



ARTS EDUCATION

Student Access and Equity in Alaska

The mission of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) is to provide an excellent education for every student, every day. In many of Alaska's schools, the arts play a role in what an "excellent education" looks like. While access to the arts is not universal, and there are enduring gaps and inequities among schools, the arts are indeed alive across our vast state. Through creative scheduling, professional development, community partnerships, and stakeholder involvement, many districts are extending learning opportunities to students through music, theater, visual arts, media arts, Alaska Native arts, and dance.

Teachers are the ones who create opportunities, who open the doors to learning about the arts and artistic expression in all forms. In 2019 the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, with assistance from the Education Commission on the States, looked into the number of students in Alaska who have access to at least one arts course. The purpose of this activity was to give stakeholders some of the information they need to address needs, close gaps, and devise strategies to reach even more youth with creative approaches to learning.

The following data, collected from all Alaskan districts and presented by the DEED data team, gives us a picture of how many students do not have any access to an art course.

* No access means there are no arts courses available.

There are a total of 22 charts illustrating the data reported by districts to the Department. The graphs reveal information such as:

- ★ Alaska Native/American Indian students have less access to the arts than other ethnicities
- ★ Students who are Economically Disadvantaged are less likely to have arts access than their peers who are not so
- ★ There are 9 districts where students do not have any access to the arts; there are 16 districts where 100% of students have access to instruction in at least one art form

- ★ 14% of students in rural hub/fringe communities (on and off road) have access to Alaska Native Arts, while only 3% of urban (on and off road) students have such access
- ★ 50% of urban students have access to music; 34% from rural hub communities have access to music and only 2% of rural off road students do

We can view the data by location, ethnicity and by art form (music, visual arts, media and graphic arts, dance, theater) across the spectrum of grades, to see which students are more prone to receive an excellent education, one rich with exposure and experience with the arts.

This report gives us the chance to more deeply probe issues of equity and access in Alaskan schools, to talk about fairness in the educational experience, and to promote the arts for all. Solid research over the years gives evidence to the value and impact of the arts on student achievement, motivation and wellbeing.

We hope that across Alaska local school boards, community leaders, Native corporations and Tribal organizations, businesses and policy makers will engage in discussions about quality and excellence in our schools, using the arts data as a springboard to their thinking and conversations.

For more information about the data contained in this report, contact Colton Christian, Data Manager, at the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, at your convenience at colton.christian@alaska.gov

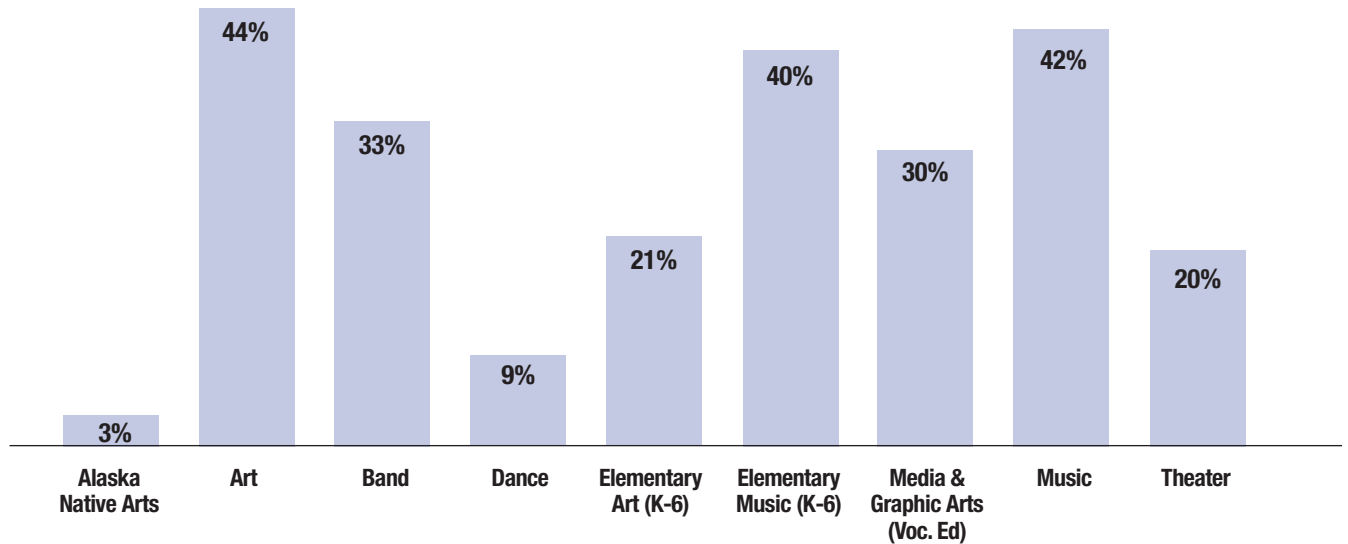
*Note that geographic definitions produced by REL Northwest (Vasquez Cano, Bel Hadj Amor, & Pierson, 2019) that are commonly used by DEED to analyze geographic differences in education data were used. The ethnicity definitions are not from this citation.

Geographic definitions include:	Ethnicity is listed as:
Rural hub/fringe (on & off road)	African American
Rural remote (off road)	Alaska Native/American Indian
Urban (on & off road)	Asian/Pacific Islander
Urban fringe (on & off road)	Caucasian
	Hispanic
	Two or More Races

*Vazquez Cano, M., Bel Hadj Amor, H., & Pierson, A. (2019). *Educator Retention and Turnover Under the Midnight Sun: Examining Trends and Relationships in Teacher, Principal, and Superintendent Movement in Alaska*. Portland, OR: Education Northwest, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest.

