & demonstrating (you cannot teach dance without modeling and demonstrating), multiple strategies, and cooperative learning.

Please discuss evidence of technical appropriateness and statistical robustness to support the validity and reliability of student-level growth scores based on each of the following assessment scenarios:

- i. Varying assessments selected off of a menu of assessments potentially available in high school grades and administered in various modalities**

The performance assessments described below and in other sections are being tested for validity and reliability. They are aligned to the Arizona Dance Standards and are being developed by experienced dance educators who understand the concepts of dance.

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Describe any services or assistance the vendor might provide to expedite the calculation of student growth scores so they are available to ADE, schools, students, and parents via student score reports produced by Arizona's test vendor(s).

1. The Arizona Dance Education Organization and its dance educators have been working with ADE to develop the aforementioned SLOs and performance assessments to assess student growth and achievement in dance. Our dance educators have been calculating their students' scores and will be helping other dance educators learn how to implement this process.

Respectfully,

Lynn Monson

AzDEO

