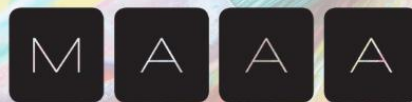




Mid-America Arts Alliance

Arts Education Landscape

2023–2024 Report



MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to work on this report, which was commissioned by Mid-America Arts Alliance through McNulty Consulting. The report is for review and use by Mid-America Arts Alliance.

I am grateful for the collaboration with the board and staff of Mid-America Arts Alliance throughout this project. Their guidance, support, and wisdom have been invaluable to the successful completion of this endeavor.

I would like to express my thanks to the individuals who generously contributed their time during the listening sessions. Their shared experiences and insights greatly enriched this report.

Throughout the preparation of this report, a wide range of information sources was reviewed. I have made a good faith effort to list these sources in the report and provide appropriate attribution for quoted content.

Special acknowledgment is due to Angelette Severt for providing M-AAA's grants history data, which strengthened the foundation of this report. Additional thanks go to Dr. Brent Hasty of MINDPOP for his review and insightful suggestions, including the crafting of sample strategies, which helped refine the extensive list of ideas generated for M-AAA.

Lastly, I want to convey my heartfelt gratitude to M-AAA's President and CEO Todd Stein for entrusting me with this project and providing guidance that proved crucial to its success.

I am sincerely thankful to all parties for their contributions and support. This report stands as a testament to the collective effort and dedication of all those involved.

With gratitude,

Deborah McNulty

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INTRODUCTION

This Arts Education report offers an examination of K-12 arts education in public schools across the M-AAA region. It presents summary data, related research findings, and expert perspectives relevant to the region, highlighting key areas requiring attention. These insights are informed by stakeholder listening sessions, guiding Mid-America Arts Alliance towards potential contributions to address these needs.

The individuals interviewed for this research report encompass a breadth of expertise and experience across various domains within the arts and education sectors. Their collective knowledge spans strategic leadership, program development, advocacy, and policy implementation. They bring to the table a wealth of insights garnered from years of hands-on involvement in arts administration, educational instruction, the public sector, and community engagement. Their diverse backgrounds include positions in executive leadership, educational administration, program management, and arts advocacy, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and nuances inherent in arts education and cultural development. This depth of expertise, coupled with their dedication to advancing the arts landscape, ensures a robust and multifaceted perspective that forms the foundation of the report.

The Arts Education report serves as an instrument to equip M-AAA leadership with a unified perspective of arts education within the region. It establishes a foundational starting point, facilitating organized discussions aimed at exploring diverse interventions. This process aids in identifying priorities for in-depth investigation and strategic planning endeavors.

As board members and staff engage with the Arts Education report, they should focus on several key aspects. First, they should evaluate how the report aligns with the organization's mission and contributes to its overarching goals. They can then consider the feasibility and potential impact of proposed interventions, while also assessing associated risks and benefits. Additionally, reflecting on the level of enthusiasm and commitment to fundraising for these interventions is crucial. Finally, they should explore how Mid-America Arts Alliance can leverage its strengths, resources, and connections to effectively address identified needs in arts education.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a comprehensive overview and analysis of the arts education landscape within the Mid-America Arts Alliance region, encompassing the states of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas.
2. Explore and propose initial ideas for arts education initiatives and strategies, and for utilizing the existing collaboration with Arts Connect Houston, that the Mid-America Arts Alliance can systematically assess, evaluate and integrate into the organization's 2024 strategic planning process.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ARTS EDUCATION?

Arts education refers to the process of teaching and learning various art forms and disciplines, including visual arts, music, theater, dance, and literature. It encompasses the development of knowledge, skills, and an understanding of artistic techniques, aesthetics, cultural heritage, and creative expression. For the purposes of this report, 'arts education' is used as the broadest term, encompassing both direct or sequential arts instruction and arts integration or arts-curricular integration. It primarily focuses on public Kindergarten through 12th-grade education.



Arts education plays a crucial role in the overall development of individuals, fostering creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-expression. It provides opportunities for students to explore their imaginations, develop their artistic abilities, and engage with different forms of artistic expression. Arts education can be pursued at various levels, including formal education settings such as schools and universities, as well as through community-based programs, workshops, and private lessons.

In schools, arts education may be integrated into the curriculum alongside other subjects, or it may be offered as standalone classes or extracurricular activities. It involves both practical and theoretical components, allowing students to engage in hands-on artistic creation, while also studying art history, aesthetics, and the cultural context of various art forms.

Arts education has been shown to have numerous benefits for individuals of all ages. It can enhance cognitive abilities, including problem-solving, spatial reasoning, and memory. It also promotes emotional well-being, self-confidence, and self-discipline. Arts education fosters cultural appreciation and understanding, encouraging students to explore diverse perspectives and experiences. Moreover, it can provide a platform for social interaction, collaboration, and community engagement.

ARTS EDUCATION THROUGH DIFFERENT LENSES

CIVIL SOCIETY AND ARTS EDUCATION

Arts education plays a significant role in civil society by contributing to the social, cultural, and economic development of communities. Here are some ways in which arts education impacts civil society:

Cultural preservation and expression: Arts education helps preserve and promote cultural heritage by teaching traditional art forms, crafts, and practices. It allows individuals to express their cultural identities, fostering a sense of belonging and strengthening social cohesion within diverse communities.

Empowerment and social justice: Arts education can empower marginalized individuals and communities by providing them with a platform to voice their experiences and address social issues. It encourages critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue, promoting social justice, inclusivity, and human rights.

Creative problem-solving and innovation: The arts cultivate creativity, imagination, and innovation. Arts education encourages individuals to think outside the box, embrace ambiguity, and find unique solutions to problems. These skills are valuable in various aspects of civil society, including entrepreneurship, community development, and social innovation.

Civic engagement and active citizenship: Arts education can inspire civic engagement by encouraging individuals to become active participants in their communities. It fosters a sense of agency, allowing individuals to use their artistic skills and creativity to address local challenges, advocate for social change, and contribute to the public sphere.

Economic impact and industry development: The arts contribute to the economy by generating employment opportunities, stimulating tourism, and fostering creative industries. Arts education nurtures talent and develops the skills needed for careers in the arts and related fields, contributing to the growth of the creative economy and cultural tourism.

Well-being and quality of life: Engagement in the arts has been linked to improved well-being and quality of life. Arts education provides individuals with an outlet for self-expression, emotional exploration, and personal growth. It can enhance mental health, resilience, and overall life satisfaction, contributing to the overall well-being of individuals within civil society.

Overall, arts education in civil society promotes cultural diversity, social cohesion, creativity, civic participation, and individual well-being. It plays a vital role in shaping engaged, empathetic, and culturally aware citizens who can contribute positively to their communities and society at large.



DEMOCRACY AND ARTS EDUCATION

Arts education is closely related to free speech. Free speech is a fundamental right protected in democratic societies, and arts education plays a role in cultivating and promoting the exercise of this right in several ways:

Creative Expression: Arts education provides individuals with a platform for creative expression. It encourages students to explore their ideas, emotions, and perspectives through various artistic mediums, such as visual arts, music, theater, dance, and literature. By engaging in artistic expression, individuals can exercise their right to free speech by communicating their thoughts, beliefs, and experiences in a unique and creative manner.



Critical Thinking: Arts education nurtures critical thinking skills, which are essential for the exercise of free speech. It encourages individuals to question, analyze, and evaluate different perspectives, including those embedded in artistic works. By engaging with art, students develop the ability to think independently, form their own opinions, and express their viewpoints freely.

Challenging Norms and Provoking Dialogue: The arts have a long history of challenging societal norms and provoking thought-provoking discussions. Arts education exposes students to a diverse range of artistic works that address social, political, and cultural issues. By exploring these works, students can develop the courage to question established ideas, challenge the status quo, and contribute to public discourse.

Freedom of Artistic Expression: Arts education helps individuals understand and appreciate the importance of freedom of artistic expression. It teaches students about the historical struggles artists have faced in asserting their right to create and share their work. By understanding these struggles, students can develop a sense of responsibility in upholding and defending the rights of artists to express themselves freely.

Tolerance and Respect for Diverse Perspectives: Arts education promotes tolerance and respect for diverse viewpoints and perspectives. It exposes students to different artistic traditions, cultures, and styles, fostering an appreciation for the richness of human expression. By understanding and respecting diverse perspectives, individuals can contribute to a climate of free speech where a wide range of ideas and opinions can be expressed and heard.

Arts education is closely related to free speech as it provides individuals with the tools, skills, and opportunities to express themselves creatively, think critically, challenge norms, and engage in meaningful dialogue. By encouraging artistic expression and fostering an environment of open-mindedness and respect, arts education supports the exercise of free speech and contributes to the vibrant exchange of ideas in society.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND ARTS EDUCATION

Arts education plays a significant and multifaceted role in academic preparation for college and the workforce. Arts education offers a range of benefits that contribute to students' overall development, critical skills, and future success in several ways:

Creativity, Critical Thinking, and Analysis: Arts education fosters creativity, encourages students to think outside the box, and teaches them how to interpret and analyze complex works. These skills are valuable across academic disciplines, promoting innovative problem-solving and analytical reasoning in both college and various careers.



Confidence and Self-Expression: Engaging in arts allows students to build self-confidence and self-expression. This can lead to greater assertiveness in presenting ideas, participating in discussions, and showcasing skills, all of which are valuable in college presentations and workplace interactions.

Collaboration and Teamwork: Many artistic projects involve collaboration, teaching students how to work together, share ideas, and contribute to a larger creative vision. These skills translate directly to collaborative efforts in group projects, research teams, and workplace collaborations.

Emotional Intelligence and Well-being: Arts education encourages students to explore and express emotions, fostering emotional intelligence. This not only helps individuals navigate social dynamics and understand diverse perspectives but also promotes stress relief and emotional well-being. These skills contribute to students' overall mental health and resilience, which are essential for success in both college and the ever-changing workforce.

Adaptability and Resilience: The creative process often involves experimentation and learning from mistakes. Through arts education, students develop resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to iterate and improve—qualities that are invaluable in facing challenges in college and the ever-changing workforce.

Cultural Awareness and Diversity: Arts education exposes students to diverse cultural expressions, promoting understanding and appreciation of different perspectives. This contributes to students' ability to work effectively in diverse academic and professional environments.



Attention to Detail, Precision, and Presentation: Artistic pursuits demand attention to detail and precision, honing students' ability to refine their work and meet high standards. Engaging in arts activities, such as performances or exhibitions, also helps students develop strong presentation skills.

INTERSECTING VALUES

All three perspectives—arts education through civil society, arts education through democracy and arts education through academic success—offer valuable insights into the role and impact of arts education.

Approaching arts education through the lens of civil society emphasizes the broader societal and cultural aspects of arts education. It highlights how arts education contributes to the social fabric, cultural diversity, and overall well-being of a community. This perspective emphasizes the importance of arts education in preserving cultural heritage, fostering social cohesion, and promoting inclusive and equitable access to the arts. It addresses societal issues, fosters personal growth, and enhances quality of life.



Looking at arts education through the lens of democracy emphasizes its role in promoting democratic values, active citizenship, and the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms. This perspective recognizes that arts education fosters critical thinking, freedom of expression, and civic engagement. It highlights how arts education nurtures informed and engaged citizens who can contribute to democratic processes, challenge social norms, and address societal issues through artistic expression. It empowers individuals to engage in democratic processes, challenge norms, and effect change through art.

From the standpoint of academic excellence and career success, arts education instills creativity, critical thinking, and effective communication skills. These skills not only enhance problem-solving abilities across disciplines but also prepare individuals for success in the workforce, where adaptability, collaboration, emotional intelligence, and the ability to communicate effectively are highly prized. Arts education, therefore, equips students with a strong foundation for academic excellence and a successful career journey.



While these perspectives may have distinct emphases, they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they complement and intersect with each other and with the values of M-AAA. Arts education within civil society contributes to the development and enrichment of democratic values, while arts education within democracy supports the vibrancy and inclusiveness of civil society. Moreover, arts education facilitates academic success by developing critical skills through creativity and personal growth. All three perspectives recognize the transformative power of arts education in shaping individuals, communities and democratic societies.

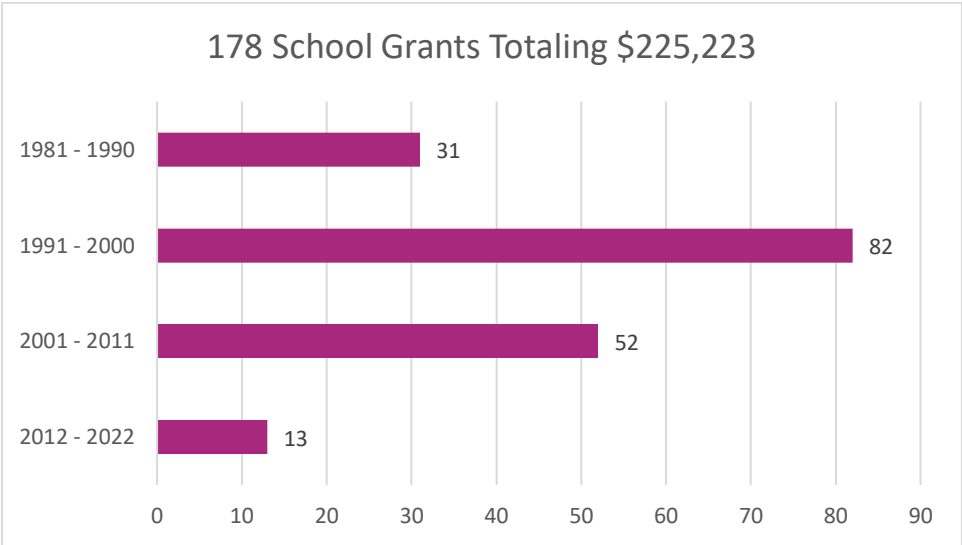
ARTS EDUCATION INITIATIVES AT MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE

M-AAA GRANTMAKING

Mid-America Arts Alliance is dedicated to fostering creative expression and access to the arts through its support of artists, cultural organizations, and communities. Historically, M-AAA has primarily focused on supporting artists, organizations, and cultural initiatives, with less emphasis on arts education in pre-K through high school settings. Nonetheless, upon reviewing M-AAA's grantmaking history, it was discovered that some direct grants have been awarded to schools and school affinity groups, as well as to grantees who have acknowledged the significance of arts education in their final reports. By connecting with these organizations and individuals, M-AAA can leverage the insights and experiences of these grant recipients to better understand the impact of arts education across various academic levels, to develop more informed and effective strategies to support and promote arts education initiatives within their programs and services.