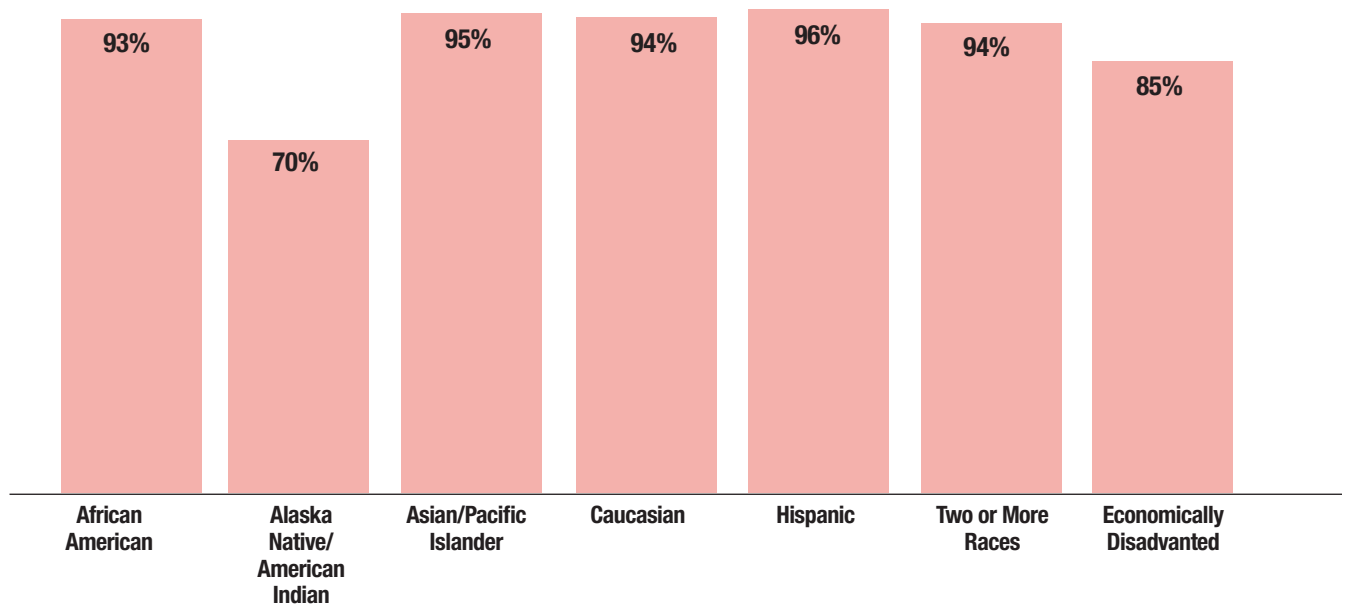
Arts Accessibility

Percent, Statewide, All Students, by Art Discipline



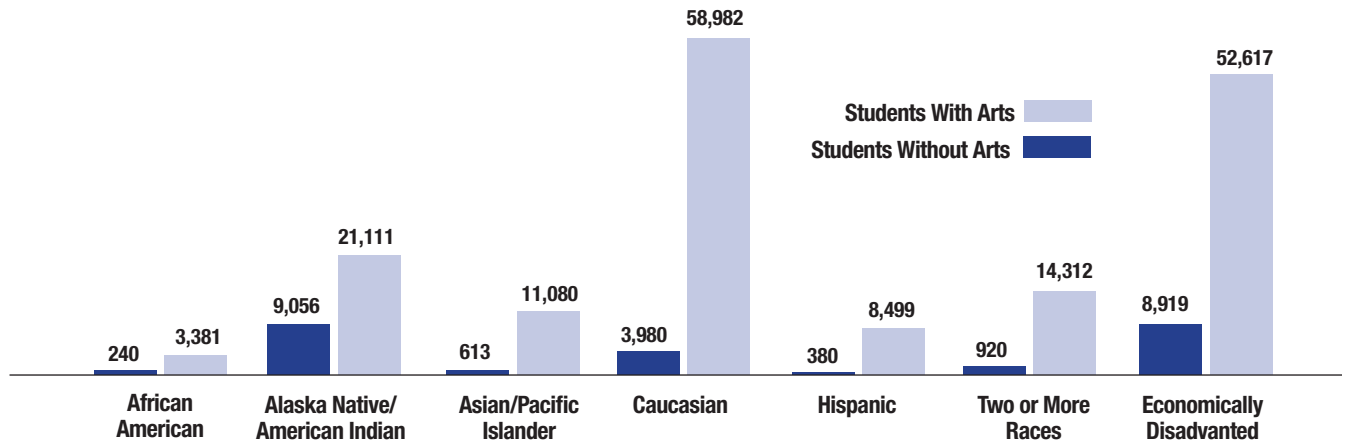
Arts Accessibility

Percent, Statewide, All Grades, by Subgroup



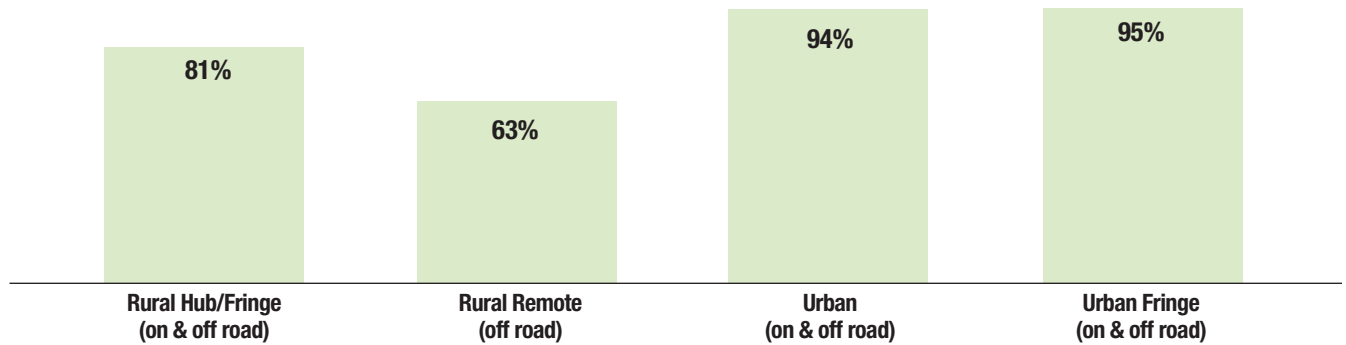
Arts Accessibility

