

## **Definition of Fine Arts for High School Graduation Requirements**

*A policy statement adopted September, 1989 by the Boards of Directors of  
The National Art Education Association,  
The National Association of Secondary School Principals,  
Music Educators National Conference,  
National Dance Association, and  
The American Alliance for Theatre and Education*

During the past decade many states and school districts have added one or more units in the fine arts to their requirements for high school graduation. This recognition of the importance of the fine arts in the education of all students is important and desirable. As pleased as these organizations have been by the large increase in the number of school districts and states acknowledging the importance of the fine arts in this way, these associations have in some instances been disturbed by the invalid interpretation of what subjects constitute the fine arts. The requirement means little if activities such as foreign language, vocational education, computers, forensics, practical arts, humanities, speech, and applied arts are considered as fulfilling it. Therefore, the following statement defining the areas that should be considered in meeting fine arts requirements has been developed to serve as a consensus statement by educators in the fine arts in America's schools.

"The performing and visual arts, generally referred to as the fine arts, are unique and important in the school curriculum."

"For purposes of developing this curricular area, we define the fine arts as consisting of the visual arts, dance, music, and theatre."

"Although certain of the language arts may fall within a broad definition of art, they receive sufficient attention in the school curriculum through their inclusion in language courses."

"All other courses, such as practical arts that include the word 'art' in their titles, serve different educational purposes, and they should not be considered as a part of the fine arts."