



ARTS EDUCATION ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

ARIZONA CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS

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Table of Contents

I.	Executive Summary	2
II.	Description of the Initiative	4
	Purpose	
	Goal	
	Why?	
	How?	
	Structure	
	Financial Management: Phase II Expenses and Workplan	
III.	Research for the Initiative	7
	Arts Education in Arizona	
	Best Practices	
	Listening Sessions and Survey Results	
	Steering Committee Meetings	
IV.	Appendix A.....	13
	Best Practices	
V.	Appendix B.....	24
	Listening Sessions and Survey Results	
VI.	Appendix C.....	29
	Steering Committee Meetings	
VII.	Citations.....	33

Executive Summary

Beginning in July 2018, Arizona Citizens for the Arts (AzCA), with the support of the David and Lura Lovell Foundation and the assistance of cSYNERGY, convened a Steering Committee comprised of leaders from across the state to build an Initiative that drives systemic change to ensure Arts Education access and equity for every student in Arizona.

In order to inform the creation of this Initiative, the committee and consultants sought comprehensive input from across the state of Arizona through listening sessions and a survey; conducted interviews with similar organizations across the country; and reviewed literature and studies. The following summarizes the results and makes the case that the Arts are a critical and necessary component of a well-rounded education.

We know the Arts develop creative thinkers who can effectively employ 21st-century, critical-thinking skills with confidence, persistence, and success. In fact, according to “Facts & Figures” from Americans for the Arts, a student who engages in the Arts is four times more likely to be recognized academically, is twice as likely to graduate college, scores nearly 100 points higher on their SATs, and is five times LESS likely to dropout than their peers. Clearly, the Arts are critical.

Overwhelmingly, Arizonans agree that no education is complete without the Arts – nine out of ten, in fact, according to the “Americans Speak Out About The Arts in 2018” study by Americans for the Arts. The consensus among leaders in Arts Education, Arizona communities, and various arts organizations is that for us to drive these outcomes, Arts Education must be:

- a required component of education, available in-school and out-of-school;
- diversified, inclusive, and culturally-relevant in every local community;
- free or affordable to all young people in Arizona; and
- valued by all education stakeholders, including community leaders, elected officials, school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community at large.

However, according to the 2018 Arts Education Data Project, the Arts Education minimum required by the state education code was accessible to only 65% of Arizona students in the 2016 school year. This means that nearly 390,000 students did not have sufficient access to Arts Education. Furthermore, the 2018 Arts Education Data Project revealed that students with the lowest access to the Arts reside in schools with 75% or more free and reduced-price lunches (40%).

Therefore, stakeholders concluded that in order to drive systemic change, the Arts community must form an initiative to:

- advance statewide policies that support quality, equitable Arts Education for all students;
- strengthen, leverage, and expand local programs to increase access to the Arts;
- mobilize and activate stakeholders by generating awareness of the impact and urgency of Arts Education; and
- collaborate with organizations and build asset-based partnerships across the state.

Best practices dictated that in order for this Initiative to be successful, it must:

- develop a unifying vision and agenda with specific, manageable goals to build accountability;
- develop a diversified, sustainable funding model with support from various funding sources;
- create a highly-collaborative process with characteristics of a collective impact model;
- select a reputable organization to drive the Initiative with a paid staff member to lead it; and
- recruit participation by individuals and organizations invested in Arts Education – including, but not limited to parents, teachers, students, administrators, policymakers, community members, and political influencers– to mobilize and advance locally-relevant policy initiatives.

Next, AzCA will embark on Phase II, which will require the following:

1. host, with the assistance of the Steering Committee, one to two sessions to provide key stakeholders with the opportunity to learn about the plans for the Initiative, provide feedback, and encourage buy-in, ensuring that the Initiative is relevant and recruiting additional support;
2. hire a staff member to drive the Initiative housed within AzCA in order to ensure its sustainability;

3. complete an asset map of the Arizona Arts Education ecosystem, identifying opportunities for partnerships and collaborations, as well as prioritizing critical policy needs and initiatives;
4. develop partnerships that align with the Initiative and drive its purpose and goal;
5. collaborate within local communities to advance policy initiatives;
6. create a marketing and branding strategy that build the advocacy base;
7. recruit a larger advocacy base so that the Initiative itself is accessible, equitable, and culturally-relevant; and
8. motivate coordinated action to advance policy initiatives, such as the State Seal for Arts Proficiency and the A-F Report Card.

These will be the next steps to ensuring that *every young person has equitable access to a meaningful, high-quality K-12 Arts Education until every child consistently participates in an equitable and culturally-relevant Arts Education because the Arts are valued as a crucial contributor to achieving a successful future for Arizona.*

Description of the Initiative

Purpose

Drive systemic change in Arizona that ensures every young person has equitable access to a meaningful, high-quality K-12 Arts Education.

Goal

Every child consistently participates in an equitable and culturally-relevant Arts Education because the Arts are valued as a crucial contributor to achieving a successful future for Arizona.

Why?

The Arts are Essential and Enhance our Lives.

The Arts are essential to human development and enhance our life and well-being. Participation in the Arts lead to personal transformation through avenues of expression, emotional connection, and the creative process.

The Arts are Integral to a Well-Rounded Education.

The Arts are an equal and integral component of a balanced Education to produce people that are activated, successful, and resilient in our society.

The Arts are Inclusive and Culturally-Relevant.

Participation in the Arts are the right of every individual. The Arts reflect, challenge, and affirm the cultural values of the local community.

How?

The Initiative will drive the work in three areas to ensure that every Arizona child participates in an equitable and culturally-relevant Arts Education.

Education: Convince others of the compelling need for the Initiative by educating the community about the importance and value of Arts Education.

Connection: Perform strategic outreach and recruit more individuals and organizations, so that our Initiative reflects the geography, demographics, culture, and art forms of our state.

Advocacy: Mobilize our advocacy base to advance Arts Education policy initiatives in order to ensure access and equity for every Arizona student.

First Steps:

- Complete an asset map of the Arizona Arts Education ecosystem (including funding and pathways for action) in order to identify opportunities for partnerships and collaborations to recruit additional support, prioritize critical policy needs, and successfully mobilize to advance policy initiatives;
- develop partnerships that drive the Initiative's purpose and align with our goals;
- collaborate within local communities to advance policy initiatives (strategically based on the results of the asset map);
- create a marketing and branding strategy with unifying, consistent messaging and toolkits that build our advocacy base;
- recruit a larger advocacy base to the Initiative so that the Initiative itself is accessible, equitable, and culturally-relevant (informed by the asset map); and
- lead and motivate coordinated action to advance policy initiatives, such as the State Seal for Arts Proficiency and the A-F Report Card.

Structure

The Initiative will hire a staff member to drive the Initiative and will be housed within Arizona Citizens for the Arts (AzCA) in order to ensure its sustainability. AzCA will ensure Arts Education access and equity in Arizona by securing funding for the Initiative and driving the Initiative’s purpose, goal, and priorities.

This Initiative will be structured with multiple tiers to foster participation at various levels. Essentially, the Staff and Leadership Council make decisions for the Effort; work with Collaborators and Advisors, Influencers, & Funders to mobilize to advance policy initiatives, solicit input, and secure funding; and hire Consultants for discreet projects, as-needed.

Staff and Leadership Council: individuals driving the work, including one staff member to lead the Effort and the Leadership Council to advise the staff member and assist in execution and mobilization.

Collaborators: additional organizations invested in Arts Education, who will provide input and mobilize as needed to support the Effort’s policy initiatives

Advisors, Influencers, & Funders: key individuals or organizations with particular expertise, access to resources, and/or political influence who will support the Effort by providing input, sharing resources, and mobilizing, as needed.

Consultants: individuals contracted with the Effort on an as-needed basis for evaluations, surveys, marketing and communication collateral, etc.

AzCA has already collaborated with a number of Arts leaders in communities across Arizona to develop an Initiative that is relevant and encourages buy-in. AzCA is currently working on securing funding for the next phase. As the Initiative evolves, AzCA will remain flexible to respond to the needs of the communities and also grow stronger as a leader for the Initiative.

Financial Management: Phase II Expenses and Workplan

In the next year, the Initiative is focused on securing approximately \$100,000 funds to:

- hire a staff member to lead the Initiative (\$50,000);
- complete asset mapping of the Arizona Arts ecosystem (\$25,000); and
- create a marketing strategy to recruit additional members to the Initiative, build the advocacy base, and advance policy initiatives – complete with developing all necessary printed and electronic toolkits and collateral (\$25,000).

This amount is detailed in the Start-Up Expenses Chart:

Start-Up Expenses

Salaries (part-time staff member)	\$25,000
Rent/Space	N/A
Equipment/Machinery Required:	\$1,000
<i>Computer hardware, software</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>
Insurance	N/A
Branding	\$25,000
<i>Marketing</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>Webpage on AzCA site</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>
<i>Collateral</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>
Additional Consulting Fees	\$25,000
Total Startup Expenses	\$75,000

Phase II Workplan

This workplan outlines the anticipated actions for Phase II in addition to the desired outcomes, timeline for completion, lead responsible for the action, and estimated budget.