GRANTS TO SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL AFFINITY GROUPS

Over the course of a forty-two year period, a review of M-AAA's grantmaking history revealed that they have awarded a total of 178 grants, amounting to \$255,223, to specifically support 105 public and private schools, school districts, and affinity organizations. These grants were primarily designated for regional touring programs and visiting artists and awarded to schools and organizations in 17 states. Seventy-one percent of the grants were in region and 29 percent out of region.

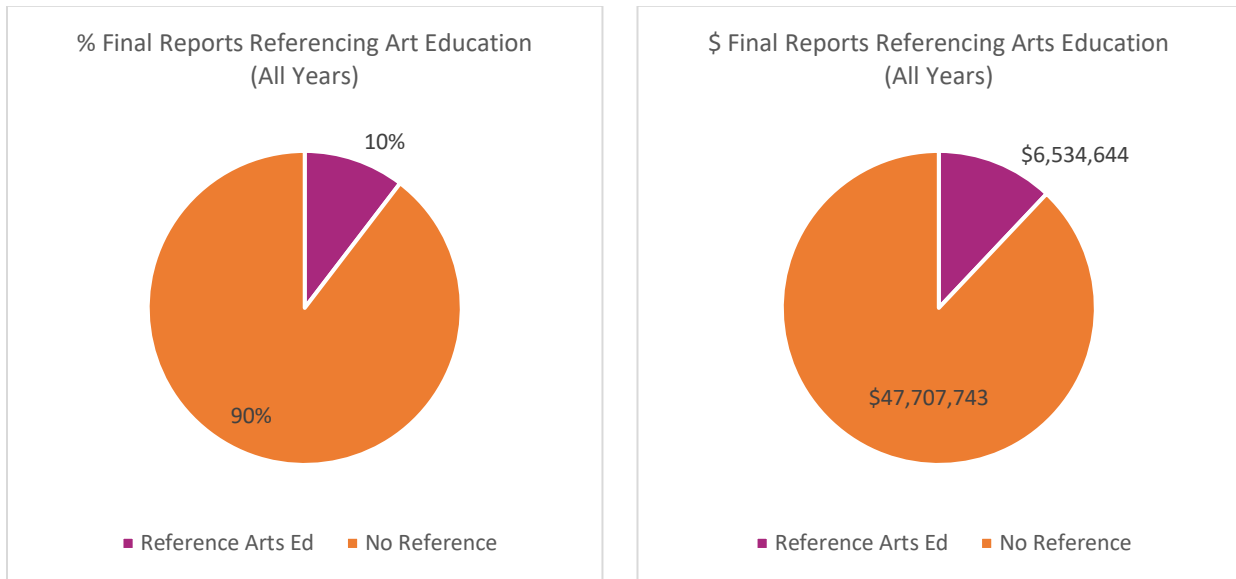


By supporting school art education programs and school-based performances and facilitating the presence of visiting artists in schools a, M-AAA has played a role in enriching the educational experiences of young learners, fostering creativity, and promoting a deeper appreciation for the arts, thus reinforcing its commitment to nurturing a generation of culturally aware and artistically engaged individuals.

ARTS EDUCATION FINAL REPORT REFERENCES

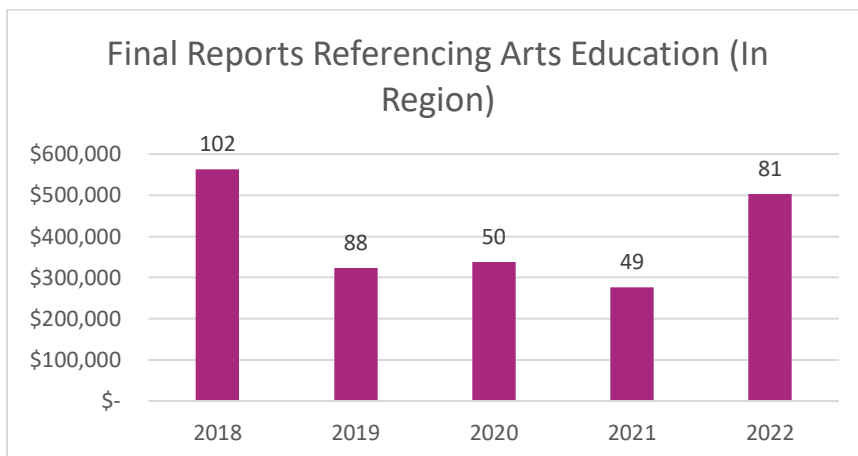
A review of all grants, both within and outside the region, found that a remarkable total of 19,265 grants and subsidies were awarded, summing up to an impressive amount of \$54,242,387 across all years.

Of the total number of final reports submitted by grantees, ten percent of them referenced arts education in some form, representing approximately 12 percent of the grant dollars or about \$6.5 million over the forty-two year period. By providing grants to various projects and organizations, M-AAA has likely helped support learning experiences for students and increased appreciation for arts and creativity.



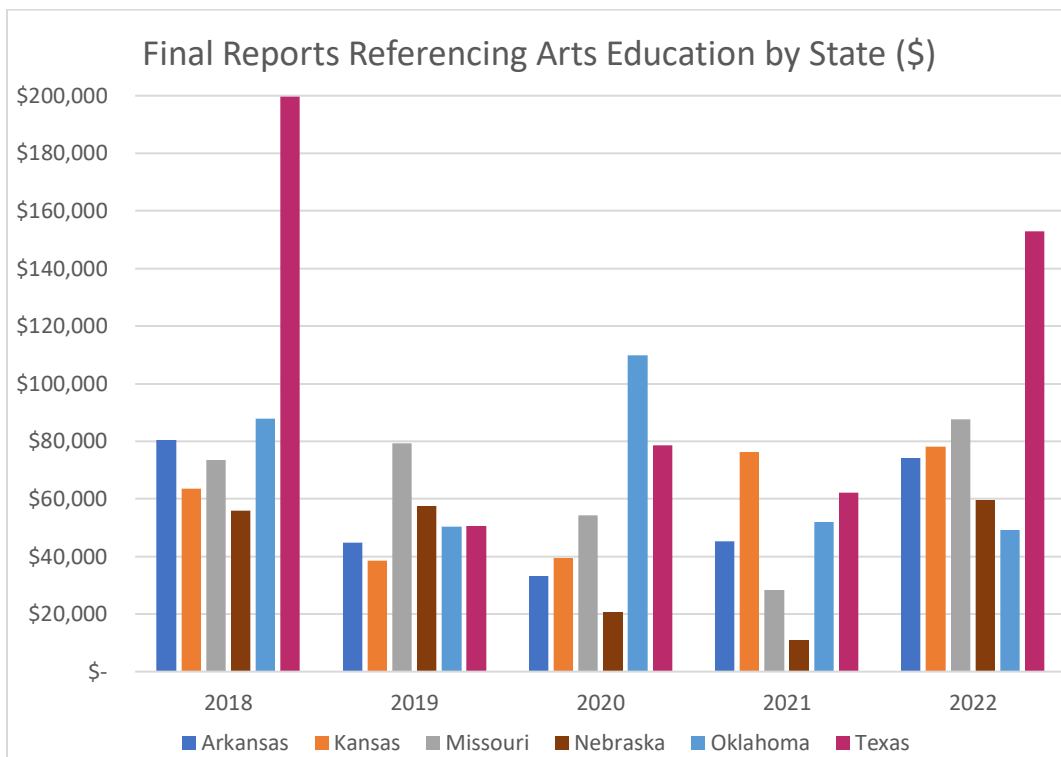
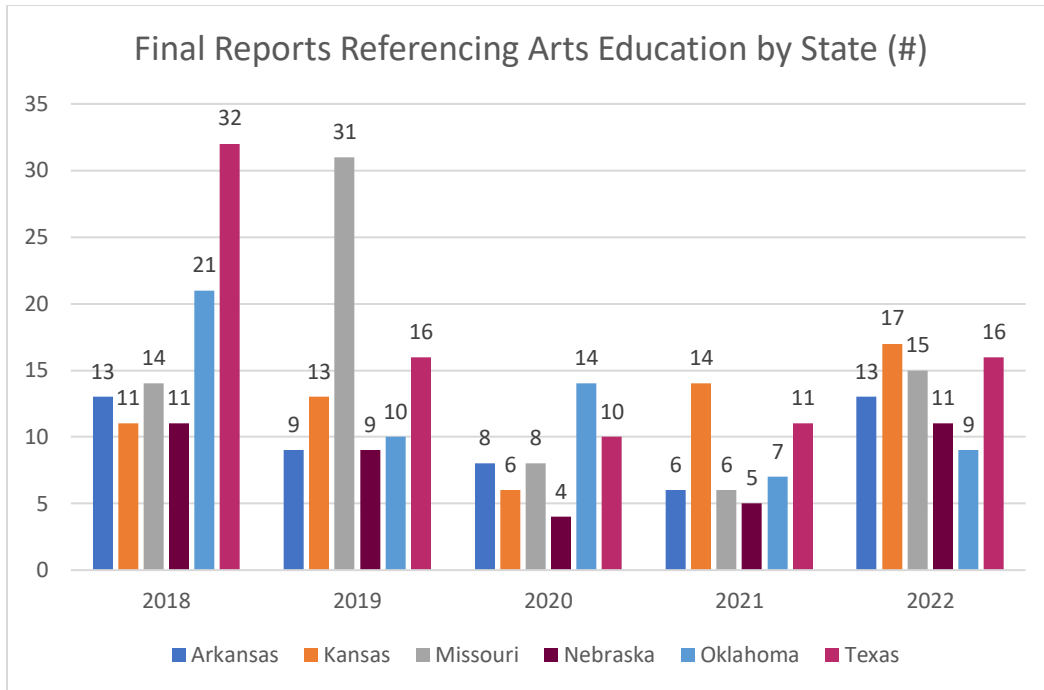
RECENT REFERENCES TO ARTS EDUCATION

Over the last five years, the percent of final reports in the region referencing arts education is 13 percent, slightly more than the comprehensive grantee pool over all years. The highest numbers of reports reference arts education for this grouping occur pre- and post-pandemic.



STATE BY STATE VIEW

State by state, the number final reports referencing arts education over the last five years returned to pre-pandemic levels for Arkansas, Missouri and Nebraska, increased for Kansas, and decreased for Oklahoma and Texas.



The geographical zip code regions represented in final reports referencing arts education over the last five years indicate areas where M-AAA has existing relationships. Having existing grantee relationships in a region can offer several significant benefits when formulating a new initiative. These benefits include:

Knowledge of Local Context: Existing grantee relationships provide valuable insights into the local context, including social, cultural, economic, and political factors.

Trust and Credibility: Established relationships with grantees indicate a level of trust and credibility.

Efficient Information Flow: Through existing grantee relationships, there is already an established channel for information exchange.

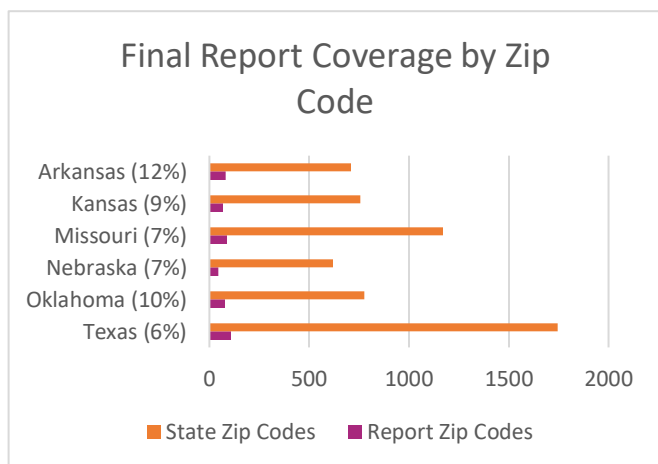
Avoiding Duplication and Overlapping Efforts: By leveraging existing relationships, you can identify ongoing initiatives or projects in the region.

Identifying Local Experts and Resources: Grantee organizations often have a deep understanding of the local talent and resources available. They can help identify skilled individuals, community leaders, or potential partners who can contribute to the success of the new initiative.

Capacity Building and Sustainability: Building on existing grantee relationships enables opportunities for capacity building within local organizations.

Effective Implementation: Existing grantees may already have experience working with the target population or implementing projects in the region. Their experience can be invaluable in avoiding potential pitfalls and ensuring a smoother and more effective implementation process.

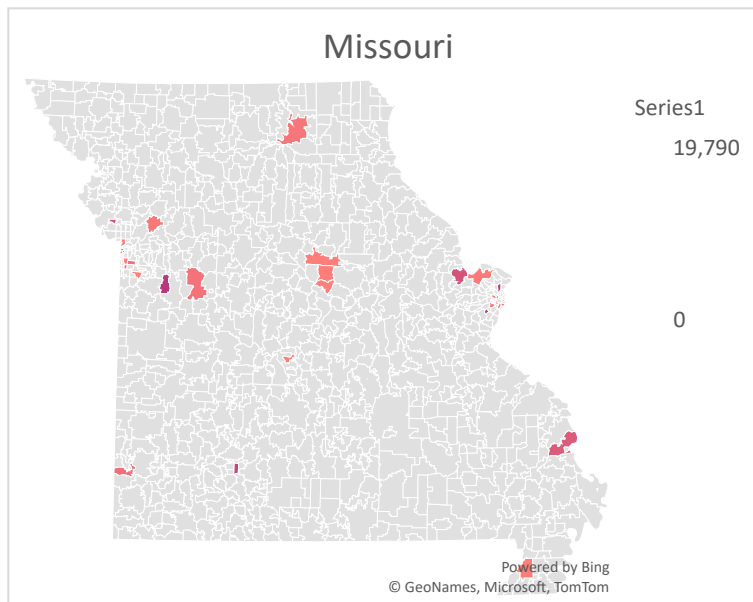
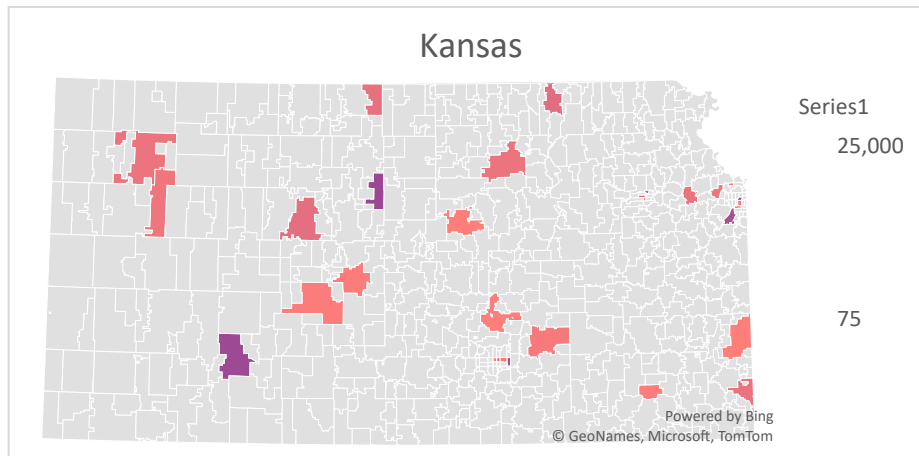
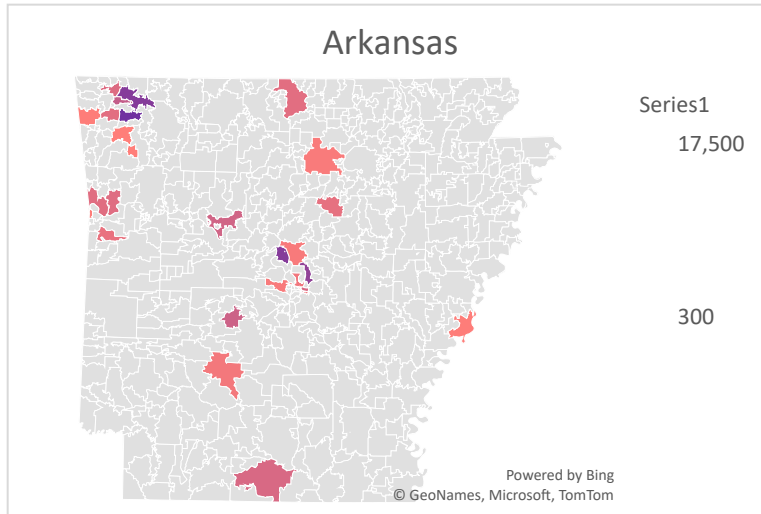
Social and Political Support: In some cases, grantee organizations may have established relationships with local authorities, which can be beneficial in navigating bureaucratic processes and gaining political support for the new initiative.



