

Report on Survey of Arts Certification and Instruction in Kentucky Schools

Introduction

At the April 2015 meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE), a trio of speakers representing the Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education (KCAE) spoke to the board during the public comment period. The KBE was presented with a white paper titled *Visual and Performing Arts Education in Kentucky: A Vision for the 21st Century*, along with a Five-Step Action Plan, proposed by KCAE.

During the discussion, KCAE members voiced their concern that the quality of arts education has faltered since the passing of Senate Bill 1 (2009). Preliminary data collected by the Kentucky Music Educators Association (KMEA) reflected a reduction in the number of specialized arts (dance, drama, music and visual art) teachers and that more and more teachers with certification in areas outside of the arts are being assigned to teach arts content.

As a result of the conversation it was determined that the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) would gather data around the expressed concerns.

Research was conducted to determine what data are available through the Data Enterprise System and the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB). It was discovered that the requested data could not be filtered in a manner necessary to address specific questions posed by the KCAE membership. Therefore, it was determined that the best method for collecting the requested data was through a survey designed and implemented by the KDE.

The survey contained a minimal number of questions with the intent to gather information to answer KCAE questions without being burdensome to schools. It was designed so that elementary, middle and high school data could be gathered and compiled separately. Overarching questions provided by KCAE centered on the method of delivery for arts instruction, time allotted to arts instruction, numbers of highly qualified arts certified teachers and collection of additional data about teacher assignments in relation to arts instruction, such as student/teacher ratio.

The survey was disseminated through the Commissioner's Office to building administrators at the elementary, middle and high school levels. It was open April 20 through 30, 2015.

The survey contained the following questions:

Common to all grade levels

1. My building is: (with the option of selecting grade level configurations)
2. How many highly qualified music teachers are assigned to teach in your school?
3. How many highly qualified visual art teachers are assigned to teach in your school?
4. How many teachers certified in drama education are assigned to teach in your school?
5. How many teachers certified in dance education (not Physical Education) are assigned to teach in your school?

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6. How many Elementary School (Primary through Grade 5) teachers (other than music, visual arts, drama, and dance) are assigned to teach arts and/or Arts and Humanities classes?
7. Does your school embed the Arts and Humanities content in other academic content areas?
8. If Arts and Humanities content is embedded into other content areas in your school, what is the percentage of the content that is embedded?
9. What is the overall average student-to-teacher ratio for your arts classes?
10. How much dedicated time is provided for arts and/or Arts and Humanities instruction per week at your school?

Middle and High school only

How many non-arts certified teachers are assigned to teach arts and/or History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts classes?

High school only

Please choose the response below that best represents how students in your school fulfill the Arts and Humanities graduation requirement.

- Students may take either a History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts survey course or they may take one specialized arts course (dance, drama, music or visual art).
- Students may take either a History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts survey course or they may take two or more specialized arts courses (dance, drama, music or visual art).
- All students must take a History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts survey course.
- All students must take a standards-based arts course (dance, drama, music, or visual art).

Please mark the certifications of all teachers in your school assigned to teach History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts other than those with arts certifications. Please check all that apply.

- Social Studies, any
- English, any
- Foreign Language, any
- Health-Physical Education or Health-Physical Education-Recreation
- Home Economics, vocational or non-vocational

How does your school deliver content instruction in a History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts course?

- Stand-alone History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Art classes
- History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts class and embedded in other content area(s)
- Completely embedded in other content area(s)
- Virtual or distance learning

Survey Results

(All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number)

There were 579 total responses from Kentucky schools, 95.52% of respondents were building administrators. Assistant principals, guidance counselors and teachers accounted for the remainder.

- 47% of all schools in Kentucky responded
- 44% of all elementary school configurations responded (Buildings including grades K-5)
- 70% of all middle school configurations responded (Buildings including grades 6 – 8)
- 78% of all high school configurations responded (Buildings including grades 9 – 12)

Note: All subsequent findings and reported percentages are based on these responses. The Overarching Question is: Who is teaching the visual and performing arts content, and what are their qualifications?

(There currently are no methods to determine if drama or dance teachers are highly qualified.)

Elementary school findings:

Highly qualified music: (333 respondents)

- 273 (82%) of elementary schools reported one or more highly qualified music teachers in their school. One elementary school reported 10 highly qualified music teachers.
- The total reported for highly qualified music teachers is 344.
- 60 (18%) of elementary schools reported no highly qualified music teachers.