Action	Desired Outcome	Timeline	Lead	Budget
Host sessions with key stakeholders.	Secure funding and engage key individuals with particular expertise, access to resources, and/or political influence as supporters and participants the Initiative in Phase II.	4/2019 – 7/2019	AzCA	Included in Phase I Budget
Hire a staff member to drive the Initiative.	Recruit a staff member to lead the Initiative’s success and sustainability.	7/2019 – 9/2019	AzCA	Included in AzCA Budget
Lead the Initiative housed at AzCA.	Continue to cultivate funding and drive the Initiative’s purpose, goal, and priorities.	Beginning 9/2019	Part-Time Staff Member	\$25,000
Develop partnerships.	Cultivate partnerships that align with the Initiative and drive its purpose and goal.			
Collaborate with local communities.	Identify and pursue critical policy initiatives that are locally-relevant and align with the Initiative.			
Recruit a larger advocacy base.	The Initiative itself is accessible, equitable, and culturally-relevant.			
Lead and motivate coordinated action.	Advance policy initiatives, such as the State Seal for Arts Proficiency and the A-F Report Card.			
Complete an asset map of the Arizona Arts Education ecosystem.	Opportunities for partnerships and collaborations identified; prioritize critical policy needs and initiatives.	9/2019 – 1/2020	Consultant	\$25,000
Create a marketing and branding strategy.	Build an advocacy base that is motivated to mobilize around policy initiatives and support the Initiative’s goals.	1/2020 – 6/2020	Consultant	\$25,000
Total				\$75,000

Research for the Initiative

Arts Education in Arizona

The research supports that the Arts develop creative thinkers who can effectively employ 21st-century, critical-thinking skills with confidence, persistence, and success. In fact, a student who engages in the Arts is four times more likely to be recognized academically, is twice as likely to graduate college, scores nearly 100 points higher on their SATs, and is five times LESS likely to dropout than their peers (“Facts & Figures” from Americans for the Arts). No Education is complete without the Arts.

Overwhelmingly, Arizonans agree: nine out of ten supported that the Arts are part of a well-rounded Education, according to a study by Americans for the Arts; however, the minimum in Arts Education as required by the state education code was accessible to only 65% of Arizona students in the 2016 school year (the 2018 Arts Education Data Project). This means that nearly 390,000 students did not have sufficient access to Arts Education. Alarming, this number represents a decrease in access by 20% when compared to the year prior.

While we know that the Arts are crucial and while Arizonans overwhelmingly support Arts Education, the Arts are becoming increasingly less accessible to our Arizona students, especially our minority and low-income students. The 2018 Arts Education Data Project revealed that students with the lowest access to the Arts reside in schools with 75% or more free and reduced-price lunches. In these schools, 40% of students do not have access to the Arts (whereas, in schools with a low-percentage of free and reduced-price lunches, only 13% do not have access). Additionally, “Facts & Figures” from Americans for the Arts asserts that “African-American and Hispanic students had less than half of the access to the Arts Education of their White peers.”

This is not unique to the Arts. Across subjects, these students are impacted by unconscious bias that “perpetuates socio-economic, gender, and racial gaps in Educational outcomes...among historically disadvantaged and underrepresented groups such as low-income and racial-minority students” (“Unconscious Bias in the Classroom: Evidence and Opportunities,” Dee, & Gershenson, 2017).

As explain by Arizona Department of Education, education needs to reflect “Culturally Inclusive Practices” and “must address the diverse needs of our population in a manner which respects cultural traditions, raises achievement of all students, and builds future citizens prepared to positively participate in our society” (p. 4). To address the issues of equity and access, formal Arts Education needs to be expanded beyond Eurocentric Arts forms to become inclusive and locally-relevant, so that every student can see themselves in the Arts. Arts Education needs to honor every student with inclusive programs that reflect the local cultures in every community. Arizona needs to provide a free, quality Arts Education that is inclusive and diverse for all Arizona students.

Our local communities are leading that charge. Across the state, local Arizona communities are offering and/or advocating for culturally-relevant Arts opportunities. Many students are involved in local, accessible Arts opportunities. In a survey distributed by ckSYNERGY in 2018, Arizonans identified 141 distinct funders, locations, and programs that are engaged in the Arts in their local communities through school programs, Arts integration, after-school programs, community events or spaces, or informal family opportunities.

Since local communities are already working to achieve culturally-relevant Arts Education access and equity, the Initiative is committed to working collaboratively across the state of Arizona to drive *systemic change that ensures every young person has access to a meaningful, high-quality, and equitable K-12 Arts Education*. The Initiative will strengthen communities’ existing, effective efforts and advance policy initiatives that support Arts Education access and equity in our state so that *every child consistently participates in an equitable and culturally-relevant Arts Education because the Arts are valued as a crucial contributor to achieving a successful future for Arizona*.

Best Practices

The Initiative studied existing, mature Arts Education advocacy organizations across the country to gather advice and compile a list of best practices for the Initiative. In total, eight individuals were interviewed:

- Donna Russell – Executive Director, Alabama Arts Alliance
- Ann Marie Miller – Director of Advocacy & Public Policy, ArtPride New Jersey
- Tim Katz – Executive Director, Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE); Representative Director, Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA)
- Marna Stalcup – Director of Arts Education, Regional Arts & Culture Council and Right Brain Initiative
- Patricia Wayne – Program Director, Create CA
- Joe Landon – Executive Director, California Alliance for Arts Education
- Leiland Theriot – Executive Director, Florida Alliance for Arts Education (FAAE)
- Sarah Triplett – Director of Public Policy, Creative Many Michigan

In order to be effective, these interviews shared that the Arizona Initiative needs to:

- encourage engagement and provide varied levels for participation within the Initiative;
- communicate regularly and ensure that the Initiative adds value to each participant;
- develop a common, unifying agenda with specific, manageable goals to build accountability and engagement;
- elect a backbone organization to drive the Initiative, hire a paid staff member to lead the Initiative, and recruit a leadership council to help with decision-making and implementation;
- obtain funding from varied sources, including individual donors, the state, public and private grants, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Title I, and/or earned income;
- ensure the Initiative’s goals are relevant and cultivate ownership by soliciting input for the Initiative’s priorities from organizations invested in Arts Education, local community members, parents, teachers, students, and individuals with particular expertise, resources, and/or political influence;
- recruit the same individuals to mobilize and advance policy initiatives;
- consider a collective impact model; and
- remember that systems-change work is a slow process that requires trust through building strong relationships among the Initiatives participants.

More detailed information can be found in Appendix A.

Listening Sessions and Survey Results

The Initiative facilitated listening sessions and administered an online survey to gather input from communities across Arizona to determine the need for Arts Education advocacy and determine how it is currently accomplished in Arizona. The data from the survey and listening sessions, revealed that the participants from 41 communities in Arizona believe that the Arts improves quality of life and is a spiritual process that involves the body, mind, spirit; saves cities (destroying books and art has destroyed great cities); and is a universal language that includes diverse populations and connects people.

Additionally, the communities shared that Arts Education:

- develops 21st century skills, creative thinking, and the right brain;
- promotes personal development and social, emotional, and mental well-being;
- creates a space where students feel safe and accepted;
- helps students excel academically;
- promotes student collaboration, teamwork, and cooperation;
- strengthens and unites the community;
- forms healthy student bonds and cultivates friendships;
- embraces diversity and cultural awareness;
- beautifies communities, classrooms, and cultures;
- expands students' worldview and broadens their perspectives;
- builds confidence and resilience;
- creates well-rounded students and responsible, engaged citizens
- empowers special needs students; and
- increases school graduation-rates.

Furthermore, the communities imagined that Arts Education could be:

- collaborative (Arts organizations and the community working together to “work smarter, not harder”);
- in the community, bringing everyone together with an accessible, annual event (“a week of art”);
- accessible and equitable for every student in every school, starting in pre-school;
- well-funded and supported in the community by everyone (even fiscally conservative);
- the reason for youth to stay (in school, in the community, home);
- valued like all other subjects, sports, and STEM; and
- happening during natural-opportunities (parent-teacher school nights, in the city, in businesses and restaurants, cross-institutional celebration).

The communities provided a series of suggestions for the Initiative. First, the community envisioned the ideal future for Arts Education and asserted that:

- the Arts should be a required component of Education;
- all Arts should be viewed equally (diversification of offerings in school);
- the Arts should be free or affordable to everyone in the community;
- the Arts should be seen as a career path;
- Arts Education should be valued by leadership, schools, teachers, students, the community at large; and
- a quality Arts Education should be available and accessible to every student in and out of school.

The communities also made three recommendations, suggesting that Arizona Arts Education needs:

1. a group of individuals or organizations that focuses on advocacy for equity and access and building collaboration within the Arts community;

2. sufficient resources, adequate space, and additional funding by schools/administration and both federal and state government/politicians (survey respondents identified 114 locations, funders, and programs); and
3. to build a marketing campaign and strategy to:
 - communicate the value and impact of the Arts on students and the community to generate buy-in from parents, students, teachers, and leadership;
 - make the public more-aware of Arts opportunities in their communities in order to create personal connections to the Arts (demonstrate value);
 - convince each city that the Arts = money; and
 - create a website with a clear message and call-to-action.

