

*Contexts for
Arts Education*



Chapter Seven

Contexts for Arts Education

Introduction

Given the increasing focus on the value of arts learning, it is useful to have an understanding of the contexts in which that learning takes place. The 1995 National Center for Education Statistics report, *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*, reported on school resources for arts education. According to that report, the frequency of arts instruction, the positions of those who teach the arts, and the nature of facilities for arts teaching are all important factors in determining the quality of an arts education.¹ Part 1 of this chapter presents data on school resources collected from the nation's schools that participated in the NAEP 1997 arts assessment.

It is specified on the NAEP school questionnaires that they should be filled in by a principal or other head administrator. However, information is sometimes provided by other school staff. In the arts, 74 percent of those who filled in the questionnaire or provided information were

school principals. Twenty-seven percent were counselors, and 19 percent were assistant or vice principals. Smaller percentages of other staff (for example, teachers) provided information.

In Part 1 of this chapter, wherever possible, school-reported data for dance, music, theatre, and visual arts are placed side by side in the same tables to facilitate comparisons. So that comparisons among these data are made based on the same student samples, the dance and theatre percentages in Part 1 are based on school-reported data for students that were part of the visual arts sample.

(As previously explained, the student samples for music and visual arts were standard NAEP random national samples. By contrast, the theatre sample was a "targeted" sample. Schools offering at least 44 classroom hours of a theatre course per semester, and offering courses including more than the history or literature of theatre, were identified. Students attending these schools

who had accumulated 30 hours of theatre classes by the end of the 196-97 school year were selected to take the theatre assessment. Theatre percentages in Part 1 are based on the visual arts sample because the visual arts sample included a larger number of students in a wider range of schools than the music sample. There was no dance sample.)

While comparisons can be made among school-reported data in the different arts areas, readers are again cautioned against making direct comparisons among scores across subjects. Readers should also note that average scores are featured only for music and visual arts in Part 1 of this chapter. NAEP did not administer a dance assessment, and theatre scores do not match the school-reported data featured in Part 1.

Part 2 of this chapter focuses on data collected from the schools and teachers of those students who took the theatre assessment. This means that the school- and teacher-reported data featured in Part 2 are based on responses from schools where

¹ National Center for Education Statistics. (1995). *Arts education in public elementary and secondary schools*. (Publication No. NCES 95-082). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1. (See also <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss.html>)

theatre is a meaningful part of the curriculum. Students' theatre scores are presented in this section of chapter 7.

Theatre was the only subject assessed in the arts to include a teacher questionnaire because of the unusual nature of the theatre student sample. Previous NAEP studies have shown that it is difficult to get teacher responses to questionnaires for subjects that may be taught by itinerant teachers or part-time staff.² Hence, a teacher questionnaire was only given to teachers at schools with a substantial theatre curriculum, under the assumption that teachers at those schools would likely be full-time or permanent staff members.

Readers should be aware that the relationships among school and (theatre) teacher variables and student performance are complex. Prior NAEP assessments have often failed to demonstrate simple relationships between many school and teacher variables and student performance. However, the absence of relationships between variables and student performance should not necessarily be interpreted to mean that there are no cause-and-effect relationships between them. Such effects may be masked by other factors. By the same token, when there are statistical relationships, readers are cautioned against assigning cause and effect to a single variable.

Part One

Schools and Arts Learning

Frequency of Arts Instruction

Table 7.1 presents results on the frequency of arts instruction for grade 8 students. As has been noted elsewhere in this report, most schools do not have comprehensive programs in dance or theatre.³ Three percent of students attended schools that reported teaching dance to the typical eighth-grader three or four times a week, and 10 percent attended schools that reported teaching theatre to the typical eighth-grader three or four times a week. By contrast, 43 percent of students attended schools where music was taught to the typical eighth-grader at least three or four times a week, and 52 percent of students attended schools where visual arts were taught to the typi-

cal eighth-grader at least three or four times a week. While approximately one quarter of students attended schools where music and visual arts were taught once or twice a week to the typical eighth-grader, 4 percent of students attended schools where dance was taught once or twice a week to these students. Seven percent of students attended schools where theatre was taught once or twice a week to the typical eighth-grader.

There were no consistent patterns of significant relationships between frequencies of instruction and student scores.

2 Large percentages (between 30 and 70 percent) of data were missing from the 1995 arts field test teacher questionnaires in music and visual arts.

3 Eleven percent of schools in the NAEP random national sample offered some kind of theatre coursework, and 23 percent of students in that sample had some exposure to theatre education.

Table 7.1

Schools' Reports on the Frequency With Which Their Students Receive Instruction in the Arts

How often does a typical eighth-grade student in your school receive instruction in each of the following subjects?		% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Dance	At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week	3			
	Once or Twice a Week	4			
	Less than Once a Week	13			
	Subject not Taught	80			
Music	At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week	43	151	33	34
	Once or Twice a Week	38	154	35	33
	Less than Once a Week	10	146	34	37
	Subject not Taught	9	139	41	—
Theatre	At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week	10			
	Once or Twice a Week	7			
	Less than Once a Week	8			
	Subject not Taught	74			
Visual Arts	At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week	52	147	45	
	Once or Twice a Week	25	155	44	
	Less than Once a Week	5	137	35	
	Subject not Taught	17	150	42	

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data reported in this table for Dance, Theatre, and Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample. Music data are taken from the Music sample.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Percentages of Students Receiving Arts Instruction

Table 7.2 shows percentages of students receiving arts instruction in the schools. A large percentage of grade 8 students attended schools in which music and visual arts are taught, but student access to theatre and dance instruction is limited. Thirty-six percent of students attended schools where 81 to 100 percent of the students received music instruction, and 39 percent attended schools where

81 to 100 percent of the students received visual arts instruction. By contrast, 7 percent of students attended schools where 81 to 100 percent of the students received dance instruction, and 5 percent of students attended schools where 81 to 100 percent of students received theatre instruction.

There were no consistent patterns of significant relationships between scores and percentages of students receiving instruction in the arts areas.

Table 7.2

Schools' Reports on Various Percentages of Students Receiving Arts Instruction

During this year, what percentage of eighth graders received instruction in the following arts in your school?			Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Dance	0 – 10% of Students	82			
	11 – 20% of Students	4			
	21 – 40% of Students	4			
	41 – 60% of Students	1			
	61 – 80% of Students	1			
	81 – 100% of Students	7			
Music	0 – 10% of Students	7	131	35	—
	11 – 20% of Students	13	144	35	32
	21 – 40% of Students	17	147	32	34
	41 – 60% of Students	19	158	38	37
	61 – 80% of Students	8	151	28	36
	81 – 100% of Students	36	155	35	32
Theatre	0 – 10% of Students	67			
	11 – 20% of Students	12			
	21 – 40% of Students	9			
	41 – 60% of Students	5			
	61 – 80% of Students	3			
	81 – 100% of Students	5			
Visual Arts	0 – 10% of Students	14	149	40	
	11 – 20% of Students	5	142	39	
	21 – 40% of Students	13	147	42	
	41 – 60% of Students	16	151	45	
	61 – 80% of Students	13	147	44	
	81 – 100% of Students	39	153	45	

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data reported in this table for Dance, Theatre, and Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample. Music data are taken from the Music sample.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Arts Curricula

In light of increasing interest in standards for arts learning, it is helpful to see what percentages of schools follow a curriculum for arts education. Table 7.3 indicates that most students attended schools in which instruction following district or state curricula was offered in

music and visual arts, but not in theatre or dance. Seventy-two percent of students attended schools that followed a district or state curriculum in music, and 64 percent attended schools that followed a district or state curriculum for visual arts. On the other hand, 10 percent of students attended

schools that followed such a curriculum for dance, and 15 percent attended schools that followed a district or state theatre curriculum. There were no significant relationships between scores and percentages of students attending schools that followed district or state arts curricula.

