

**VERMONT ARTS COUNCIL:
ARTS EDUCATION ACTION PLAN
2014-2018**



December 9, 2013



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I. Introduction

The Vermont Art Council believes that every student in Vermont has the right to learn in, about, and through the arts. A student's ability to actualize that right will, in large part, determine both their own creative futures as well as the cultural landscape of our state. The goal of this plan then, while ambitious, is simple: to turn that right from a talking point into a reality.

The current changes in education in Vermont are more significant than any seen since the introduction of "No Child Left Behind." The introduction of the Common Core Standards, Personalized Learning Plans, Flexible Pathways to Graduation, increased interest in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Education, and a new Secretary of Education appointed by the Governor, provide remarkable opportunities to galvanize interest in arts education. Given the dissolution of the Vermont Alliance for Arts Education and the elimination of an Arts Content Specialist at the Agency of Education, the Vermont Arts Council's unique role as a state arts agency means that these opportunities are also our responsibility.

We believe that the best way to improve the status of arts education is to revise our thinking about it: arts education should not just be a valued part of a complete education, but rather a critical driver of education across disciplines. In essence, to increase student achievement, we propose to systematically change the way the arts are utilized in Vermont schools. The action plan contained in this document proposes a myriad of strategies to achieve this goal.

II. Current Programs of the Council

Currently, the Vermont Arts Council supports arts education in four major ways: 1) through **grant funding** of direct arts experiences for Pre K-12 students (most notably through our Artists in Schools, Cultural Routes, and Head Start Arts Partnership grants), 2) **advocacy work** with the State Board of Education and Agency of Education (our participation in the recent creation of the Education Quality Standards for Vermont students is an example), 3) **professional development** for teaching artists, and 4) **arts education programming** (Poetry Out Loud).

While the nature of this work is varied, it does have a common goal: to expose students to the arts largely through the work of professional artists. The implicit assumption of this approach is that exposure to the arts and direct arts experiences will foster a lifelong appreciation for the arts. The challenge, however, is in measuring the effectiveness of this approach as well as overcoming the seeming marginalization of the arts as an academic discipline in the public schools. In other words, the Council has historically embraced the idea that arts education for art's sake is enough to drive change. The current landscape would suggest that it is not.

What is needed, then, is a strategic approach for arts education that recognizes the limitation of our current approach and articulates a way forward that ensures that the arts are valued in our schools, that students have access to quality arts education, and that these outcomes can be successfully tracked over time. This plan addresses that need.

III. Research Conducted for this Plan

Gathering input into the development of a plan for arts education for the Vermont Arts Council engaged a variety of stakeholders and arts education experts over a seven month period from May-November, 2013. Research was designed, implemented, and analyzed by Maren Brown Associates, in close collaboration with Ben Doyle of the Vermont Arts Council. Brown and Doyle held ten formal planning meetings over the course of the seven months to design and analyze the research, and develop the plan.

The research process involved four distinct components: (1) review of prior arts education initiatives at the Vermont Arts Council through an examination of internal and external documents and a site visit with board and staff; (2) assessment of the current status of arts education in Vermont through phone interviews with key informants in Vermont, a review of literature about systems of state support, and examination of secondary sources of data to quantify arts learning in Vermont's public schools; (3) research into the best indicators to demonstrate the effectiveness of arts learning through a comprehensive examination of state arts plans and interviews with national arts education experts; and (4) research into best practices both nationally and regionally through interviews with state and national arts education experts.

A. Review of the Council's prior arts education work and site visit with staff and board

The research process began with a thorough examination of background information about the Council's current and past arts education work, previous planning efforts, internal evaluation documents, program literature, financial statements, marketing samples, and other materials that provided information about the history and context of the arts education work done by the Council. Brown then met with staff and selected board members in Montpelier to discuss current and past arts education partnerships, successful arts education strategies employed by VAC, past challenges with the arts education work, and potential subjects for interviews and focus groups. See Appendix A *Background Research Observations and Questions for Planning* for more information about this phase of the work.