Finally, the communities identified resources, locations, and programs critical for Arts Education:

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FUNDERS	MENTIONS	PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FUNDERS	MENTIONS	PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FUNDERS	MENTIONS
ABODA	1	COOLIDGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER FOUNDATION	1	PHOENIX SYMPHONY	1
ACA	2	DEL E. WEBB CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS	1	PHOENIX ZOO	1
ACE	1	DESERT ARTISTS OF YUMA	1	PRESCOTT JAZZ SUMMIT	1
ACT ONE	2	DESERT CABALLEROS WESTERN MUSEUM	1	ROMERO HOUSE POTTERS	1
ADE (OFFICE OF ARTS EDUCATION)	3	DICK BLICKS	1	ROSIES HOUSE	1
AFA	1	DOWNTOWN PHOENIX	1	SCOTTSDALE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART	1
AMEA	1	FLAGSTAFF ARTS COUNCIL	1	SCULPTURE RESOURCE CENTER	1
ARIZONA CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS	2	FLAGSTAFF MUSIC THEATRE	1	SEDONA ARTS CENTER	3
ARIZONA COMMISSION ON THE ARTS	5	FLAGSTAFF SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	1	SEDONA ARTS FESTIVAL	1
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY	2	FREE ARTS FESTIVALS	1	SEDONA VISUAL ARTISTS COALITION	1
ARIZONA STEAM SHOP	1	FREE ARTS FOR ABUSED CHILDREN	1	STARLIGHT COMMUNITY THEATER	1
ARIZONA WESTERN COLLEGE	1	FRIENDS OF MUSIC	1	TEMPE ARTS CENTER	2
ARTISAN VILLAGE	1	GARDENS FOR HUMANITY	2	TEMPE LIBRARY COMPLEX	1
ATC	1	GILBERT PUBLIC SCHOOLS - MUSIC PROGRAMS	1	TEMPE SCHOOL DISTRICT	1
AWC	1	HEARD MUSEUM	1	THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	2
AZ OPERA	1	HIGHLAND LAKES ELEMENTARY	1	THE LIVING ROOM	1
AZDEO	1	JCC	1	THE ROCK	1
AZGM	1	LITTLEWOOD FINE ARTS AND COMMUNITY CO-OP	5	THE SAGRADO GALLERIA	1
BALLET AZ	1	LTW	1	THEATRICKOS	1
BALLET YUMA	1	MARICOPA ARTS COUNCIL	1	TITLE 4A	2
BICAS	1	MARY FISHER THEATER	1	TMA	1
BLACK BOX FOUNDATION	3	MESA ARTS CENTER	6	TRANSCANADA	1
BOTANICAL GARDENS	1	MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1	TREASURE FOR TEACHERS	1
CASA GRANDE CITY COUNCIL	1	MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MUSEUM	3	TSO	1
CCUSD	1	NAFME	1	TUCSON CLAY COOP	1
CENTER FOR THE ARTS	1	NORTH END	1	TUCSON SYMPHONY	1
CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE COMMUNITY BAND AND CHOIR	1	NORTH VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	3	TUSD	1
CG ART ASSOATION	1	NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSTIY'S ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DANCE	1	UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA	4
CG ART MUSEUM	1	NORTHERN ARIZONA WATER COLOR SOCIETY	1	UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA SCHOOL OF MUSIC	1
CG ARTS AND HUMANITIES COMMISSION	1	OMA	1	WEST VALLEY SYMPHONY	1
CG CREATIVE COMMUNITIES GRANT	1	OSBORN SCHOOL DISTRICT - MUSIC AND ARTS CLASSES	1	WICKENBURG CHILDREN'S CULTURAL ORGANIZATION	1
CG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	PARAMOUNT FOUNDATION	1	XERACRAFT	1
CHANDLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS	2	PARKS AND RECREATION	4	YOUNG ARTS OF ARIZONA	1
CHILDSPLAY THEATRE	2	PCC	1	YOUTH CHOIRS (PHX BOYS, GIRLS, CHILDREN'S CHOIRS)	1
CITY OF PEORIA	1	PEORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	1	YUMA AREA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION	1
CITY OF SEDONA	1	PHOENIX ART MUSEUM	5	YUMA ART SYMPOSIUM (TOMKINS POTTERY)	2
CITY OF TEMPE GRANTS	1	PHOENIX CENTER FOR THE ARTS	3	YUMA COMMUNITY THEATRE	1
CITY OF YUMA (THE YUMA ART CENTER)	6	PHOENIX CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	1	YUMA COUNTY LIBRARIES ART PROGRAMS AND EXHIBITIONS	1

More detailed information can be found in Appendix B.

Steering Committee Meetings

With the support of David and Lura Lovell Foundation and the assistance of ckSYNERGY, AzCA assembled a Steering Committee comprised of leaders across the state of Arizona. Beginning in July 2018, the Steering Committee worked in groups to share key themes in regard to the current landscape and the ideal for Arts Education in Arizona.

The Steering Committee identified the following strengths in their communities:

- Some school districts have strong Arts Education programs.
- Additional Arts Education school programs are offered (i.e. – after school programs, integrated programs, dance in high school, and free-play, open-ended programs).
- The state, Arts organizations, local artists, local businesses, and cultural institutions collaborate to provide Arts Education and needed resources or act as “bridge organizations” to fill the gaps.
- Additional support/leadership opportunities exist: intern programs for credentialing, colleges and universities certificate programs, leadership connections, and professional development at state, district, and national levels.
- Youth have representation in the Arts via peer-to-peer learning, technology, online/social media (self-curated and self-directed), and student art show/gallery openings.
- The Arts have a presence in the community at events (i.e. Día de los Muertos), rec centers and libraries, private studios, and youth mariachi; folklife is happening formally and informally with families (not codified).
- Common use of federal Title I and Title IV-A funds to support arts education programs and arts educators.

The Steering Committee expressed the following concerns regarding Arts Education in their communities:

- Collaboration and integration are not consistent; some do it better than others (i.e. – NPOs and schools collaborate for the Title IVA grant, but there is a lack of collaboration with mid/large Arts organizations).
- There is a lack of equity and inclusiveness in Arts Education; issues with equity of resources (i.e. – professional development).
- Not-for-profit (NFP) and charter schools need to have better reporting and accountability for grant funds.
- Many gaps in Arts Education exist: not enough art teachers, curriculum doesn't prepare for the future and is Eurocentric, and drama and dance aren't included for elementary.
- Arts Education is not prioritized in all schools or districts: food insecurity is the focus, art is at the bottom of the list and viewed as a luxury/elective; low registration results in cancelled classes (creating a domino effect), but high registration doesn't result in more resources.
- Need a method/process for to assess arts achievement in schools and hold arts education programs accountable for meeting quality standards, need to have consistent data collection.
- The impact of Arts Education isn't readily tangible; too much time is spent trying to prove Arts with others' metrics and by linking it to other curriculum; need to organize around a common vision, compelling definition, and consistent messaging to make Arts part of the larger Education narrative.

The Steering Committee shared what they believe to be the value of Arts Education:

- Positive influences on critical thinking, problem solving, school culture, brains development, motivation, self-confidence, attendance, healing/humanity/self-agency, academic achievement, creativity, innovation, resilience, and the economy.
- Arts Education gives students a sense of hope, joy, and purpose, as well as encourages empathy, tolerance, open-mindedness, and mental health.
- Arts Education helps students learn who they are (part of the standards) and is a 21st century skill (STEAM); it increases graduation rates, allows students to grapple with ambiguity, and teaches artistic literacy; it engages all types of learners and “provides an opportunity for divergent thinking that can be applied to a convergent experience.”

- The Arts promote a global understanding of people and culture, social justice, the passing on of heritage, collaboration, the economy, tourism, and entrepreneurship; it creates well-rounded and engaged citizens, a place for beauty, a safe space, and a sense of pride; the Arts make the invisible, visible.

Finally, the Steering Committee envisioned the ideal for Arts Education:

- Arts Education is valued by all stakeholders and a network of advocates support one another.
- Arts Education is a part of the core curriculum (A-F report card and even A.P opportunities) with a fine Arts seal for graduation; assessments include all disciplines and Arts Education has a measurement for success.
- Arts Education advocates have a universal message to appeal to a broader audience and a strategy to get there; Arts Education has a voice in larger Education organizations and the community at large, with an economic development narrative tied to the Arts.
- Standards for educators demonstrate competency with state-approved assessments that are rigorous, project-based, and reviewed by teacher (as an alternative to portfolio performance).
- All students have access to Arts Education, regardless of economics; funding is consistent and equitable across schools and districts.
- Arts Education extends outside the boundaries of school: teachers/schools are connected to organizations and each community's Arts Education program is relevant to their identities; the link between vitality and the Arts is established. Arts Education is integrated into who we are.

More detailed information can be found in Appendix C.

Appendix A

Best Practices

Introduction

ckSYNERGY studied existing, mature Arts Education advocacy organizations to gather advice and determine:

- the history of what prompted the formation of similar organizations and the origination of that impetus;
- the typical organizational structure (including partnership, board, and governance models; and the role of advocacy work);
- the recommended systems for internal communication, the structure/frequency of meetings, process for decision-making, and methods for keep members engaged, motivated, and accountable;
- best potential funding sources for advocacy work, suggestions for ensuring sustainability, and hurdles to anticipate or avoid;
- the best approaches to successfully influence policy initiatives;
- any additional recommendations that these organizations may offer.

ckSYNERGY conducted interviews with the following individuals/organizations:

Donna Russell – Executive Director, Alabama Arts Alliance

The mission of the Alabama Arts Alliance is to increase public awareness of and engagement in the Arts. It is a statewide partnership program of the Alabama State Council on the Arts and a member of Americans for the Arts.

