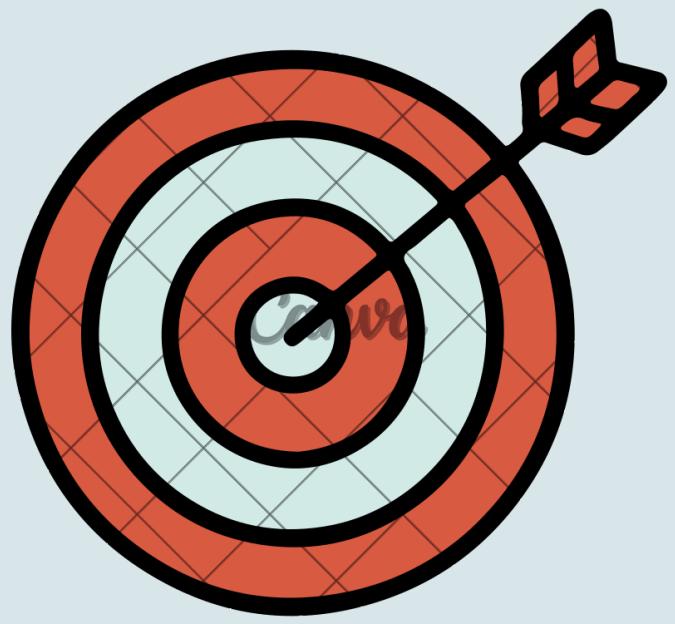


N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.1

New Jersey Student
Learning Standards
(NJSLS) Authority



Purpose:

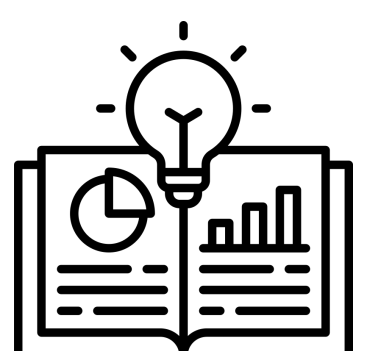
N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.1 establishes the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), which define the academic subject areas that must be taught in public schools throughout the state. Visual and Performing Arts, including music education, is identified as one of the required content areas, meaning that music is considered part of a complete academic education rather than an optional extracurricular activity. By including music within statewide academic standards, the policy ensures that arts education is integrated into the overall structure of public education in New Jersey.

Context:

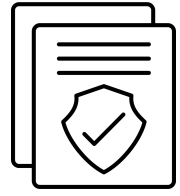
The New Jersey Student Learning Standards provide a statewide framework that defines what students should know and be able to do at each stage of their education. These standards aim to ensure consistency across school districts and promote a well-rounded education that includes academic, creative, and critical thinking skills. Music education is included within the Visual and Performing Arts standards because it supports cognitive development, cultural literacy, communication skills, and creative expression.



The standards encourage sequential learning from kindergarten through twelfth grade so that students can gradually develop musical knowledge and skills over time. Schools are expected to design curriculum that aligns with these standards and supports student achievement across artistic disciplines.



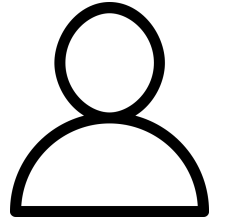
What is the impact?



Policy Actions

- This regulation requires school districts to align curriculum and instruction with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, including standards for music education. Districts must provide learning opportunities that allow students to demonstrate knowledge and skills in artistic processes such as creating, performing, responding, and connecting.
- Schools must periodically review curriculum to ensure continued alignment with updated standards and must ensure that instruction supports diverse learners, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and advanced students. Educators are expected to implement instructional strategies that promote artistic literacy, creative thinking, and collaboration.
- The policy also influences teacher preparation programs and professional development opportunities, ensuring educators are prepared to teach according to statewide expectations.

Who is affected?



All public school students in kindergarten through twelfth grade are affected because they are entitled to instruction aligned with state standards. School districts, administrators, curriculum supervisors, and teachers are responsible for implementing standards-based instruction and ensuring students have access to music education.

Teacher preparation programs are indirectly affected because they must prepare educators to teach according to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Community arts organizations and educational partners may also be influenced by these standards when designing programs that collaborate with schools.

Why does this policy matter?

The policy supports New Jersey's constitutional obligation to provide a "thorough and efficient education," which has been interpreted to include access to multiple academic disciplines, including the arts. By embedding music education within statewide academic standards, the regulation affirms that music contributes to intellectual, social, and cultural development.

Music education supports skills such as creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking, which are considered essential competencies for participation in modern society. Ensuring access to music education promotes educational equity by recognizing artistic learning as an important component of academic development.



Limitations:

Although the policy requires access to music education, it does not mandate a specific amount of instructional time or guarantee equal funding for music programs, resulting in variation in program quality between districts

Sources:

- <https://www.nj.gov/education/code/current/title6a/chap8.pdf>
- <https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/new-jersey/N-J-A-C-6A-8-1-1>