Because M-AAA does not primarily focus on arts education and is sometimes limited by funder restrictions, it serves different areas of each state at varying levels. It's important to note that the data here only pertains to M-AAA grants for arts education, not all grants provided by M-AAA, which have a broader reach.

State Zip Codes with Final Reports Referencing Arts Education 2018 – 2022

Over the past five years, examining zip code reach in final reports referencing arts education reveals that some states (Arkansas, Kansas, Oklahoma) have a more balanced distribution of arts education grants across their zip codes. This could be advantageous for developing statewide grantmaking strategies. Conversely, in other states (Missouri, Nebraska, Texas), M-AAA will need to focus more on building relationships to implement a comprehensive grantmaking strategy.

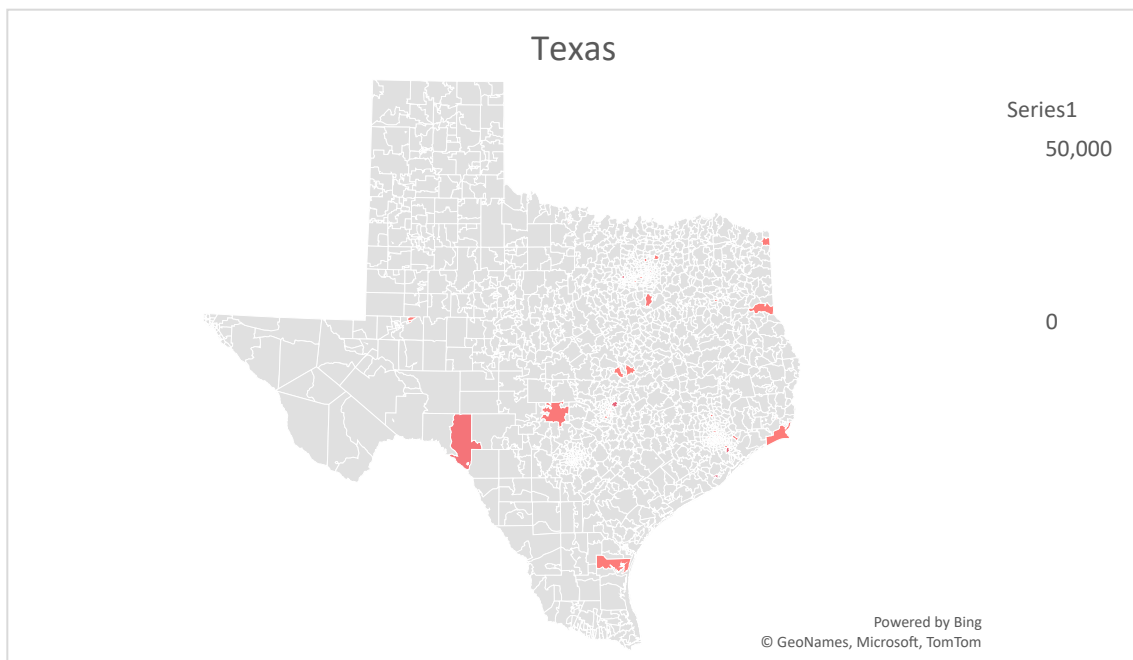
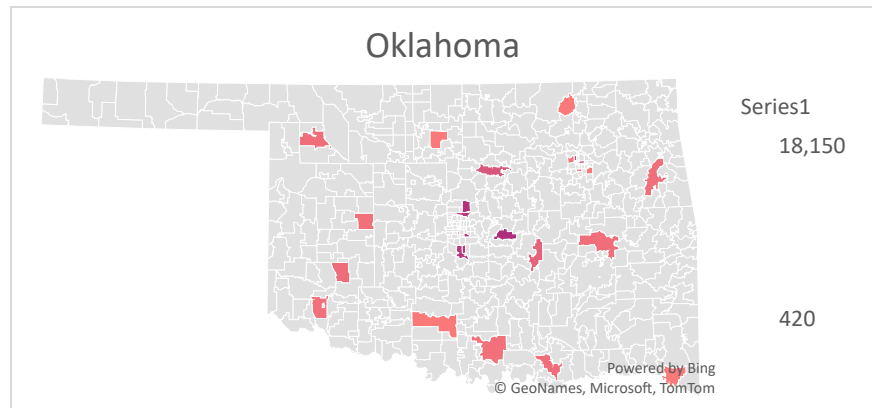
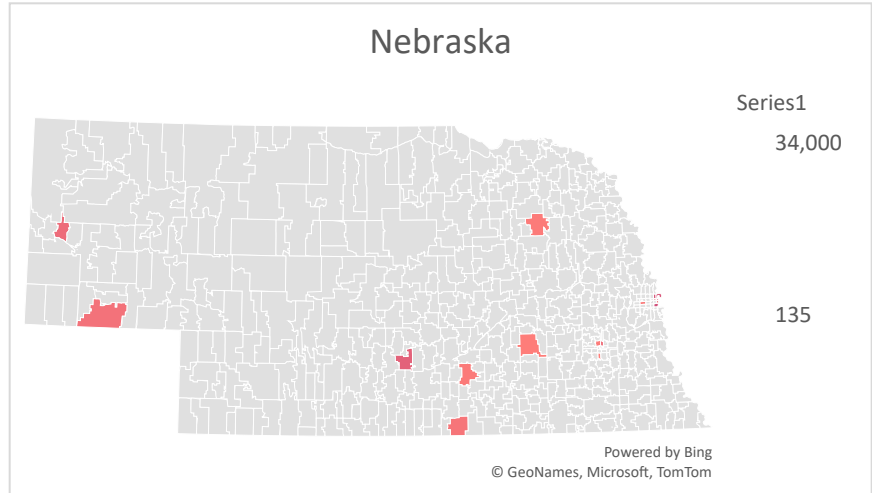


State Zip Codes with Final Reports Referencing Arts Education 2018 – 2022

This analysis underscores the difficulties in ensuring fair support for arts education across the region through grantmaking alone.

A systemic approach could offer a more effective means of ensuring that all public education students in the region enjoy equal access to arts education.

By working at the systems level, M-AAA could enhance the educational landscape for all schools in the region, thereby serving all communities, and ensuring comprehensive and equitable access to arts education.



One of the challenges of using ZIP codes to track coverage rates is that ZIP codes can vary widely in size and population density. Some ZIP codes cover large rural areas with a low population, while others may encompass densely populated urban areas. Using ZIP codes alone may not accurately represent the actual population or service area covered by a particular service or facility. To overcome these challenges, using more precise geographic information systems (GIS) or incorporating demographic data along with ZIP codes can improve the accuracy of tracking coverage rates.

M-AAA PARTNERSHIP WITH ARTS CONNECT HOUSTON

In January 2023, M-AAA took a significant step into the realm of arts education by forging a strategic partnership with Arts Connect Houston (ACH). ACH is a collaborative organization dedicated to promoting equity in arts education within and beyond Houston ISD. Operating independently under a distinct IRS charitable designation, ACH aligns its efforts with the mission of M-AAA.

To combat a growing number of students without the arts as part of their education, Houston stakeholders joined force in 2015 to establish an unprecedented partnership. The shared objective was to ensure that all students within Houston ISD have equitable access to arts education. Today, Arts Connect Houston comprises an expanding network of over 90 partners who are actively working to bridge the gap in in-school arts education opportunities. Since its inception, more than 90,000 students have benefited from enhanced arts experiences.

The primary goal of Arts Connect Houston is to foster equal access to high-quality arts education by instigating systemic changes and cementing the arts as an integral facet of a well-rounded education. Going beyond mere partnership or collaboration, this initiative exemplifies the principles of collective impact, signifying a sustained commitment among diverse organizations working collectively toward a shared objective. Arts Connect Houston unites various stakeholder groups, including local arts and cultural organizations, the school district, municipal authorities, the local philanthropic community, community leaders, as well as state and national partners.

The partnership between M-AAA and Arts Connect Houston brings together a formidable combination of knowledge assets. M-AAA's deep expertise in capacity building complements Arts Connect Houston's proficiency in collective impact strategies, creating a powerful collaboration that holds immense potential for the entire M-AAA region. This partnership not only enriches arts education but also signifies a significant commitment to supporting more art for more people.

Arts Connect Houston has a track record of effective facilitation in guiding disparate entities to find common goals. Arts Connect helps groups make better decisions and achieve their goals more efficiently with their strong interpersonal skills, communication skills and deep understanding of group dynamics. They remain neutral and impartial while guiding discussions and activities to ensure that everyone's perspectives are



considered and that the group reaches meaningful outcomes. Ways that Mid-America Arts Alliance might utilize Arts Connect with new or existing arts education initiatives are:

Meeting and Workshop Facilitation: Facilitators help plan, organize, and lead meetings and workshops. They ensure that discussions stay on track, objectives are met, and participants remain engaged and focused.

Decision Making: Facilitators aid groups in making informed decisions by guiding them through a structured decision-making process. This may involve analyzing options, gathering input, and reaching a consensus.

Team Building: Facilitators conduct team-building sessions to improve collaboration, communication, and trust among team members. These activities can enhance team dynamics and productivity.

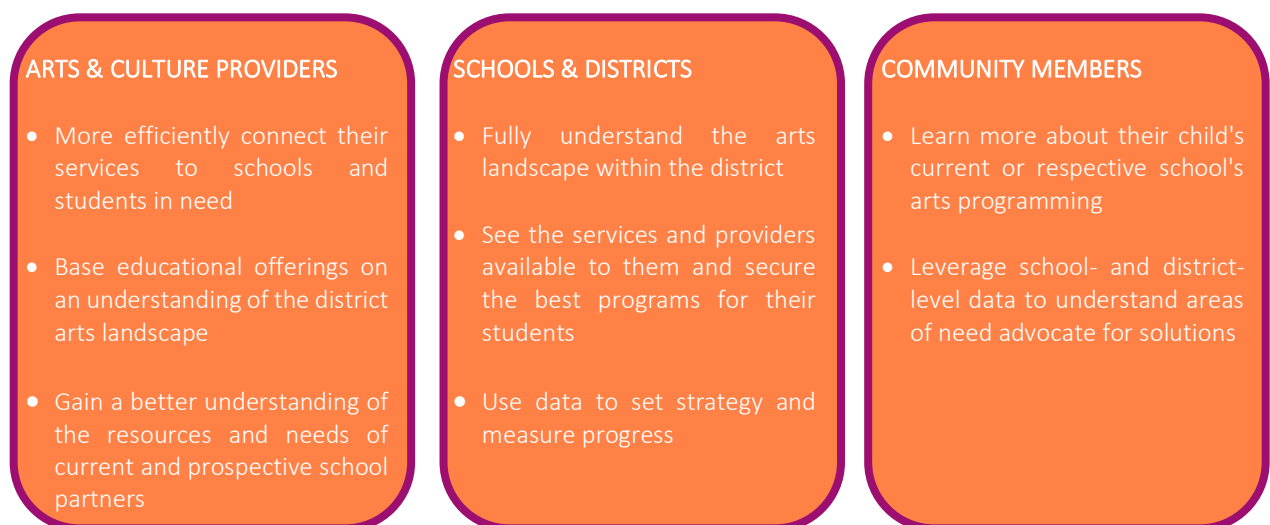
Problem-Solving: Facilitators help groups identify and analyze problems, brainstorm solutions, and develop action plans to address issues effectively.

Community Engagement: In community settings, facilitators engage residents in discussions and decision-making processes related to local issues, projects, or policies.

Training and Development: Facilitators may provide training sessions on various topics, such as leadership, communication, and conflict resolution, to help individuals and teams improve their skills.

Conflict Resolution: Facilitators can assist in resolving conflicts within groups by creating a safe and neutral space for participants to express their concerns and find mutually acceptable solutions.

Another way Mid-America Arts Alliance might leverage its partnership with Arts Connect Houston is data collection and data analysis. Arts Connect Houston partners with Texas A&M's Arts, Humanities & Civic Engagement Lab, an NEA Research Lab, dedicated to the rigorous investigation of the role of the arts and humanities in promoting human development, social and emotional well-being, and civic engagement, as well as the Houston Education Research Consortium, Ingenuity in Chicago, and The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Robust arts education data is a powerful tool for arts and culture providers, schools and school districts and community members.