B. Assessment of current status of arts education in Vermont

Brown and Doyle gathered baseline information about the current status of arts education in Vermont's PreK-12 schools through an examination of secondary data sources, such as the National Center for Education Statistics and the Vermont Agency of Education. Doyle was successful in securing data about the levels of visual arts instruction in the public schools from the Agency of Education that has opened the door to further discussions. Relevant research reports were assessed in developing this baseline information (such as *Arts Education in Public Secondary Schools: 1999-2000 and 2009-10* by the National Center for Education Statistics, and the Arts Education Partnership's *Arts State Policy Database*). Examination of relevant state programs and services that support public arts education in Vermont—as well as their effectiveness—were examined through meetings with VAC staff, five phone interviews with Vermont arts education leaders, and internet research. See Appendix B *Baseline Data Research Summary* and Appendix C *Baseline Data Interview Research Summary* for more information about this phase of the work.

C. Research into best indicators to demonstrate effectiveness of arts learning

Through research into current arts education literature and selected interviews, Brown provided the Council with a set of recommended indicators to show the effectiveness of learning *in and*

through the arts. A review of 27 state and regional arts education reports were examined to determine common indicators in measuring the effectiveness of arts learning, and two in-depth interviews were held with national arts education leaders to assess the most compelling uses of these indicators as they apply to policy and advocacy. See Appendix D *Outcomes and Metrics Research Summary* for more information about this phase of the work.

D. Assessment of best practices in arts education

Best practices in arts education at other state/regional arts agencies and consortia that could be adapted by the Council were examined through three phone interviews with national arts education leaders and through two focus groups on STEAM education strategies and artist in residency programs. Research questions concentrated on effective partnerships, exemplars, low-cost activities that can yield tangible results, and current trends and issues in the Vermont's schools that the Arts Council can address through its programs and initiatives. See Appendix E *Best Practices Research Summary* for more information about this phase of the work.

Results were then reviewed and discussed in meetings with Doyle, Brown, and other Vermont Arts Council staff, to develop the action plan below.

IV. Relevant Vermont Arts Council Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

The mission of the Vermont Arts Council is to advance and preserve the arts at the center of Vermont Communities.

This plan directly responds to the three key goals of the Vermont Arts Council's 2013-2017 strategic plan, as reproduced below.

- 1. (Participation) To increase opportunities for everyone to experience and/or participate in the arts through**
 - a. Grants and services to artists, arts administrators, arts educators, and communities
 - b. Collaborations that achieve synergies and savings in the creation, presentation, appreciation, arts learning, and promotion of the arts in Vermont
 - c. In-school and out-of-school programs that reach pre-K through 12 students (especially, but not exclusively) during these critical years of their formal education
- 2. (Public Value) To demonstrate the benefits of investing in Vermont communities through the arts to policy-makers and the general public by**
 - a. Participating in the research, documentation, and analysis of arts-based activities that improve the quality of life in Vermont communities particularly in the areas of revenue generation, tourism, school quality, public spaces, and health care/social services
 - b. Collaborating with State agency and private sector partners to infuse the arts into Vermont's "Brand Identity"
- 3. (Capacity) To expand and sustain the Council's capacity to serve its constituents by**
 - a. Advocating for increased public investment in the arts and culture from State and Federal resources
 - b. Expanding private sector support to underwrite "signature" initiatives and events
 - c. Embracing technology to expand the Council's marketing and promotional resources to constituents
 - d. Modeling and communicating best practices where access and inclusivity are concerned

V. Five Year Action Plan For Arts Education

Our five-year action plan is based on five key ideas:

