

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 244 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY COMITTA, HAYWOOD, TARTAGLIONE, SCHWANK, KEARNEY,
SAVAL, COLLETT, COSTA, KANE, FONTANA, HUGHES, CULVER,
BREWSTER, CAPPELLETTI, L. WILLIAMS, HUTCHINSON AND J. WARD,
MARCH 11, 2024

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, MARCH 11, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of March 2024 as "Music in Our Schools
2 Month," "Theater in Our Schools Month," "Dance in Our Schools
3 Month" and "Youth Art Month" in Pennsylvania.

4 WHEREAS, Arts education experiences have substantive effects
5 on student academic, social and emotional outcomes; and

6 WHEREAS, Social and emotional learning skills are more
7 necessary than ever as the world emerges from the COVID-19
8 pandemic; and

9 WHEREAS, Research and studies have shown that engagement in
10 arts education has a positive impact on student discipline,
11 standardized writing scores and compassion and empathy for
12 others; and

13 WHEREAS, The Every Student Succeeds Act recognizes fine arts
14 programs as fulfilling the requirement that each school provide
15 a well-rounded education to its students; and

16 WHEREAS, In this Commonwealth, students in grades
17 kindergarten through 12 must be provided with instruction in

1 fine arts disciplines, including music, dance, theater and
2 visual art; and

3 WHEREAS, Students who took four years of art classes in high
4 school scored an average of 92 points higher on their SATs than
5 their peers; and

6 WHEREAS, Students with high levels of arts involvement are
7 less likely to drop out of school; and

8 WHEREAS, Disadvantaged students who receive an arts education
9 are three times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than
10 students who lack those experiences; and

11 WHEREAS, The study of music engages students in their
12 creative, cultural, aesthetic, intellectual, social, physical
13 and emotional development; and

14 WHEREAS, Music education helps develop students' skills that
15 are critical to 21st century learning for success in school and
16 life; and

17 WHEREAS, These skills are integral to the economy of this
18 Commonwealth; and

19 WHEREAS, The National Association for Music Education is
20 leading the conversation nationwide on the importance of quality
21 music education in our schools; and

22 WHEREAS, Theater education teaches invaluable skills needed
23 to be successful in the workforce, including the ability to
24 listen, artistic sense, nonverbal communication, enthusiasm and
25 storytelling; and

26 WHEREAS, Drama instruction integrated into elementary
27 classrooms improves students' social and emotional development
28 and contributes to a positive classroom culture; and

29 WHEREAS, English language learners in kindergarten through
30 second grade who received weekly drama lessons demonstrated

1 increased listening and speaking skills on standardized tests;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Reading play scripts aloud has been found to help
4 at-risk middle school students become better readers; and

5 WHEREAS, Only 28% of public high schools in areas of high
6 poverty offer theater instruction; and

7 WHEREAS, The Educational Theatre Association envisions every
8 student will have access to theater taught by qualified
9 educators as a vital part of a well-rounded education and is
10 dedicated to shaping lives through theater education; and

11 WHEREAS, Education in the art of dance develops the knowledge
12 and skills required to create, perform and understand movement
13 as a means of artistic communication; and

14 WHEREAS, A comprehensive education in dance includes
15 improvisation, technique, choreography, performance, observation
16 and analysis; and

17 WHEREAS, Dance education engages the artistic processes of
18 creating, performing and critical analysis by requiring students
19 to read symbol systems, use critical thinking skills, excel in
20 nonverbal reasoning and communication, exchange ideas, work
21 cooperatively and collaboratively with others and interact in a
22 multicultural society; and

23 WHEREAS, Student achievement, teacher satisfaction and school
24 culture are improved through dance education as demonstrated by
25 increased reading and STEM test scores, improved memory
26 retention and cognitive connections and enhanced teacher and
27 school morale; and

28 WHEREAS, The National Dance Education Organization is
29 dedicated to advancing dance education for individuals of all
30 backgrounds; and

1 WHEREAS, Visual arts education is valuable in developing
2 divergent and critical thinking, multicultural awareness and
3 technical, communication and expressive skills among students;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, The Council for Art Education promotes quality
6 school visual art education programs in grades kindergarten
7 through 12 across the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, The Council for Art Education's "Youth Art Month"
9 theme for 2024 is "Dream in Art"; and

10 WHEREAS, "Youth Art Month" exists to recognize art education
11 as a viable factor in the total education curriculum and to
12 direct attention to the value of art education for divergent and
13 critical thinking; therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of March 2024
15 as "Music in Our Schools Month," "Theater in Our Schools Month,"
16 "Dance in Our Schools Month" and "Youth Art Month" in
17 Pennsylvania; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize schools and certified
19 arts educators in their efforts to provide more robust,
20 comprehensive arts education curriculum for students in grades
21 kindergarten through 12; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the positive impact that
23 music, theater, dance and visual art education has on
24 communities and students across this Commonwealth to help raise
25 awareness regarding the need for access to quality programs for
26 all students regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity
27 or ability.