Highly qualified art: (335 schools responding)

- 225 (68%) of schools reported one or more highly qualified arts teachers. One elementary school reported 10 highly qualified visual arts teachers.
- The total reported for highly qualified visual arts teachers is 261.
- 108 (32%) of elementary schools reported no highly qualified visual arts teachers.

Drama certified: (333 schools responding)

- 34 (10%) of schools reported one or more certified drama teachers. One elementary school reported 10 certified drama teachers.
- The total reported for certified drama teachers was 34.
- 299 (90%) of schools reported no certified drama teachers.

Dance certified: (334 respondents)

- 29 (1.5%) of schools reported having one or more certified dance teachers. One elementary school reported having 9 certified dance teachers while a second school reported 10.
- The total reported for certified dance teachers was 29.

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- 305 (98.5%) schools reported no certified dance teachers.

Elementary School Summary

This data reflected a lack of clarity about certifications and highly qualified status, especially at the elementary school level. Based on responses, there is not agreement on what “highly qualified” means when it comes to teachers who are assigned to teach the arts. For example, one elementary school reported that it has ten highly qualified music teachers. This may imply the administrator considers any highly qualified elementary teacher also to be a highly qualified music teacher.

Although elementary classroom certified teachers are certified to teach any content by EPSB standards, it is unlikely that all have the background in creating and performing skills necessary to effectively teach those aspects of the Arts Standards for music and visual arts.

One of the claims that representatives from the KCAE seek to verify is that teachers without specific training in arts instructional pedagogy are increasingly being assigned to teach arts; and those teachers are not equipped with the skills and depth of understanding that are comparable to teachers who are certified in the arts disciplines (e.g., music certification, visual arts certification). KCAE contends that this results in a lower quality of arts instruction for students.

The data also reflected a shortage of certified drama and dance teachers. College programs leading to those certifications are limited due to a low demand for teachers in those areas. For purposes of providing instruction, English teachers are considered certified to teach drama and Physical Education/Recreation teachers are considered certified to teach dance.

The findings in this brief survey suggested that a more specific and focused look at the data on the method of delivery and on embedding instruction in other content areas may provide a more reliable indication of how instruction is actually occurring in elementary schools.

Middle school findings:

Highly qualified music: (226 respondents)

- 178 (79%) of middle schools reported one or more highly qualified music teachers. One middle school reported 10 highly qualified music teachers.
- The total reported was 296 highly qualified music teachers.
- 48 (21%) of middle schools reported no highly qualified music teachers.

Highly qualified art: (218 respondents)

- 157 (72%) of middle schools reported one or more highly qualified visual arts teachers. One middle school reported 10 highly qualified visual arts teachers.
- The total reported is 181 highly qualified visual arts teachers.
- 61 (28%) reported no highly qualified visual arts teachers.

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Drama certified: (214 respondents)

- 53 (25%) of middle schools reported one or more certified drama teachers. One middle school reported 8 certified drama teachers.
- The total reported was 76 certified drama teachers.
- 161 (75%) of middle schools reported no certified drama teachers.

Dance certified: (213 respondents)

- 25 (12%) of middle schools reported one or more certified dance teachers. Two middle schools each reported having 10 certified dance teachers.
- The total reported was 43 certified dance teachers.
- 188 (88%) of middle schools reported no certified dance teachers.

Middle School Summary

Reporting the numbers of highly qualified arts teachers without considering arts certification clouds the issue in secondary schools. Although certifications become more clearly delineated at the middle school level, there are some numbers reported in the current survey that may need further examination. For example, two middle schools each reported having 10 teachers certified in dance.

It is possible for a middle school to consider higher numbers of teachers certified in drama because an English certification also results in certification to teach drama. However, even with Physical Education teachers certified to teach dance, it is not typical that a middle school would have 10 PE and/or dance teachers, provided respondents are using that certification to determine their number of dance certified teachers. The dance total for certified teachers is likely inflated.

These data suggest further examination and/or collection of data is needed to gauge the skill level of teachers assigned to teach the Arts Standards. These data support the contention that arts certified staffing by teachers equipped with the skills and competencies needed to address not just responding to the arts but also creating and performing of the arts in middle schools is lower than reported.