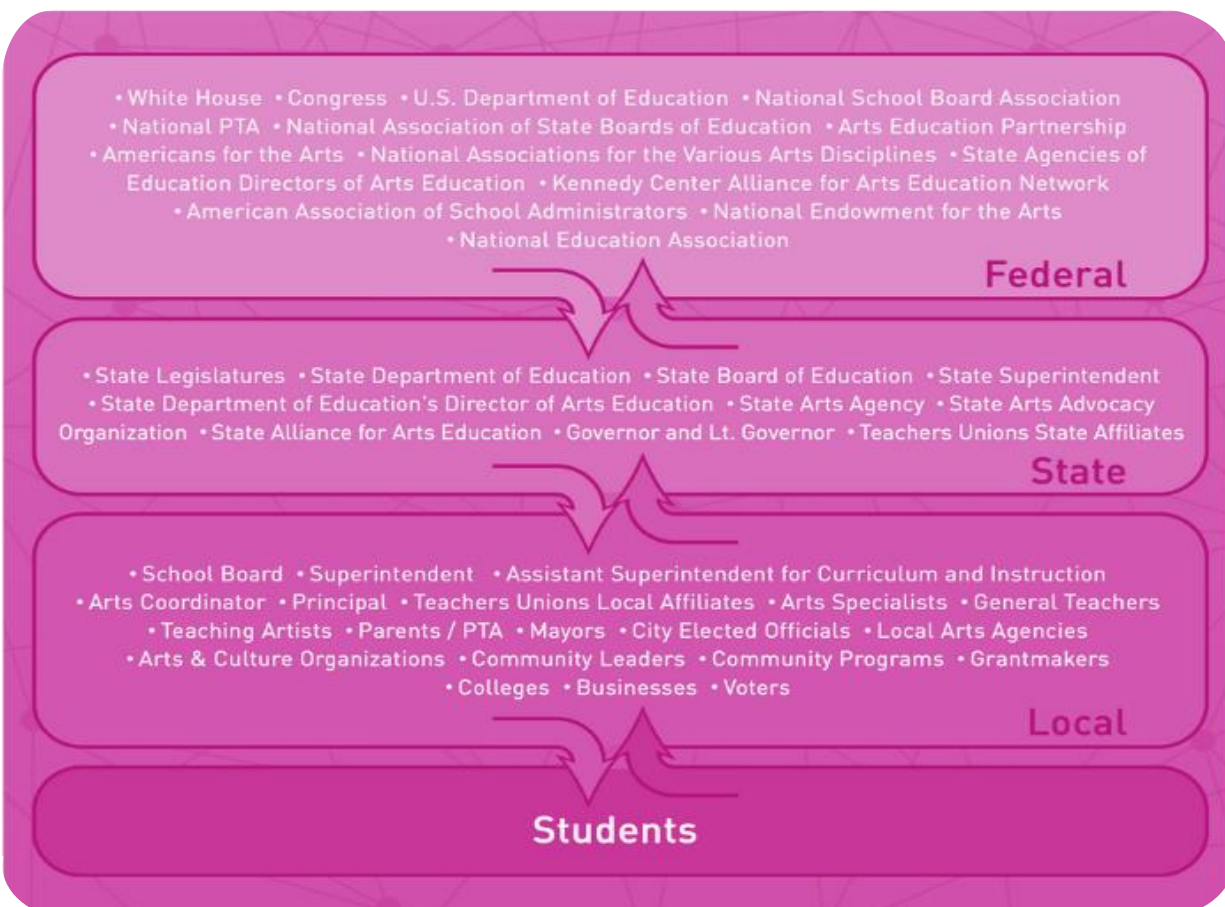
SCHOOL ARTS EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN THE M-AAA REGION

SYSTEM OVERVIEW

The structure of the education system in the United States is a multi-layered hierarchy, where each level plays a distinct role and holds varying degrees of influence. At the federal level, partners such as the White House, Congress, and the U.S. Department of Education work alongside organizations like the National School Board Association, National PTA, and National Associations for the Various Arts Disciplines to shape education policies and advocate for arts education.

On the state level, each state has its own State Department of Education, responsible for overseeing K-12 education and implementing education policies, standards, and regulations. These departments collaborate with State Legislatures, State Arts Agencies, and other stakeholders, including the Governor and teachers' unions' state affiliates, to ensure the successful operation of the state's public education system, including arts education.

Furthermore, at the local level, individual school districts play a crucial role in managing and operating public schools. School boards, superintendents, and principals work closely with Arts Coordinators, teachers' unions' local affiliates, and other educational personnel to ensure that students receive an education that meets state standards, including access to arts education opportunities.



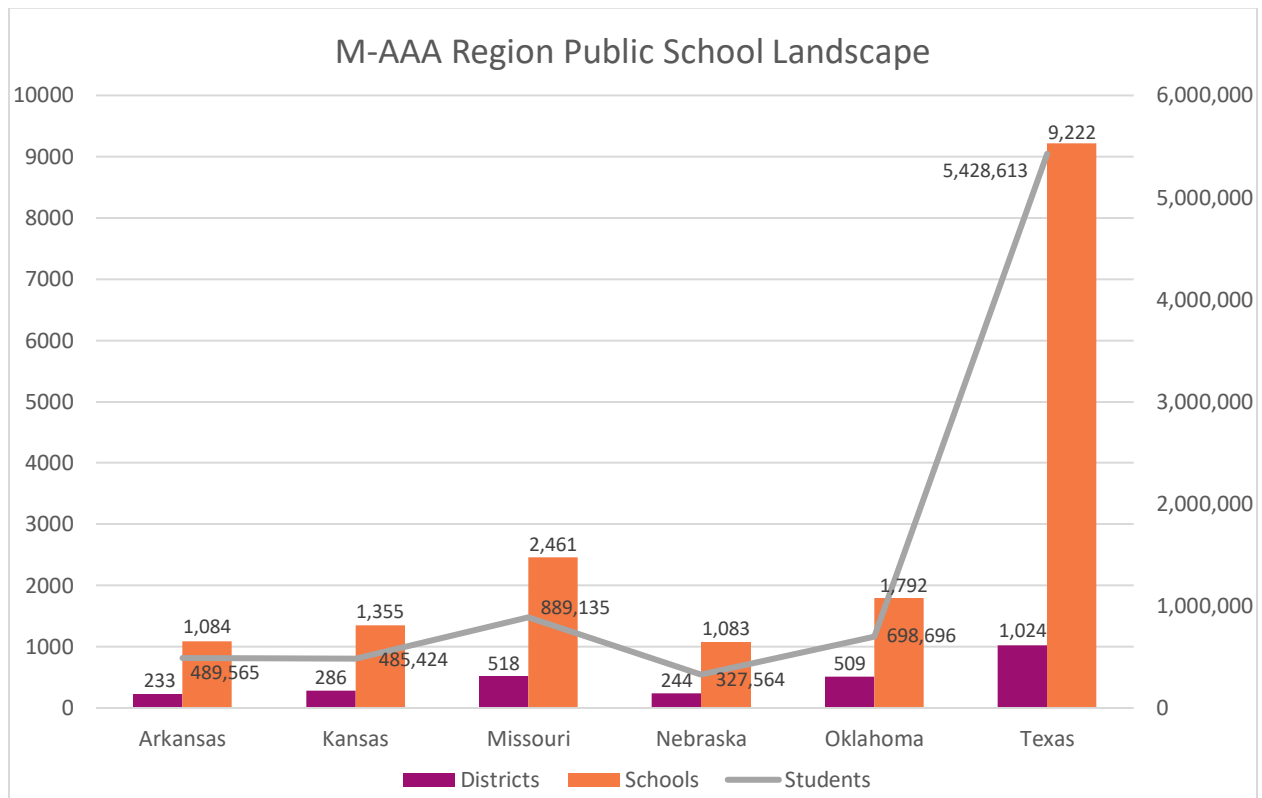
Source: *The Arts Education Field Guide*, Americans for the Arts ¹



In terms of funding, each state relies on a combination of federal, state, and local funding to support their public K-12 education systems, with funding mechanisms and levels varying from state to state. Additionally, all states provide special education services to support students with disabilities, in compliance with federal laws.

To support their respective areas, each state Department of Education has regional units or education service centers that provide essential services to school districts. These cooperatives offer professional development for educators, curriculum and instructional support, special education services, and administrative assistance, contributing to the overall effectiveness and improvement of the education system. In summary, the education system's complex network of federal, state, and local partners collaborates to shape education policies and ensure students' access to arts education and other crucial services throughout their academic journey.

The Mid-America Arts Alliance six state service region includes approximately 2,800 public school districts, 17,000 public schools and over 8 million K-12 students.



Summary of Regional State Arts Education Policies*

M - AAA REGION	Arkansas	Kansas	Missouri	Nebraska	Oklahoma	Texas
Early Childhood Arts Ed Standards	●	●	●	●	●	●
Elementary & Secondary Arts Ed Standards	●	●	●	●	●	●
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement — Elementary School	●		●	○	○	○
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement — Middle School	●			●	●	●
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement — High School	●		○	●	●	●
Arts Requirements for High School Graduation	●	●	●		●	●
Arts Alternatives for High School Graduation					●	●
Arts Ed Assessment Requirements						
Licensure Requirements for Non-Arts Teachers			●	●	●	
Licensure Requirements for Arts Teachers	●	●	●	●	●	●
State Arts Ed Grant Program or School for the Arts	●		●		●	
Arts and STEAM Diploma Seals						
Other State Arts Ed Policies	●		●		●	

Elementary Time Allotment Not Stipulated ○ Middle/High Courses Offered as Electives ○

Policy	Description
Early Childhood Arts Ed Standards	State adopted early childhood or pre-kindergarten content or performance standards for any and all disciplines of arts education.
Elementary & Secondary Arts Ed Standards	State adopted elementary and/or secondary content or performance standards for any or all disciplines of arts education.
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement — Elementary School	State requires school districts or schools to provide or offer arts instruction in one or more arts disciplines at the elementary school level.
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement — Middle School	State requires school districts or schools to provide or offer arts instruction in one or more arts disciplines at the middle school level.
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement — High School	State requires school districts or schools to provide or offer arts instruction in one or more arts disciplines at the high school level.
Arts Requirements for High School Graduation	State requires course credits in the arts for high school graduation.
Arts Alternatives for High School Graduation	State includes arts course credits as an option to fulfill graduation requirements.
Arts Ed Assessment Requirements	State requires state-, district- or school-level assessment of student learning in the arts.
Licensure Requirements for Non-Arts Teachers	State specifies arts requirements for initial licensure or certification of non-arts teachers.
Licensure Requirements for Arts Teachers	State specifies requirements for endorsement, initial licensure or certification of arts teachers or arts specialists in one or more arts disciplines.
State Arts Ed Grant Program or School for the Arts	State provides funding for an arts education grant program or a state funded school for the arts.
Arts and STEAM Diploma Seals	State awards an endorsement upon graduation to students demonstrating proficiency or achievement in arts or “science, technology, engineering, arts, and math” (STEAM) education and coursework.
Other State Arts Ed Policies	State policies that do not fall under the specified policy areas and exist in the state statute and/or regulations.

*Adapted from the Education Commission of the States: 2022 ARTSCAN at a Glance, a project of the Arts Education Partnership

STATE POLICY AND PROGRAM PROFILES AS OF AUGUST 2023

ARKANSASⁱⁱ

The Arkansas code provides that elementary students K – 6 have 40 minutes of performing (dance, theater or music) and 40 minutes of visual arts instruction each week. (Two arts courses a week or the equivalent). A stipend of not less than \$100 per class for supplies and equipment is required

Grades 7 and 8 are required to take visual art or performing art both years. A stipend of not less than \$100 per class for supplies and equipment is required.

High school students need a .5 credit to graduate. Schools are required to offer three credits in different content areas so students have a choice and can take higher level courses, including AP of music or visual art.

Instruction is required to be provided by a teacher certified in the content they are teaching.

Districts choose their own curriculum, and the only requirement is that they teach the standards which are loosely based on the National Coalition of Art Standards.

ARTS EDUCATION DATA PROJECT – STATE OVERVIEWⁱⁱⁱ

- Nearly all students have access to two arts disciplines.
- 81% of all students participated in arts education (382,000 students).
- Arts enrollment was 97% in elementary schools, 88% in middle schools and 52% in high schools.
- Schools where a high proportion of students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch (FRL) were equally likely to lack access to arts education (76%) as student in schools where a low portion of students were eligible. .
- Overall arts participation was highest in schools with a mid-low and mid-high FRL-eligible population (83% and 84%).
- The arts participation rate was lower, 77%, in cities than in rural areas, 83%.

The Arkansas report is a project of the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The Arts Education Data Project is a partnership between the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education and Quadrant Research. All data are from 2019-2020 unless otherwise noted.

ARKANSAS ARTS COUNCIL^{iv}

The Arkansas Arts Council (AAC) is an agency division of the Department of Arkansas Heritage and funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of Arkansas. AAC engages in a multitude

of activities that makes arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. The AAC oversees four grant programs tailored for students and other supporting initiatives.

After-School/Summer Residency grants are major grants that help fund placing professional artists from the Arts in Education Roster in residencies outside the school environment, school day or school year.

The **In-School Residency Program** places professional artists from the Arts in Education Roster during the school day or school year in residencies at specific school sites or in conjunction with other nonprofit community or governmental organizations and institutions.

Mini-Grants are short-term residencies of up to 10 days where professional artists from the Arts in Education Roster provide curriculum-based arts activities in a school environment or other location, or provide a teacher's professional development workshop.

The **Arts in Education Artist Roster** is an online listing of professional performers and visual or literary artists who are available to participate in the agency's programs and grants.

The Arkansas Arts Council partners with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation for **Poetry Out Loud** to encourage students to learn great poetry and develop real-world skills.

The **Arts Across Arkansas** pilot program aims to foster and expand high school students' originality, artistic skills, and personal experiences by offering them the opportunity to showcase their creative works. Finalists will receive mentorship and guidance from an AIE artist, either virtually or in person, to refine and develop their initial work before submitting the final version for the state finals.

Additionally, the **Arts on Tour** grant is open to schools for nonprofit organizations is open to schools and reimburses some of the cost to hire a professional artist from the **Arts on Tour Artist Roster**.

AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: Despite facing budget cuts, staffing constraints, and staff turnover, our Department of Education is fortunate to have a dedicated Arts and Education Manager. Our focus remains on allocating federal funds exclusively to arts in education initiatives, primarily emphasizing residencies and school experiences. The demand for these programs has grown as schools increasingly rely on them to bridge educational gaps. Despite our commitment to inclusivity, we continue to encounter reluctance from some districts due to the matching requirement. We are actively exploring avenues to assist districts in meeting this requirement. However, we have observed a recurring pattern of applications from the same sources, hindering our ability to expand into untapped and underserved communities.

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Arkansas for the Arts is the state advocacy organization. In addition, there are discipline specific organizations including **Arkansas Art Educators, Arkansas Choral Directors Association, Arkansas Dance Network, Arkansas Music Educators Association, Arkansas School Band and Orchestra Association/Bandmasters Association** and **Arkansas Thespians**.

KANSAS^v

The Kansas code provides that one (1) fine arts credit is required for Kansas students to graduate from high school.

Each local board of education shall adopt a written policy specifying that pupils are eligible for graduation only upon completion of at least the following requirements: One unit of fine arts, which may include art, music, dance, theatre, forensics, and other similar studies selected by local board of education.

RELATED INFORMATION

- One (1) credit = only 4.8% of students' academic courses

^{vi}Source: *Why Art Education is Essential* - Kansas Art Education Association's Presentation on Graduation Requirements.