1. Students and student learning are the focus of our work.
2. The arts will be valued by all members of an academic community when they are integrated into other disciplines. This approach plays to a documented strength of the arts (the arts increase student engagement regardless of learning style) and a renewed emphasis at the state level on student-driven learning.
3. Direct arts experiences with professional artists are inherently valuable, but those experiences, as currently practiced, do not regularly create sustainable, systemic change in the classroom. Too often, when a residency ends, so does the art. The Council should advocate for, financially support, and publicize direct arts experiences for students that will have a lasting impact on the ways students are taught and learn. Sustainable, systemic change in the classroom begins with teachers and administrators, those that will shape the educational experiences for generations of students.
4. Arts integration is not at odds with a traditional “art for art’s sake” approach to arts education—rather arts-integration, when done correctly, elevates the arts (and art teachers) as the best vehicle for delivering student’s learning objectives.
5. The Arts Council’s approach to arts education should focus primarily on in-school initiatives. While there are many excellent after-school and out-of-school arts education programs, our goal of achieving equity in students’ access to quality arts education, regardless of socio-economic status, demands we focus on programing opportunities during the school day.

Given these tenets, the following action plan provides specific, strategic steps to increase the role the arts plays in student education writ large. The success of these efforts will be measured in a variety of ways (see Appendix D), but most notably through an annual review of arts education data provided by the Agency of Education and the Council’s Artist in Schools information (both final reports and follow-up surveys). Essentially, if our approach is successful the number of arts professionals in Vermont’s public schools—and by extension, the number of students who take art classes in the public schools—will increase. In addition, the number of grant recipients who regularly integrate the arts into their classrooms after a residency has been completed will also be a measure of our success.

The action steps contained in this plan are organized chronologically, but can be classified and summarized as follows:

RESEARCH

- *Partner with the Agency of Education to gather data on the status of arts education in Vermont’s public schools.*
- *Support demonstration projects that exemplify best practices in arts education in the state.*
- *Redesign Vermont Arts Council arts education grant application forms (such as “Cultural Routes”) to further support data collection efforts.*
- *Disseminate research and data about the state of arts education in Vermont’s public schools.*

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

- *Highlight best practices and exemplars of arts education in Vermont’s public schools.*
- *Create a local arts education advocacy portal on the Vermont Arts Council website.*

- *Highlight research that demonstrates the impact of arts on student outcomes.*
- *Continue to advocate for strong arts education policies in the state of Vermont.*

FUNDING SUPPORT

- *Seek outside funding to support arts education programs in rural areas of the state.*
- *Seek additional funding to support demonstration projects and arts education research.*

GRANTMAKING

- *Invest in programs and services that expand access to the arts in Vermont's public schools and deepen the quality of these programs and services.*

OTHER PROGRAMMING

- *Continue to support the development and adoption of Poetry Out Loud (POL).*
- *Continue to support the Art Start program, increasing access to the program, while enhancing the quality of the program statewide.*
- *Review the teaching artist roster, instituting new criteria for inclusion on the roster, and incentivizing professional development for teaching artists.*

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- *Forge partnerships with organizations such as the Vermont Principals Association and Superintendents Association to improve the climate for arts education in the state.*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- *Offer professional development and training opportunities for teachers, teaching artists, educational administrators, and others to advance the quality of arts education instruction in the state.*
- *Offer trainings for teachers, educational administrators, and teaching artists on current topics, and promote arts education networks in the state.*
- *Partner with teacher preparation programs in the state to introduce more general classroom teachers to arts education.*

VI. Detailed Annual Action Plan

Year 1: FY2014

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

- *Include arts education in the Arts Awards Gala to highlight exemplary programs in the state.*
- *Create at least one Vermont Arts Council blog posting that focuses on exemplary arts education programs each quarter.*
- *Participate in the redesign of the Vermont Arts Council website to include a more robust arts education area that includes data about arts education access, best practices, advocacy materials, and other arts education resources.*
- *Regularly update the Arts State Policy Database with current information at <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/DatabaseSupport/StatePolicyReportPopWindow.php>.*

FUNDING SUPPORT

- Focus on supporting initiatives that are located in Rutland and the Northeast Kingdom and those that connect geographically-dispersed rural areas.
- Research and submit at least one funding proposal to a foundation, national or regional funders for support of arts education initiatives. Funders may include the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (that supported arts education research in New Jersey), the National Endowment for the Arts (that supported Montana’s arts education research), Henderson Foundation (for pre-K initiatives), Wolf Kahn Foundation, Turrell Foundation (for pre-K initiatives), Bay Paul Foundation (IAA project), and the Orton Foundation.
- Seek funding from the Henderson Foundation or Turrell Fund to support an expansion of the Art Start program in underserved areas of the state and/or to augment Vermont Arts Council funding for the program.