Statewide, All Grades, by Subgroup, with Student Count



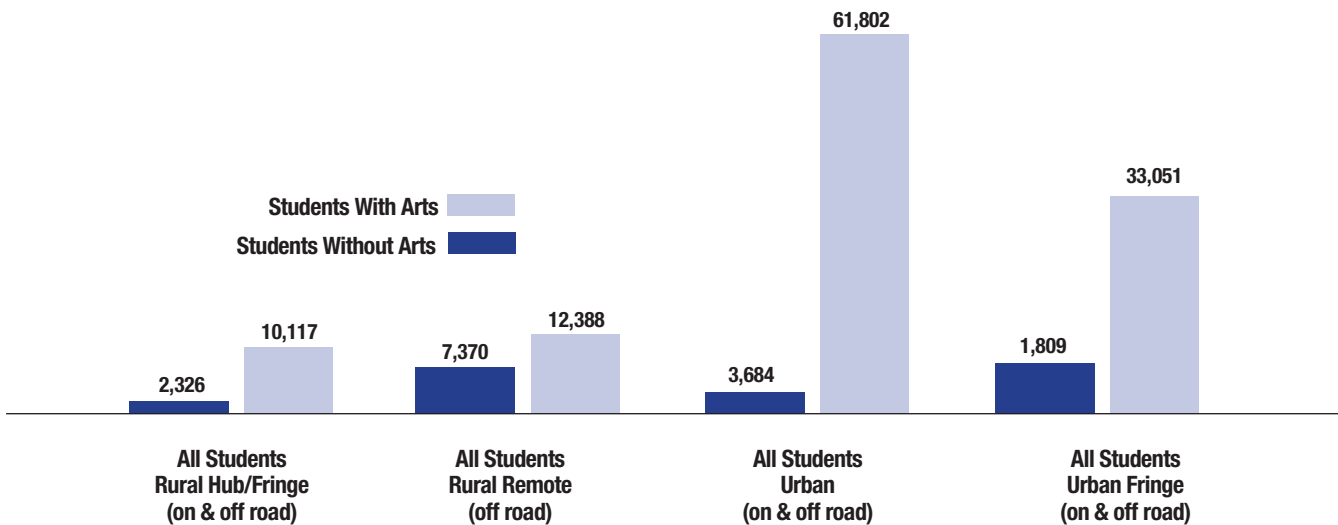
Arts Accessibility

By Area/Location, All Grades



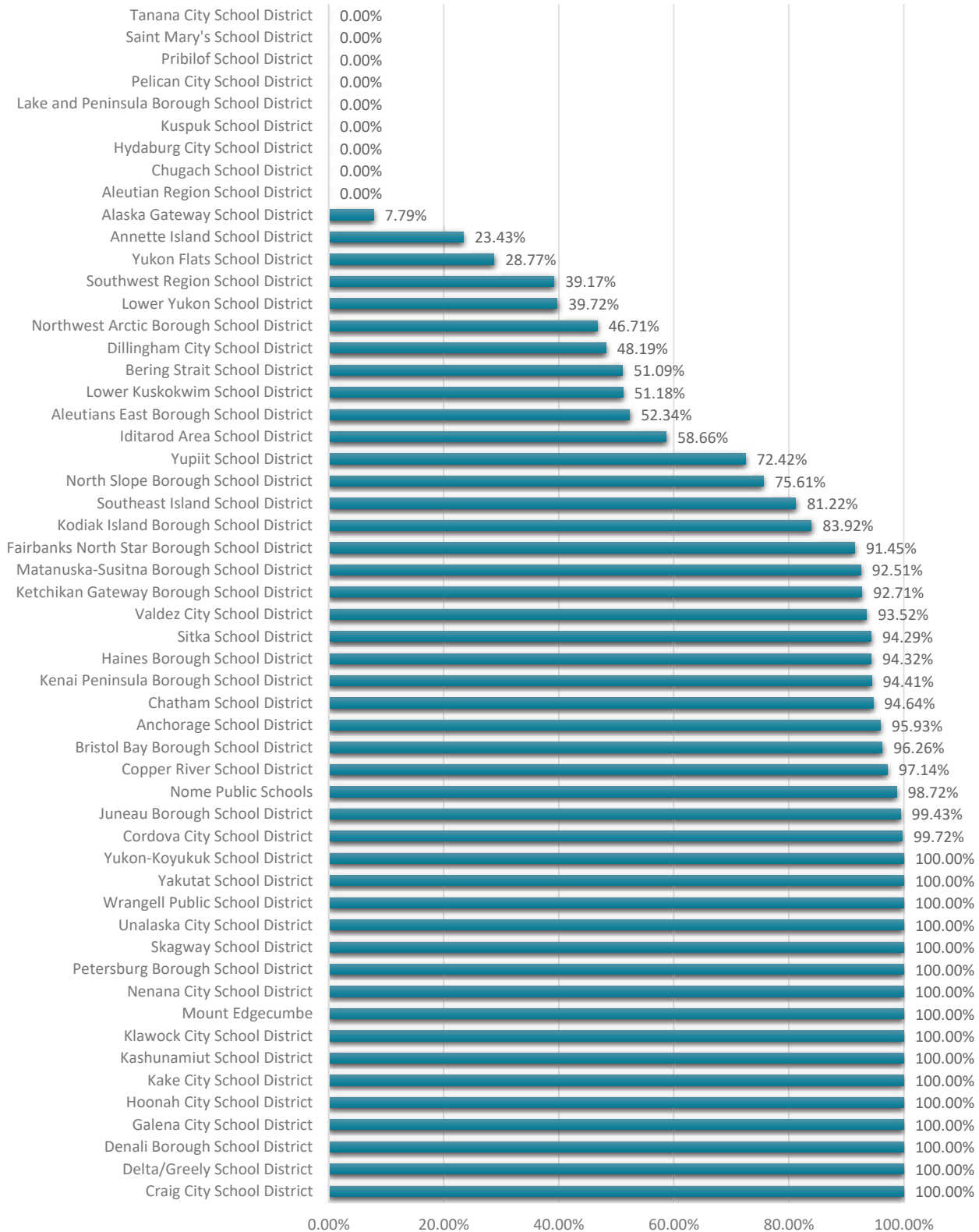
Arts Accessibility

By Area/Location, All Grades, with Student Count

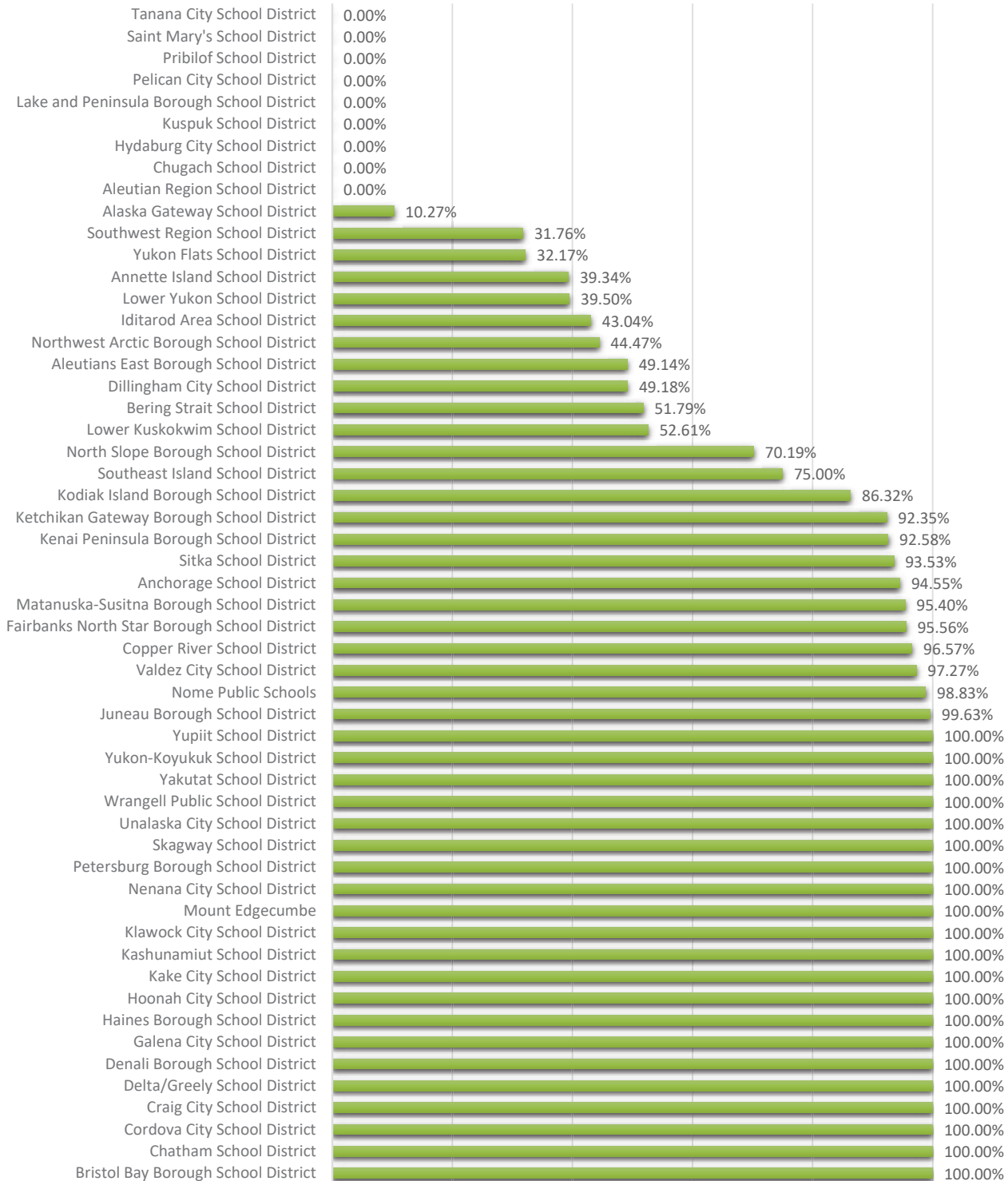


Arts Accessibility Per District (%)