- "Crucially, the new set of requirements maintains that unit of fine arts education, which had been put on the chopping block in a graduation task force's preliminary set of recommendations late last spring. Music and art teachers around the state had lobbied against the removal, which they argued would undermine the subject and lead to fewer students engaging in critical, artistic thought."

^{vii}Source: *New Graduation Requirements Will be Implemented in Kansas High Schools, With the Life Skills Credit Falling Short*, Rafael Garcia in the Topeka Capital-Journal (2022).

- Kansas ranks 17th in the nation in people who have a "high quality" postsecondary credential, according to a group that promotes learning after high school. With 55.7 percent of Kansans aged 25-65 having such credentials, Kansas exceeds the national average of 53.7 percent, according to the Lumina Foundation. The Kansas State Board of Education's "Kansans Can" vision of increasing postsecondary credentials has set a goal of getting 75 percent of students academically ready for college and having postsecondary success by 2030.

^{viii}Source: *New Report Shows Progress and Gaps in Educational Attainment* - Kansas Association of School Boards, Posted Date: 06/21/2023.

KANSAS CREATIVE ARTS INDUSTRIES COMMISSION ^{ix}

The Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (KCAIC) is a division of the Kansas Department of Commerce and funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of Kansas. KCAIC engages in a multitude of activities that makes arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. KCAIC oversees a grant program tailored to schools and other supporting initiatives.

The **Arts Integration Program Grant** supports the role the arts play in all levels of education, community service and workforce development. This program provides funding for educational institutions, arts organizations, and community service non-profits to use the arts to increase student success, foster creative thinking, develop critical job skills, and enhance community development.

Arts Integration Workshops engage diverse learners through music, dance, poetry, visual art and drama to understand and express their learning of curriculum concepts through the arts. Arts integration isn't just for art teachers; these strategies can be incorporated by all educators from early childhood to 12th grade as well as school support staff.

KCAIC supports and coordinates with the **Professional Development with the KS/MO Kennedy Center Partners in Education** program, a community part of the national partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Established in 1991, the program is designed to assist arts organizations throughout the nation to develop or expand educational partnerships with their local school systems. The primary purpose of these school/community partnerships is to promote the professional learning of teachers. Find out more about free virtual workshops and the annual symposium.

KCAIC maintains an approved **Touring Roster** of Kansas-based touring companies and artists and a **Mural & Public Art Roster** of artists for a range of activities including arts education components.

KCAIC partners with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation for **Poetry Out Loud** to encourage students to learn great poetry and develop real-world skills.

AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: Addressing a significant demand for additional teaching artists and their training is a critical priority. Our current pool of teaching artists falls short of meeting this demand, prompting us to consider establishing training centers at select hubs to transition artists into the education sphere. In our pursuit of this goal, we are actively seeking strategic partnerships with resource organizations that can facilitate a seamless transition to arts education. Our emphasis is on delivering professional development that aligns with teachers' genuine desires and requirements, especially considering the prevailing issue of teacher burnout. The mental strain on educators is a pressing concern, often hindering their engagement with arts integration professional development. We need a professional development program that caters to teachers' social-emotional well-being initially, to create an environment where they feel supported and motivated to participate, eventually leading to effective arts integration training.

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Kansas Citizens for the Arts and **Kansas Alliance for the Arts in Education** are state advocacy organizations. In addition, there are discipline specific groups including: Kansas Music Educators Association, **Kansas Art Educators Association**, **Kansas Music Educators Association** and **Kansas Thespians**.

MISSOURI ^{x xi}

The Missouri code provides that each elementary student will receive instruction in art, music, and physical education for a minimum of fifty (50) minutes in each area each week (twenty-five (25) minutes in each area for half-day kindergarten classes). Arts teachers must be certified in the disciplines that they teach, which include music, visual art, dance and theatre.

Beyond the elementary level, there are no state fine arts requirements for middle school students, although districts are required to offer arts courses as electives. Art and music are required to be scheduled and taught so that all students have access to each for a minimum of one thousand five hundred (1,500) minutes each year.

One fine arts credit is required for Missouri students to graduate from high school.

In addition, the State Board of Education recently adopted guidelines for Pre-Kindergarten education, which includes a focus on the need for children to participate in the “expressive arts.”

Missouri districts are required to certify, on an annual basis, that adequate instruction in the arts is available to its students. The Missouri Learning Standards do not dictate curriculum. Local districts and schools make their own decisions about curriculum, instructional strategies, materials and textbooks.

KEY FINDINGS FROM “ARTS EDUCATION STILL MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN MISSOURI SCHOOLS”

- Most students in Missouri public schools continue to have opportunities to participate in fine arts education, particularly in the areas of Visual Art and Music. Course offerings in Dance and Theater continue to be limited.
- The level of student participation in fine arts classes at the district level is significantly related to student attendance rates. That is, the higher the number of fine arts courses and the student enrollment in these courses, the higher the attendance rate.
- Levels of student participation in arts education continue to be significantly correlated to standardized test scores (MAP scores) in Mathematics, with higher arts participation equaling higher Math scores (across all grades tested) at the district level.
- Levels of student participation in the fine arts is also significantly related to test scores in English Language Arts, with higher participation equaling higher MAP scores across the district for students in all grades tested.

The Missouri report was funded by the Missouri Arts Council. The Missouri Alliance for Arts Education analyzed 2014-15 core data submitted by public school districts to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

MISSOURI ARTS COUNCIL ^{xii}

The Missouri Arts Council (MAC) is a division of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. The Council is funded through the Missouri General Assembly, Missouri Cultural Trust and National Endowment for the Arts. The

Missouri Arts Council engages in a multitude of activities that makes arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. The MAC oversees eight grant programs and other initiatives tailored for schools.

The **Artist in Residence Grant for Schools** and the **Artist in Residence Grant for Organizations** supports projects involving multiple encounters between teaching artist and students. This program may focus on strengthening fine arts curriculum as well as enhancing other academic disciplines.

The **Big Yellow School Bus Grant** supports transportation costs for educational field trips to arts events and destinations that received funding from the Missouri Arts Council.

The **Out of School Grant for Schools** and the **Out of School Grant for Organizations** supports quality arts education activities for underserved PK-12 students occurring outside of the normal school day.

The **Professional Development Grant for Schools** and the **Professional Development Grant for Organizations** supports fine arts specialists, classroom teachers, school administrators, teaching artists, or a combination of these groups. This program seeks to enhance and strengthen fine arts teaching and/or arts integration skills.

The **School Touring Grant** supports the cost of presenting performing artists to PK-12 students. School-Touring-Qualified performers can present at school assemblies or classroom workshops.

The Missouri Arts Council partners with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation for **Poetry Out Loud** to encourage students to learn great poetry and develop real-world skills.

MAC maintains a **Touring Performers** directory and financially support their performances throughout Missouri (and a six-state region through Mid-America Arts Alliance).

AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: Missouri's elementary school mandate provides us with a unique opportunity to address critical areas where schools may lack resources, such as residencies, transportation, out-of-school and after-school programs, as well as professional development initiatives. We are seeing more of these efforts go towards integration. Collaboratively, we share a role with the Missouri Department of Education, co-funding half the expenses for the Fine Arts Coordinator position, ensuring that the arts have a significant presence in crucial discussions. We have successfully assisted schools in fulfilling their grant requirements by leveraging educator time and offering adaptable solutions. Despite these achievements, the challenge remains, as arts education often struggles to secure a prominent position on schools' priority lists.

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Missouri Citizens for the Arts and **Missouri Alliance for Arts Education** are state advocacy organizations and MAAE also facilitates professional development for high quality arts education. In addition, there are discipline specific groups including: **Missouri Art Education Association**, **Missouri Association for Jazz Education**, **Missouri Dance Association**, **Missouri Music Educators Association** and the **Speech & Theater Association of Missouri**.

NEBRASKA^{xiii xiv}

Nebraska code provides for core curriculum that includes the visual and performing arts for all grades.

The elementary schools must provide a representative weekly schedule for each classroom teacher including Visual Arts and Music.

Visual Arts Curriculum: helps children understand and apply a variety of media, techniques, and processes within a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas. Music Curriculum: (the curriculum helps children to sing and play a variety of music, read and notate music, listen to and describe music, and evaluate music. The curriculum also includes reflection and assessment in relation to history, culture, and other curricular areas.

Middle schools must provide instruction for each grade each year in subjects including Art and Music.

Art: curriculum includes activities and experiences designed to develop skills in working with a variety of artistic techniques, processes, and media. Music :curriculum includes experiences that involve students in singing and playing musical instruments and provides opportunities for students to pursue individual musical interests and to develop individual talents. The curriculum also relates study to history and culture.

High schools must provide a minimum 40 instructional units which include each year instruction in vocal music, instrumental music, and visual arts. It may also include dance and theater. The visual and performing arts curriculum includes performance, interpretation, and evaluation.

Visual Arts: curriculum includes media, techniques, and processes; choice and evaluation of a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas; assessment of characteristics and merits of student work and the work of others; and the visual arts in relation to other disciplines. Music: curriculum includes singing and playing a varied repertoire of music, improvising melodies and accompaniments, reading and notating music, listening to and describing music, evaluating music and music performances, recognizing relationships between music and the other disciplines, and the study of music in relation to history and culture.

A fine arts credit is not stipulated for high school graduation.

Teacher certification is required for arts teachers and endorsements are required for non-arts teachers.

RELATED INFORMATION^{xv}

- Nebraska is set to roll out its Arts Education Data report in the first quarter of 2024.
- Currently about 58% of Nebraskans aged 25 to 34 have a degree, certificate, diploma, or other credential of value. In 2022, the Coordinating Commission of Postsecondary Education officially adopted a goal that 70% of Nebraskans aged 25 to 34 will have a degree, certificate, diploma, or other postsecondary or industry-recognized credential with economic value by 2030.

NEBRASKA ARTS COUNCIL^{xvi}

Nebraska Arts Council (NAC) is an independent agency and funded by the State of Nebraska, National Endowment for the Art and Nebraska Cultural Trust Endowment. The Nebraska Arts Council engages in a multitude of activities that makes arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. The NAC oversees eight grant programs and other initiatives tailored for schools.

Artists in Schools & Communities Grants provide funds to hire artists from Nebraska Arts Council’s Artist Roster to lead interactive sessions conducted online or in-person.

Arts Learning Projects Grants support programs with a strong educational emphasis in preK-12 schools or in community settings. Community-based projects must incorporate educational learning outcomes in the arts.

Nebraska Touring Program Sponsor Grants help sponsor organizations provide arts engagement for people across the state through funding for performances or programs selected from the Nebraska Arts Council Artist Roster.

Presenting Nebraska’s State Poet grants provide financial assistance for Nebraska nonprofit organizations and accredited public or private schools to host events featuring the current Nebraska State Poet.

School Bus for the Arts Grants provides grants for students from kindergarten to 12th grade to underwrite the cost of field trips to attend professional arts events, including concerts, dance or theatre performances, and cultural exhibits at museums or other venues.

Through the support of the Richard P. Kimmel & Laurine Kimmel Charitable Foundation, Nebraska Arts Council offers **School Bus for the Arts Grants - Southeast Nebraska** specifically available to schools in that region.

The **Artist Roster** lists participating touring and teaching artists and exhibits.

The Nebraska Arts Council partners with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation for **Poetry Out Loud** to encourage students to learn great poetry and develop real-world skills.

AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: We successfully navigated an effort to eliminate the commission's board and transition to an appointed model. Concurrently, we have cultivated positive relationships with the Department of Education, culminating in the initiation of two collaborative programs that enhance our respective missions. We are launching the Arts Education Data Project with an aim to identify the strengths and areas requiring improvement within the state's arts education landscape. There can then be strategic advocacy efforts to address these needs. We have a very flexible grant to support teachers and they decide how they want to use it.

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Nebraskans for the Arts is the state advocacy organization and to a certain degree so is the **Nebraska Cultural Endowment**. In addition, discipline specific organizations include: **Nebraska Art Teachers Association**, **Nebraska Communication and Theater Association**, **Nebraska Music Educators Association** and **Nebraska Thespians**.

Oklahoma statute provides that school districts shall develop and implement, curriculum, courses, and instruction in order to ensure students meet the established skills and competencies in the subject matter standards adopted by the State Board of Education including study of the arts (dance, drama/theatre, music, or visual art).

Further, as one of 16 statutory criteria, alternative education programs must provide opportunities for hands-on arts education to students, including artists residency programs coordinated with the Oklahoma Arts Council

One fine arts credit is required for Oklahoma students to graduate from high school.

Prior to 2003, Oklahoma lawmakers mandated that visual arts and music education be included as part of the core curriculum within the school system and tested as such, along with math, English, science, and history (House Bill 1017). In 2003, Oklahoma lawmakers approved House Bill 1414, allowing each school district to create their own test and standards for arts education. While arts are still officially required, school leaders have decreased and even cut arts programs within Oklahoma schools.

A revision to state standards was passed by the state Board of Education in 2023. Most of the standards remained intact, but Media Arts was added as a separate artistic discipline, and PreK standards for all disciplines were added as well.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE ARTS EDUCATION DATA PROJECT^{xix}

- Most students (83%) had access to at least one arts discipline. The access rate was lowest in elementary schools (71%).
- More than a quarter of schools (26%) did not offer any arts courses.
- Just over half (55%) of all students participated in arts education (almost 390,000 students).
- Arts enrolment was highest in middle schools at 61%, and lowest in high schools, 49%.
- 16.8% of students did not have access to any arts instruction, down from the prior year's 18.5%.
- Schools where a high proportion of students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch (FRL) were the most likely to lack access to arts education (35%).
- Overall arts participation was lowest in schools with a mid-high FRL-eligible population (51%).
- The arts participation rate was highest in schools where the majority of students are Hispanic (80%) and was lowest in majority-White schools (24%).
- The arts participation rate was much higher in cities, 72%, than in rural areas, 39%.

The Oklahoma report is a collaboration of Oklahomans for the Arts, the State Department of Education, and the Oklahoma Arts Council. The Arts Education Data Project is a partnership between the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education and Quadrant Research. All data are from 2021-2022 unless otherwise noted. Only data from traditional schools are included in the report.

The Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC) is an independent agency and funded by the State of Oklahoma and the National Endowment for the Arts. OAC engages in a multitude of activities that makes arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. In FY22 it made 581 grants in 309 schools and organizations across 113 Oklahoma communities. OAC oversees nine grant programs tailored for schools, each undergoing continuous evolution to meet the ever-changing requirements of educational institutions.

The flagship program of OAC is its artist in residence grant, **Essential Arts Education Grants for Schools** and enables guest artists to deliver specialized arts instruction across various school environments. This initiative is complemented by the **Extended Arts Learning Grants**, supporting both in-school and out-of-school-time arts learning.