Table 7.3 Schools' Reports on District or State Arts Curriculum Requirement

Does your district or state have a curriculum in any of the following subject areas that your school is expected to follow?		% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Dance	Yes	10			
	No*	90			
Music	Yes	72	151	34	34
	No*	28	152	35	35
Theatre	Yes	15			
	No*	85			
Visual Arts	Yes	64	148	44	
	No*	36	153	43	

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data reported in this table for Dance, Theatre, and Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample. Music data are taken from the Music sample.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes."

For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Visiting Artists

Another important indicator of the commitment of schools to arts education is whether those schools bring in visiting artists, and especially whether they sponsor visiting artist programs. While some schools organize occasional events

involving a visiting artist, a deeper commitment is evidenced by sponsorship of an ongoing program. Such programs can offer a means of exposing both teachers and students to people who create art as their primary professional activity.⁴ Larger percentages of students attended schools that brought in visiting

artists than attended schools that sponsored visiting artist programs (Tables 7.4 and 7.5).

Table 7.4 shows that of the four arts, the largest percentage of students (52 percent) attended schools that brought in visiting artists in music to perform, demonstrate, or teach music. For dance, theatre, and

Table 7.4 Schools' Reports on Whether They Use Visiting Artists

In the last year, did your school bring in visiting artists to perform, demonstrate, or teach in any of the following areas?		% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Dance	Yes	33			
	No*	67			
Music	Yes	52	151	32	34
	No*	48	151	37	34
Theatre	Yes	38			
	No*	62			
Visual Arts	Yes	33	151	44	
	No*	67	149	43	

NOTES: Data reported in this table for Dance, Theatre, and Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample. Music data are taken from the Music sample.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



⁴ National Center for Education Statistics, (1995). *Arts education in public elementary and secondary schools*. (Publication No. NCES 95-082). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 20. (See also <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss.html>)

visual arts, about one third of students attended schools that brought in visiting artists. There were no consistent patterns of significant relationships between scores and percentages of students attending schools that brought in visiting artists.

According to Table 7.5, most students attended schools that did not sponsor visiting artist programs in music, dance, theatre, or visual arts. Twenty percent or less of students attended schools that sponsored a visiting artist program. There were no significant relationships between

students' scores and percentages of students attending schools sponsoring visiting artist programs.

In the last year, did your school sponsor a visiting artist program (such as an Artist-in-the-Schools program) in any of the following areas?		% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Dance	Yes	10			
	No*	90			
Music	Yes	17	151	33	34
	No*	83	151	35	34
Theatre	Yes	12			
	No*	88			
Visual Arts	Yes	20	151	44	
	No*	80	149	44	

NOTES: Data reported in this table for Dance, Theatre, and Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample. Music data are taken from the Music sample.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



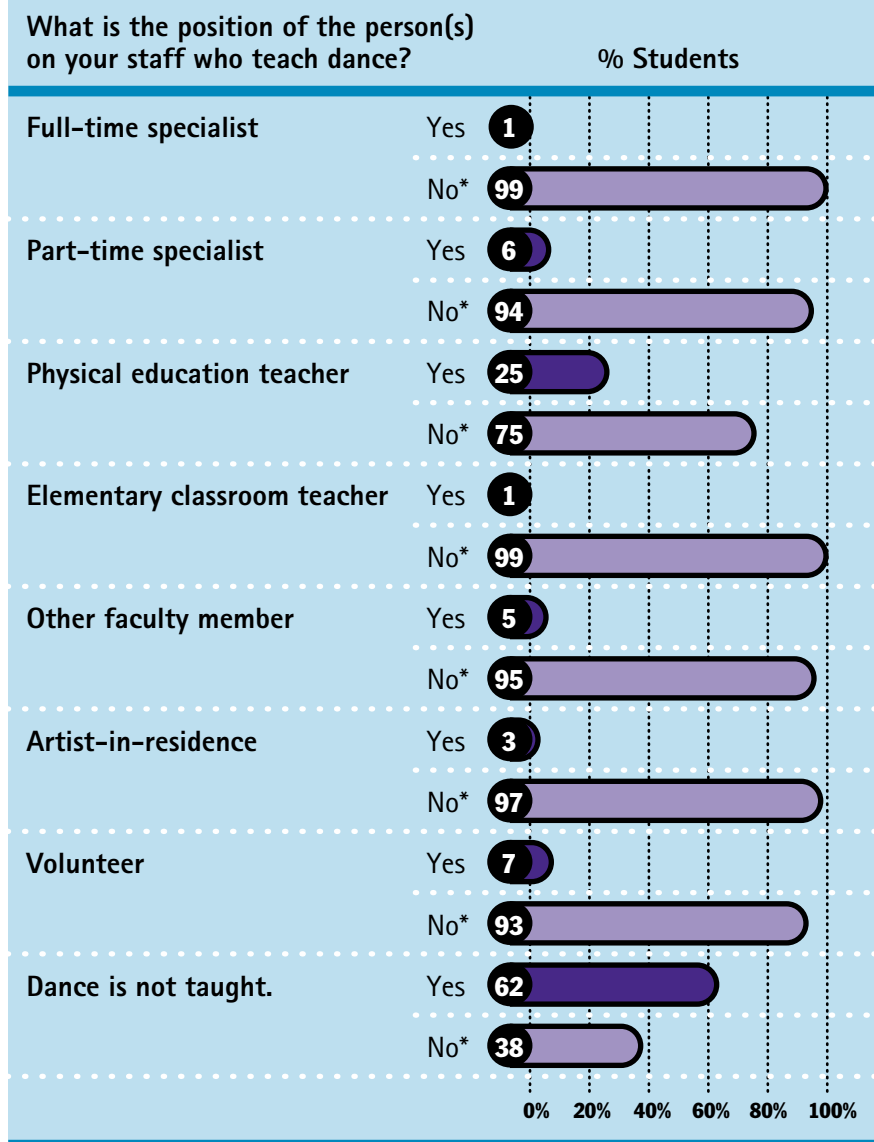
Positions of Those Teaching the Arts

Tables 7.6 to 7.9 present data on the positions of those teaching the arts in the nation's schools. More students attended schools where music and visual arts were taught by full-time specialists than attended schools where dance and theatre were taught by full-time specialists. Seventy-five percent of students attended schools that relied on full-time staff to teach music, and 73 percent attended schools that relied on full-time staff to teach visual arts (Tables 7.7 and 7.9). By contrast, 1 percent of students attended schools that relied on full-time specialists to teach dance, and 16 percent of students attended schools that relied on full-time specialists to teach theatre (Tables 7.6 and 7.8).

As shown in Table 7.6, 25 percent of students attended schools where dance was taught by physical education teachers. Sixty-two percent of students attended schools that reported not teaching dance.⁵ Sixteen percent of students attended schools where theatre was taught by full-time specialists, and another 16 percent of students attended schools where theatre was taught by other faculty members

Table 7.6

Schools' Reports on Who Teaches Eighth Graders in Dance



NOTES: Data reported in this table for Dance are taken from the Visual Arts sample.