Ann Marie Miller – Director of Advocacy & Public Policy, ArtPride New Jersey

ArtPride New Jersey advances, promotes and advocates for the Arts as essential to the quality of life of every citizen and to the economic vitality of our state. ArtPride New Jersey, Inc. was instrumental in saving the Arts from elimination in the NJ state budget in 2003 and advocating for a dedicated state revenue source for Arts, history and tourism through the NJ Hotel/Motel Occupancy Fee. Since then ArtPride New Jersey continues to protect public Arts support through grassroots advocacy Initiatives. The ArtPride New Jersey Foundation was incorporated in 1996 as the Educational arm of ArtPride New Jersey, Inc. The ArtPride New Jersey Foundation's work focuses outside of Arts related legislation to more broadly promote the value of the Arts to New Jersey's quality of life, Education and economic vitality.

Tim Katz – Executive Director, Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE); Representative Director, Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA)

Ohio Alliance for Arts Education's mission is to ensure that the Arts are an integral part of the Education of every Ohioan. The statewide Arts Education service organization was founded in 1974 and has evolved over time into a nationally recognized leader in Arts Education. Much of the organization's success is based on strong partnerships and works statewide to ensure the Arts are an integral part of the Education of every Ohioan.

Ohio Citizens for the Arts is a member-driven, not-for-profit, grassroots Arts advocacy organization working to benefit the citizens of Ohio. Their vision is to become the country's most effective statewide Arts advocacy organization. The Ohio Citizens for the Arts Foundation is a nonprofit Educational organization affiliated with Ohio Citizens for the Arts; their mission is to advance the impact of the Arts in Ohio by providing research, engagement, and learning opportunities.

Marna Stalcup – Director of Arts Education, Regional Arts & Culture Council and Right Brain Initiative

The Right Brain Initiative (RBI) helps change the way kids learn in the Portland metro area by bringing discovery, collaboration and creativity into the classroom. RBI makes change by: training educators to weave creative thinking into core subjects; enabling collaboration between the Arts community and K-8 teachers in the Portland region's school districts; being community partners, bringing together the resources of artists, school districts, local governments and businesses to delight, challenge and empower kids. The organization wants creative thinking to be a basic part of every kid's public Education and engages in Arts integration. Their work helps teachers gain new skills to bring the interdisciplinary learning to their classrooms.

Patricia Wayne – Program Director, Create CA

Create CA is a coalition of dedicated and innovative leaders who understand that together we have the power to create lasting change for every California student. Their mission is to ensure ALL students are able to reach their full potential by advancing an Education model that promotes creativity and the Arts for the workforce of tomorrow.

Create CA believes that all California students deserve equal access to a high quality Arts Education; an Arts Education is vital to California's robust, globally competitive, creative economy; every child deserves the same opportunities to be a vital part of a creative workforce; the Arts are important for lifelong learning, the development of 21st century skills and college and career readiness; NOW is the time for the resurgence and expansion of Arts instruction in California's public schools.

Joe Landon – Executive Director, California Alliance for Arts Education

The California Alliance for Arts Education (CAAE) advocates for high quality Arts Education for all students by providing policy expertise and by mobilizing a statewide network of advocates and allied partners. Their Initiatives focus on three key areas: public advocacy, state policy, and partnerships. The Alliance is in its fifth decade of working to build a brighter future for our state by making the Arts a core part of every child's Education. A statewide leader and convener, the Alliance galvanizes California's educators and other experts in Arts and culture to increase access to quality Arts Education and improve the quality of Arts Education.

Leiland Theriot – Executive Director, Florida Alliance for Arts Education (FAAE)

FAAE's mission is to improve, enhance, and promote Arts Education in Florida. The organization asserts that the Arts: are basic to a complete Education; are essential to the vitality and quality of life in schools and communities; address both cultural inclusiveness and diversity; are powerful in the Education of students with special needs; and have a positive impact on student achievement. Since 1981, FAAE has united educators, artists, community leaders, concerned citizens, Arts Education organizations, Arts institutions and corporate partners from across the state to ensure Florida's students a complete Education that includes the Arts.

Sarah Triplett – Director of Public Policy, Creative Many Michigan

Creative Many is a statewide organization that develops creative people, creative places and the creative economy for a competitive Michigan through research, advocacy, professional practice and communications. The Creative Many Michigan Action Alliance, affiliated with Creative Many Michigan, is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit membership organization enacting a mission to engage advocates and leverage all available resources to influence positive change for the creative sector at the federal, state, and local levels. The main goals of the Creative Many Michigan Action Alliance are to educate policymakers, media and citizens about the importance of Arts, culture, Arts Education and the creative industries to the success of the state and local communities; advocate for sustainable means to support the creative sector; and equip others to be advocates.

Findings

After conducting interviews with the eight organizations across the country, ckSYNERGY performed a thematic analysis of the data and compiled the following findings into the following sections:

- History
- Structure
- Communication, Decision-Making, and Engagement
- Funding, Sustainability, and Challenges
- Policy Initiatives
- Additional Recommendations

ckSYNERGY has written a summary of best practices for each section, in addition to compiling the more-detailed notes.

History

ckSYNERGY explored the history of what prompted the formation of similar organizations and the origination of that impetus.

Many of the organizations were highly reliant on a single source of funding (like a large grant), which proved unsustainable.* Many dissolved or were forced to change structures by merging, forming a collective impact model or finding other revenue sources. They recognized the need to collaborate with other organizations in their respective states to make real change; the organizations reported that, within their states, they began working together, typically organically, and one person or organization remained the driving force.

*Note that the California organizations are the only organizations that are still primarily grant-funded.

Notes

What prompted the formation of your organization? Where did that impetus originate (i.e. – individuals, Arts Education or advocacy organizations, foundations, state agencies, etc.)?

- Grant funded to organizations do this type of work (i.e. - Kennedy Foundation)
- Multiple organizations (including governmental) saw a need to create a strategic plan for Arts Education for the entire state; collaborated to serve as state-wide umbrella organization
- Individuals motivated to advocate for Arts Education in the state and generated grass-roots political Initiative, using a collective-impact model
- Many of the organizations have changed their initial structure. Many were highly reliant on a single source of funding, when that went away, they were forced to change structure by merging, forming a collective impact model or finding other revenue sources.
- Leaders of the various art organizations recognized a need to communicate and work together more effectively, so they formed an informal network to better facilitate that communication and work towards common goals.
- Coalition created to work together to collect data and develop policies; recognized need to formalize coalition and decided to generate long-term goals and a strategic plan to accomplish them (continue gathering data annually and refreshing strategic plan to remain relevant)

Structure

ckSYNERGY studied the typical organizational structures; this included discussing the numbers of partners included and the reason behind their inclusion and the structures of the boards and governance models.

The organizations’ sizes vary greatly, depending on the needs of the location and the number of organizations and individuals who self-identify as invested in the Arts; however, regardless of the size, organizations aim to include high-level decision makers, individuals with access to financial resources and/or political influence, and people that are interested in doing the work. At least annually, most seek input from a wide variety of stakeholders to remain relevant and to continue to build community support and awareness.

Organizations that identified as a 501(c)3, have boards; however, the boards are not necessarily the group making the decisions on what advocacy Initiatives they want to support or executing the initiatives – many organizations have committees with specific partnering organizations responsible for the advocacy work.

Notes

How is your organization organized? How many partners are included in your organization and how many are included in your advocacy work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15-20 (working towards 25) • 15 - 5 permanent, 10 rotate • 6 formal partnerships • Only 15-17 attend steering committee meetings, but 25-30 official steering committee members; board itself is small (currently 5 members, want to expand to 7) • 60-70 organizations who provide bi-annual input for the statewide board of directors • 39 organizations
How was this list of partners selected? Why are these organizations included?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangentially-related: anyone who has an invested interest in the Arts • Steering committee = main leaders, decision-making power • All funders are included in order to get their buy-in • One organization has a policy council that uses a membership model where partners pay to be a part of it • Some include all leadership and funders, but only some have voting power • Steering committee composed of major Arts organizations, teacher union, charter schools, music and Arts educators • Most-basic partnership that has been necessary: Alliance, Arts Council, and Department of Education (scope and missions very different); alliance does a lot of the work, state crucial for funding support; and department of Education provides the context for the work being done and gives the coalition credibility` • Self-selected and “deselected” • Important to have policy makers involved • PTO/teacher/superintendent associations important to include • Created a separate agency (now dissolved) to advocate and push ballot measure for tax and to show data and explain the need; the advocacy Initiative had its own steering committee to get other organizations’ input and support (also, they had to prove to other organizations that they would not cannibalize the funding)
What is the governance structure?

Incorporation

- 501(C)3
- Have a fiscal sponsor

Leadership

- Paid ED - either this is their only job, or it is a significant part of their job

Board Members

- Have advisory board for organization
- Traditional board with 5-7 members, but a steering committee to accomplish the work (and advisory committee without voting rights comprised of funders and other important people to engage)
- Invite important partners to attend board meetings either once per year or on a regular basis (no voting rights)
- Invite incoming president from each organization onto their board (extend invite to advisory board if president is not interested in being on the actual board)

Communication, Decision-Making, and Engagement

ckSYNERGY asked the interviewees to share recommended systems for internal communication; structure/frequency of meetings; processes for decision-making; and methods to keep members engaged, motivated, and accountable.