GRANTMAKING

- Set aside 20% of Artists in Schools funding for STEAM projects for the duration of this plan.
- Document and evaluate all pilot initiatives and promote them widely through media outlets.
- Continue to provide residency funding for up to four days for arts-based residencies designed as “exposure to the arts,” with no two years of funding in a row.

OTHER PROGRAMMING

- Seek Poetry Out Loud partnerships with 70% of (50) Vermont High Schools.
- Meet at least once a year with Head Start regional coordinators to build awareness, brainstorm strategies for continued adoption of the Art Start program, and to help overcome barriers to participation.
- Meet with teachers at three or more Art Start program sites per year to examine how to improve the quality of the program and enhance linkages to curriculum.
- Work with arts partners on providing free or subsidized tickets to cultural events for Art Start family members and students.
- Institute new criteria for inclusion on the teaching artist roster, consisting of a strong educational background (33% of selection criteria, as demonstrated through resume review), artistic ability (33%, as demonstrated through work samples, examples of how curricular context of work will be integrated for extra points), and ability to collaborate effectively (33%, as demonstrated through letters of reference, two of which must be from two different residencies in the past three years).
- Encourage participation in the Integrated Arts Academy Teaching Artist Training Program by providing automatic inclusion in the teaching artist roster and making these artists eligible to receive more than three days of residency funding from the Arts Council.
- Explore additional requirements, such as two professional development activities each year, in order to stay on the teaching artist roster.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Attend AOE working group on the development of Personalized Learning Plans. See <http://education.vermont.gov/plp-working-group>.
- Meet with AOE representatives in charge of Common Core implementation.
- Partner with the Vermont Principals Association and the Agency of Education to disseminate an RFP to identify three schools each year to participate in the Council’s pilot initiatives.
- Partner with Vermont Public Television station to broadcast the Poetry Out Loud finals competition.

- Work with the Vermont Principals Association to increase the adoption of the Poetry Out Loud program and promote it to principals throughout the state.
- Provide input into the implementation of the federal *Next Generation Science Standards* in Vermont.
- Participate on the steering committee of the New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals network to continue to support teaching artist professionals in the New England region.
- Participate in the national network of state arts agency arts education managers to contribute to national exemplars and best practices.
- Convene local arts partners, representatives of art teachers associations (Vermont Art Teachers Association, Vermont Music Educators Association, Vermont Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and Educational Theater Association), Parent Teacher Association representatives, local school board officials, state legislators, and other arts education advocates in Vermont to advise on the development of a web-based resource area that equips local arts advocates to promote the value of the arts to their local school boards.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Continue to sponsor the Integrated Arts Academy Teaching Artist Training Program in collaboration with St. Michael's College and the Integrated Arts Academy.
- Provide technical assistance to applicants to all arts education grant programs.

RESEARCH

- Meet with Agency of Education (AOE) leadership to obtain support for gathering data from existing NCLB required data sources about the number of art specialists by discipline (music, dance, theater, visual arts, and media arts), school, and grade level, and the number/% of children receiving arts instruction by discipline, school, and grade level.
- Inventory current policies that support arts education in the public schools, noting especially the differences between policy *recommendations* vs. *requirements*.
- Examine the relationship of policy to implementation, and note inconsistencies between policy and practice. Diagnose possible reasons for these inconsistencies, and develop strategies to overcome impediments to policy implementation. Also examine credentialing requirements for generalist teachers as part of this scan.