* Percentages in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



⁵ The response option "Subject not taught" appeared in various school background questions for the same arts subject. Schools did not respond consistently when confronted with this option; therefore, percentages of students attending schools where a given arts subject was not taught vary across tables. This may reflect the difficulty in collecting consistent responses to the same option when that option is offered in multiple contexts.

Table 7.7 Schools' Reports on Who Teaches Eighth Graders in Music

What is the position of the person(s) on your staff who teach music?		% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Full-time specialist	Yes	75	151	35	33
	No*	25	151	34	35
Part-time specialist	Yes	16	155	33	37
	No*	84	150	35	33
Elementary classroom teacher	Yes	2	—	—	—
	No*	98	151	34	34
Other faculty member	Yes	3	—	—	—
	No*	97	151	35	34
Artist-in-residence	Yes	0	—	—	—
	No*	100	151	34	34
Volunteer	Yes	1	—	—	—
	No*	99	151	34	34
Music is not taught.	Yes	7	132	—	—
	No*	93	152	34	34

NOTES: Data reported in this table for Music are taken from the Music sample.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

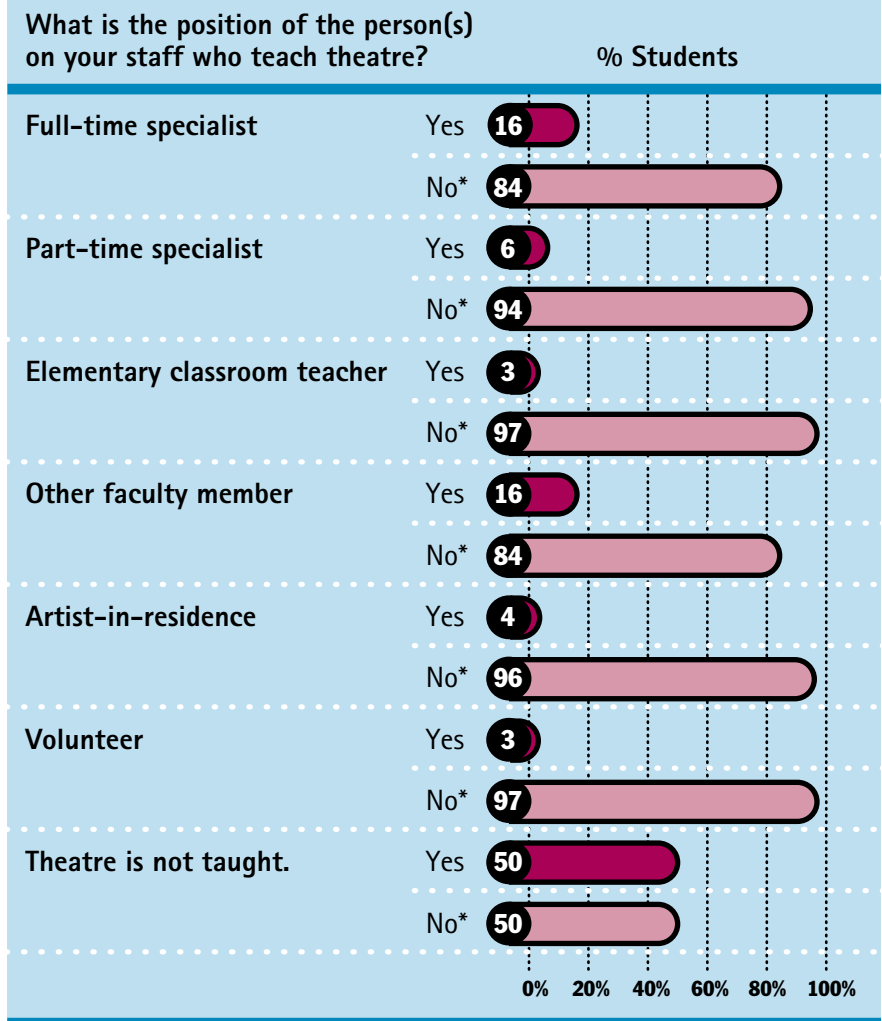


(that is, teachers who were not specialists or elementary classroom teachers). Fifty percent of students attended schools that reported not teaching theatre (Table 7.8).

There were no consistent patterns of significant relationships between student scores and the positions of those teaching the arts.

Table 7.8

Schools' Reports on Who Teaches Eighth Graders in Theatre



NOTES: Data reported in this table for Theatre are taken from the Visual Arts sample.

* Percentages in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Table 7.9**Schools' Reports on Who Teaches Eighth Graders in Visual Arts**

What is the position of the person(s) on your staff who teach visual arts?		% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)
Full-time specialist	Yes	73	150	44
	No*	27	148	42
Part-time specialist	Yes	8	154	42
	No*	92	149	44
Elementary classroom teacher	Yes	5	151	39
	No*	95	150	44
Other faculty member	Yes	6	151	45
	No*	94	150	44
Artist-in-residence	Yes	1	—	—
	No*	99	150	44
Volunteer	Yes	2	—	—
	No*	98	150	44
Visual arts are not taught.	Yes	6	146	41
	No*	94	150	44

NOTES: Data reported in this table for Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes."

For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Space for Arts Teaching

The spaces and facilities available in schools to teach the arts are also good indicators of the level of commitment to arts education. Tables 7.10 to 7.13 present information about the kinds of space resources available in the schools for the teaching of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. As opposed to dance and theatre instruction, most music and visual arts instruction takes place in school facilities dedicated to those subjects.

As shown in Table 7.11, 44 percent of students attended schools where music was taught in rooms dedicated to that subject, with a stage. Another 42 percent of students attended schools where music was taught in rooms dedicated to the subject, with no stage. Fifty-three percent of students attended schools where visual arts were taught in a studio with special equipment, while 35 percent attended schools where visual arts were taught in rooms dedicated to the subject but without special equipment (Table 7.13).

On the other hand (Table 7.10), no students attended schools with dance studio space with special dance equipment, and 1 percent of students attended schools with rooms dedicated to dance teaching without special equipment. Of those students who attended schools

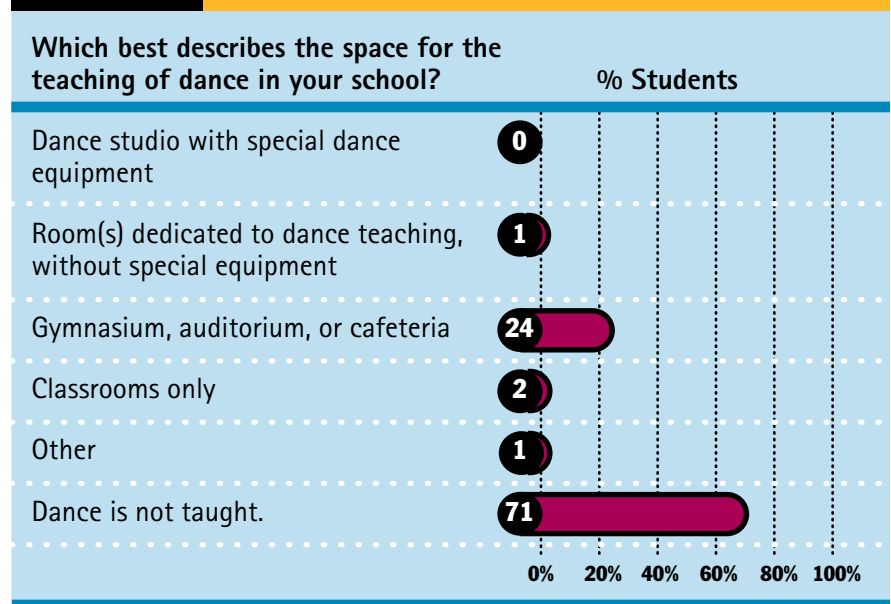
reporting teaching dance, the largest percentage (24 percent) were taught in a gymnasium, auditorium, or cafeteria.