The organizations have varying communication strategies, but a best practice is to meet in-person at least once a year and find a natural opportunity to draw people together for those meetings. Most have regular, consistent conference calls or web meetings more frequently than the in-person meetings. At the beginning, however, in-person meetings were crucial to building relationships/trust. Signing up for each other's newsletters is an effective way to stay informed on the happenings of each partner and look for ways to leverage one another's skill sets.

To make decisions, input is typically gathered from a large group of stakeholders or the community at large, but a smaller group is tasked with creating defined priorities and executing the plan based on that information. Organizations also asserted that having a (paid) person who is dedicated to driving the work is imperative.

To keep the partners motivated, engaged, and accountable, organizations recommended creating opportunities for ownership and also value. It helps to define concrete objectives and explain how each partner can use their specialized skills to achieve those objectives; and the organization needs to continually evaluate and refresh these goals to keep them relevant. The collaborative should strengthen each partner: by showing how they work together to achieve goals, it helps achieve individual organizations' goals and also makes each organization competitive when soliciting funding (collaboration).

Notes

<p>How do you communicate with your partners? How often do you meet and what is the structure of those meetings (i.e. – in-person, online, etc.)?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference calls at a regular interval and get-togethers once per year • Just keep each other in the loop by signing up for one another's newsletters • Bi-annual convening that everyone is invited to and then a quarterly statewide board of directors meeting that leaders with decision-making power are invited to • Attend legislative sessions and the organizations "chat" before and after; typically sit in gallery, but will speak as a united group when they feel it is needed • Monthly statewide conference call to share information on bills, etc.; meet in-person three time per year • One statewide meeting per year (run like a think-tank); up to 4 that are divided out by issue; zoom meeting for board every month and a retreat to the capital each year • All organizations sign up for "voter voice mailing list" • Meet twice per year - rotate through one another annual conferences • Sit on one another's board and attend/present at associations, etc. (no formal communication strategies) • Monthly newsletter and meeting scheduled in advance (looking at streamlining collection of information for online format) • Weekly newsletter that highlights legislation that could impact Arts in Education in the state • One annual conference but monthly web meeting • Meet before or after state board of Education (all attend together, support one another's initiatives)
<p>What is the decision-making process?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone has a defined role and are responsible for executing the strategic plan that was generated - "they deal well with policy makers and we deal well with legislators" • Have policy council that provides input on priorities – "we execute, but in reality, we bring something to policy council." • Have large convening that is run like a think tank and then pull priorities from there that can be agreed upon. We then may have "mini-think tanks" to flesh out ideas throughout the year • 60-70 organizations provide bi-annual input for the statewide board of directors to review and then build goals and strategies for the coalition
<p>What keeps your partners engaged and motivated? How is everyone held accountable?</p>

- Keep motivated by constant refresh and facets of campaign development that has to be flushed out; evaluation on what works/what doesn't; culture of pride in terms of how Arts Education is regarded in the state; sense of maintaining high-regard and quality (always room for improvement and new goals to attain)
- Defining advocacy goals that are actionable (think SMART) and understanding how you can achieve it together
- Lots of really good, knowledgeable heads in the room, it's a delight to attend the meeting
- Find ways to keep the momentum going during the summer (i.e.- National Arts in Education Week)
- Leaders in the Arts Education community attend large conference twice because they understand the value of convening and all share the same values
- Organization makes it easy on those attending by reimbursing for mileage expenses and providing meal per-diem, in addition to catering the event; many on list are k-12 Arts educators, so they reimburse substitute teachers - "show people how much you value them and having them part of the conversation"
- Make the purpose of the meeting valuable and actionable with a "concrete product" (ie - strategic plan for Arts Education that Board of Directors approves)
- Clear communication on regular basis about what people can do specifically
- Don't try to work on too many things - find things group can agree on
- Having paid person to drive work
- Have someone very passionate, motivated, and "A-type" with strong relationships in the Arts Education community in a leadership role
- If you take on too big of scope, hard to find staff-power; advise us to have a steering committee to prioritize what should be done (not just keep adding) and have plan and people-power to do it (contract and limit scope, or broaden and rethink structure)
- Annually, statewide partnership for the Arts gives every member of the coalition approximately \$65,000 to use for overhead at their own organizations.
- Keep partners motivated by constant refresh; evaluation of what works/what doesn't; culture of pride in terms of how Arts Education is regarded in the state; sense of maintaining high-regard and quality (always room for improvement and new goals to attain)

Funding, Sustainability, and Challenges

ckSYNERGY compiled the advice from the interviewees regarding best potential funding sources for advocacy work, suggestions for ensuring sustainability, and hurdles to anticipate or avoid.

Organizations agreed that funding for advocacy work can sometimes be a struggle and recommended thinking about the difference between “policy” and “advocacy.” Many organizations began with a single funder, which became insufficient over time. Organizations recommended pursuing a healthy mixture of funding from private donors, the state, grants, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Title I funds, and/or earned income. Regardless, of funding sources, a best practice is to include the funders on the board or committee in order to foster ownership of the Initiative and grow the relationship for the future.

Additionally, organizations expressed that they have been overwhelmed and/or burned out. They suggested that the Initiative needs to ensure that they utilize enough of the funding to build the infrastructure; a paid employee should be in charge of the Initiative with a team of devoted individuals so that they workload isn’t overwhelming. Another recommendation to consider: who will be the backbone organization for the Initiative? Where will the Initiative sit?

Some expressed that their goals became too aspirational and a clear process was not identifiable, so people lost interest. The goals need to be specific and achievable: they should match the capacity of the partners and unify everyone, including “music people.”

Finally, many suggested that changing culture is tough, slow work and can only move at the rate of trust.

Notes

<p>What were your funding sources when you were founded? Was it adequate? Were the current funding sources for your advocacy work? Do you have plans to expand the current funding sources? How?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began with a single grant (i.e. – Kennedy Foundation); it was not sufficient and eventually dissolved. • Grant funded • State funded • Funding from NEA • NEA collective impact grant • Planning to expand funding via additional partners and funders to supplement • Planning for earned income strategy
<p>How have you approached sustainability? Do you have any tips for ensuring sustainability?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue seeking funding from grants, the state, and/or NEA • Look at earned income strategies • Registration from conference • Invite funders and partners to be a part of the organization so that they take ownership of the success • Use collective impact model and ask yourself, “who is the backbone organization? Where does this Initiative sit?” • Mixture of private and public funds is very advantageous • Title I money: AZ work around the issue, using title I money for Arts Education
<p>What has been the most-challenging aspect of sustaining your work (i.e. – money, unifying agendas, other operational issues)?</p>

- Money
- Unifying agendas; too many aspirational goals, not enough manpower/resources
- Naysayers who aren't interested in serving the kids (protecting territory), but good at throwing “stink bombs”; speak the truth among participants; people outside wreaking havoc; change only moves at the speed of trust
- Deciding how to allocate resources: sometimes transactional (i.e. – pleasing donors), sometimes taking action because something in our community absolutely needs to change
- Sometimes districts that need the help the most are not able to respond to advocacy in the way that you need
- Need a group of people to effect change – it can't be one person
- Not being able to gain traction; have to create success that demonstrates what you are trying to do – is this going to make a difference? Doing it because it is the right thing to do
- Changing culture is tough and can be slow work.
- Biggest challenge: balancing being present at many meetings and also finding the time to work on everything else; wearing too many hats, looking to get intern support from public policy students.
- If we are working towards a policy agenda, make sure we really understand where people lie on that spectrum (think about our approach and how we define)
- Funders not wanting to fund advocacy work
- Working with music organizations: they prefer to “play in their own sandbox,” but engage in very strong advocacy work; if AZ can build a relationship with music (perhaps by presenting at one another's conferences and speaking to their membership), it could strengthen art Education advocacy

Policy Initiatives

ckSYNERGY discussed the best approaches to successfully influence policy initiatives with the organizations and pulled out key themes from the examples.

The organizations that were successful in influencing policy initiatives share that they engaged key stakeholders in the advocacy. They work with partners to ensure that they are working together to make one-another stronger and also avoid redundancy. In many cases, they worked with consultants or professional organizations to facilitate listening sessions, evaluate programs, or create unified messaging.

Notes

What has made your policy initiatives successful? Can you provide an example of a policy initiative you influenced and how? To what do you credit your success?

- Title one funding for Arts Education - dedicated superintendent
- “Piggybacking” on one another’s advocacy work; rather than duplicating Initiatives, find out what other organizations are doing and then work alongside them (strength in numbers and a unified message)
- Tax for the Arts -- facilitated listening sessions across the state; involved superintendents; determined that it didn’t poll well outside of the city, so left out outlying communities; goal was access and equity, so programs are offered during the school day; reassure organizations that we would not cannibalize their funding; steering committee shaped messaging; worked with an evaluator before the initiative was launched and has continued to evaluate (how do you know that this has made a difference?)
- Organizations all work together: attend state board of Education in galley in order to be present for discussion of issues; when needed, get on docket to share their opinion on an issue (message always stronger when you are up there with partners by your side - often work with prof orgs, etc. to combine and share unified message)

Additional Recommendations

Finally, ckSYNERGY requested that interviewees share any additional recommendations.