In fact, many arts certified teachers are itinerant, serving more than one school. For example, band teachers are regularly assigned to multiple schools at multiple levels. It is typical that a middle school band director also may teach at the elementary level and/or high school level. Those teachers are certified in music and meet the criteria to be highly qualified to teach specifically music, yet they will be counted as “staff” by multiple schools.

High school findings:

Highly Qualified Music: (183 respondents)

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- 150 (82%) of high schools reported one or more highly qualified music teachers. One high school reported having 6 highly qualified music teachers.
- The total reported was 271 highly qualified music teachers.
- 33 (18%) high schools reported no highly qualified music teachers.

Highly Qualified Art: (183 respondents)

- 143 (78%) of high schools reported one or more highly qualified visual arts teachers.
- The total reported is 205 highly qualified visual arts teachers. Two high schools reported having 8 highly qualified visual arts teachers.
- 40 (22%) of high schools reported no highly qualified visual arts teachers.

Drama Certified: (178 respondents)

- 69 (39%) of high schools reported one or more certified drama teachers. Two high schools reported 8 certified drama teachers and two high schools reported 9 certified drama teachers.
- The total reported was 105 certified drama teachers.
- 109 (61%) of high schools reported no highly qualified drama teachers.

Dance Certified: (179 respondents)

- 13 (7%) of high schools reported one or more certified dance teachers.
- The total reported was 14 certified dance teachers.
- 166 (93%) of high schools reported no certified dance teachers.

High School Summary

Certifications at the high school level are defined in course codes and descriptions of content. The arts become highly specialized at the high school level where students take courses in band, orchestra, choir and visual arts of various configurations. Drama/theatre courses are offered to a lesser degree and dance is offered in even fewer high schools. Performance-based and skill-based arts programs at the high school level demand the use of highly qualified arts specialists to deliver instruction consistent with the intent of the standards. Instrumental and vocal music teachers are often itinerant, serving in multiple schools.

Although high school counts for highly qualified arts teachers are probably more accurate than those at the lower grade levels, there is still some question about the total numbers when two high schools report having 8 highly qualified visual arts teachers each. It is possible, however, in large high schools and arts magnet programs to show higher numbers in that regard.

704 KAR 3:30 establishes minimum requirements for high school graduation, stating: *High school students must have one (1) credit through a History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts (or another arts course which incorporates this content) to include content contained in the Kentucky Core KDE: ONGL DPS: PS (kk/ae) May 2015*

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Academic Standards for Arts and Humanities or a standards-based specialized arts course on the student's individual learning plan.

This regulation provides that students may take the History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts (HAVAPA) survey course for credit, or a standards-based music, visual arts, drama/theatre, and/or dance class, to fulfill the minimum graduation requirement.

Certifications (permissions) attached to the HAVAPA course code vary widely, including non-arts specific teachers. What is not clear about these figures is how many in this count are considered highly qualified arts teachers by schools based on that course code and the permissions granted. It again becomes necessary to look at method of delivery data to clarify ways the HAVAPA course is being delivered across the state.

Method of Delivery Summary

Overarching Question - Method of Delivery: How are the visual and performing arts being delivered?

Elementary

- Approximately 92% of respondents reported embedding arts content into other academic content areas.
- Approximately 52% of respondents reported that no arts certified teachers deliver arts instruction.
- Approximately 40% of respondents reported that only arts certified teachers deliver arts instruction.
- Approximately 9% of respondents reported that arts and non-arts certified teachers collaborate to deliver instruction.

Middle School

- Approximately 87% of respondents reported that Arts and Humanities content is embedded in other content areas.
- Approximately 47% of respondents reported that only arts certified teachers deliver arts instruction.
- Approximately 40% of respondents reported non-arts certified teachers deliver arts instruction.
- Approximately 13% of respondents reported that arts and non-arts certified teachers collaborate to deliver instruction.

High School

- Approximately 70% of respondents reported embedding Arts and Humanities content in other content areas.
- Approximately 40% of respondents reported instruction is delivered by only arts certified teachers.
- Approximately 39% of respondents reported instruction is delivered by non-arts certified teachers.
- Approximately 21% of respondents reported collaborative instruction by arts and non-arts certified teachers.
- Approximately 85% of schools offer some sort of student choice in how they fulfill the Arts and Humanities graduation requirement (specialization in an art form or the HAVAPA course).
- Approximately 15% of schools require all students to take the HAVAPA course.