Also in contrast to the results for music and visual arts, the results for theatre shown in Table 7.12 indicate that 16 percent of students attended schools where theatre was taught on a stage with special equipment. Seven percent attended schools where theatre was taught on stage without special equipment. Another 10 percent of students

attended schools where theatre was taught in a gymnasium, auditorium, or cafeteria.

A number of significant relationships were observed between student scores and facilities for teaching. Students who attended schools where music was taught in a room dedicated to music teaching with a stage had higher average Creating and Performing scores than did their peers who attended schools where music was taught on a stage with no room dedicated to

Table 7.10 Schools' Reports on the Space Where Dance is Taught



NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data reported in this table for Dance are taken from the Visual Arts sample.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



music teaching (Table 7.11). Further, students who attended schools where music was taught in rooms dedicated to music teaching without a stage had higher average Performing scores than did their peers who attended schools where music was

taught on a stage with no room dedicated to music teaching.

For visual arts (Table 7.13), students who attended schools where visual arts were taught in art studios with special equipment, or in rooms dedicated to art but with

no special equipment, had higher average Creating scores than did students who attended schools where visual arts was taught in classrooms only.

Table 7.11 Schools' Reports on the Space Where Music is Taught

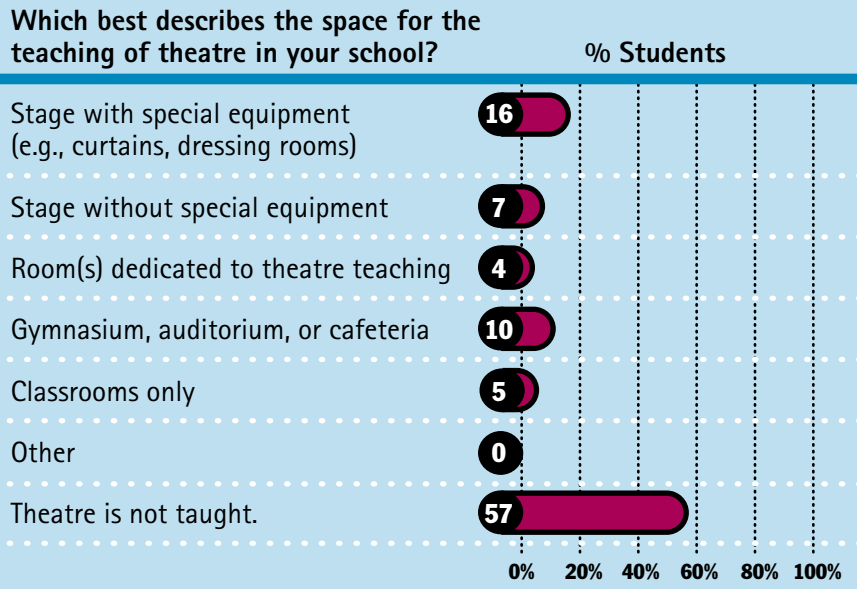
Which best describes the space for the teaching and performing of music in your school?	% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)	Average Performing Score (0-100%)
Room(s) dedicated to music teaching, and stage	44	154	37	34
Room(s) dedicated to music teaching, no stage	42	150	34	35
Stage, no room dedicated to music teaching	3	139	21	23
Classrooms only	7	155	29	—
Other	2	—	—	—
Music is not taught.	2	—	—	—

NOTES: Data reported in this table for Music are taken from the Music sample.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Table 7.12**Schools' Reports on the Space Where Theatre is Taught**

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data reported in this table for Theatre are taken from the Visual Arts sample.



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

Table 7.13 Schools' Reports on the Space Where Visual Arts is Taught

Which best describes the space for the teaching of visual arts in your school?	% Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating Score (0-100%)
Art studio with special equipment	53	152	45
Room(s) dedicated to art but with no special equipment	35	148	43
Art-on-a-cart; no dedicated space	0	—	—
Classrooms only	5	148	37
Other	0	—	—
Visual arts are not taught.	8	140	40

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data reported in this table for Visual Arts are taken from the Visual Arts sample.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Summary

Part 1 of this chapter presented variables related to the school contexts in which the arts are taught. Several patterns emerged across the arts disciplines.

- A large percentage of grade 8 students attended schools in which music and visual arts are taught, in most cases by full-time or part-time specialists. Student access to theatre and dance instruction was limited. Schools that did offer dance and/or theatre usually relied on staff other than full- or part-time specialists to provide instruction.
- Most students attended schools in which instruction following district or state curricula was offered in the subjects of music and visual arts, but not in theatre or dance.
- Larger percentages of students attended schools that brought in visiting artists than attended schools that sponsored visiting artist programs. Twenty percent or fewer of students attended schools that reported sponsorship of such programs.
- Most visual arts and music instruction takes place in school facilities dedicated to these subjects. Where available, dance is usually taught in gymnasiums, auditoriums, or cafeterias. Where available, theatre instruction usually takes place on a stage, or in gymnasiums, auditoriums, or cafeterias.
- Few significant relationships were found between contextual variables and student performance in the arts. More specialized school facilities were associated in some cases with higher levels of performance in music and visual arts. Other contextual variables, such as the frequency of instruction, and percentages of students enrolled in arts classes, showed no patterns of significant relationships with student performance.

Part Two

Schools, Teachers, and Theatre Learning

Schools with Theatre Programs

This part of Chapter 7 presents school and teacher data for the targeted theatre sample. As previously explained, schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, and offering courses including more than the history or literature of theatre, were identified. Students attending these schools who had accumulated 30 hours of theatre classes by the end of the 1996-97 school year were selected to take the theatre assessment. Those students comprised the targeted student sample.

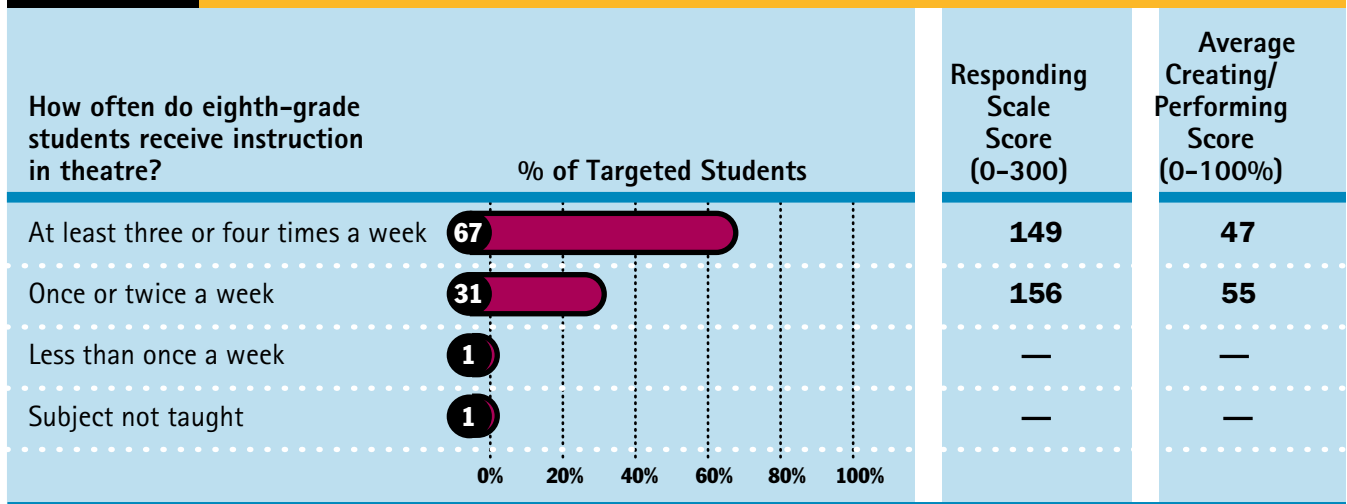
As the tables in this section show, there are notable differences

in theatre resources between the targeted theatre schools and the schools attended by students in the random national sample discussed in Part 1. (Readers should keep in mind that the percentage of schools where theatre is taught is very small.)