Year 2: FY2015

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

- Make national and state-level research about the benefits of arts learning accessible on the Vermont Arts Council website.
 - Feature national and state data that shows increases in standardized test scores, improvements in math and literacy, lower dropout rates, and lower rates of truancy, among other outcomes.
- Build a new area of the Vermont Arts Council website that offers data, best practices, and advocacy tools for the field.
 - Make arts access data gathered from AOE available on the site.
 - Create an area on the website that highlights exemplary programs. Focus on specific areas of concern to the field: arts integration projects, rural arts education programs, STEAM projects, and project-based learning exemplars.

- Make highlights of the *New Perspectives in Arts Integration* report available on the Vermont Arts Council website, such as the rubrics in the back of the report.
- Create visual graphs and charts that illustrate key information from the Agency of Education data.
- Offer downloadable information about state arts education policies that are currently in place in the state of Vermont (for example, teacher licensure requirements, student requirements for a credit in arts education, etc. available at the Arts State Policy Database: <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/DatabaseSupport/StatePolicyReportPopWindow.php>).
- Provide case studies and best practices of arts education programs in the state of Vermont that can inspire others to create arts education programs in their communities. Offer exemplars of arts integration (STEAM), as well as project-based education examples.
- Invite individuals from throughout the state to offer first-hand “testimony” about the positive impact of a strong public school arts education program on their lives and their communities. Post these on the local arts education advocacy area of the website.
- Offer examples of how teachers have integrated arts into the Common Core.
- Include links to funding sources, training opportunities, and other resources to help communities to enhance arts education in the public schools.
- Participate in legislative committees that determine education policy in the state.
- Continue to advocate for the implementation of curriculum standards in the arts http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_curriculum/arts.html.
- Invite local arts education advocates to testify at the Vermont General Assembly.
- Advocate for five critical success factors identified by LA County Arts for All: district-level arts coordinators, 5% or more of general budget for arts education, ratio of 400:1 students to credentialed arts teachers, board-adopted arts education policy, and board-adopted arts education plan.

FUNDING SUPPORT

- Use data collected in AOE research above to determine underserved rural areas and target these for funding support.
- Research and submit at least one funding application to the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the Dana Foundation, the Vermont Community Foundation or other, specifically targeted to rural arts education access.
- Research best practices in rural arts education outreach, such as Ethos Music Center in Portland, OR.
- Explore the possibility of leveraging EB5 funding to support arts education initiatives, particularly in the Northeast Kingdom.

GRANTMAKING

- Target funding to underserved areas of the state, as determined by AOE access data.
- Evaluate success of pilot initiative funding and make refinements as needed.
- Continue to provide funding to support arts education programs in the state.

OTHER PROGRAMMING

- Continue to support Poetry Out Loud, as long as federal funding is still available to underwrite the program.
- Put into place new methods for evaluating outcomes of the Poetry Out Loud program.

- Revitalize and expand Art Start program to shift towards a professional development residency model.
- Develop new Art Start initiative in Northeast Kingdom provided funding is received in year 1.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Partner with the Agency of Education on data collection and accountability systems in arts policy adoption in the state.
- Continue to participate on the steering committee of the New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals network to continue to support teaching artist professionals in the New England region.
- Continue to participate in the national network of state arts agency arts education managers to contribute to national exemplars and best practices.
- Re-convene local arts partners, representatives of art teachers associations (Vermont Art Teachers Association, Vermont Music Educators Association, Vermont Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and Educational Theater Association), Parent Teacher Association representatives, local school board officials, state legislators, and other arts education advocates in Vermont to advise on the development of a web-based resource area that equips local arts advocates to promote the value of the arts to their local school boards.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Offer technical assistance and training on the development of lesson plans, managing scheduling and logistics, integrating the arts into other curricular areas (such as dance and obesity), and best practices in Pre-K arts education to enhance the delivery of the program in the state.
- Review evaluation results from the Integrated Arts Academy Teaching Artist Training Program in collaboration with St. Michael’s College and the Integrated Arts Academy, and make refinements as necessary.

RESEARCH

- Work with Agency of Education data analyst to set up reporting system to gather this data on an annual basis.
- Develop a “dashboard” in Excel for collecting and interpreting metrics on an annual basis.
- Work with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies to “map” the arts education access results for display on the Arts Council’s website.
- Work with the Agency of Education on systems for accountability for policy requirements.