Overarching Question: How is the History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts (HAVAPA) survey course being delivered at the high school level?

- Approximately 58% of high schools reported offering the stand alone HAVAPA course.
- Approximately 57% of respondents use teachers certified in areas other than the arts to teach a HAVAPA survey course.
- Approximately 45% of respondents reported embedding some or all HAPVA content into other content areas.
- Approximately 27% of high schools reported using the HAVAPA course with some of the content embedded in other content areas.
- Approximately 18% completely embed the HAVAPA content in other academic content areas.
- Approximately 7 % offer the HAVAPA course through dual credit with a college or university.
- Approximately 9 % use virtual or distance learning options.

The most often used certifications for teaching the HAVAPA course other than arts certifications are: (This survey question requested schools to check all that apply. It is interesting to note that nearly 300 permissions are granted to teach the HAVAPA course.)

- Social Studies, any 57%
- English , any 55%
- Health-Physical Education/Recreation 26%
- Foreign Language, any 24%
- Home Economics, vocational or non-vocational 5%

Overarching Question Adequate Staffing: Is there adequate staffing in schools to deliver high quality arts instruction? What is the average student to teacher ratio for arts classes?

Approximately 95% of respondents reported class ratios of between 15 and 30 students to one teacher. This tends to mirror class sizes that vary according to school or district guidelines. For example, at a high school, each class period would involve a different group of students. If a teacher is assigned 5 periods with a cap of 30 students, then that teacher sees 150 students; a ratio of 150 to 1. The ratio 30 to 1, as offered by many of the respondents, fits this scenario.

Less than 5% of respondents offered the total numbers of students to a single teacher ratio. Those figures ranged from 200 students to 1 teacher up to 860 students to 2 teachers. This may reflect the relationship between the student body as a whole and the number of teachers who serve those students.

As an example, often in elementary schools a single music, art, or Arts and Humanities teacher delivers instruction to all students on a rotation. Each day in that rotation the teacher sees different groups of

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students until the rotation is complete. A common rotation for an elementary school is on a weekly basis, so in this case a new rotation would begin at the start of each week and all students would get arts instruction from that teacher once per week.

In answer to whether or not there is adequate staffing to deliver high quality arts instruction, this seems to vary by school. Data reflect this variation. In the examples above, broadness of that variation is noted. What may be adequate in one situation may be inadequate in another. The combined factors of teacher qualifications, class size, mode of instruction, time for instruction and school schedules all work in tandem to impact program quality. Further research may be required to provide more accurate information concerning student-to-teacher ratios across all grade levels.

Overarching Question: How is time allocated for arts instruction?

Approximately 75% of elementary schools reported that they offer in a range of 45 to 300 minutes per week of arts specific instruction per student. There is limited data to indicate whether these figures are associated with stand-alone arts classes or arts embedded instruction.

One elementary principal explained that the school offers one hour per day of arts related instruction so over 5 days that would equal to 300 minutes per week of arts instruction. At the same time another school response indicated that each student gets 45 minutes per week in a rotation.

These data are inconclusive in terms of establishing a norm for how time is allocated to arts instruction, but the data do seem to connect to classes and the length of those class periods. These data reflect that this also is how time is allocated at the middle and high school levels. Further research may be required for an accurate reporting of the amount of time for scheduled arts instruction at the each level.

Conclusion

There is not clarity, and therefore no agreement, in what determines the level of teacher qualification. Data indicated that many schools responding to the survey questions may consider teachers not certified in the arts as highly qualified to teach the arts.

The survey indicated that the most commonly used mode of instruction for arts is embedding Arts and Humanities content in other academic content areas. Data collected show 92% of elementary schools, 87% of middle schools, and 70% of high schools that responded to the survey report part to all of the Arts and Humanities content being embedded in other academic content areas. This indicates that many teachers without arts specific pedagogy skills, pre-service training or arts certification are responsible for direct instruction in the arts.

The data collected in the survey suggested the claim by KCAE regarding movement of arts instruction to non-arts certified teachers is accurate. More data would need to be collected and observations made to

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determine to what degree, if any, this results in a loss of overall quality of instruction in the areas of visual and performing arts.