Table 7.14 presents results on the frequency of theatre instruction for targeted grade 8 students in selected schools. Sixty-seven percent of students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools where eighth graders received theatre instruction at least three to four times a week, 31 percent once or twice a week, and 1 percent less than once a week.

The frequency of theatre instruction in the schools included in the targeted theatre sample mirrors the frequency of instruction in music and visual arts in the schools included in the national random samples, as described in Part 1. There were no significant relationships between targeted student performance on the theatre assessment and frequency of theatre instruction in schools with theatre programs.

Table 7.14 Selected* Schools' Reports on the Frequency of Theatre Instruction



NOTES: — Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

* These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Percentages of Students Receiving Theatre Instruction

Table 7.15 presents the percentages of grade 8 students receiving instruction in schools with theatre programs attended by targeted grade 8 students. These percentages are noticeably larger than the percentages of students receiving

theatre instruction featured in Part 1 of this chapter. Thirteen percent of students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools where 0 to 10 percent of eighth graders received theatre instruction, while 31 percent attended schools where 21 to 40 percent of eighth-grade students received theatre instruc-

tion. Twenty-four percent of targeted students attended schools where 61 percent or more of grade 8 students received theatre instruction. Again, there were no significant relationships to targeted student performance.

Table 7.15 Selected* Schools' Reports on the Percentage of Students Receiving Theatre Instruction

During this year, what percentage of eighth graders received instruction in theatre in your school?	% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
0-10% of Students	13	145	53
11-20% of Students	19	144	50
21-40% of Students	31	154	49
41-60% of Students	13	—	—
61-80% of Students	12	—	—
81-100% of Students	12	—	—

NOTES: — Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

* These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Theatre Curricula

As indicated in Table 7.16, in contrast to the schools attended by students in the standard national sample, 45 percent of students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools that followed a district or state theatre curriculum. (In Part 1, 15 percent of students in the random national sample attended schools that followed a district or state theatre curriculum.) There were no significant relationships between the presence of such curricula and targeted student performance.

Table 7.16

Selected* Schools' Reports on a District or State Theatre Curriculum

Does your district or state have a curriculum in theatre that your school is expected to follow? % of Targeted Students		Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Yes	45	154	49
No**	55	149	50

NOTES: * These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.



** Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

Visiting Artists

As stated in Part 1, an important indicator of the commitment of schools to arts education is whether those schools bring in visiting artists to perform, demonstrate, or teach, and especially whether they sponsor visiting artist programs. (A deeper commitment to arts education is evidenced by sponsorship of an ongoing program.) Table 7.17 indicates that 61 percent of students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools that brought visiting artists in to perform, demonstrate, or teach in theatre.

Table 7.17

Selected* Schools' Reports on Bringing in Visiting Artists

In the last year, did your school bring in visiting artists to perform, demonstrate, or teach in theatre? % of Targeted Students		Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Yes	61	153	50
No**	39	148	50

NOTES: * These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.



** Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

According to Table 7.18, 21 percent of students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools that sponsored visiting artist programs in theatre. There were no significant relationships between percentages of targeted students that attended schools bringing in visiting artist or sponsoring visiting artist programs and student scores.

Table 7.18 Selected* Schools' Reports on Sponsoring a Visiting Artist Program		
In the last year, did your school sponsor a visiting artist program (such as an Artist-in-the-Schools program) in theatre? % of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Yes 21	158	53
No** 79	149	49

NOTES: * These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.



** Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

Positions of Those Teaching Theatre

Table 7.19 presents data on the positions of those teaching theatre in selected schools where theatre is part of the curriculum. The patterns shown in this table differ from those shown in Part 1 of this chapter. Fifty-eight percent of students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools that relied on full-time specialists to teach theatre to eighth graders. Nineteen percent of targeted students attended schools that relied on part-time specialists to teach eighth graders, and 22 percent attended schools that relied on other faculty members. There were no significant relationships with targeted student achievement.

Table 7.19 Selected* Schools' Reports on the Positions of Theatre Teachers

What is the position of the person(s) on your staff who teach theatre to eighth graders?		% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Full-time specialist	Yes	58	149	48
	No**	42	153	52
Part-time specialist	Yes	19	146	52
	No**	81	152	49
English or language arts teacher	Yes	4	—	—
	No**	96	150	50
Elementary classroom teacher	Yes	1	—	—
	No**	99	151	50
Other faculty member	Yes	22	—	—
	No**	78	149	49
Artist-in-residence	Yes	0	—	—
	No**	100	151	50
Volunteer	Yes	0	—	—
	No**	100	151	50
Theatre is not taught.	Yes	0	—	—
	No**	100	151	50

NOTES: — Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

* These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.

** Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Space for Theatre Teaching

The spaces and facilities available in schools to teach the arts are important indicators of the level of commitment to arts education. Table 7.20 features the kinds of space resources available in schools attended by students in the targeted theatre sample. Twenty-three percent of targeted students attended schools that had stages with special

equipment for theatre teaching, 10 percent attended schools with stages without special equipment for theatre teaching, and another 37 percent attended schools with rooms dedicated to theatre teaching. Ten percent of targeted students attended schools that used classrooms for theatre teaching.

For this variable, targeted students who attended schools that

had stages with special equipment for theatre teaching had higher average Responding scale scores than did targeted students who attended schools with rooms dedicated to theatre teaching. The difference between the average Creating/Performing scores of those groups of students, though it appears to be large, is not significant.

Table 7.20 Selected* Schools' Reports on the Space Available for Teaching Theatre

Which best describes the space for the teaching of theatre in your school?	% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Stage with special equipment (e.g., curtains, dressing rooms)	23	161	54
Stage without special equipment	10	—	—
Room(s) dedicated to theatre teaching	37	141	46
Gymnasium, auditorium, or cafeteria	20	—	—
Classrooms only	10	—	—
Other	0	—	—
Theatre is not taught.	0	—	—

NOTES: — Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

* These were schools offering at least 44 hours of a theatre course per semester, including more than the history or literature of theatre.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Teachers at Schools with Theatre Programs

Given the current interest in strengthening arts learning in the schools, it is useful to explore the backgrounds of, resources available to, and instructional practices of teachers of eighth-grade theatre. As previously explained, teachers of the targeted sample of eighth-grade theatre students received a questionnaire. Their responses provide additional information about the contexts in which theatre learning takes place.

Teacher Certification and Professional Development

According to Table 7.21, most students (68 percent) in the targeted theatre sample were taught by teachers who had teaching certification in theatre recognized by the state in which they taught. Twenty-six percent of targeted students were taught by teachers without such certification. There were no significant relationships between student scores and theatre teacher certification.

