

**RCW 28A.230.020 Common school curriculum.** All common schools shall give instruction in reading, handwriting, orthography, written and mental arithmetic, geography, the history of the United States, English grammar, visual and performing arts, physiology and hygiene with special reference to the effects of alcohol and drug abuse on the human system, science with special reference to the environment, and such other studies as may be prescribed by rule of the superintendent of public instruction. All teachers shall stress the importance of the cultivation of manners, the fundamental principles of honesty, honor, industry and economy, the minimum requisites for good health including the beneficial effect of physical exercise and methods to prevent exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, and the worth of kindness to all living creatures and the land. The prevention of child abuse may be offered as part of the curriculum in the common schools. [2022 c 250 s 2; 2013 c 23 s 48; 2006 c 263 s 414; 1991 c 116 s 6; 1988 c 206 s 403; 1987 c 232 s 1; 1986 c 149 s 4; 1969 c 71 s 3; 1969 ex.s. c 223 s 28A.05.010. Prior: 1909 p 262 s 2; RRS s 4681; prior: 1897 c 118 s 65; 1895 c 5 s 1; 1890 p 372 s 45; 1886 p 19 s 52. Formerly RCW 28A.05.010, 28.05.010, and 28.05.020.]

**Intent—2022 c 250:** "(1) Washington state has long led the way in creating arts education policy. Washington state was one of the first states to adopt visual and performing arts graduation requirements. Our state has a two-credit visual and performing arts graduation requirement, although the second credit may be waived in certain circumstances. Our state has also been a leader by formally declaring the arts including dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and media as core content areas in the definition of basic education. However, there is a very large gap between policy and practice in our state. While most high schools offer a range of arts courses, it is not uncommon for middle schools to offer only one of the arts, usually music, and for elementary schools to offer no formal arts instruction at all, during the regular school day. When arts instruction is offered, it is often as an extracurricular activity, a volunteer docent program, or as a program which meets far less often than other core subjects do. Further, students who perform poorly on standardized tests in math and English often have what little arts instruction they would normally receive taken away, in favor of remediation in the test subject areas. Our students who live in low socioeconomic areas tend to perform worse on standardized tests. As a result, poorer students in our state tend to be denied arts instruction at a higher rate than students from economically stable homes and neighborhoods. The evidence of the multiple benefits of arts education is voluminous and undeniable. The arts are not only a vehicle for doing better at other subjects; they have immense value in their own right and should be taught as stand-alone disciplines, the way our laws and policies are written.

(2) The legislature intends to clarify, for schools and school districts, the importance of arts education and to bring our schools' practices in line with our state and federal laws and policies, and the promises made to our communities, by ensuring formal instruction in the core disciplines of visual and performing arts for all Washington students, regardless of their family's socioeconomic status or the relative affluence of the neighborhood in which they live. The legislature recognizes and supports that the best practice is for basic education courses, including the arts, to be taught by

certificated teachers who are qualified through an endorsement to teach in the subject area of the course. However, the legislature acknowledges that there is a shortage of arts endorsed teachers in Washington, so intends to allow arts instruction to also be provided by certificated teachers actively pursuing an endorsement in the relevant arts discipline." [2022 c 250 s 1.]

**Findings—Purpose—Part headings not law—2006 c 263:** See notes following RCW 28A.150.230.

**Effective date—1988 c 206 ss 402, 403:** See note following RCW 28A.230.070.

*Districts to develop programs and establish programs regarding child abuse and neglect prevention: RCW 28A.230.080.*

*Sexual abuse of students, child abuse, and neglect—Coordinated prevention program: RCW 28A.300.160.*