Year 3: FY2016

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

- Update website resources with new data and information.
 - Make Agency of Education arts access data searchable by local school districts (as Oregon Arts Council has done) to enable local arts education advocates to understand the level of arts education available in their communities.
 - Work with the arts education teacher training program at St. Michael’s College to identify students to research exemplary arts education programs in the state and write about these programs in blogs, social media, and other media sources.

- Develop and make available downloadable “fact sheets” that draw on national and state-level research on the Vermont Arts Council website (such as the information about jobs and employment prospects in the arts, economic impact data from Americans for the Arts, research overview areas of artsedsearch.org, data on the correlation of arts exposure and increased scores on high-stakes testing, and other research studies that demonstrate the value of arts learning on students and communities). See the “Five Indicators” tool from LA County Arts for All.
- Update arts access data gathered from AOE.
- Make Agency of Education arts access data searchable by local school districts (as Oregon Arts Council has done) to enable local arts education advocates to understand the level of arts education available in their communities.
- Develop and administer a local school board candidate survey, as California and Washington have done.
- Participate in working group to establish a *School Makers Space Network*.

FUNDING SUPPORT

- Approach the Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility for funding to support enrichment programs that foster creative thinking and next-generation workforce skills.
- Research and write at least one grant to support funding for new or existing arts education initiatives.

GRANTMAKING

- Continue to provide funding to support arts education programs in the state.
- Continue to evaluate the success of pilot funding initiative and make refinements as needed.

OTHER PROGRAMMING

- Continue to support Poetry Out Loud, as long as federal funding is still available to underwrite the program.
- Maintain revitalized Art Start program with integrated professional development residency model.
- Develop sustainable implementation strategy of Art Start in Northeast Kingdom, provided funding is received in year 1.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to participate on the steering committee of the New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals network to continue to support teaching artist professionals in the New England region.
- Continue to participate in the national network of state arts agency arts education managers to contribute to national exemplars and best practices.
- Present at meetings to discuss findings from research and best practices. Also use these opportunities to brainstorm how to improve communication and collaboration between educators and community arts organizations, extend the reach of successful programs and best practices throughout the state, and disseminate information to teachers about opportunities and resources in arts education.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Prepare an introductory presentation about best practices in arts education in the state of Vermont to present at conferences and other convenings sponsored by teachers associations, Vermont Principals and Superintendents Associations, Vermont Science

Teachers Association, Vermont Council for Gifted Education, Vermont Principals Association Leadership Academy, district-wide principal meetings, and others to inspire educators to integrate the arts into their curricula.

- Identify exemplary arts integration and arts education programs to highlight at conferences and events in presentations.
- Compile relevant data and research about arts education nationally and in the state of Vermont to use in presentations.
- Develop presentation(s) about best practices in arts education in Vermont that can be repurposed for multiple conferences and convenings.
- Submit at least two presentation proposals each year to Vermont teacher conferences, Principal's Association meetings, Superintendent's Association meetings, etc. that highlight best practices in arts education in the state of Vermont.
- Inventory relevant professional development offerings in the field, such as those that train practitioners on how to integrate the arts into STEM education, how to make effective use of the arts in project-based learning, how to make effective use of technology in arts learning, and how to integrate the arts into the Common Core. Also examine professional development opportunities for principals in the state.
- Explore the mechanics of providing CEU's through various school systems for teachers and education administrators.
- Brainstorm a list of topics to offer each year, such as effective collaboration skills between teaching artists and schools, arts integration strategies, integration of the arts into Common Core and project-based learning, etc.
 - Identify trainers who can offer presentations on each topic of interest.
 - Determine appropriate venues for presentation (such as at pre-existing conferences, professional development programs at local schools, at the VAC statewide arts conference, and other pre-existing events).
 - Schedule, market, and present the program(s).
- Examine how to set up a mentorship program to extend learning, and how to develop training programs that are delivered to district or school-wide teams for sustainability.
- Develop supplementary resources to augment learning, such as handouts, templates, and other materials.