Table 7.22 features results on teacher involvement in seven professional development activities. For each activity, the table presents percentages, Responding scale scores, and average Creating/Performing scores for three groups of targeted students: (1) students whose teachers engaged in that activity, (2) students whose teachers did not engage in that activity but did engage in one of the other activities listed, and (3) students whose teachers did not engage in any of the listed activities.

Table 7.21

Teachers' Reports on Whether They Have a Teaching Certificate in Theatre for the Targeted Student Sample

Do you have teaching certification in theatre that is recognized by the state in which you teach?	% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Yes	68	151	50
No*	26	161	51
Not offered in my state	6	—	—

NOTES: * Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



As shown in the table, 43 percent of targeted students were taught by teachers who had participated in professional development activities in acting. Approximately one third of students taking the theatre assessment had teachers who had participated in professional development activities in play production, technical theatre, design, and directing. Forty-five percent of targeted students were taught by teachers who reported no professional development activities in any of the seven areas in the last five years. There were no patterns of significant relationships between teacher participation in professional development activities and targeted student achievement.

Table 7.22

Teachers' Reports on Whether They Have Spent Time in Theatre Professional Development Activities for the Targeted Student Sample

During the past five years, have you participated in professional development activities in any of the following areas, either in college or university course or in workshops?			Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
		% of Targeted Students		
Filmmaking	Yes	10	149	55
	No, other activity*	45	148	49
	None**	45	152	49
Play Production	Yes	36	144	49
	No, other activity*	19	158	53
	None**	45	152	49
Technical Theatre	Yes	29	151	48
	No, other activity*	26	146	52
	None**	45	152	49
Design (e.g., sets, costumes, makeup, lighting)	Yes	30	148	46
	No, other activity*	25	149	54
	None**	45	152	49
Playwriting/screen writing	Yes	16	128	41
	No, other activity*	39	157	54
	None**	45	152	49
Acting	Yes	43	151	51
	No, other activity*	13	142	47
	None**	45	152	49
Directing	Yes	33	144	48
	No, other activity*	22	155	53
	None**	45	152	49

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes" to this activity, but did indicate involvement in one or more of the other activities in Table 7.22. For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

** The percentage and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes" to any of the activities in Table 7.22.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Teacher Resources

The facilities that schools make available to teachers are important factors in judging the status of arts education. According to Table 7.23, 39 percent of the students in the targeted theatre sample had teachers who indicated that they got all or most of the instructional materials and other resources they needed to teach their theatre classes. Another 58 percent of targeted students had teachers who indicated that they got some of the resources they needed, and 4 percent of students had teachers who indicated getting none of the resources they needed. Targeted students whose teachers indicated that they got most of the resources they needed had higher average Responding

scale scores than their peers whose teachers indicated getting some of the resources they needed.

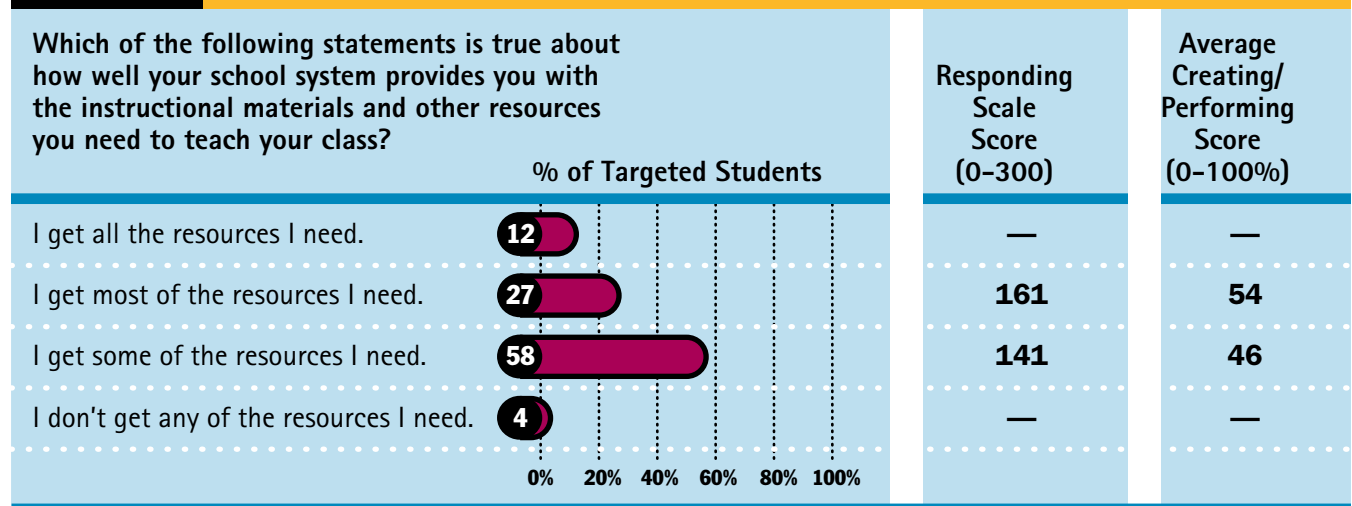
Among the resources theatre teachers require are adequate spaces for teaching students how to Create and Perform. Table 7.24 features results on six kinds of stage facilities reported by teachers of targeted students. For each stage facility, the table presents percentages, Responding scale scores, and average Creating/Performing scores for three groups of targeted students: (1) students whose teachers reported having that stage facility, (2) students whose teachers reported not having that facility but having one of the other facilities listed, and (3) students whose teachers reported not having any of the listed stage

facilities.

Table 7.24 indicates that 51 percent of the targeted sample of theatre students had teachers who reported having stage facilities with more than one curtain, while the teachers of 65 percent of targeted students reported having stage facilities with sound systems. Another 58 percent of students had teachers who reported having stage facilities with lighting and controls. Fifteen percent of students taking the theatre assessment had teachers who reported not having any of the listed stage facilities. There were no significant relationships with student scores.

Finally, teachers of students taking the theatre assessment were asked whether they had curriculum

Table 7.23 Teachers' Reports on Whether They Get the Instructional Resources They Need for the Targeted Student Sample