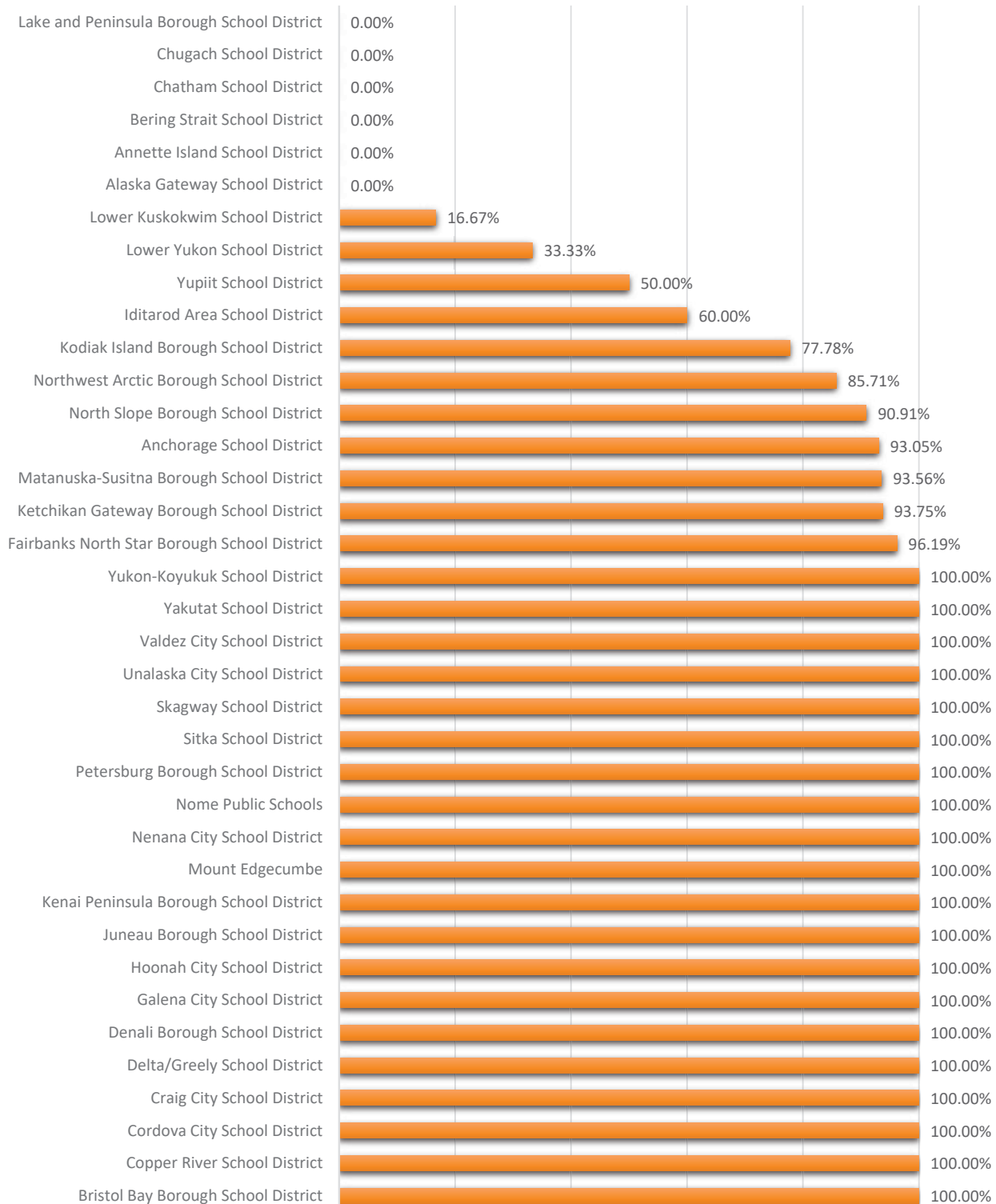
All Students



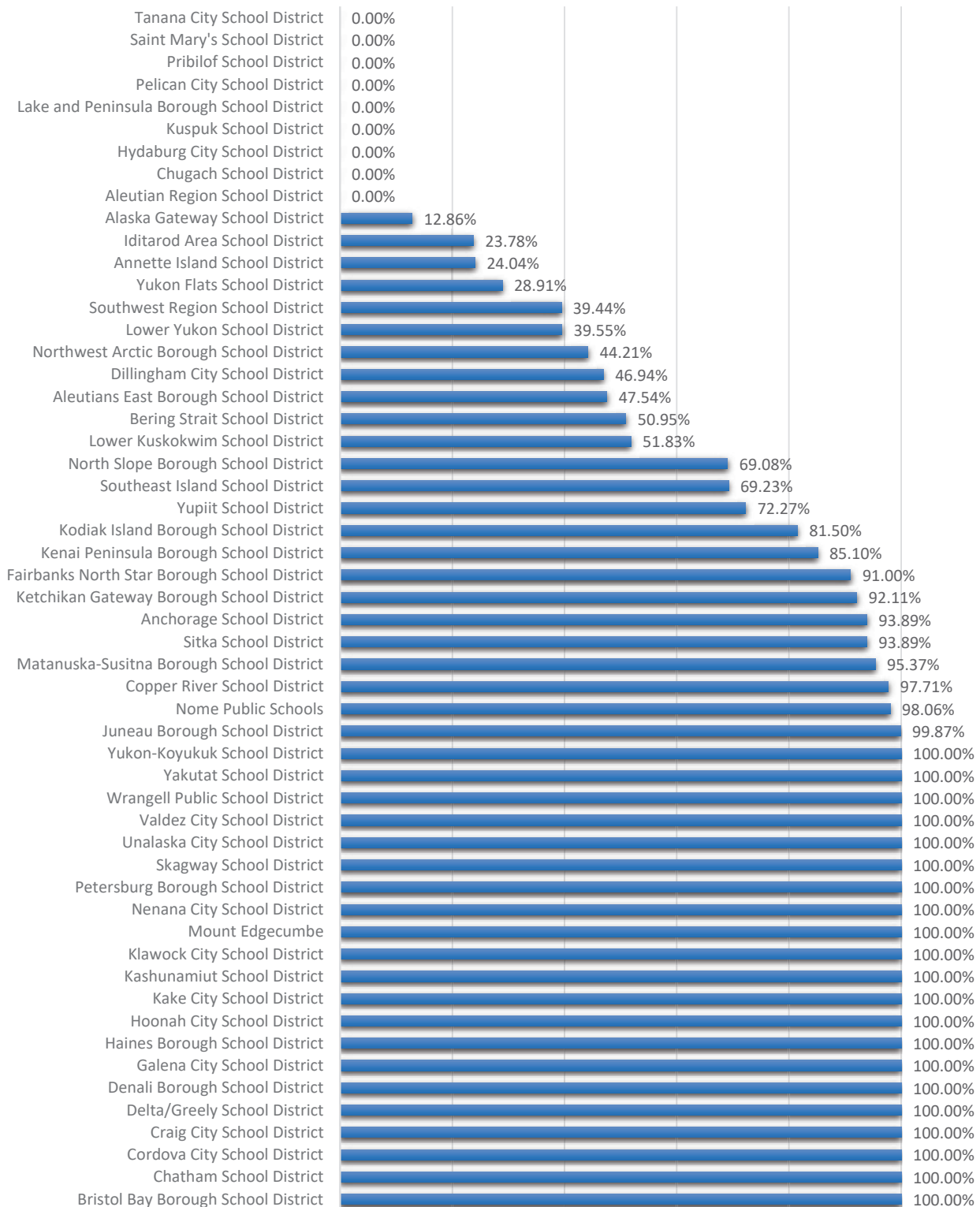
Arts Accessibility Per District (%) Economically Disadvantaged Status