The **Classroom Supply Grants for Visual and Performing Arts** was designed to meet a need that was clearly expressed by educators. This grant program has extended OAC's reach to counties and communities that previously lacked access to OAC initiatives.

After a hiatus of several years due to renovations at the State Capitol, the **Capitol Art Field Trip Grants** are set to be relaunched in FY23. This popular program covers the expenses associated with organizing a field trip to the State Capitol for any school in Oklahoma. Participants are treated to a guided tour of the Capitol's artwork, which narrates the history of Oklahoma from multiple perspectives.

The **Arts in Education Grants** funds nonprofits to conduct programs during normal school hours and the **Oklahoma Poetry Out Loud Partnership Grant** selects one organization to administer the annual statewide initiative.

In FY23, the Oklahoma Arts Council received funding from the Oklahoma State Department of Education's (OSDE) federal ARP-ESSER funding specifically to work with alternative education schools to overcome learning loss and re-engage students with three new and expanded **Alternative Education** grant programs. Valuable lessons will share OAC's future initiatives.

Additionally, in September 2020, Oklahoma State Department of Education was awarded the Expanding Access to Well-Rounded Demonstration Grant for the Art Tech Project. This \$5 million dollar, 5-year grant will restore arts education in Oklahoma schools currently without arts programming. This project is in partnership with the Oklahoma Arts Council, University of Central Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation, the Osage Nation, and the University of Oklahoma's Center for Educational Development and Research (CEDaR).

AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: We have successfully countered a proposed reduction of the single high school arts credit required for graduation on three separate occasions. Recent legislative proposals have presented a conflict between agricultural and arts education. Some rural communities seek to allocate graduation credits towards agriculture, to safeguard agriculture instructors, potentially displacing arts education. Collaborating with the Department of Education, we undertook a comprehensive review of educational standards, resulting in the inclusion of dance and media arts. As we address the demographic shift within the Roster of Artists, it is evident that emerging artists are less inclined to engage in remote travel. We have reduced the grant to 10 percent in some programs. The Tulsa Any Given Child initiative has yielded substantial positive outcomes. By collaborating with stakeholders, we are pursuing legislative grants to ensure stability. The emphasis on experiential learning resonates effectively within the legislative sphere. Currently, our focus is centered on revitalizing foundational exposure to the arts, as budgetary constraints impede even basic transportation funding by schools.

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Oklahomans for the Arts is the state advocacy organization. In addition, there are discipline specific organizations including: **Oklahoma Art Education Association** and **Oklahoma Music Educators Association**.

The State of Texas provides that a school district that offers kindergarten through Grade 12 must offer Fine Arts (dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts) as part of the Required Curriculum.

Elementary schools must provide Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)-based instruction in music, theatre, and visual arts for grades K-5.

Each middle school student must complete one fine arts course in grade 6,7,8. Districts are required to offer three of the four arts disciplines or two, if reduced by the commissioner of education based on school size.

One fine arts credit is required for Texas students to graduate from high school. Districts are required to offer at least two of the four arts disciplines.

While all fine arts TEKS are part of the required curriculum, districts and campuses have the flexibility to implement instruction in a variety of arrangements according to their resources.

Elementary arts education may either be provided by a general education teacher, who in most cases is also responsible for providing instruction in math, science, social studies, and English language arts, or an arts-certified teacher, who exclusively focuses on fine arts classes: music, theatre, or visual art.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST STATE OF THE ARTS REPORT^{xxiv}

- 94% of elementary campuses self-report that they are offering fine arts classes. However, who provides the instruction and how it is delivered differs from campus to campus.
- 18,290 teachers provide arts education instruction for elementary grade students. Of these, 61% are not fine arts-certified and in rural communities 70% are not fine arts-certified.
- In secondary schools, course offerings are not equally distributed by art form. Music courses (11%) and visual arts (7%) are offered more than theatre (1%) or dance (< 1%).

The Texas report is presented in partnership with the Texas Commission on the Arts and Texans for the Arts. The research referenced in the report was conducted by the Texas Cultural Trust and Art Can partners. Research on student access to the arts was conducted for the Texas Cultural Trust by MINDPOP. The study utilized Texas Education Agency (TEA) data from the 2018-2019 school year for all schools in every district across the state.

TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS^{xxv}

The Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) is an independent agency and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, State of Texas and the Texas Cultural Trust. TCA engages in a multitude of activities that makes

arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. TCA oversees two grant programs and other initiatives tailored for schools.

The **Arts Respond Performance Support Grant** provides professional artist fees to schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations for hiring an artist from TCA's Texas Touring Roster to do a performance or workshop.

The **Texas Young Masters** program, a joint program with the Texas Cultural Trust, awards grants to talented young artists, 8th – 11th grade, to further their studies in their chosen field.

The Texas Commission on the Arts maintains an approved Roster of **Texas-based Touring Companies and Artists**. In this program, the artist or artist's management sets the fee and negotiates the booking.

TCA conducts the Texas program of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation **Poetry Out Loud** recitation competition to encourage students to learn great poetry and develop real-world skills.

AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: With the diverse landscape of schools, districts, and states, it's evident that a one-size-fits-all approach isn't feasible, given the unique challenges and varying needs. What's lacking is a collaborative platform for educational overseers to convene and exchange insights. In other state agencies, incorporating programming and teaching artists is common practice. Arts partners should be involved in superintendent searches and having dedicated individuals on school boards can yield transformative outcomes. Establishing connections between arts and career pathways, such as audio and visual disciplines within performing arts production, can enhance career and technical education. Bridging the language gap between artists and educators through specialized training can facilitate classroom integration. Empowering arts groups with the tools to deliver top-tier experiences within schools is crucial. Expanding initiatives like NASAA's convening of arts agency arts directors and broadening the scope of arts advocacy beyond organizational staff with more board members and political donors is essential.

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Texans for the Arts is the state advocacy organization, and the work of the TCA is complemented by the **Texas Cultural Trust (TCT)**. The **Center for Educator Development in Fine Arts (CEDFA)** provides professional development opportunities based on state and national standards in art, dance, music and theatre. In addition, there are discipline specific organizations including: **Texas Art Education Association**, Texas Bandmasters Association, **Texas Dance Educators' Association**, **Texas Music Educators Association**, **Texas Orchestra Directors Association** and **Texas Educational Theatre Association**.

TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST^{xxvi}

The TCT is a nonprofit organization and engages in a multitude of activities that makes arts and cultural programs possible in communities and schools across the state. TCT offers four grant/scholarship programs and other initiatives tailored for students and schools.

First Year Teacher Grants: Funding for first year arts teachers to increase arts access within underserved communities and seek employment in low arts access, Title I schools.

Texas Women for the Arts Grants: Funding to support arts and arts education programs for children.

Texas Young Masters Scholarships: A joint program of the Texas Cultural Trust and Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA), Texas Young Masters awards scholarship grants to deserving young artists in music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literary arts, and other artistic disciplines.

The Texas Cultural Trust x Brandon Maxwell x The University of Texas Textiles and Apparel Scholarship: Funded by the Bennett Endowed Scholarship in Human Ecology, this scholarship is a one-year, merit and need-based award for students pursuing higher education in fashion.

The Texas Cultural Trust's **Art Can** program conducts research and produces data to quantify the economic and educational impact of the arts in Texas. These findings are published in the biennial **State of the Arts Report**. Data is visualized on the **Art Can Map** and additional resources include an **Arts Advocacy Toolkit Library**.

Arts & Digital Literacy (A&DL) is a project-based fine arts program that integrates technology into the creative classroom through innovative curricula created by the Trust, in partnership with The University of Texas at Austin College of Fine Arts.

The PILOT **Art Box** project provides creative resources for children in Title I elementary schools to engage in creativity at home.

ORGANIZATION PERSPECTIVE: Advocating for essential teacher training to evolve programs is not only vital for sustaining arts education, but also for actively addressing the challenges faced by both students and schools. Ensuring grants for the growth of arts education and facilitating enriching experiences such as bus trips remain integral. Equipping non-arts educators with TEKS-aligned training and resources to tackle emerging school challenges is imperative. Our commitment extends to regional collaboration, needs assessment, and innovative problem-solving, drawing on comprehensive research for the benefit of other states. Notably, we successfully opposed a bill aimed at removing fine arts credits from graduation prerequisites. While recognizing the potential of mandatory arts testing to safeguard arts instruction, concerns regarding content dilution, similar to observed trends in other tested subjects, underscore the need for a balanced perspective.

INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIES FOR M-AAA:

OUTCOMES FROM STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSIONS

The M-AAA region boasts committed leaders and advocates dedicated to providing equitable access to quality fine arts instruction for all students, as well as professional development and networking opportunities for teachers and teaching artists. Listening sessions with 38 representatives from various states and national partners revealed common themes and challenges, along with promising initiatives and models for replication.

As noted in the introduction, the individuals interviewed for this report encompass a breadth of expertise across various domains within the arts and education sectors, including strategic leadership, program development, advocacy, and policy implementation. Their diverse backgrounds in executive leadership, educational administration, program management, and arts advocacy provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities inherent in arts education and cultural development.

Participants expressed heartfelt appreciation for Mid-America Arts Alliance's potential involvement in the sector, offering over 200 sentiments, observations, and ideas for ways M-AAA can support and enhance arts education in its region. This critical input provides M-AAA with a wealth of potential strategies and actionable items to evaluate in further consultations and through its strategic planning process. The diverse range of needs, ideas, and observations captured are loosely grouped into five recurring themes: Actionable Data, Collective Impact & Coordinated Efforts, Empowering Educators, Rural Focus, and Strategic Communication.

Actionable Data refers to information that is collected, organized, and presented in a way that enables stakeholders to make informed decisions, take specific actions, and drive meaningful improvements.

Collective Impact & Coordinated Efforts is a collaborative approach where diverse stakeholders work together towards a shared goal, leveraging their resources, expertise, and efforts to achieve meaningful and sustainable social change.

Empowering Educators encompasses, professional learning/development, equitable funding, comprehensive curricula, assessment mechanisms, technology integration, inclusivity, mentorship, data-driven advocacy, and intergenerational engagement to empower transformative arts education experiences.

Rural Focus underscores the urgent need for dedicated efforts to enhance arts education in rural communities, addressing prevalent challenges such as teacher shortages, resource limitations, and equitable access.

Strategic Communication refers to the deliberate planning and execution of messaging and actions aimed at achieving specific goals, aligning with group objectives, and fostering desired perceptions and outcomes.

ACTIONABLE DATA

A major topic of discussion revolved around the need for accessible arts education data from state departments of education to inform policymakers, administrators, and advocates effectively. **While vast amounts of data are being collected by state departments of education, there's a lack of internal capacity and resources to convert this data into meaningful knowledge.** The issue is further exacerbated by the downsizing of data management offices in most states' education departments over the last decade.

We needed schools in the county and our current grant director, she was like, well, I don't know any schools. And I pulled up the dashboard and pulled up the county, and I was like look, there's six sites right here, right off the bat, that have nothing."

Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma have made strides with initiatives that report arts education data for public schools across various metrics. Nebraska is set to follow suit and plans to roll out its reporting in the first quarter of 2024. Meanwhile, Kansas is actively working on a data sharing agreement and evaluating the feasibility of extracting relevant data from the DOE. In Missouri, due to limitations in their data infrastructure, they are considering publishing high school data as a starting point. While there are similar metrics across states, each state selects which data it highlights in public reporting.

Stakeholders are utilizing (or desire to utilize) data in a multitude of ways to enhance arts education and advocate for its importance. One key focus is on conducting **comparative analyses** using locale codes, allowing stakeholders to understand the varying dynamics of arts education in far rural, suburban, and major urban communities. Through this lens, they aim to uncover disparities in participation rates, programmatic opportunities, and student-teacher ratios.

Furthermore, data serves as a powerful tool for identifying underlying issues and realities within arts education. By **examining access rates**, stakeholders can gain insights into how many students lack access

In most of the states across the country, participation at the elementary level it's north of 90%. So, if the number is less than 90%, then there's some sort of issue that states can focus on. So then when you start to move participation rates by a couple percentage points, the real impact of that is 10s of 1000s, if not hundreds of 1000s of students just by increasing participation by a marginal number

to arts education. This data-driven approach forms the foundation for targeted advocacy efforts, as stakeholders use compelling data to encourage legislators, local school boards, and communities to bolster arts education, ensuring compliance with requirements for arts education access and participation.

The role of data extends beyond advocacy, shaping program improvement initiatives. Stakeholders can utilize data insights to **examining participation rates and student choices**, to try and gain insights into why students opt to study arts or not and pinpoint areas needing enhancement, such as program relevance or program quality.

In tandem with advocacy, stakeholders employ data to fuel fundraising efforts. Recognizing that state funding might not cover all costs, they rely on data to **demonstrate the positive impact of arts education**, engaging both national and local fundraising strategies to secure necessary resources.

Data also plays a pivotal role in **tracking student progress and success**. Stakeholders that have meticulously monitored academic performance, test scores, grades, and behavior, have been able to demonstrate how arts education positively influences students' overall development. This data-driven approach positions their programs as models of best practices, serving as inspiration for other organizations and schools seeking to enhance their arts education offerings.

Engaging teachers and communities is another vital aspect of data utilization. Stakeholders encourage educators to interact with data dashboards, enabling them to compare their districts and advocate for additional resources based on concrete data insights. Furthermore, they empower parents, students, and community members to leverage the data dashboard to assess the status of arts education in local schools and take proactive steps towards improvement.

There is somewhat of a disconnect between data collected at the state and national level and local data. While many cities make investments in various arts and cultural services, including arts education, these investments and programs are generally not captured in state-level reporting. Additionally, many local arts organizations have arts education programs for schools that may or may not be connected reporting about access and enrollment or to a professional learning practice.

Stakeholders want to harness the power of data to **drive positive changes in arts education**. By analyzing and interpreting data, they uncover disparities, address issues, advocate for support, enhance program quality, and ensure equitable access to arts education across diverse communities.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT & COORDINATED EFFORTS

I really want to see something like Any Given Child happen for our region. I've been looking and really enjoy seeing children experience the ballet or opera, or an immersive art installation. And then they would go to create or a makerspace. And they were sixth graders, so that middle life, and it's like they stuck their finger in the creative light socket. And they were brimming with ideas and building things. And I thought, the world doesn't get any better than that

The theme of collective impact and coordinated efforts emerges as a pivotal from the listening sessions. Stakeholders consistently **emphasize the importance of collaboration**, forging connections with school districts, organizations, and community leaders. This united approach aims to amplify the impact of arts education initiatives by leveraging the strengths and resources of multiple entities.

Within this context, **advocacy stands out as a shared goal**. Stakeholders recognize the challenge of advocating for arts education, particularly in politically constrained environments. They discuss the need to engage legislators, navigate policy

changes, and advocate for increased funding and support. By uniting their efforts and speaking with a collective voice, they strive to drive policy changes that prioritize arts education.