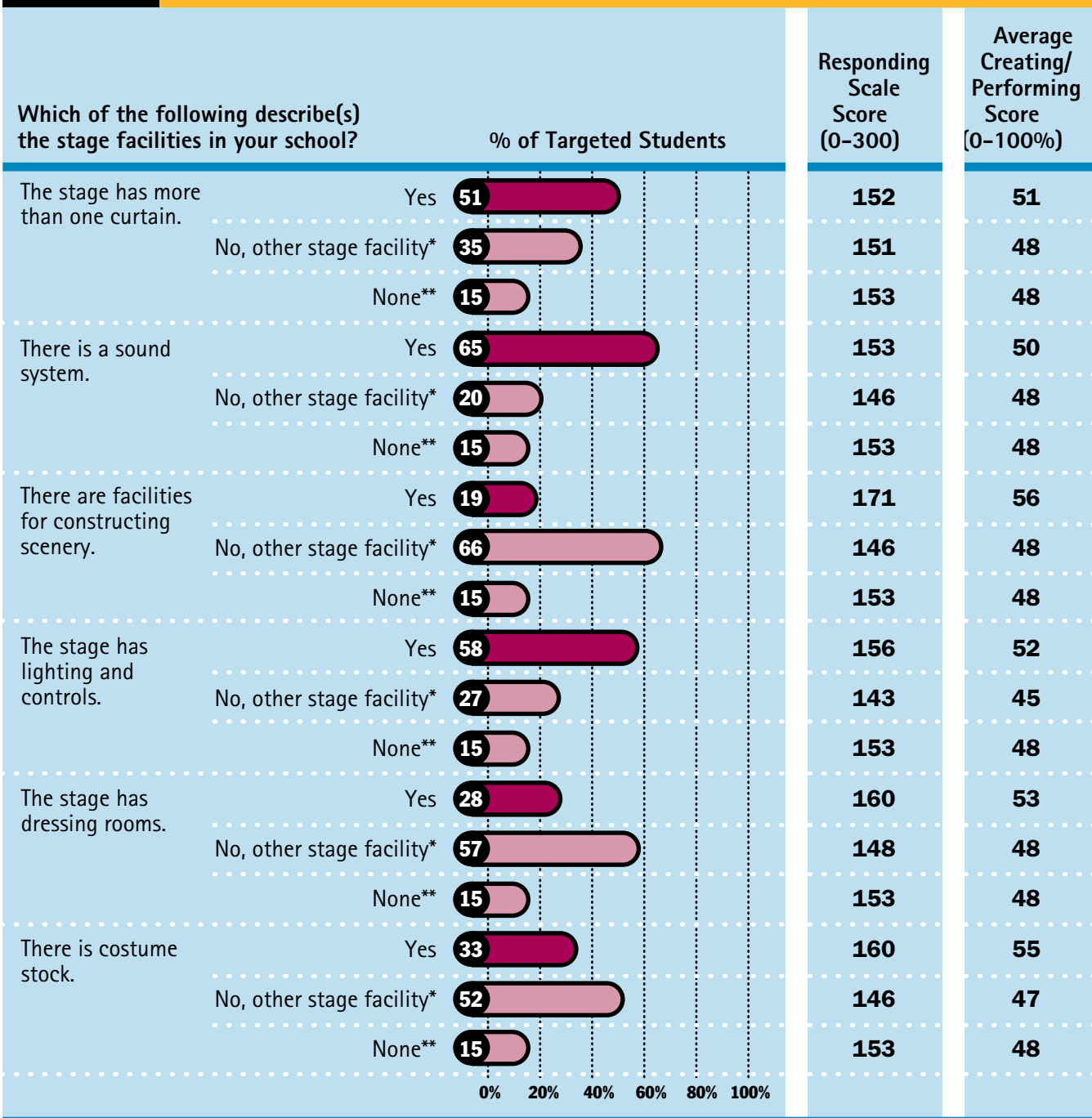
NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Table 7.24 Teachers' Reports on Theatre Stage Facilities for the Targeted Student Sample



NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

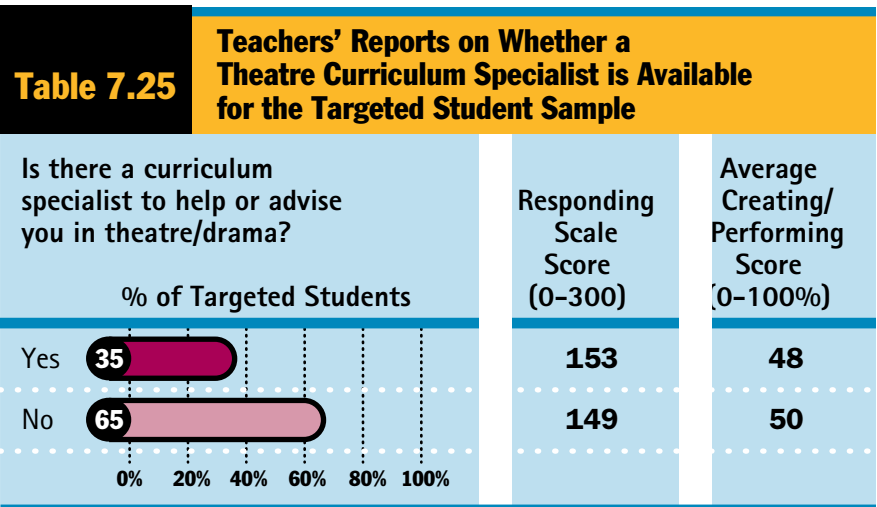
* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes" for this facility, but did indicate having one or more of the other stage facilities in Table 7.24. For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

**The percentage and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes" to any of the facilities in Table 7.24.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



specialists to help or advise them in theatre or drama (Table 7.25). About a third of targeted students had teachers who reported that they did have such a resource, while 65 percent of targeted students had teachers who reported not having this resource. There were no significant relationships with student scores.



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Instructional Practices

The place of arts instruction in school curricula, as well as the nature of arts instructional practices, are of great interest to those concerned with arts education. This interest is demonstrated in the voluntary *National Standards for Arts Education*, which describes what students learning the arts in school should know and be able to do.⁶ Teachers of the targeted students who took the theatre assessment were asked questions about the place of theatre instruction in their schools, how closely their instruction matched the

voluntary *Standards*, and what sorts of activities targeted students were asked to do in their theatre classes.

Table 7.26 features results for six kinds of theatre instruction reported by teachers. For each kind of instruction, the table presents percentages, Responding scale scores, and average Creating/Performing scores for three groups of targeted students: (1) students whose teachers reported having that kind of theatre instruction, (2) students whose teachers reported not having that kind of theatre instruction but having one of the other kinds listed, and (3) students whose teachers reported not

having any of the kinds of theatre instruction listed.

According to Table 7.26, the teachers of approximately one third of targeted students taught theatre as part of a K-12 curriculum, or part of a shorter but sequential theatre curriculum. Particularly interesting in light of the recent focus on integrating the arts with other subjects, 38 percent of students had teachers whose theatre instruction was integrated with other academic curricula.⁷ Twenty-nine percent of students had teachers whose theatre instruction was integrated with other arts curricula. There were

6 *National Standards for Arts Education* (1994). Reston, Virginia: Music Educators National Conference.

7 Boston, B. O. *Connections: The arts and integration of the high school curriculum*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board and Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 21.

Table 7.26

Teachers' Reports on the Place of Theatre in the Curriculum for the Targeted Student Sample

Which of the following statements describe(s) your theatre instruction?	% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
It is part of a K-12 curriculum.	Yes 33	147	50
	No, other form of instruction* 52	156	52
	None of the above.** 15	136	41
It is part of a shorter but sequential theatre curriculum.	Yes 32	160	55
	No, other form of instruction* 53	149	49
	None of the above.** 15	136	41
It is coordinated with or related to local, district, or state theatre standards.	Yes 47	153	51
	No, other form of instruction* 38	152	51
	None of the above.** 15	136	41
It is integrated with other academic curricula.	Yes 38	159	54
	No, other form of instruction* 46	148	48
	None of the above.** 15	136	41
It is integrated with other arts curricula.	Yes 29	150	50
	No, other form of instruction* 56	154	52
	None of the above.** 15	136	41
It is part of the English/language arts curriculum.	Yes 13	—	—
	No, other form of instruction* 72	153	50
	None of the above.** 15	136	41

NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

* Percentages and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes" for this form of theatre instruction, but did indicate another form or forms of theatre instruction in Table 7.26. For this series of background questions respondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

**The percentage and scores in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes" to any of the forms of theatre instruction in Table 7.26.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



no significant relationships between kinds of theatre instruction and targeted student performance.