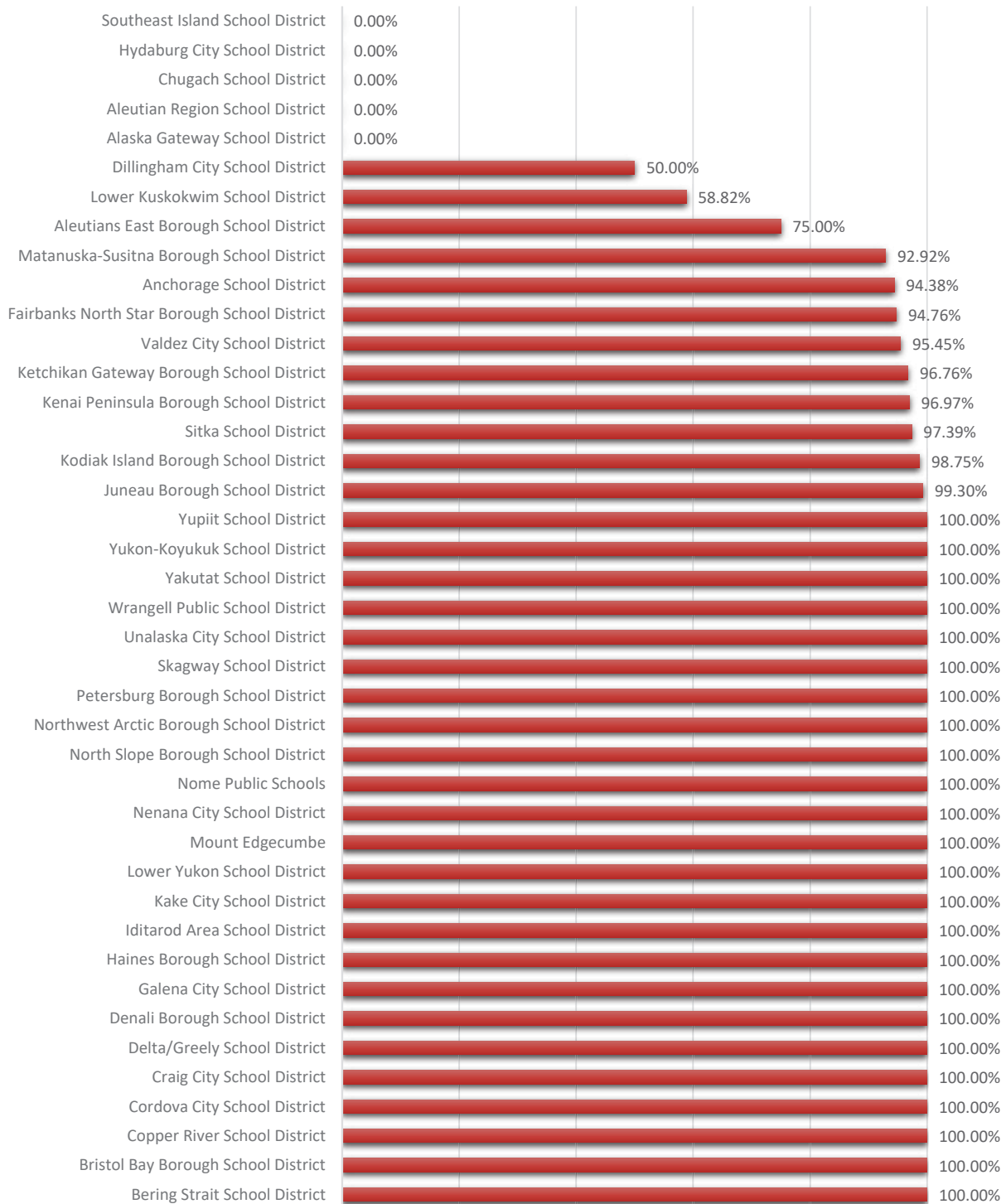
Arts Accessibility Per District (%), All Grades African American Subgroup



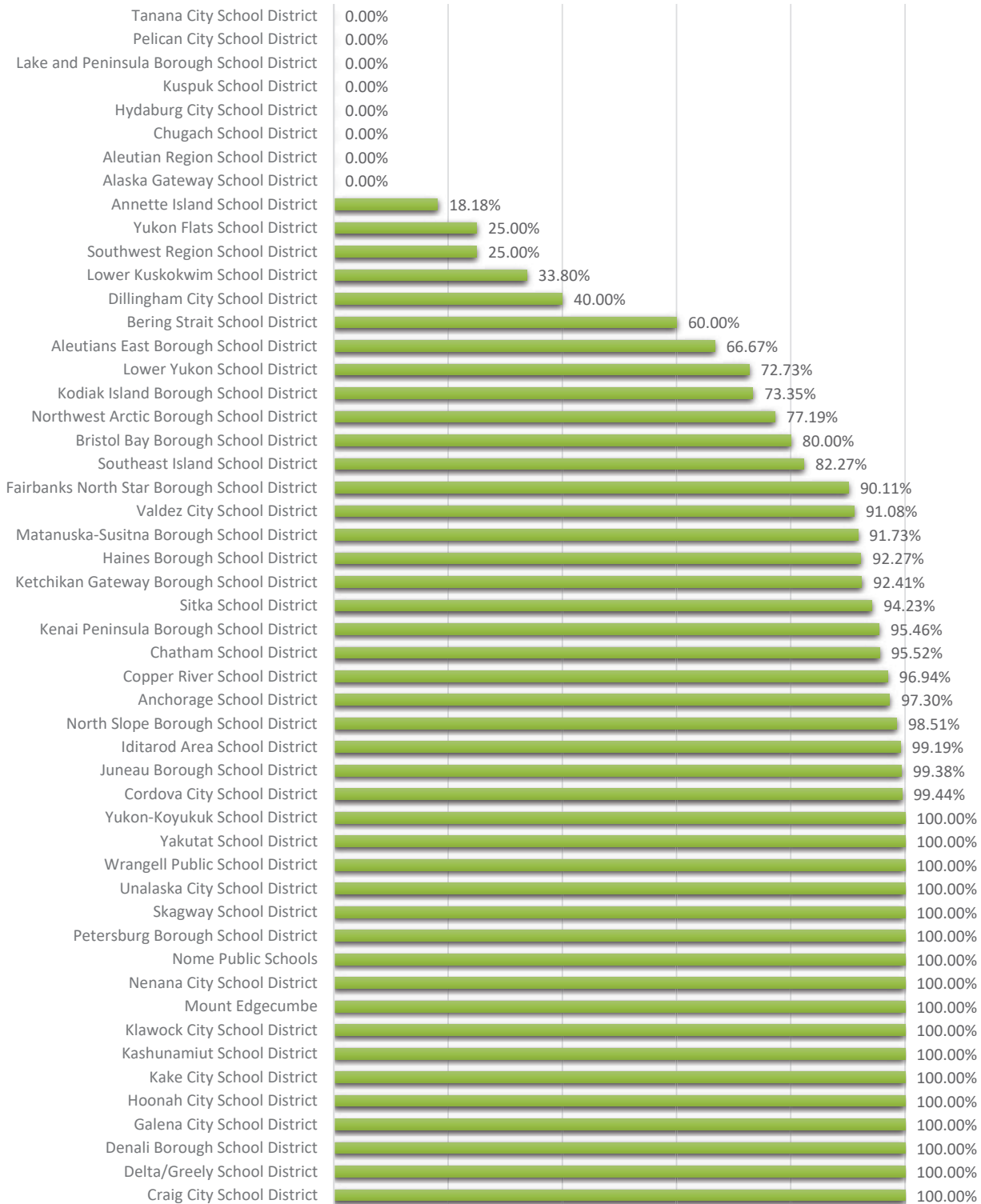
Arts Accessibility Per District (%), All Grades Alaskan Native/American Indian Subgroup