Data utilization is another cornerstone of collective impact, enabling stakeholders to make informed decisions and advocate effectively. Stakeholders emphasize the potential of data to reveal disparities, track progress, and showcase the positive impact of arts education on student development. This shared data-driven approach equips them with evidence to engage policymakers, educators, and the public, fostering a deeper understanding of the value of arts education.

Equity and access are central concerns within the theme of collective impact and coordinated efforts. Stakeholders acknowledge the significance of ensuring that all students, particularly those from underserved communities, have access to high-quality arts education. Through collaboration to address disparities and create inclusive opportunities, they strive towards a more equitable arts education landscape.

Resource challenges and fundraising are acknowledged as shared obstacles that can be tackled through collective efforts. Stakeholders discuss the need for strategic planning, fundraising initiatives, and efficient resource allocation. By **pooling resources and expertise**, they aim to secure the financial support needed to sustain and expand arts education programs.

I believe in art for arts sake, but I want to be able to prove that the arts can help kids in other areas of their life. And there's some kids, the way that they learn, you can't just open their head, pour information, and tell them to sit in their seat and don't move and be quiet and be still, and that's going to work. That's not going to work.

And so, then what happens is, when they don't sit in their seat and be quiet and be still, just listen quietly, while you talk about something that they can't figure out why it has something to do with them, then they're pushed out of the classroom. And the problem is that significantly, that's happening to black male children more than anybody else. at least in this district.

Community engagement and awareness also feature prominently within the context of collective impact. Stakeholders emphasize the significance of **engaging parents, students, and community members** to advocate for arts education. They explore avenues such as events, social media, and educational resources to raise awareness and garner widespread support for their cause.

Collective impact drives a focus on educational impact, where stakeholders emphasize **the positive influence of arts education on student development and academic performance**. They aim to demonstrate

this impact through shared data and success stories, reinforcing the value of arts education in shaping well-rounded individuals.

Professional development and training emerge as important components of the collective impact strategy. Stakeholders recognize the need to **equip advocates, teachers, and leaders with the skills and knowledge** required to effectively promote and implement arts education initiatives.

Stakeholders seek to engage school administrators, superintendents, and legislators, advocating for arts education with a **unified voice** and compelling evidence of its importance, to elevate the status and availability of arts education for the benefit of all students.

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS

From the perspective of empowering educators, a critical consideration in arts education is the **recruitment, retention, development, and support of certified fine arts teachers and teaching artists**. Many art teachers feel unsupported and undervalued in their role, highlighting the significance of support and mentorship, particularly for new educators navigating the challenges of the profession to prevent turnover.

There is a **prevailing need for supplies, equipment, and transportation funding for field trips**. At the same time, grantors report difficulty attracting applicants, leading to unspent funds. Stakeholders express a challenge in finding a comprehensive resource tailored to arts education, one that provides teachers and schools easy access to available funding opportunities.

As arts educators, we develop the whole child. And yes, it's important that our students learn how to read and write, and do math, that's important, and we cannot neglect the fine arts, we cannot just ignore the importance of a fine arts education because through art you can implement social emotional learning and build relationships with students so they can be successful. Through art you can really get to know an individual, because a lot of art is about perspective. I tell my students there's no right or wrong way, here's the guidelines of a project, but the way you draw, the way you design is up to you. It's all about you putting your perspective into the project. And once you give kids that permission, they just go wild and it's so cool and learning becomes a positive enjoyable experience

Ensuring that arts education is accessible to all students, regardless of their geography or socioeconomic background, is a significant concern. Stakeholders underscore the importance of engaging with legislative bodies to secure funding and support for arts education initiatives, alongside the necessity for scholarships and apprenticeship programs to provide opportunities for underserved students.

Professional learning, or professional development, is another cornerstone of effective arts education. Offering content-specific workshops, training, and mentorship opportunities can empower teachers with the skills needed to foster engaging learning experiences. The convergence of in-person and virtual platforms ensures flexibility, accessibility, and a continuous avenue for skill enhancement.

The absence of readily available, **comprehensive curricula** for visual arts, music, and theater, particularly in rural school districts, remains a significant challenge. Teachers often find themselves piecing together materials from various sources, struggling to create coherent curriculum maps and scaffolding skills effectively.

Effective **assessment mechanisms** are indispensable to demonstrate the value of arts education. Though standardized tests might not be apt, developing tools to gauge artistic progress can illuminate the tangible benefits of arts integration. Teachers often face challenges in demonstrating the value of arts education, as their impact may not be easily quantifiable in terms of standardized test scores.

Arts education is universally recognized as a catalyst for sparking creativity, imagination, and a love of learning in students. Stakeholders value **arts integration** with other subjects, seeing the potential for the arts to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

You get your most bang for buck in kindergarten readiness. The best way to close a gap is to not let one happen.

Providing students with **opportunities to explore the arts** beyond their immediate environment is highlighted. Both in-person and virtual field trips, artist talks, and exposure to various forms of art can broaden students' horizons and offer a deeper understanding of artistic expression and the world around them.

Learning essentials revolve around the empowering educators, the provision of necessary resources, accessibility for all students, and the continuous growth through professional development.

The mental strain on educators is a pressing concern. We need a professional learning program that caters to teachers' social-emotional well-being initially, to create an environment where they feel supported and motivated to participate, eventually leading to instructional topics.

RURAL FOCUS

The listening sessions highlighted the urgent need to **make arts education a priority in rural schools**. Many rural schools, especially those with small student populations, struggle to provide arts education due to limited funding and teacher shortages. Access to arts instruction is lacking in rural districts. Schools are spread out across the region, making it tough to share resources fairly and provide equal opportunities for all students. Collaborative efforts were mentioned to address these disparities

I've talked to teachers from towns, far flung sometimes, which I taught in a tiny town, I get it. And I'm like, have you thought about asking the local bank for a donation to get paper for your art room, or whatever it is, and they say, we don't have a bank, we have a gas station.

The **scarcity of certified arts teachers** emerged as a critical issue, aggravated by the broader teacher crisis in the United States. Rural areas face additional difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified instructors. Stakeholders discussed strategies to attract teachers to rural communities, including creating appealing incentives and addressing the broader issues contributing to the teacher shortage.

In economically struggling communities, the **tension between investing in arts education and meeting essential needs**, such as food and other necessities, was highlighted. This often led to difficult decisions regarding resource allocation.

Initiatives to encourage teaching artists to stay in rural settings were proposed, as they could bring valuable expertise and opportunities for students. Stakeholders proposed the development of **teaching artist rosters specifically tailored for rural areas** to identify and develop local artists to ensure access to arts instruction even in areas with limited resources.

Efforts to provide arts education to marginalized communities, including Native American populations, and **ensuring that all students have access** to a comprehensive curriculum was emphasized.

Kids can graduate high school without an arts credit, because you can take public speaking in lieu of fine arts. So, there's kids in our state who go pre-K through 12, with no art, music, dance, drama classes. I think it's about 20,000 kids who attend those specific schools where there's not anything offered. And the majority, unfortunately, are in parts of the state where our Indian Reservation territory still are established--we're still not serving the descendants with equitable education.

A Department of Education grant aimed at arts integration, literacy, and SEL faced **obstacles in identifying receptive communities**. This could be attributed to local concerns, teacher burnout, or other factors affecting engagement.

Distance learning programs for arts subjects and the utilization of intermediaries were discussed as innovative solutions to address gaps in arts education in rural districts.

The stakeholder viewpoints underscore the complex landscape of arts education in rural areas, revealing challenges related to funding, teacher shortages, resource allocation, advocacy, and the need for strategic solutions to ensure access to quality arts education for all students.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Stakeholders discussed the need for **advocating and messaging the value of arts education** to counter misconceptions about its relevance. They emphasized promoting the broader benefits of arts education in fostering creative thinking and skills applicable to various professions. There were concerns about community engagement, particularly in conservative areas. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of effectively communicating the value of the arts to legislators, parents, and the public. They discussed strategies to overcome resistance and change perceptions about arts education's impact.

You see it businesswise, Target or Bud Light, taking a stance on something and the backlash. They've been caught very unprepared. So, I would say that we could get caught flat footed like that. Because we believe in what they do so much, and we want to be equitable--it's part of our strategic plan. So, we could easily get attacked for something.

Stakeholders noted the necessity of effective messaging and **marketing strategies** to reach a wider audience, including parents, legislators, and the general public, to create awareness about the value of arts education.

Funding challenges were evident, and stakeholders suggested different strategies to secure **financial support**. They mentioned political action committees, using data to demonstrate the return on investment, and lobbying efforts, especially in conservative political environments.

The discussions highlighted the need to **make arts education accessible to all students**, irrespective of their backgrounds. They identified disparities in access, particularly in rural and conservative areas, and proposed tactics to address these gaps.

Collaborative efforts were a recurring theme, whether in engaging community influencers, partnering with external experts for crisis communications, or collaborating with other organizations to amplify advocacy efforts. Stakeholders recognized the importance of crisis communication and having well-prepared responses when facing challenges or criticism, especially when dealing with controversies related to the arts.

Give people an action to take when they are moved and motivated to do something, create a tool where they can sign up to be an ambassador and volunteer, get trained to engage with leaders and spread the message.

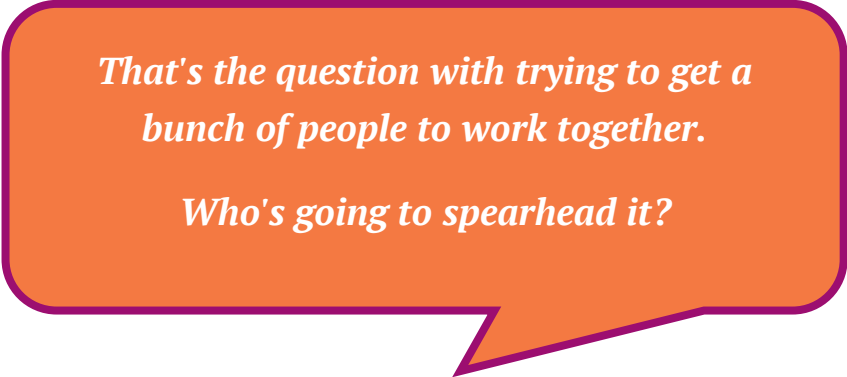
In addressing culturally sensitive topics or commemorations, stakeholders highlighted the value of involving consultants or experts from **relevant communities** to ensure respectful and meaningful engagement.

Stakeholders emphasized the value of using data and evidence to support advocacy efforts. They discussed the impact of having statistics and studies that **demonstrate the positive outcomes** of arts education on various aspects of students' lives.

Stakeholders recognized the significance of engaging politicians and decision-makers, including utilizing surveys to gauge their stance on arts education and gathering **testimonials to influence their perceptions**.

Stakeholders discussed involving business leaders and industry representatives in the conversation to emphasize the **relevance of arts education in preparing students for the workforce** and enhancing various skills.

These themes emerged from the stakeholder listening sessions, highlighting a variety of challenges and strategies in advocating for and promoting arts education.



SAMPLE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONABLE ITEMS

Listening session participants offered over 200 sentiments, observations, and ideas for ways M-AAA can support and enhance arts education in its region. Stakeholders envision working together to ensure that arts education is robust, equitable and well-integrated into the broader educational landscape.

The following tables outline an array of sample strategies derived from the actionable items generated from listening session participants that are aimed at enhancing arts education in public schools.

M-AAA can evaluate these strategies and consider alignment with its mission and vision and engage with key stakeholders to gather further insights and perspectives on how to best refine the strategies. By fostering ongoing dialogue and collaboration, M-AAA can ensure it adds value to arts education in the region that is effective and relevant to the communities it serves.

Actionable Data

ARTICULATE A RESEARCH AGENDA (GAPS)

Discover if graduates remain/return to communities with arts and culture

REPORT ON KEY INDICATORS ANNUALLY

Determine state compliance with statutory requirements
Monitoring of individual student progress
Support data dashboards in every state

FACILITATE DATA SHARING AND RESEARCH

Foster connects between state agencies and city orgs to track access
Support cost sharing for state DOE data personnel
Support data analysis

Collective Impact & Coordinated Efforts

COORDINATE AND LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS

Build state coalitions
Connect state agencies and city orgs for tracking access
Consortium funding approach
Convene with the UNusual suspects
Create volunteer engagement portals
Engage collaboratives at community foundations
Engage with SEDAE
Join Arts Education Partnership
Join Grantmakers for Education
Partner with schools/states to close gaps in access

IMPACT POLICY AT STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS

A forum for (non-arts) educational leaders to share insights
Arts caucuses
Co-fund DOE Fine Arts coordinator
Dashboard training for teachers
Easy on demand advocate training
Elevate arts education's importance with school leaders
Focus on elementary schools
Increase state advocacy personnel
Legislative watchdog
Model legislation for arts ed
Prepare for end of ESSER funds
Support PAC(s)

USE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

Listen to communities and what is needed
Model trust-based philanthropy
Plan to prevent disruptions from turnover in DOE staff and schools
Prioritize elementary access and participation rates
Products/services to meet state ed priorities, school needs
Publish, share, and utilize data for improvement
Replicate NE Cultural Endowment
Replicate TCT Medal of Arts
Share equitable grantmaking best practices
Share learning/outcomes from grant-funded initiatives

Empowering Educators

IMPROVE POLICY, LEADERSHIP AND VISIBILITY

- Arts questions on candidate surveys
- Creative schools designation incentives
- Engage arts partners with superintendent searches
- Enhance requirements
- Evaluation, strategic & operational planning for orgs
- Link arts ed with career pathways
- Link incentives to region/state progress
- Prizes for best practices
- Recruit art teachers & teaching artists
- Safeguard art programs before teacher retirements
- Set best practice of program design so there's no need to evaluate every program

PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: ARTISTS

- Teaching artist guild
- Access DOL programs for summer/year-round apprenticeships
- Bilingual, multilingual teaching methods
- Bridge the language gap between teachers and teaching artists
- Equip non-educators with relevant training
- Grow our own, recruit BIPOC artists for TAs w support to retain

PROMOTE ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- Aid educators in securing flexible grant funds and/or match
- Arts lessons for post-Covid mental health needs
- Database for grants for supplies, theater equipment
- Facilitate field trips/ virtual accessible to all
- Help teachers access Title IV for PD
- High quality instructional materials
- Improve equity in distribution of grants
- Make scholastic awards free for students
- Navigators to get programs in schools

PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: TEACHERS

- Boot camp for new teachers
- Bridge the language gap between teachers and teaching artists
- Easy, on-demand PD
- Engage with early childhood programs, Head Start
- PD for teaching art and technology
- Scale vital teacher training to advance educational programs
- Summer PD where absent
- Teacher dashboard trainings

Rural Focus

COORDINATE THE REGION BY COUNTY

- Build teacher corps from residents to support the local economy
- Help districts, schools, teachers access resources
- Join Partners for Rural Impact
- Targeted advocacy as opposed to statewide messages
- Train graduates from rural districts to speak to school boards
- Use intermediaries more

PROVIDE RESOURCES TO BUILD CAPACITY

- Connect resources with local needs and priorities
- Relevant PD
- Rural teaching artist roster development
- Supplies and equipment
- Tools for one art/music teacher serving an entire district
- Training and tools for non-arts teachers

PROVIDE DIRECT SERVICES

- Curriculum standards, instructional materials appropriate to small schools
- Distance learning and virtual visiting artists and experiences
- Recruited teachers and teaching artists

Strategic Communication

BUILD LIBRARY OF TARGETED MESSAGES

- Align messaging with state priorities, emerging school needs
- Branding tools for data
- Call to action messaging for local and state leaders
- Local/state customizable messaging for volunteers/advocates
- Message arts as for everyone, not elite
- Message the value of fine arts graduation credit
- Messaging for HR professionals for recruiting from BIPOC communities
- Messaging for school guidance counselors
- Messaging toolkits that are up to date and readily available
- Position arts ed as the latest and greatest innovation
- The value and versatility of art courses for technical careers

LEAD STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

- Convey arts education impact to legislators without firsthand experience
- Report access gaps to legislators
- Show the data, graphs, results
- Use associations to test and distribute messaging

BUILD SKILLS IN COMMUNICATIONS

- Be sure communications is informed by relevant expertise
- Connect people with data resources
- Crisis communications preparation
- Help arts field see themselves as a community
- Help people in arts ed see themselves as a group
- People need to see themselves in messaging
- Training to effectively communicate with partners

LEARNING FROM MODEL INITIATIVES

ANY GIVEN CHILD^{xxvii, xxviii}

The "Any Given Child" program is an arts education initiative developed by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, also known as the Kennedy Center, situated in Washington, D.C. This program's primary goal is to ensure that every child in a participating community has access to a high-quality arts education during their K-8 years. Among the 28 communities in the United States that have embraced the Any Given Child program, four are located in the M-AAA region: Springfield, Missouri; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Austin and Houston, Texas.

