



## New FRSS Study Lays Groundwork for Continued Arts Education Data Collection

In early April, the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released a Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) study, *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools 1999-2000 and 2009-10*. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012014.pdf>

The data clearly shows inequities in access to music education between low poverty and high poverty schools, and it also reports that, generally speaking, the percentage of schools and students receiving music education more than once per week is still as low as it was in 1999.

The Music Education Policy Roundtable estimates that only about 45–50% of all students in K–12 public schools receive a credible sequential music education. “Credible” means that there are sufficient resources available for music education (mostly sufficient time) so that one can credibly believe that students might get a high-quality education.

It should be noted that in 2012 there are 7,000 fewer music teachers in K – 12 public schools than there were in 2010 ([www.schooldata.com](http://www.schooldata.com)).

The last time the Department produced such a study was 1999–2000; the arts education community has worked hard to push Congress to fund this additional study. This 2009–2010 report serves as a benchmark, building from the 1999 and 1994 studies, and examines many of the same issues.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the FRSS does not explore “complex interactions and relationships” in the data. The survey was designed to “describe key indicators of arts education in 2009–2010 and comparisons with 1999–2000.”

The 2009–2010 survey is an important and necessary step, as it builds a strong foundation for ongoing national arts education data collection by the U.S. Department of Education. The Music Education Policy Roundtable believes that such ongoing work must continue with a rigor, regularity, and sense of purpose equal to that of data collection for other core academic subjects. Specifically, it should include regular and frequent collection of data on student achievement [through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the arts]; and be more comprehensive in scope and depth, fully encompassing dance and theatre.