Organizations shared that initially the steering committee should focus on building trust, identify an individual who is responsible for the Initiative (paid), get help from consultants when needed, and find a way to unite competing agendas. When setting goals for the Initiative, always ask “what are we really trying to do?” and make the goals attainable. Many recommended the collective impact model.

Additionally, in regard to advocacy: one person recommended that the Initiative make a practice out of sending out a survey to anyone up for re-election asking about their stance on the Arts; once the surveys are collected, the responses should be internally published. Another recommended that unifying messages and having all partners release the message in unison has the strongest impact.

Notes

What else should I have asked? What else should we consider? What other advice do you have to share?

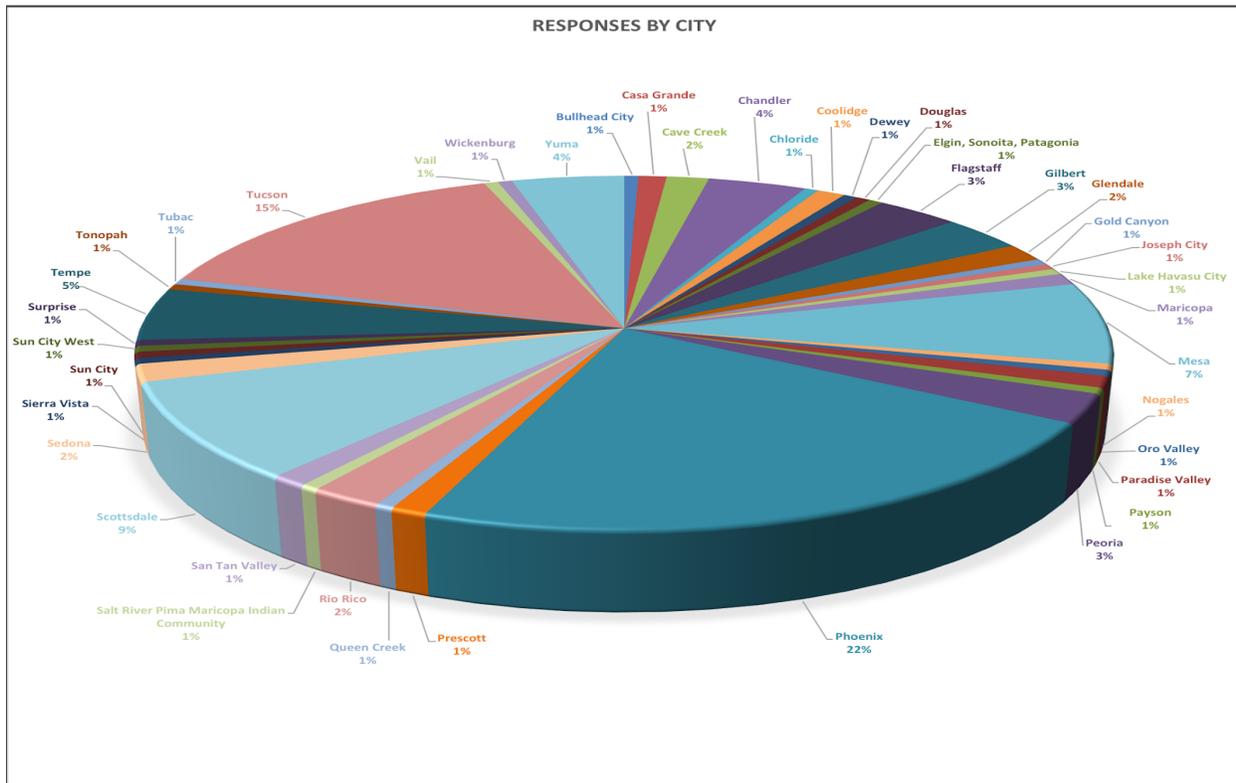
- Legislative consultant - very helpful to keep everyone on same page
- Have a designated advocacy person
- Bills: who is sponsoring, who is up for re-election, who their donors are, non-partisan
- Send out survey to everyone up for re-election asking what their stand is on the Arts and then publicize to task force
- Needs to be a paid person to drive the process - someone who it is their job or a substantial part of their job
- Consultants can be helpful to have expertise in specific geographical areas
- Set small, achievable goals
- Find a way to work out competing agendas within group and present united front.
- Community alliances come under your umbrella - develop a plan of action with points of contact; need to barrage local official all at the same time (found it is helpful to hear at the same time)
- In the first 6 months, conduct stakeholder interviews and ask:
 - Where do you see yourself in the work?
 - What is your perspective on things that are happening?
 - Where do you want to go next?
- Then 2-day retreat - facilitated and allowed that group to get to know each other in a relaxed setting with lots of ice breaking type tools
- Ask WHY? Just because we can? What are we really trying to do?
- Collective impact model effective can go at a slow pace to build trust

Appendix B

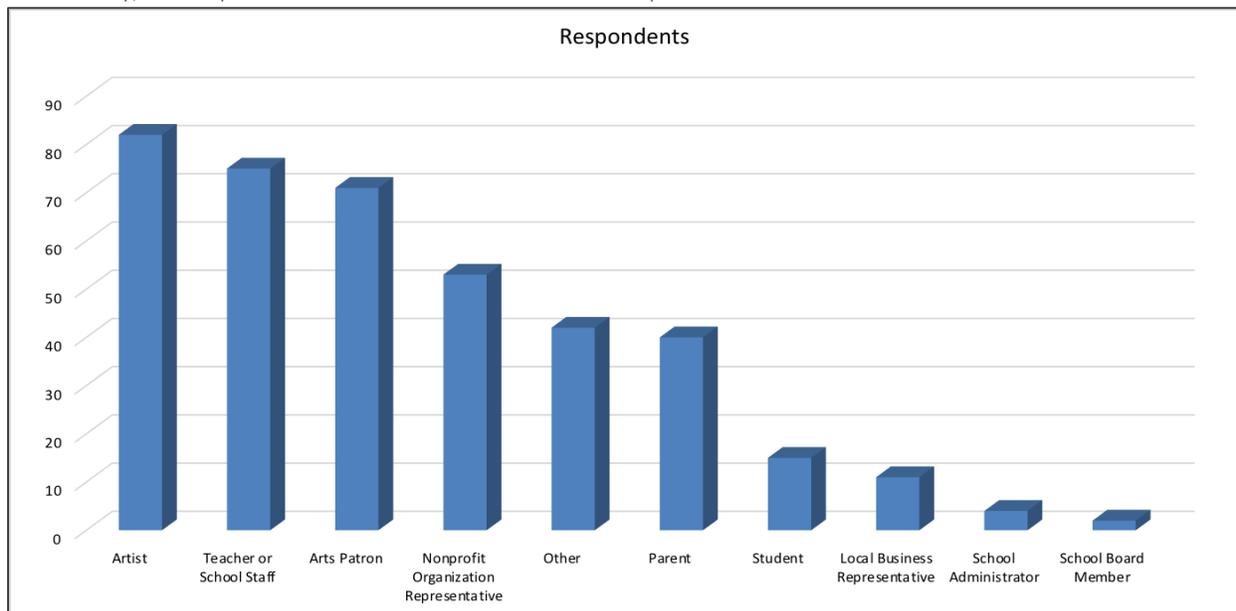
Listening Sessions and Survey Results

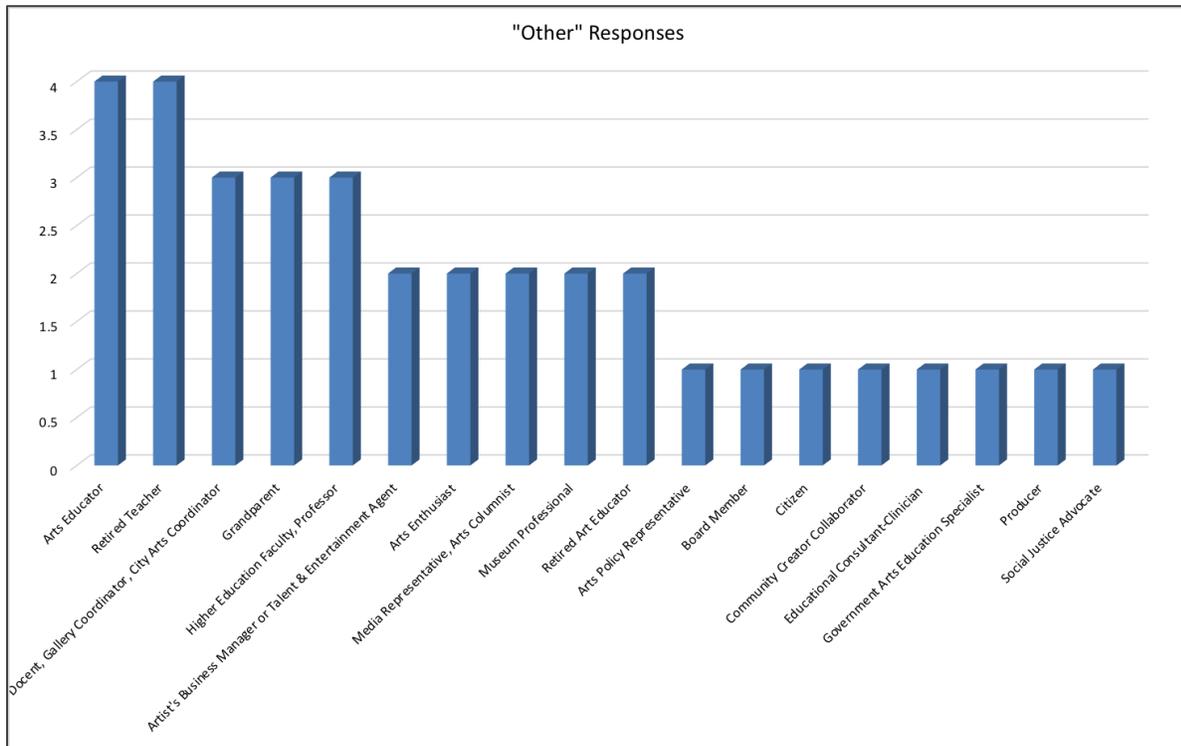
ckSYNERGY facilitated listening sessions and administered an online survey to gather input from communities across Arizona to determine the need for Arts Education advocacy and how it is currently accomplished now in Arizona.