The Any Given Child initiative encompasses two distinct phases of activity. The initial phase, lasting from ten months to one year, is referred to as the Strategic Planning Phase. In the initial steps of this phase, the Community Arts Team (CAT), established during the application process, convenes for the first time. Throughout this phase, Kennedy Center staff and consultants visit the community on a monthly basis to facilitate CAT meetings, offer ongoing support and technical assistance via phone and email, and grant access to resources and materials developed by the Kennedy Center, as well as other Any Given Child sites.

Upon the completion of the Strategic Planning Phase, the community enters the Implementation Phase. During this stage, the CAT may either disband or transform into another oversight group. This group assumes responsibility for implementing long-term goals aimed at enhancing access and equity in arts education programs and resources for K-8 students. The Implementation Committee takes charge of decisions regarding the procurement of resources to support the Any Given Child initiative, including funding, staffing, communications, advocacy, and marketing. Throughout the Implementation Phase, the Kennedy Center remains available to offer consultation and advice to the sites, with this support continuing for up to an additional three years.

Any Given Child communities have identified seven key outcomes resulting from their involvement in the Kennedy Center's initiative:

1. Increased Student Access
2. Establishment of a Strong Data Foundation
3. Development of a Shared Community Vision and a Commitment to Action
4. Collective Impact
5. Enhanced Capacity
6. Improved Ability to Secure Support
7. Growth of a National Network

Thanks to the successful partnership with Tulsa Public Schools, all 28,000 K-8 students have the opportunity to participate in Any Given Child trips each year.

In its 10th year, the Austin Creative Learning Initiative (CLI), a nationally recognized, community-wide partnership among the Austin Independent School District, MINDPOP, the city of Austin and more than 200 community arts partners is embedded in 90+ schools, serving 3,500 educators and 50,000 students.

CALIFORNIA BALLOT INITIATIVE^{xxix}

On November 8, 2022, Californians overwhelmingly passed Proposition 28, which will bring a windfall of arts education funding to California schools. Prop. 28 will provide about \$1 billion each year in funding to California public schools, so all 6 million students in pre-K through 12th grade can participate in arts and music at school. Advocates say the investment is long overdue, as arts education has declined in most districts — particularly those in low-income areas — for decades. While the state requires arts education in grades one to six and a year of arts education in high school, it's up to districts to decide how to fund and implement it. The result has been an inconsistent patchwork of arts programs that leave many children with little exposure to music, dance, art and other creative forms of expression.

Create CA used information from the Arts Education Data Project to help convince voters to support the proposition. Create CA advocates for high-quality arts education for all students by providing policy expertise and mobilizing a statewide network of advocates and allied partners. Their website has information and facts, links to research, a page that helps people speak out (by telling them how to contact school leaders and share their thoughts), a page that gives simple ways to support the cause (like talking to school boards, download social media messaging and taking online advocate training), and a shop where you can buy things with pro arts education messaging.

Proposition 28 funds will be distributed according to enrollment, with 70% based on overall enrollment and 30% based on Title 1 enrollment. In all, districts will receive an additional 1% of their funding allotment to spend on the arts. School boards must certify districts' Prop. 28 budgets annually, post the expenses on the district's website and submit the information to the state Department of Education, where it will be available to the public. Schools must spend 80% of the money on teachers and aides, which should help alleviate California's teacher shortage, with the remainder of the funds earmarked for art supplies and materials.

GEORGIA START GRANT^{xxx}

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) allocated Title IV, Part A funds for the stART Grant, which is a GaDOE-administered, grant for up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) used to create and/or develop arts initiatives that support arts education and significantly increase student access to the arts during the school day. The arts initiatives developed as a result of stART funds are directly tied to fine arts standards, and sustainable, lasting beyond the grant period.

The purpose of the stART grants is to assist rural schools and districts in creating and developing arts initiatives that support quality arts education programs that significantly improve student access to the arts. This Request for Application (RFA) is specifically for the creation of new arts programs or the expansion of existing arts programs in rural Georgia. stART grants provide one-time funds to help provide arts programs in schools and systems that currently are lacking fine arts as a fundamental aspect of access to a well-rounded education. Successful proposals must demonstrate that the applicant will increase existing arts learning and sustain arts learning in future years. Eligible stART Grant applicants are public school local

educational agencies (LEA) and charter LEAs that are eligible for the Federal Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP—Title V, Part B) as identified by RLIS or SRSA eligibility report from the U.S. Department of Education.

NEBRASKA INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS COLLABORATIVE^{xxxix}

Every Nebraska student deserves the opportunity to learn from high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials to prepare for success in college, career, and civic life. Through the Nebraska Instructional Materials Collaborative, the Nebraska Department of Education and key partners are committed to providing statewide leadership that informs and supports the decisions made locally related to curriculum and instructional materials for English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies.

Rubrics have been developed to support educators in evaluating the quality of lessons and full-year sets of instructional materials. The EQUiP rubric and the IMET tool are examples of tools that are used to determine the quality of instructional materials.

The Nebraska Instructional Materials Collaborative utilizes EdReports, an independent, nonprofit designed specifically to help teachers, administrators, and leaders to seek, identify, and demand the highest-quality instructional materials. They work with expert educators from around the country to conduct evidence-based reviews of instructional materials and publish their findings to inform local decision making.

Guidance documents and resources included in the Nebraska Instructional Materials Collaborative inform and support local decision making by ensuring instructional materials meet Nebraska's expectations for quality and alignment.

The Nebraska Instructional Materials Collaborative features resources and professional development for instructional materials aligned to Nebraska's English Language Arts Standards and Nebraska's College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics. Eventually, resources will be added for science and social studies.

PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE OF LEARNING^{xxxix}

The Partnership for the Future of Learning comprises a varied network of 700 leaders in the education and social justice fields, hailing from more than 300 organizations and 20 foundations. The collective effort aims to advocate for policies that enhance this system, while highlighting schools that prioritize rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning opportunities for all students.

The initiative focuses on changing the conversation surrounding public education without trying to directly reform school systems. Working in the systems is incredibly complex and challenging and requires a readiness of personnel and working at many different levels of the system. There are many obstacles, and you most often get ephemeral changes that happen for a time. The PFL strategy involves highlighting noteworthy models and diffusing information through a network. As a strategic consideration, PFL is capitalizing on pockets of energy for potentially more enduring outcomes.

Film and video projects played a role in this endeavor early on. A collection of short films and mini documentaries related to schools, education, and community were curated for sharing via a dedicated website. While some of these projects were financially supported (approximately 20), the majority (around 80 or 90) were sourced through partnerships. The challenge of altering narratives to align with prevailing education viewpoints and competing for attention within a crowded information landscape was evident. Despite attempts to saturate the narrative with stories, high costs and the need for cohesiveness prompted PFL to move away from film and into a spokesperson strategy, a journalism strategy, and an influencer strategy.

PARTNERS FOR RURAL IMPACT^{xxxiii}

Partners for Rural Impact was born out of our place-based partnership in Appalachia, where they have worked for 25 years to create student opportunity and success. They learned that creating sustainable change in rural places means holding multiple roles. It means running programs, building civic infrastructure, developing local capacity and long-lasting partnerships.

Through place-based partnerships, PRI implements programs, supports local leaders, shifts state and local policy, and increases funding to move population-level outcomes in rural places. PRI builds rural capacity & infrastructure to strengthen leaders, organizations, and schools in under-resourced rural communities by supporting the development of civic infrastructure and increasing access to proven practices through trainings and technical assistance. Working with partners across the country, PRI accelerates equitable systems change by advancing a national rural agenda, increasing public and private funding for rural places, and expanding research on what works in rural America.

Partners for Rural Impact dedicates substantial effort to recruiting and developing regional teaching artists, managing a roster of around 40 artists, soon expanding by approximately 18, mainly from Eastern Kentucky. The students in Eastern Kentucky and the Appalachian region, have fewer opportunities, access to arts education than their peers across the state. Their recruitment emphasizes individuals interested in working with young people, followed by comprehensive training. The organization secured a new grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, establishing the "Appalachian Teaching Artists Fellowship." This initiative provides an immersive professional learning experience, enhancing teaching skills and forging networks within the Appalachian region. The fellowship includes mentorship, training, and practicum experiences in partner schools, with a focus on intensive development. PRI seeks out emerging teaching artists through social media and word of mouth and asking organization partners to share information with their networks. Their approach encourages artists to join their roster, which is less competitive than the Kentucky Arts Council's, and get experience with PRI and then go on to join the Kentucky Arts Council's, expanding their opportunities for work. Their commitment extends to serving the Appalachian region, where they address the scarcity of arts education opportunities. They've also worked with an aging roster of teaching artists, actively seeking emerging artists and providing training. The organization has taken on the administration piece of screening and background checks and offers vetted artists through a directory to schools, reinforcing their dedication to professional development and promoting arts engagement within partner schools.

TEXAS MEDAL OF ARTS AWARD^{xxxiv}

The Texas Cultural Trust spotlights the luminaries and leaders who have achieved excellence through their creative talents, as well as those whose generosity has opened doors to artistic opportunity for Texans of all ages during a star-studded awards show and additional celebratory events. The Texas Medal of Arts is the highest honor given to artists and arts patrons by Texas. Nominees are considered in the following categories: architecture, arts education, arts in health, arts patron (individual or foundation/corporate), dance, design, film, lifetime achievement, fashion, literary arts, media/multimedia, music (performance and songwriter), television, theatre arts, and visual arts.

As the signature fundraising event for the Texas Cultural Trust, the TMAA is a two-day celebration of the power of the arts. Tables for the awards start at \$15,000 and the 2019 awards raise nearly \$1.8 million^{xxxv}. Since 2001, TXCT has presented 129 medals to Texas creatives and those whose generosity has opened doors to artistic opportunities for Texans of all ages. The TMAA raises substantial financial support, visibility, and awareness for the arts and demonstrates how the arts can enhance a child's education, bolster our state's economy, and improve our health, well-being, and way of life.

The TMAA has celebrated numerous influential and talented honorees, including Matthew McConaughey, Miranda Lambert, Luke Wilson, Jamie Foxx, Eva Longoria, ZZ Top, Willie Nelson, Boz Scaggs, Christopher Cross, Taylor Sheridan, Deborah Roberts, Dan Rather, Neiman Marcus, H-E-B, Margaret McDermott, Barbara Smith Conrad, Tommy Lee Jones, Bob Schieffer, Debbie Allen, Robert Rodriguez, James Surls, Walter Cronkite, Eloise and John Paul DeJoria, Tommy Tune, Lawrence Wright, Lake Flato Architects, The Nasher Foundation, Sandra Cisneros, Robert Rauschenberg, Clint Black, Anheuser Busch Companies, Lyle Lovett, Texas Monthly, Robert Edsel, AT&T, and Exxon Mobil, among others.

The Texas Cultural Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and increasing access and awareness for the arts across the state. Programs of the organization include the Texas Medal of Arts Awards, Arts Access, Art Can, Texas Young Masters, Texas Women for the Arts, and Partners in the Arts. Efforts are amplified by supporters who are instrumental in the success of leading a cohesive voice for the arts in education, advocacy and economic impact in Texas, spotlighting the artistic excellence of the state.

FOLLOW-UP MEASURES

In the context of an initiative aimed at enhancing educational experiences across a network of over 17,000 public schools with more than eight million students spanning six states, a systematic and thorough approach is crucial. To ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of these efforts, a set of follow-up measures has been identified:

Engage Team: Recognizing the collective nature of this endeavor, fostering open dialogue within the organization is prioritized. Engaging both the board and staff will facilitate discussions aimed at comprehending the report findings and contributing to well-informed decision-making.

Involve Stakeholders: Acknowledging the broader scope of influence, involving all pertinent stakeholders is integral. Through discussions that include educators, administrators, local communities, and other relevant parties, a diverse array of perspectives will be considered when shaping strategies.

Seek Expertise: Given the multifaceted nature of the mission, seeking guidance from experts in the field is paramount. Their insights will provide validation and offer innovative ideas to augment the impact of the initiatives.

Align Goals: Ensuring alignment with the core mission and values is of utmost importance. An in-depth assessment of the alignment between strategies and overarching goals will ensure a cohesive and purpose-driven approach.

Plan Development: Crafting a well-structured plan is pivotal for navigating the journey effectively. Through this process, strategies that hold the potential for growth and impact will be identified, thereby guiding the path forward.



Incorporating these follow-up measures underscores the commitment to transparency, collaboration, and strategic action. By engaging the team, involving stakeholders, seeking expertise, aligning goals, and crafting comprehensive plans, a robust foundation is established that fosters positive change within the arts educational landscape while fostering a sense of collective accomplishment among all contributors.

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