Table 7.27 features teachers' familiarity with the *National Standards for Arts Education*, in terms of student percentages. The voluntary *National Arts Standards*, although still unread by the teachers of 63 percent of the students taking the theatre assessment, has had a clear influence. Approximately 40 percent of targeted students had teachers who reported a degree of match between their instruction and the *Standards*: teachers of 23 percent of targeted students reported a moderate match, and teachers of 14

percent of students indicated that there was a close match between their teaching and the *Standards*. There were no significant relationships with student performance.

Table 7.28 presents data about what sorts of activities students in the targeted theatre sample were asked to do by their theatre teachers. (See continuation of Table 7.28 on page 174.) The most frequent activities were creating characters or scenes by improvisation and performing for audiences. Twenty-five percent of targeted students had teachers who reported asking their students to do improvisations almost every day, while 38 percent

of students had teachers who asked their students to do improvisations once or twice a week. Nearly 30 percent of targeted students had teachers who asked their students to perform for an audience almost every day, and another 21 percent had teachers who asked students to do this once or twice a week.

Less-frequent activities were reading about theatre, directing a play or scene, or critiquing a play or scene, although a good portion of students did these things once or twice a month. There were no significant relationships between frequencies of classroom activities and targeted student performance.

Table 7.27 Teachers' Reports on the Match Between Their Theatre Instruction and National Standards

To what extent does your theatre instruction match the standards for theatre in the voluntary <i>National Standards for Arts Education</i> ?	% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
There is a close match.	14	—	—
There is a moderate match.	23	143	45
There is a weak match.	0	—	—
I have not read the <i>Standards</i> .	63	156	52

NOTE: — Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Table 7.28**Teachers' Reports on How Often Their Students Engage in Theatre Instructional Activities for the Targeted Student Sample**

How often do you ask students in this class to do the following?		% of Targeted Students	Responding Scale Score (0-300)	Average Creating/Performing Score (0-100%)
Create characters or scenes by improvisation	Almost Every Day	25	144	45
	Once or Twice a Week	38	160	53
	Once or Twice a Month	30	147	51
	Never or Hardly Ever	7	—	—
Read a play aloud	Almost Every Day	10	—	—
	Once or Twice a Week	6	123	34
	Once or Twice a Month	79	151	50
	Never or Hardly Ever	5	—	—
Write a play or scene	Almost Every Day	1	—	—
	Once or Twice a Week	14	154	49
	Once or Twice a Month	53	152	50
	Never or Hardly Ever	32	144	47
Do technical aspects of theatre	Almost Every Day	4	—	—
	Once or Twice a Week	21	149	47
	Once or Twice a Month	35	163	53
	Never or Hardly Ever	40	145	49

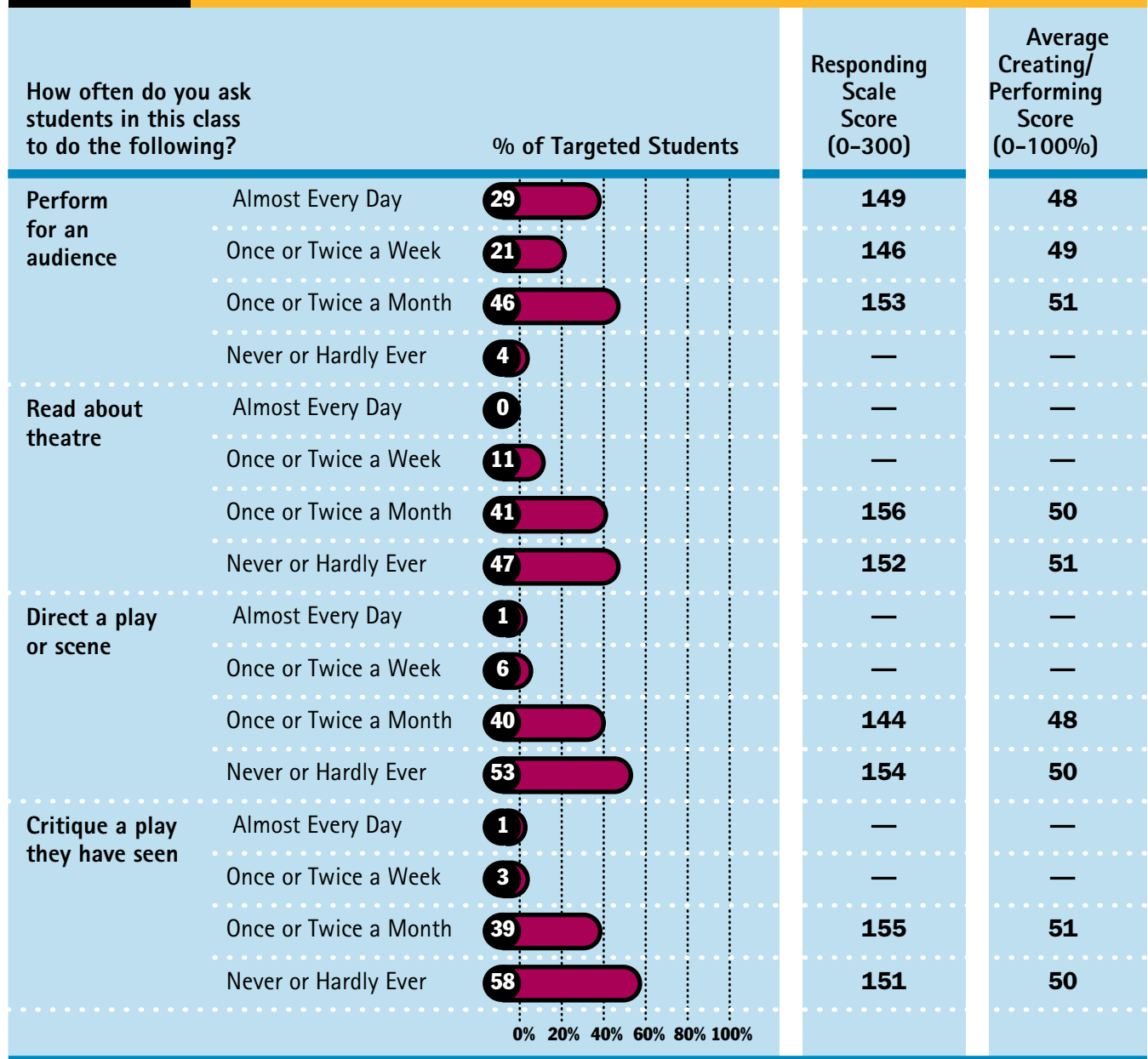
NOTE: — Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Table 7.28
(cont.)

Teachers' Reports on How Often Their Students Engage in Theatre Instructional Activities for the Targeted Student Sample



NOTES: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

— Sample size is insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.



Summary

The previous section provided information from two background questionnaires. The school questionnaire for theatre supplied information about school resources for theatre learning. The theatre teacher questionnaire provided information about teacher background and theatre instructional practices. The following points emerged from this discussion.

- Most students in the targeted theatre sample attended schools where eighth graders received theatre instruction at least three or four times a week.
- Almost half the targeted students were in schools in which a district or state theatre curriculum was expected to be followed.
- Most of the targeted students attended schools that brought in visiting artists to perform, demonstrate, or teach in theatre; about one fifth of the theatre students attended schools that sponsored a visiting artist program.
- Teachers of most students in the targeted theatre sample were either full-time or part-time specialists, held state teacher certification in theatre, and gave instruction in school facilities dedicated to theatre or on a stage. Thirty-nine percent of targeted students were taught by teachers who reported receiving most or all of the resource materials they needed to teach their classes.
- The most common theatre classroom activities for targeted students included creating characters or scenes by improvisation and performing for an audience.