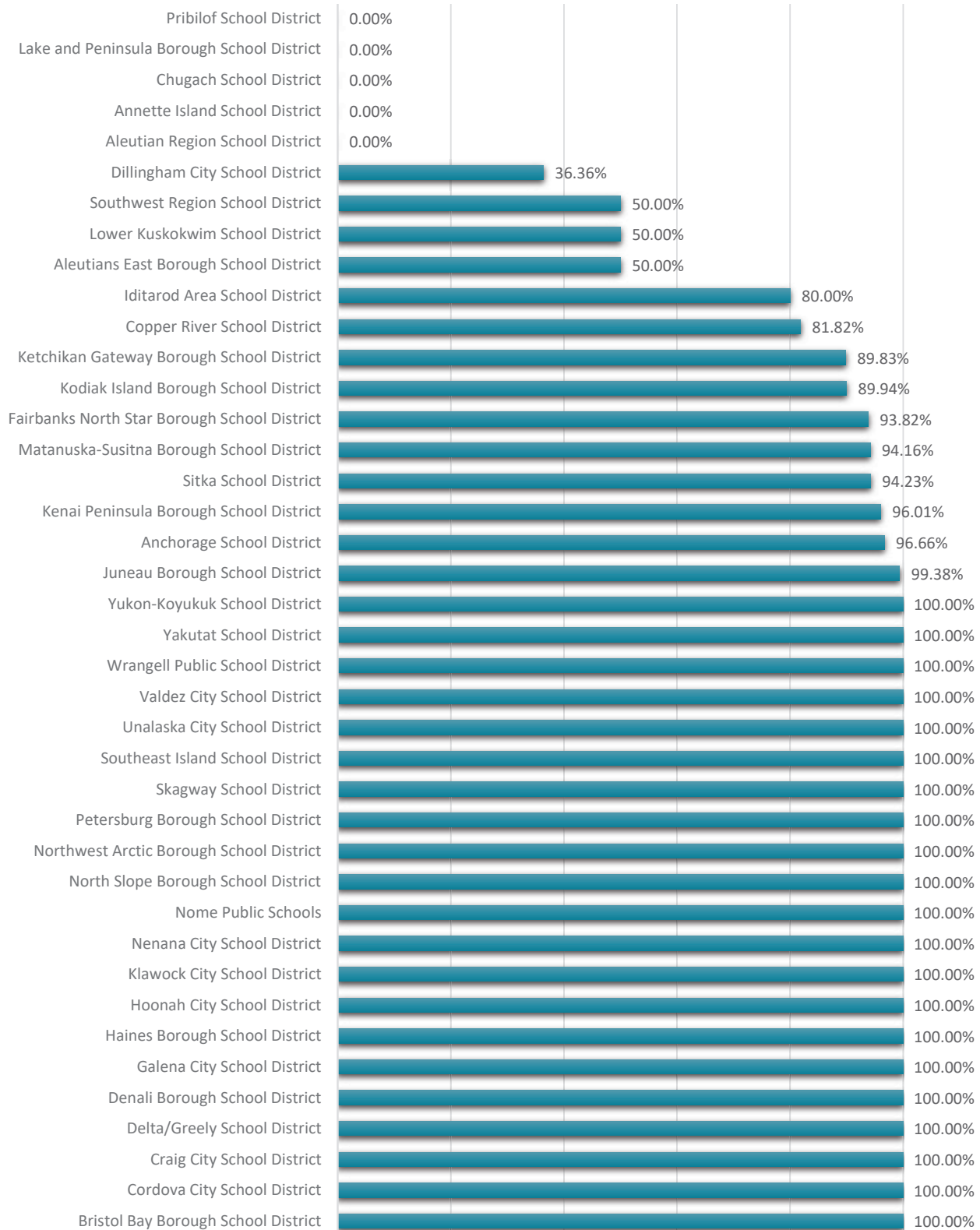
Arts Accessibility Per District (%), All Grades Asian/Pacific Islander Subgroup



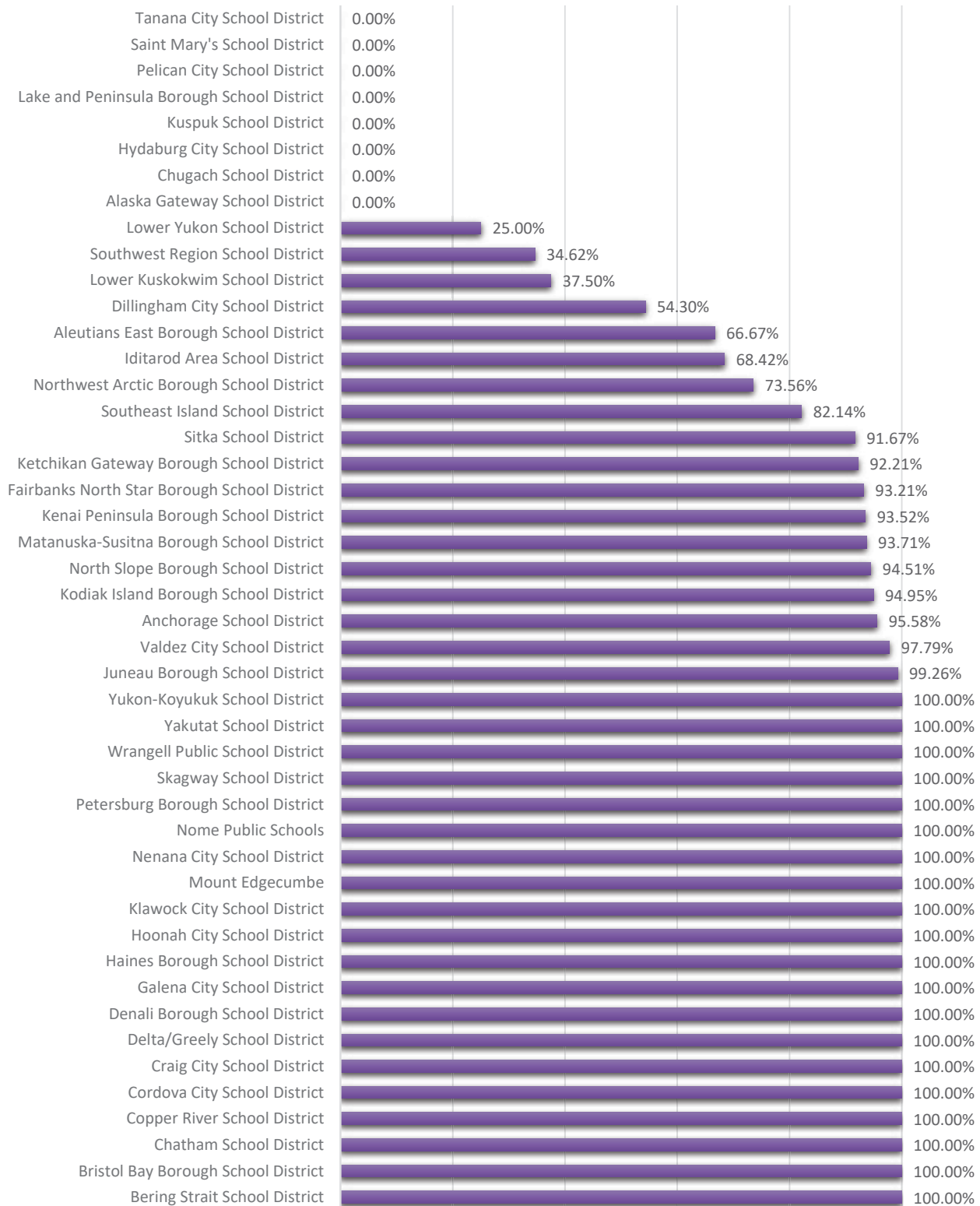
Arts Accessibility Per District (%), All Grades Caucasian Subgroup



