

## September 2025 Arts Update Newsletter

National **Arts** in  
Education Week

**standing  
strong**  
Together for  
Arts Education

September 14–20, 2025

*National Arts Education Week - Celebrating Arts Education*

Here is what we have included for you in this month's newsletter:

- National Arts Education Week
- Advocacy at the Federal Level
- NFTA Arts Education Committee
- NebraskARTS Award Applications are due October 17, 2025
- NAC Grants Due
- Arts Education Campaign 2025
- New Advocacy Blog
- Join Nebraskans for the Arts Today!

## National Arts Education Week, Sept. 14-20



In 2010, the U.S. House of Representatives passed House Resolution 275, which designated the week starting with the second Sunday in September as National Arts in Education Week. The purpose of the resolution is to celebrate the transformative power of arts in education for all students.



92% of American adults believe that it is important for students to receive an education in the arts (including dance, media arts, music, theater, visual arts, and literature): elementary school (92%), middle school (93%), and high school (89%). This sentiment crosses political party lines.



The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 lists the arts and music as part of a "well-rounded education," providing that all arts disciplines (dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual art) are eligible for programmatic support through Title I, Title IV, and other supplemental federal funds available to school districts across the nation.

## Here are ways to recognize Arts Education Week.

- Attend and support a local school's performances or art presentations.
- Join the [Americans for the Arts Webinars](#) on Sept. 12 and Sept. 16, 2025.
- **Take Action**: Contact your Representatives, urging them to support arts education funding.
- Follow [Nebraskans for the Arts on our Social Media](#) throughout the week.
- Support the [NFTA Arts Education Campaign](#).

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## Advocacy at the Federal Level



Congress is returning from the August recess and the first order of business will be federal funding. Both the House and Senate FY'26 Interior Appropriations bills could move to the floors of their chambers this month. These bills include funding for the NEA, NEH, and other cultural agencies as well as funding for arts education, but we expect floor amendments that could propose cutting or even eliminating this funding.

Federal cultural funding has a direct impact on every state and community. Cuts or rescissions don't just affect agencies in Washington—they reduce resources for organizations, artists, and schools in our state. That's why it's critical to be prepared.

Nebraskans for the Arts Executive Director Lance Nielsen and Neidy Hess, Communications and Grants Manager of the Omaha Conservatory of Music, were invited by Americans for the Arts to the July Advocacy Fly-in.

NFTA had private meetings specifically regarding NEA and NEH funding and grant rescissions, and requesting support for NEA and NEH in FY26 Appropriations.



## What can you do now?

**Stay Alert on advocacy updates by NFTA and AFTA.** We'll notify you immediately of updates and action alerts.

[Join the Nebraska Arts Advocacy Network](#)

**Use the tools and resources by our partners.** Review the many resources provided by Americans for the Arts.

[Download resources](#)

### Share your story

Lawmakers will listen when they hear the direct impact in their communities.

[Follow us on our social media sites](#)

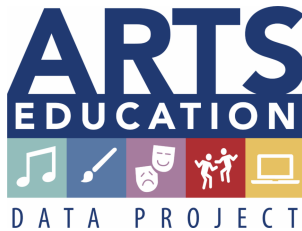
# NFTA Arts Education Committee

In 1998, the Nebraska Alliance for Arts Education merged with the Nebraskans for the Arts, forming the Arts Education Committee.

The Nebraskans for the Arts Education Committee is active in supporting and advocating for arts education by providing professional development and instructional resources for arts educators, exploring research and arts data systems to support arts education, sponsoring the NebraskARTS Award, and advocating on behalf of arts education.

## 2025-26 NFTA Arts Education Committee

- Danielle Laurion (Chair), Omaha South H.S. Dance
- Judy Bush, Retired, LPS Music
- Nancy Engen Wedin, Lied Center for Performing Arts
- Lorinda Rice, LPS Visual Arts Specialist
- Heather Stahr, McCool Junction Public Schools Music
- Nathan Murray, The Union for Contemporary Art
- Anne Alston, Nebraska Arts Council
- Cody Talarico, Nebraska Department of Education



Bringing the vibrant world of arts education to life through data, Nebraska's Arts Education Data Project is part of a national snapshot of arts education. The interactive data visualization tool allows users to explore enrollment, access, and participation in the arts throughout Nebraska's public school system.



The Arts Education Partnership is a national network of more than 200 organizations dedicated to advancing arts education. AEP is the nation's hub for arts and education leaders, building their leadership capacity to support students, educators, and learning environments.



The Customized Arts Learning (CAL) toolkit supports personalized learning in arts education and promotes strength-based instructional practice. The CAL toolkit is intended to provide educators with resources to support the needs of various students, thus addressing gaps that impair learning.

Learn more  
about AEDP

Learn more  
about AEP

Learn more  
about CAL

## 2025-26 NebraskARTS Award Applications



Each year, Nebraskans for the Arts honors two Nebraska schools or school districts that have supported and encouraged achievement in the media arts, visual arts, dance, music, or theatre. The application deadline is **Friday, October 17, 2025**, and the two recipients for 2025-26 will be notified in December 2025. The application process has been updated. The new application is now available on the NFTA Website.

2025 FALL SET DEADLINE GRANTS



NEBRASKA ARTS COUNCIL

NOW OPEN!

## Nebraska Arts Council Grants

Check out grant opportunities through the Nebraska Arts Council.

Applications are being accepted from now until October 1st, 2025, for projects taking place between January 1st, 2026, to June 30th, 2026.

- Artists in Schools & Communities grants
- Arts Learning Projects Grants
- Arts Project Grants

[Learn more about Nebraska Arts Council Grants](#)

## Arts Education Campaign

A new school year means new opportunities for students to unleash their creativity through the arts!

At Nebraskans for the Arts, we work to ensure every student in Nebraska has access to quality arts education. From the classroom to the Capitol, we advocate for arts education at both the state and federal levels—because every child deserves the chance to learn, create, and thrive.

Join us in keeping creativity alive for future generations. Support our Arts Education Campaign today.

[VIDEO LINK](#)



[Donate to Support Arts Education Campaign](#)



**What Comes First?**



[Read Judy's Blog and Others](#)

## Advocacy Blog about Arts Education

NFTA continues to post advocacy blogs on our website once a month. This month, Judy Bush, retired music educator and NFTA Secretary, writes about the importance of arts in education.

### **What Comes First? Celebrating Arts in Education**

"Your favorite artists and local professional instrumentalists, choirs, actors, dancers, and visual artists don't just decide one day to show up and share their "talent". It all begins in our public school arts classes".





## Benefits of being a member of Nebraskans for the Arts

**THANK YOU** to all of our current members of Nebraskans for the Arts. NFTA membership has increased by 18% last fiscal year.

If you are not a member, we encourage you to become a part of a network of arts advocates. Your support is helping us expand our capacity to advocate for arts education, artists, arts organizations, and creative districts across the State of Nebraska. We are your VOICE in arts advocacy.

As a member of NFTA, you receive:

- Two Newsletters
  - NFTA Arts Update Newsletter (5 times a year)
  - Arts Advocate Newsletter (monthly)
- Reduced registration fee for special events.
- Advocacy support and a voice at the state and federal levels.

Individual memberships start at \$25/year.  
BSG / ASE Grant Winners and Creative Districts are encouraged to join.

**Together, we can make a difference for the Arts.**

[JOIN NFTA](#)



### Nebraskans for the Arts

1004 Farnam St., Plaza Level  
Omaha, NE 68102  
402.853.4461



[Website](#)

Nebraskans for the Arts | PO Box 8517 | Omaha, NE 68108 US

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