Respondents identified from the following communities:



Additionally, the respondents self-identified their relationships to Arts Education:





ckSYNERGY compiled the data from the survey and listening sessions, revealing that the communities believe that the Arts improves quality of life and is a spiritual process that involves the body, mind, spirit; saves cities (destroying books and art has destroyed great cities); and is a universal language that includes diverse populations and connects people.

Additionally, the communities shared that Arts Education:

- develops 21st century skills, creative thinking, and the right brain;
- promotes personal development and social, emotional, mental and well-being;
- creates a space where students feel safe and accepted;
- helps students excel academically;
- promotes student collaboration, teamwork, and cooperation;
- strengthens and unites the community;
- forms healthy student bonds and cultivates friendships;
- embraces diversity and cultural awareness;
- beautifies communities, classrooms, and cultures;
- expands students' worldview and broadens their perspectives;
- builds confidence and resilience;
- creates well-rounded students and responsible, engaged citizens
- empowers special needs students; and
- increases school graduation-rates.

Furthermore, the communities imagined that Arts Education could be:

- collaborative (Arts organizations and the community working together to “work smarter, not harder”);
- in the community, bringing everyone together with an accessible, annual event (“a week of art”);
- accessible and equitable for every student in every school, starting in pre-school;
- well-funded and supported in the community by everyone (even fiscally conservative);
- the reason for youth to stay (in school, in the community, home);
- valued like all other subjects, sports, and STEM; and
- happening during natural-opportunities (parent-teacher school nights, in the city, in businesses and restaurants, cross-institutional celebration).

The communities provided a series of suggestions for the Initiative. First, the community envisioned the ideal future for Arts Education and asserted that:

- the Arts should be a required component of Education;
- all Arts should be viewed equally (diversification of offerings in school);
- the Arts should be free or affordable to everyone in the community;
- the Arts should be seen as a career path;
- Arts Education should be valued by leadership, schools, teachers, students, the community at large; and
- a quality Arts Education should be available and accessible to every student in and out of school.

Additionally, the communities made three recommendations, suggesting that Arizona Arts Education needs:

4. a group of individuals or organizations that focuses on advocacy for equity and access and building collaboration within the Arts community;
5. sufficient resources, adequate space, and additional funding by schools/administration and both federal and state government/politicians (survey respondents identified 114 locations, funders, and programs); and
6. to build a marketing campaign and strategy to:
 - communicate the value and impact of the Arts on students and the community to generate buy-in from parents, students, teachers, and leadership;
 - make the public more-aware of Arts opportunities in their communities in order to create personal connections to the Arts (demonstrate value);
 - convince each city that the Arts = money; and
 - create a website with a clear message and call-to-action.

Finally, the communities identified resources, locations, and programs that are critical for Arts Education:

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FUNDERS	MENTIONS
ABODA	1
ACA	2
ACE	1
ACT ONE	2
ADE (OFFICE OF ARTS EDUCATION)	3
AFSA	1
AMEA	1
ARIZONA CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS	2
ARIZONA COMMISSION ON THE ARTS	5
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY	2
ARIZONA STEAM SHOP	1
ARIZONA WESTERN COLLEGE	1
ARTISAN VILLAGE	1
ATC	1
AWC	1
AZ OPERA	1
AZDEO	1
AZGM	1
BALLET AZ	1
BALLET YUMA	1
BICAS	1
BLACK BOX FOUNDATION	3
BOTANICAL GARDENS	1
CASA GRANDE CITY COUNCIL	1
CCUSD	1
CENTER FOR THE ARTS	1
CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE COMMUNITY BAND AND CHOIR	1
CG ART ASSOATION	1
CG ART MUSEUM	1
CG ARTS AND HUMANITIES COMMISSION	1
CG CREATIVE COMMUNITIES GRANT	1
CG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT	1
CHANDLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS	2
CHILDSPLAY THEATRE	2
CITY OF PEORIA	1
CITY OF SEDONA	1
CITY OF TEMPE GRANTS	1
CITY OF YUMA (THE YUMA ART CENTER)	6

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FUNDERS	MENTIONS
COOLIDGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER FOUNDATION	1
DEL E. WEBB CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS	1
DESERT ARTISTS OF YUMA	1
DESERT CABALLEROS WESTERN MUSEUM	1
DICK BLICKS	1
DOWNTOWN PHOENIX	1
FLAGSTAFF ARTS COUNCIL	1
FLAGSTAFF MUSIC THEATRE	1
FLAGSTAFF SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	1
FREE ARTS FESTIVALS	1
FREE ARTS FOR ABUSED CHILDREN	1
FRIENDS OF MUSIC	1
GARDENS FOR HUMANITY	2
GILBERT PUBLIC SCHOOLS - MUSIC PROGRAMS	1
HEARD MUSEUM	1
HIGHLAND LAKES ELEMENTARY	1
JCC	1
LITTLEWOOD FINE ARTS AND COMMUNITY CO-OP	5
LTW	1
MARICOPA ARTS COUNCIL	1
MARY FISHER THEATER	1
MESA ARTS CENTER	6
MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MUSEUM	3
NAFME	1
NORTH END	1
NORTH VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	3
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSTIY'S ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DANCE	1
NORTHERN ARIZONA WATER COLOR SOCIETY	1
OMA	1
OSBORN SCHOOL DISTRICT - MUSIC AND ARTS CLASSES	1
PARAMOUNT FOUNDATION	1
PARKS AND RECREATION	4
PCC	1
PEORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	1
PHOENIX ART MUSEUM	5
PHOENIX CENTER FOR THE ARTS	3
PHOENIX CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	1

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FUNDERS	MENTIONS
PHOENIX SYMPHONY	1
PHOENIX ZOO	1
PRESCOTT JAZZ SUMMIT	1
ROMERO HOUSE POTTERS	1
ROSIES HOUSE	1
SCOTTSDALE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART	1
SCULPTURE RESOURCE CENTER	1
SEDONA ARTS CENTER	3
SEDONA ARTS FESTIVAL	1
SEDONA VISUAL ARTISTS COALITION	1
STARLIGHT COMMUNITY THEATER	1
TEMPE ARTS CENTER	2
TEMPE LIBRARY COMPLEX	1
TEMPE SCHOOL DISTRICT	1
THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	2
THE LIVING ROOM	1
THE ROCK	1
THE SAGRADO GALLERIA	1
THEATIRKOS	1
TITLE 4A	2
TMA	1
TRANSCANADA	1
TREASURE FOR TEACHERS	1
TSO	1
TUCSON CLAY COOP	1
TUCSON SYMPHONY	1
TUSD	1
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA	4
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA SCHOOL OF MUSIC	1
WEST VALLEY SYMPHONY	1
WICKENBURG CHILDREN'S CULTURAL ORGANIZATION	1
XERACRAFT	1
YOUNG ARTS OF ARIZONA	1
YOUTH CHOIRS (PHX BOYS, GIRLS, CHILDREN'S CHOIRS)	1
YUMA AREA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION	1
YUMA ART SYMPOSIUM (TOMKINS POTTERY)	2
YUMA COMMUNITY THEATRE	1
YUMA COUNTY LIBRARIES ART PROGRAMS AND EXHIBITIONS	1

Appendix C

Steering Committee Meetings

ckSYNERGY worked with AzCA to invite Arizona community members to help design an Initiative dedicated to supporting policy initiatives and strategies to increase access and equity in Arts Education and develop adequate resources for Arts Educators.

