



What is a local Seal of Arts Excellence?

The purpose of these guidelines is to help districts and schools establish a Seal of Arts Excellence or other programs to recognize high school graduates who have demonstrated an advanced level of specialization, as determined by the [Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) for the Visual and Performing Arts](#), in a visual and performing arts area of interest. As local boards of education award diplomas and determine how to best recognize students for their various accomplishments, the following information will provide guidance on what to consider when establishing a local Seal of Arts Excellence.

How may a student earn a local Seal of Arts Excellence?

A local board of education or governing board may determine if and how students may become eligible to earn a local Seal of Arts Excellence based on evidence that they have demonstrated an advanced level of specialization in the [KAS for Visual and Performing Arts](#) in their chosen art form(s). Boards of education may support students in developing the skills and understanding needed to earn a local Seal of Arts Excellence prior to high school. The seal will be awarded to a high school graduate.

At the high school level, students may choose to specialize in one or more art forms to earn a local Seal of Arts Excellence. Such specialization will enable students to study an art form in an in-depth manner, and work toward achieving an advanced demonstration in creating, performing/producing/presenting, responding and connecting to their chosen art form as established by the [KAS for Visual and Performing Arts](#). Students who choose to specialize in an art form will participate in performance-based arts courses designed to develop skills and understanding that will enable them to use the art form as a high-level communication tool. This is accomplished through the development of skills in the processes that artists engage in to make the arts.

What are possible criteria for eligibility?

To determine a students' eligibility to earn a Seal of Arts Excellence, districts and schools may consider the following criteria:

1. The student is eligible to earn a high school diploma.
 - a. The student currently is a senior or junior in good standing; AND

- b. The student attends a school that provides the opportunity to earn a Seal of Arts Excellence.
2. The student earns three or four Visual and Performing Arts credits in an area of interest, demonstrating sustained specialization/performance in the area.
 - a. A school may design a Visual and Performing Arts course sequence based on the courses available in the [Searchable State Course Code Database](#) that meets students' needs. Schools are encouraged to develop a sequence of courses that develops students' knowledge, skills, techniques, etc., so they may succeed beyond the secondary level. Schools may choose multiple courses or advanced coursework under a course code, such as: Comprehensive Art, Painting/Drawing, Sculpture or a 4th choice; Chorus, Band, Orchestra, Guitar, etc., I, II, III, IV; Introduction to Theatre, Comprehensive Stagecraft, Acting and Performance or Directing; or Dance Technique, Dance Choreography, Dance Repertory, Dance Workplace Experience/Internship. Schools are not limited to these course codes, and may name their courses as they choose.
 - b. The "local district assures that all students have had access and opportunity to learn the standards contained in the Kentucky Academic Standards. 704 KAR 3:303 and 704 KAR Chapter 8" (40). Thus, local decisions must ensure that students "have had access and opportunity to learn the standards" in the [KAS for Visual and Performing Arts](#).
3. The student exhibits an advanced demonstration as determined by the KAS for Visual and Performing Arts. Demonstration of a high level of achievement or learning may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. The student shows progress/growth based on the local formative assessment process and measures that may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - A mechanism to collect evidence of student mastery of the [KAS for Visual and Performing Arts](#).
 - A locally determined growth measurement that documents a student's ability to excel through the development of skills in the processes of Creating, Performing/Producing/Presenting, Responding and Connecting that artists engage in to make the arts.
 - b. The student submits a summative student-curated collection of evidence, such as a standards-based portfolio, project or performance, that constitutes satisfactory demonstration of learning within the four arts processes (Creating, Performing/Producing/Presenting, Responding and Connecting) within the identified area of specialization; OR
 - c. The student passes, with a score of 3 or higher, an Advanced Placement Test for the area of arts specialization; OR
 - d. The student passes, with a score of 5 or higher, an International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme in the area of arts specialization.
 - e. The student participates in juried arts events that utilize well developed

rubrics and are assessed by professionals in the arts fields.

Note: The local board of education may determine the process for evaluating student evidence in awarding the seal. A local arts specialist in the student's area(s) of specialization may be best equipped to evaluate if the student exhibits an advanced demonstration as determined by the [KAS for Visual and Performing Arts](#).

How might students be recognized for attaining the local Seal of Arts Excellence?

Student commendations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Indication of the Seal of Arts Excellence on the transcript/e-transcript;
- Special seal on the diploma;
- Graduation cord or sash for the ceremony;
- Senior Night award or certificate; and/or
- Verbal or written recognition in the graduation program or during the ceremony.

Where may additional resources/guidance be found?

Additional information to support local schools and districts in designing and implementing the local Seal of Arts Excellence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Resources from [National Core Arts Standards](#), including the Model Cornerstone Assessments and Student Artworks Handbooks;
- National Association for Music Education National Opportunity to Learn Standards, accessible from www.NAfME.org;
- Educational Theatre Association [Opportunity-to-Learn Standards for Theatre Education](#); and
- National Dance Education Organization [Opportunity-to-Learn Standards for Dance](#).