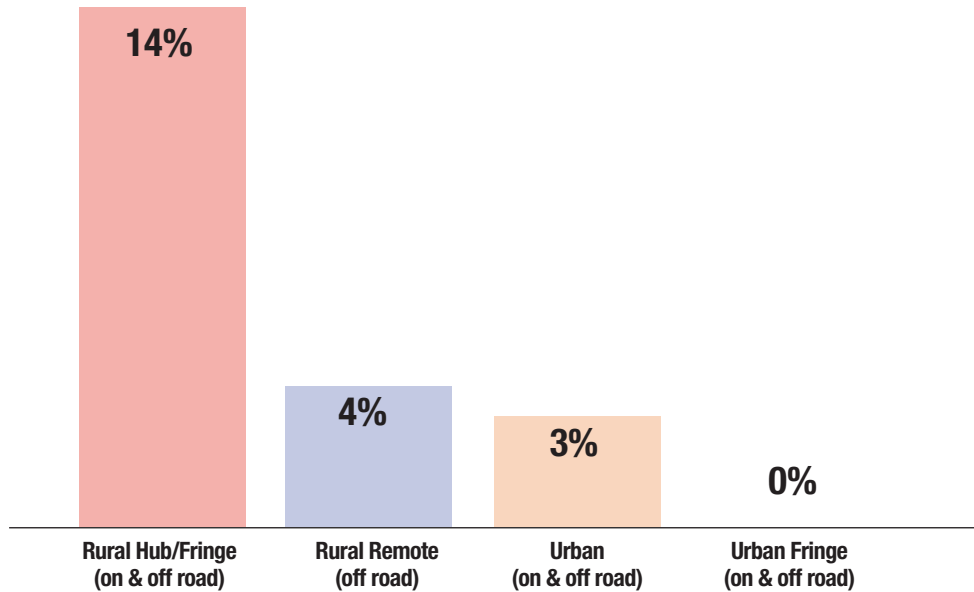
Arts Accessibility Per District (%), All Grades Hispanic Subgroup



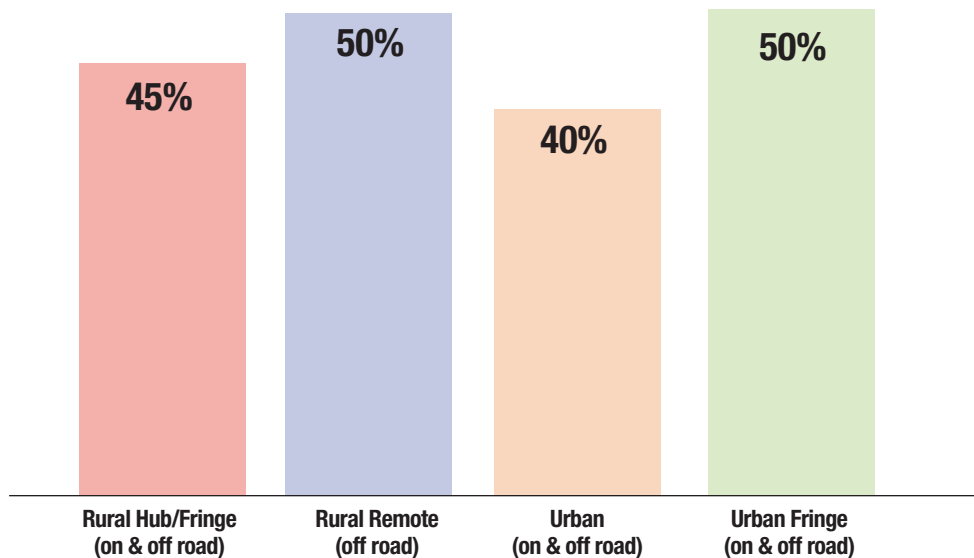
Arts Accessibility Per District (%), All Grades Two or More Races Subgroup