The committee included the following members:

- Korbi Adams, Childsplay
- Joan Ashcraft, Tucson Unified School District
- Benjamin Baer, Arizona Musicfest
- Cynthia Calhoun, Arizona Thespians
- Sarah Cirelli, Arizona Citizens for the Arts
- Kimi Eisele, Southwest Folk Alliance
- Rusty Foley, Arizona Citizens for the Arts
- Leah Fregulia, Arizona School for the Arts
- Pam Hall, Glendale Community College
- Nathan Johnston, Scottsdale Unified School District
- Lia Littlewood, Littlewood Fine Art & Community Coop
- Dustin Loehr, Arizona Department of Education
- Natalie Marsh, Scottsdale Arts
- Jenny Millinger, Childsplay
- Lynn Monson, Arizona Dance Education Organization
- Shara Nieto, Heard Museum
- Regina Nixon, Phoenix Conservatory of Music
- Robert Panzer, Peoria Unified School District
- Julie Peters, North High School
- Norm Pratt, Paradise Valley School District
- Eliza Radcliffe, Arizona Commission on the Arts
- Isaac Russell, Littlewood Fine Art & Community Coop
- Josh Schachter, Community Share
- Sandra Skelton, Arizona Department of Education
- Benjamin Smith, Osborn School District
- Tomas Stanton, Mesa Arts Center
- Glenn Wilke, Arizona Community Foundation
- Geri Wright, Act One
- Juliette Martin, Act One
- John Amoroso*, David and Lura Lovell Foundation
- Christina Rosetti*, David and Lura Lovell Foundation



*only attended the first two meetings as observers.

To develop a diverse group of collaborators, the Steering Committee identified the following individuals as key advisors for the Initiative. ckSYNERGY has been working to connect with each individual and has included their insights and input:

- Evan Mendelson, Evan Mendelson Consulting
- Carol Varney, Arts Foundation of Tucson and Southern Arizona
- Marcus Monenerkit, The Heard Museum**
- Susan Levy, Native Health
- Jon-Peter Wilheit, Social Venture Partners**
- Eileen Bagnol, Art Ability/Arizona Theater Company
- David Baker, Flowing Wells Unified School District
- Ed Dawson, Sunnyside Unified School District
- Steve Holmes, Sunnyside Unified School District
- Rebecca Cohen, Baboquivari High School & Middle School (Tohono O'Odham Nation) **
- Jane Best, Arts Education Partnership
- Paul Fisher, Arts Integration Solutions**
- Lisa Chow, Arizona Dance Coalition
- Beth Simek, Arizona PTA
- Jetuan Whedon, Arizona PTA
- Roger Mantie, Arizona State University
- Kirk Johnson, SOUNDS Academy**
- Steven Tepper, Arizona State University**
- Brad Richter, Lead Guitar**
- Mary Stephens, InSite Consultants
- Cassandra Hernandez, Celebración Artística de las Américas
- Sam Gomez, Sagrado Galleria
- Carmen and Zarco Guerrero; Musicians, Artists, Educators
- Royce Manuel, Tools of Yesterday
- Yolanda Stevens, Artist
- Frances Benavidez, Tohono O'Odham Community College
- Evan Tobias, Herberger Institute for Design and Arts
- Alex Nelson, Arizona Commission on the Arts
- Mark Joraanstad, Arizona School Administrators**
- Robert Benson, Foothills Fine Arts Academy**

**Individuals who have agreed to continue participating as advisors to provide guidance, as needed.

Beginning in July 2018, the Steering Committee worked in groups to share key themes in regard to the current landscape and the ideal for Arts Education in Arizona.

The Steering Committee identified the following strengths in their communities:

- Some school districts have strong Arts Education programs.
- Additional Arts Education school programs are offered (i.e. – after school programs, integrated programs, dance in high school, and free-play, open-ended programs).
- The state, Arts organizations, local artists, local businesses, and cultural institutions collaborate to provide Arts Education and needed resources or act as “bridge organizations” to fill the gaps.
- Additional support/leadership opportunities exist: intern programs for credentialing, colleges and universities certificate programs, leadership connections, and professional development at state, district, and national levels.
- Youth have representation in the Arts via peer-to-peer learning, technology, online/social media (self-curated and self-directed), and student art show/gallery openings.
- The Arts have a presence in the community at events (i.e. Día de los Muertos), rec centers and libraries, private studios, and youth mariachi; folklife is happening formally and informally with families (not codified).
- Title IV-A (for information, email Dustin Loehr, Director of Arts Education and Title IV-A for the Arizona Dept of Education, at Dustin.Loehr@azed.gov).

The Steering Committee expressed the following concerns regarding Arts Education in their communities:

- Collaboration and integration are not consistent; some do it better than others (i.e. – NPOs and schools collaborate for the Title IVA grant, but there is a lack of collaboration with mid/large Arts organizations).

- There is a lack of equity and inclusiveness in Arts Education; issues with equity of resources (i.e. – professional development).
- NFP and charter schools need to have better reporting and accountability for grant funds.
- Many gaps in Arts Education exist: not enough art teachers, curriculum doesn't prepare for the future and is Eurocentric, and drama and dance aren't included for elementary.
- Arts Education is not prioritized in all schools or districts: food is the focus, art is at the bottom of the list and viewed as a luxury/elective; low registration results in cancelled classes (creating a domino effect), but high registration doesn't result in more resources.
- Need a method/process for measurement to hold all Arts accountable; need to have consistent data collection.
- The impact of Arts Education isn't readily tangible; too much time is spent trying to prove Arts with others' metrics and by linking it to other curriculum; need to organize around a common vision, compelling definition, and consistent messaging to make Arts part of the larger Education narrative.

The Steering Committee shared what they believe to be the value of Arts Education:

- Positive influences on critical thinking, problem solving, school culture, brains development, motivation, self-confidence, attendance, healing/humanity/self-agency, academic achievement, creativity, innovation, resilience, and the economy.
- Arts Education gives students a sense of hope, joy, and purpose, as well as encourages empathy, tolerance, open-mindedness, and mental health.
- Arts Education helps students learn who they (part of the standards) and is a 21st century skill (STEAM); it increases graduation rates, allows students to grapple with non-absolutes, and teaches artistic literacy; it engages all types of learners and "provides an opportunity for divergent thinking that can be applied to a convergent experience."
- The Arts promote a global understanding of people and culture, social justice, the passing on of heritage, collaboration, the economy, tourism, and entrepreneurship; it creates well-rounded and engaged citizens, a place for beauty, a safe space, and a sense of pride; the Arts make the invisible, visible.

Finally, the Steering Committee envisioned the ideal for Arts Education:

- Arts Education is valued by all stakeholders and a network of advocates support one another.
- Arts Education is a part of the core curriculum (A-F report card and even A.P opportunities) with a fine Arts seal for graduation; assessments include all disciplines and Arts Education has a measurement for success.
- Arts Education advocates have a universal message to appeal to a broader audience and a strategy to get there; Arts Education has a voice in larger Education organizations and the community at large, with an economic development narrative tied to the Arts.
- Standards for educators demonstrate competency with state-approved assessments that are rigorous, project-based, and reviewed by teacher (as an alternative to portfolio performance).
- All students have access to Arts Education, regardless of economics; funding is consistent and equitable across schools and districts.
- Arts Education extends outside the boundaries of school: teachers/schools are connected to organizations and each community's Arts Education program is relevant to their identities; the link between vitality and the Arts is established. Arts Education is integrated into who we are.

In the subsequent meetings, they compared their responses to the community input and best practices. The Steering Committee identified that working in smaller groups was particularly effective, so the Steering Committee worked together to identify the content for the mission, vision, and values; then, they broke into small task forces to formalize each.

Next, referencing their own input, the Steering Committee reviewed the insights from the community and suggested priorities for the Initiative, including:

Connect

- Recruit more members for the Initiative
- Become inclusive/responsive to communities
 - Need representation from all communities across the state
 - Explain the connection: our relationship between the Arts and those consuming the Arts
- Actively participate in collaboration and information-sharing among organizations within the Initiative
- All members: accountability
- Build trust
- How will we get funded? What will be our organizational structure?

Educate

- Understand our ecosystem via asset mapping: funding for Arts Education and pathways for action.
- Expand beyond Eurocentric art forms
 - Contemporary forms of artmaking (i.e. -- tech, hip-hop)
 - Acknowledge, promote, embrace, support the need to address challenges
 - Embrace traditional and folk-Arts in Arizona communities -- reflect the community
- Focus on the process, not just the product

Advocate

- Create a policies and procedures handbook with advocacy toolkits for parents and teachers.
- Mobilize around policy initiatives, including the Fine Arts Seal, A-F, and Report Card.
- Build messaging to appeal to each audience with calls to action
 - Lobbying: build our advocacy base
 - Art is for everybody: help everyone see themselves in it
 - Scaffolding opportunities for involvement based on capacity
 - Website with “who are you?” to link constituent to appropriate information
- Remember change takes time -- message of sustainable work

Currently, some of the Steering Committee members have volunteered to participate on sub-committees to begin organizing the Initiative’s work in each of the short-term objectives, as well as formalize the structure and pursue the necessary funding.

These committees include:

Connect & Educate

- Dustin Loehr
- Benjamin Baer
- Juliette Martin
- Cynthia Calhoun

Advocate

- Sarah Cirelli
- Lia Littlewood
- Eliza Radcliffe
- Haley Honeman

Governance & Funding

- Rusty Foley
- Lynn Monson
- Natalie Marsh
- Pam Hall
- Isaac Russell

In 2019, the Initiative will host one to two sessions to provide our advisors and key stakeholders with the opportunity to meet with the Steering Committee members from their communities and discuss the plans for the Initiative. The attendees will listen and react to our plans and then have a facilitated discussion that drives buy-in, engagement, and mobilization. The goals of these sessions will be not only to ensure that the Initiative is relevant and that the priorities are needed and well-received; but also, to recruit additional members for the Leadership Council; Collaborators; and Advisors, Influencers, & Funders.

Citations

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