RESEARCH

- Update arts education access data with new information from AOE.
- Research data from comparable states that have conducted statewide arts education research, such as New Hampshire, Alaska, Wisconsin, Idaho, Montana, Utah, or Wyoming, to show how Vermont arts education access stands in comparison to these states. Also use the National Center for Education Statistics national study, *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999-2000 and 2009-2010*, as comparative data. See example of Ohio for comparison of data to NCES study.
- Explore additional metrics to gather, as possible, from AOE sources, such as the minutes of arts instruction by each discipline, school, and grade level; the number and range of art course offerings; the presence of designated arts classrooms; and the amount of funding provided to arts programs in the Vermont public schools (both from within the system and from outside funding sources).
- Explore ways to distill data for effective messaging, such as creating a composite arts education "index," as was done for Colorado and Illinois, or using ratios to illustrate concepts (such as teacher-to-student ratios, specialist-to-student ratios, as were used in Montana's research).

- Examine areas where Vermont has lower levels of arts education access than national or comparative state averages. Focus on arts education access to rural areas.
- Examine gaps in arts education access in relation to community-based arts resources, and develop tools to counteract the lack of access, such as pilot funding initiatives.

Year 4: FY2017

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

- Seek opportunities to advocate for arts in the licensure requirements for non-arts teachers, arts alternatives for high school graduation, and arts requirements for college admission in the state.
- Update website resources with new data and information.

FUNDING SUPPORT

- Research and write at least one grant to support funding for new or existing arts education initiatives.

GRANTMAKING

- Continue to provide funding to support arts education programs in the state.
- Continue to evaluate the success of pilot funding initiative and make refinements as needed.

OTHER PROGRAMMING

- Continue to support Poetry Out Loud, as long as federal funding is still available to underwrite the program.
- Maintain revitalized Art Start program with integrated professional development residency model.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to collaborate with the AOE on data collection, policy implementation, and other strategies to strengthen arts education in the state.
- Continue to participate on the steering committee of the New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals network to continue to support teaching artist professionals in the New England region.
- Continue to participate in the national network of state arts agency arts education managers to contribute to national exemplars and best practices.
- Examine existing licensure requirements for general classroom teachers and identify at least five education departments in the state that provide licensure for arts specialists and general classroom teachers, such as St. Michael's College, Johnson State, and UVM.
- Convene representatives (such as education department chairs) of these colleges and universities to discuss how to connect arts specialists to general education teachers to expand their understanding of how the arts can be used to support their teaching.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Pull research and data from sources such as ArtsEd Search that show higher rates of teacher satisfaction, retention, and increased confidence when teachers integrate the arts into their instructional approach.
- Develop programmatic strategies that provide general education teachers greater access to art specialists in their teacher education programs.

- Measure outcomes of these strategies on arts education instruction in “generalist” classrooms (such as elementary education classrooms).

RESEARCH

- Update arts education access data with new information from AOE.

Year 5: FY2018

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

- Update website resources with new data and information.

FUNDING SUPPORT

- Research and write at least one grant to support funding for new or existing arts education initiatives.

GRANTMAKING

- Continue to provide funding to support arts education programs in the state.
- Continue to evaluate the success of pilot funding initiative and make refinements as needed.

OTHER PROGRAMMING

- Continue to support Poetry Out Loud, as long as federal funding is still available to underwrite the program.
- Maintain revitalized Art Start program with integrated professional development residency model.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to collaborate with the AOE on data collection, policy implementation, and other strategies to strengthen arts education in the state.
- Continue to participate on the steering committee of the New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals network to continue to support teaching artist professionals in the New England region.
- Continue to participate in the national network of state arts agency arts education managers to contribute to national exemplars and best practices.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Continue to provide and evaluate strategies that provide general education teachers greater access to art specialists in their teacher education programs.

RESEARCH

- Update arts education access data with new information from AOE.