

MICHIGAN

AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS STATE POLICY PILOT PROGRAM – SP3

Michigan has been selected, after applying on a competitive basis, to be one of ten (10) pilot states to participate in Americans for the Arts' comprehensive national campaign to advance arts education, the [State Policy Pilot Program](#) (SP3)..

The Michigan SP3 Team will facilitate an action plan for the development and implementation of an arts education policy strategy for a 3-year period. Americans for the Arts will provide in-depth customized technical assistance and \$10,000 each year to assist Michigan in successfully creating its plan and achieving its planned goals. To ensure that best practices will be developed, both in the state and nationally, the team will attend an annual symposium to share learning with other state teams, participate annually in a meeting of the State Arts Advocacy Network, and produce a final report, outlining what worked and did not work during participation in the pilot program. These final report/case studies will be turned into policy development tools for the field.



Led by ArtServe, the Michigan SP3 Team plans to use the three-year pilot program to reconvene and invigorate the Michigan Arts Education Roundtable – a consortium that in the past guided the implementation of the Michigan Arts Education Survey – in order to update the 2011 statewide census of arts education participation, to raise public awareness of the value of arts learning, and to develop an agenda for arts educators that unites them across arts disciplines and departments. Specifically, the Team intends to foster policy recommendations, guidance documents, advocacy messages, and tools; as well as to assist school districts in applying federal resources to improving arts learning.



High Arts Education Index scores correlate with higher standardized test scores and lower dropout rates [credit: Interlochen Center for the Arts]

The environment for arts education in Michigan has been shaped by an emphasis on local control, reduced state financial support for education, and the ongoing debate over implementation of Common Core, which has increased the need for an organized statewide community of stakeholders to ensure that arts education is an indispensable component of a student's curriculum. The state does require a credit in the visual, performing or applied arts for high school graduation, but a 2011-2012 arts education census indicated a significant "gap" in the implementation of this requirement. The Michigan Department of Education has not had an arts consultant position since 2011; however, the appointment of an "integrated instruction consultant" indicates that providing information and tools to promulgate the value and practice of arts integration might be among productive approaches.

Accordingly, plan activities to be considered include:

- tapping into existing sources of information to establish an understanding of Michigan education policies and the current state of arts education;
- researching studies of arts education in other states for models of baseline data useful in Michigan policy development;
- reviewing "gap analysis" in other states for insights into differences in Michigan between approved arts learning policies and their implementation;
- reviewing what arts education programs are under way in Michigan and who is providing leadership;
- organizing meetings to build an advocacy network and identify priority policy goals; and

- developing a statewide agenda through the Roundtable and conducting a messaging campaign to support its implementation.



MI SP3 activities raise awareness of the value of arts education [credit: Creative Many]

Potential products include case studies and e-advocacy tools. SP3 resources have made it possible for the Team to engage a consultant to assist in convening the Roundtable and developing its agenda.

In 2001, The Arts Alive Survey Report documented that “great unevenness in programmatic coverage, in terms of different disciplines being available in different schools and at different grade levels,” had continued since the previous survey, taken in 1989. Survey respondents listed their main concerns as inadequate facilities, materials and supplies, and insufficient scheduling time. Though only 12% of all districts/schools had a “written, board-approved arts education policy,” the Survey discovered that those having “at least one arts supervisor or coordinator” had doubled, from 15% to 31% -- still lower than the

national average, but making progress. A drama/theatre teacher was reported in 39% of public school districts, but less than 5% of all schools reported having a dance teacher. Music teachers were reported in 87% of public school districts, but only 48% of those were certified. Visual arts teachers were also reported in 87% of public school districts with 49% being certified. An arts class was required for high school graduation in much less than half (39%) of all schools and school districts. The Survey found that on the whole, the smaller the school/district enrollment, and the lower its total per pupil allocation, the less likely that school/district would have an arts requirement for graduation. This fact is independent of whether the school was urban or rural.

By 2011, the infrastructure supporting arts education in Michigan had grown dramatically. That year’s Michigan Arts Education Survey partners included Michigan Youth Arts, a coalition of 16 association, education and public agency groups, in addition to the earlier survey partners, as well as new sponsors including the Gilmore and Frey Foundations. Findings of concern included the following:



MI SP3 “gap analysis” identifies where arts activities are needed [credit: Glen Bering]

- 108,000 students attend school each day without arts education.
- Annual spending for curricular support of arts education averages only \$4.39 per pupil in high school and only \$1.67 per pupil in elementary school – just 2.5 cents a day in high school and less than a penny a day in elementary school.
- Only 11% of elementary schools offer at least one course in theatre; only 6% of middle schools offer at least one course in dance.
- 12% of high schools do not meet the state graduation requirement of one credit in the arts.
- 13% of schools do not include the arts equally when calculating students’ grade point averages.

Recommendations included:

- Requiring school accountability in the areas of student access to arts courses, level of student participation in the arts, number and certification status of educators providing arts instruction, and means of meeting arts education standards.
- Defining certification standards of licensure for all arts disciplines and working with Michigan universities to align those standards with degree programs

- Identifying schools without student access to arts education and reducing that number of students from over 100,000 to zero.
- Schools should provide access to all visual and performing arts disciplines
- Developing funding standards for arts instruction in public schools
- A higher education admission requirement of a year of high school arts instruction, and the inclusion of visual and performing arts coursework in GPA calculations
- Increasing professional development opportunities in arts education for school administrators
- Expanding professional development in arts education for educators
- Employing arts coordinators in all school districts
- Developing a statewide assessment system to evaluate teacher training and student skills acquisition in the arts
- Requiring new schools to provide appropriate facilities for arts learning
- Foundations including arts education as a funding priority

The Survey project team developed an “arts education index” comprised of 24 different measures related to the participation, resources and quality of arts education provided by a school or district. Higher arts education index ratings correlated significantly with higher scores on standardized tests including the ACT Overall MME Science, ACT English MME Writing, ACT Math MME Math, ACT Reading MME Reading, and MME Social Studies.

Researchers also found a significant correlation between high Arts Education Index scores and low dropout rates – schools with higher Arts Education Index scores had fewer dropouts than those with lower indices. These correlations existed regardless of the socioeconomic status of the students - even among poorer schools, those with higher indices showed higher test scores and lower dropout rates.

For additional information and to participate in Michigan SP3 activities, please contact:

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Americans for the Arts’ State Policy Pilot Program (SP3)

A three-year, 50-state initiative with a 10-state pilot component, the State Policy Pilot Program is meant to influence the implementation of federal mandates and programs around arts education at the state level, expand support for arts education policy and funding, and impact local access to arts programs and instruction for students. Through a set of data collection efforts, state-level capacity building, and the convening of a network for knowledge sharing and collective action, the State Policy Pilot Program will strengthen arts education nationally by improving state policy.

For more information, visit: www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SP3.