Alaska Native Arts by Area/Location, All Students

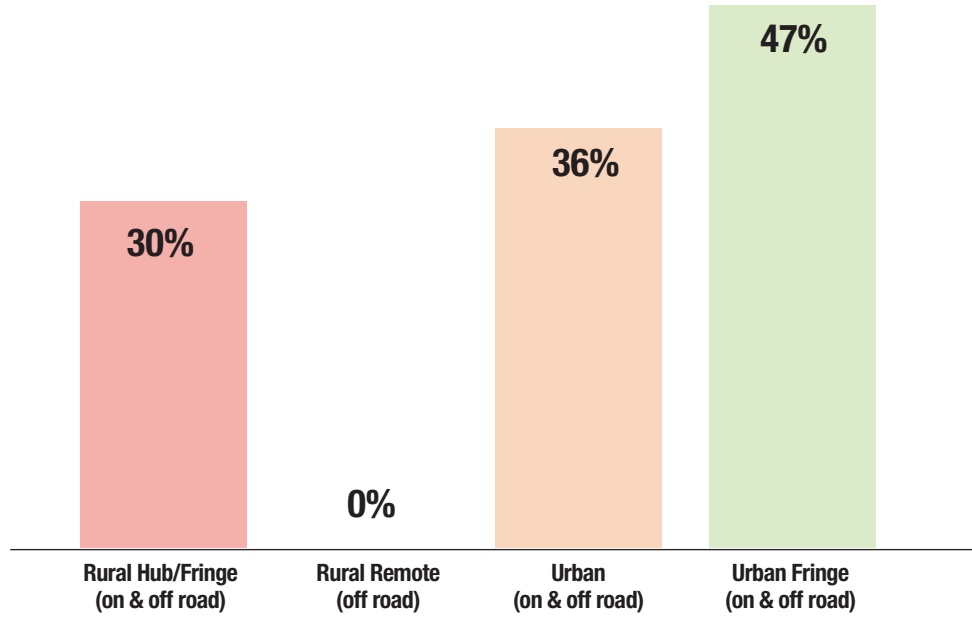


Visual Arts by Area/Location, All Students



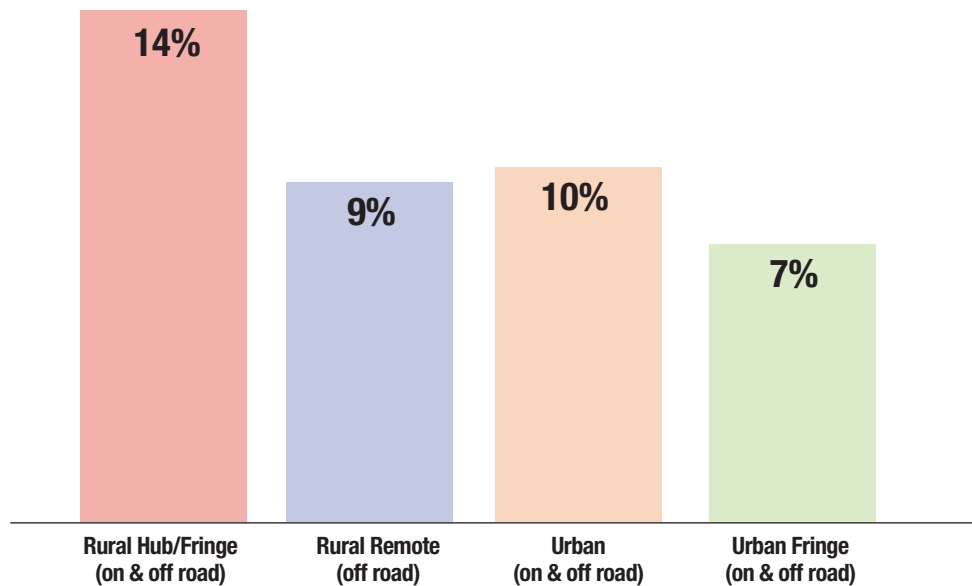
Band

by Area/Location, All Students



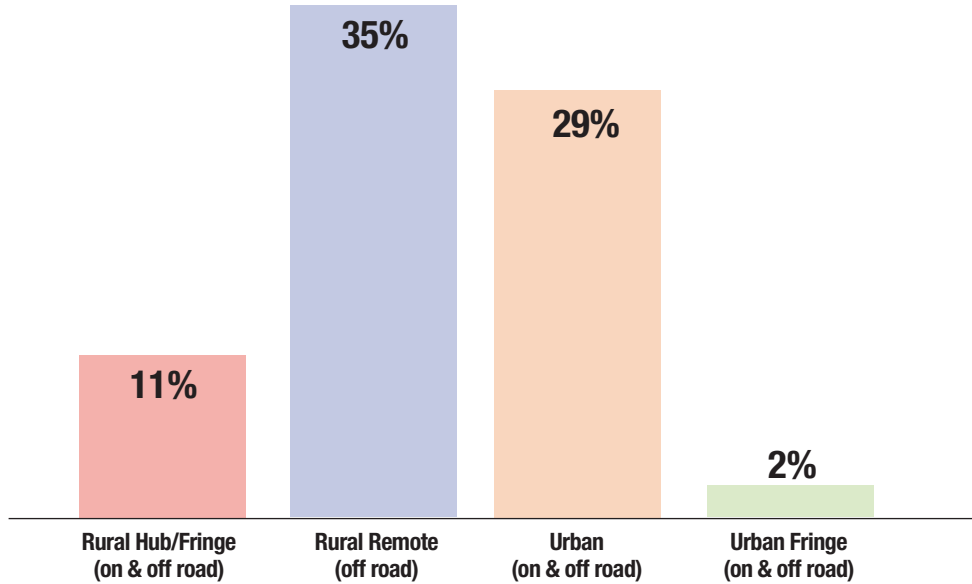
Dance

by Area/Location, All Students



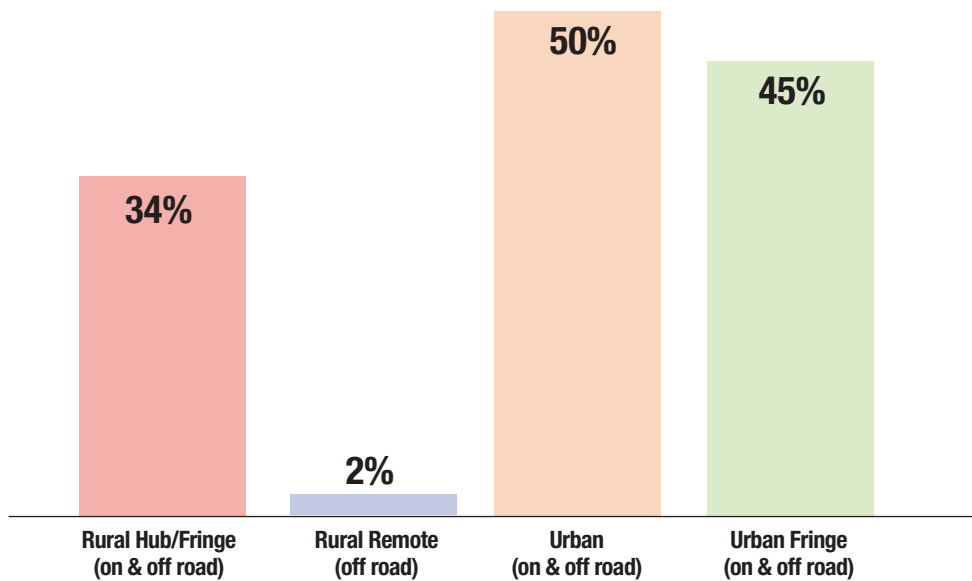
Elementary Art, Grades K-6

by Area/Location, All Students



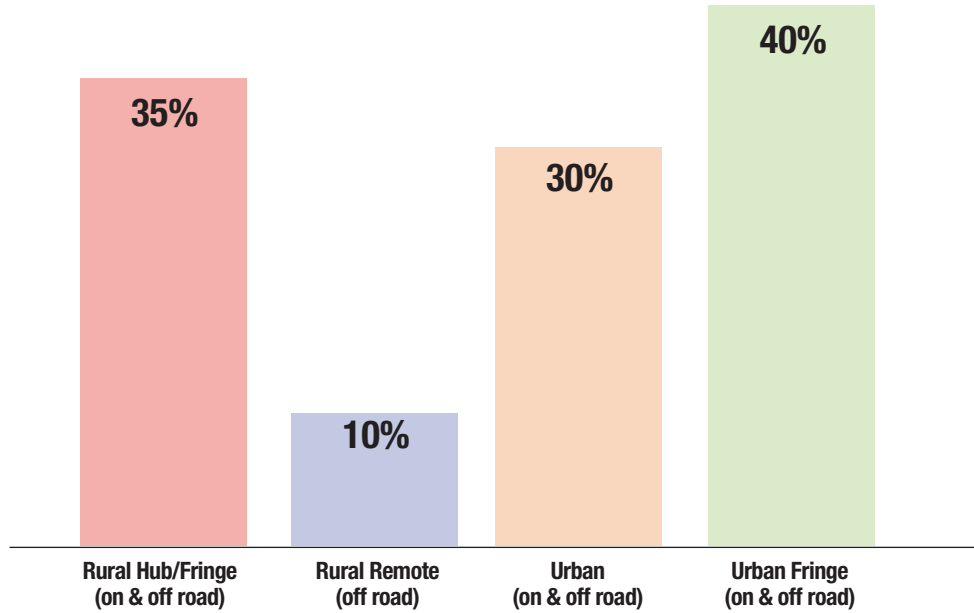
Elementary Music, Grades K-6

by Area/Location, All Students



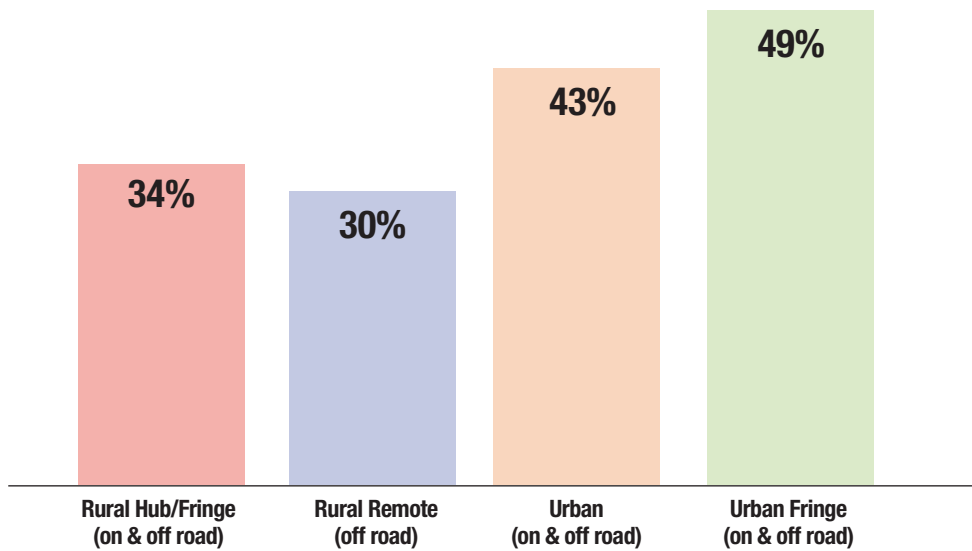
Media/Graphic Arts

by Area/Location, All Students



Music

by Area/Location, All Students



Theater

by Area/Location, All Students

