

# Connecticut

*Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism*  
*Bonnie Koba, Arts in Education Senior Program Manager*

---

## **General Information**

### ***Organization Mission Statement***

To preserve and promote Connecticut's cultural and tourism assets in order to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of the state. The Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism (CCT) was created in 2003 by the Connecticut General Assembly to bring together arts, historic preservation, film and tourism.

The Commission strives to develop and enhance opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and growth in the arts, historic preservation, tourism and film. The Commission operates as a grant-making agency for state and federal funds and serves to market and promote the state to in-state and out-of-state residents. The Commission devotes its resources to serving Connecticut's cultural institutions, organizations and individuals through funding, technical assistance and promotion. The Commission works to enhance and preserve Connecticut's historical and cultural resources, and to strengthen its organizations and institutions to be economic contributors and to exist into the future.

### ***Arts Education Program Mission***

Advance the arts as an essential element of schooling and lifelong learning.

### ***Arts Education Program Overview***

In earlier years, Connecticut's AIE programs included the Urban Artists Initiative (UAI), Teaching Artists (TA), and Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools programs. The arts education manager left the agency in 2002 and his position remained unfilled until 2005. During that time, UAI program was eliminated and consultants who had been managing HOT Schools since 1997/98 continued to manage the program until they were hired by the agency in spring 2005. Hence, HOT Schools had become the main focus for arts education. Because the TA program was so integrally related to HOT Schools, it was completely revamped and all artists were required to reapply in 2005 at the direction of the new arts education managers. HOT Schools and TA programs still walk hand in hand. HOT Schools has adapted and reshaped based on swings in funding and support.

Now in its 16th year, it is clear that the process of the HOT Schools approach is truly adaptable for non-HOT Schools (those not ready to make a full commitment to whole school change through the arts but want to incorporate strategies/strands of HOT Schools), and for organizations wishing to develop relationships with community schools based on meaningful learning experiences that are connected to school curriculum and aligned with organizations' arts education goals. CCT has proposed to increase funding to develop application models for using the HOT Schools approach in these settings, using existing HOT Schools as demonstration/learning sites.

Outcomes from HOT Schools best practices include: professional development for teaching artists and arts organization educators; the teaching artist pilot mentorship program; and a school-to-school mentor program; and new arts integration, residency, and school/artists/arts organization partnership models.

Other arts education work includes the TA Program. Teaching artists are selected for inclusion in the agency's Directory through a rigorous application and jury process. In 2005 the selection criteria was reviewed and revised, and all teaching artists were required to reapply to the roster. Teaching artists, teachers, principals, and arts education organization educators were included in the review and revision setting process. CCT has since conducted selection rounds in 2007 and 2009 using revised criteria developed in 2005.

With the teaching artists determined by reapplication, CCT created the Creative Collaborations Grant (CCG) Program, available to schools, arts organizations and arts programs of non-arts organizations, to hire teaching artists for long-term residencies (five or more days with same group of learners). These \$2,000-\$3,000 grants were to jump-start three-tiered relationship building between and among teaching artists, schools, and arts programs or organizations, and complement the traditional Arts Presentation grants that create exposure opportunities (one performance up to a five-day residency). The model for CCG came from HOT Schools teacher artist collaborations.

In 2007, CCT initiated two new arts education programs: Underserved Youth and Early Learning. One-year grant awards in these categories were in the amounts of \$10,000-\$25,000.

## **Grant Programs**

### ***Types of Arts Education Grant Programs***

- residency program
- in-school arts education
- out-of-school-time arts education
- early childhood learning in the arts
- lifelong learning in the arts
- general operating support for arts education organizations
- arts education program/project support for arts organizations
- quick funds/minigrants
- cross-sector work between and among organizations, schools, and artists

### ***Groups Eligible for Grant Programs***

- public pre-K centers
- public schools
- private/nonparochial schools
- private/parochial schools
- charter schools
- regional/local arts agencies
- arts organizations
- non-arts organizations
- arts education alliance or similar statewide organization

### ***Multiyear Grants***

Multiyear grants are available for up to three years. HOT Schools is a four- to six-year commitment.

### ***Total Number of Arts Education Grants Awarded in Most Recent Fiscal Year***

160 grants

### ***Total Dollar Value of Arts Education Grants Awarded in Most Recent Fiscal Year***

\$ 371, 960

### ***Additional Comments on Arts Education Grant Programs***

These figures are loosely defined and include project grants, CCG, early learning, underserved youth and all presentation grants with a workshop component.

## **Major Initiatives & Partnerships**

### ***Higher Order Thinking Schools***

The Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools Program, established in 1994, works with select Connecticut schools to promote teaching and learning in, about and through the arts in a democratic setting. The program builds higher-order thinking skills in students through three core components: strong arts, arts integration and democratic practice.

Students in HOT schools are actively involved in “making” (creating and performing) all of the arts. They are challenged to think critically and to respond to others’ work. HOT Schools encourages students to make authentic decisions, respect the rights of others, act responsibly, and participate fully in their school community.

In HOT schools, the arts are rigorous academic subjects, each with its own sequential curriculum conveying knowledge not learned through other academic disciplines. HOT schools integrate the arts across disciplines, creating arts-rich environments that motivate students to make connections between and among subject areas and ideas. HOT schools cultivate a democratic school culture that emphasizes individual leadership and to which all members of the school community contribute.

The HOT Schools approach is reflected in a school’s commitment to hands-on child-centered arts experiences. In an arts-infused environment, the processes of creating, performing and responding enhance student achievement, increase student attendance and build a strong school community. Since the program’s inception, HOT schools have experienced steady improvements in student self-esteem, retention, discipline and parent participation.

The hallmark of the HOT Schools Program is its comprehensive approach to professional development. Classroom teachers, arts specialists, artists, principals and parents all assist in the planning and design of professional development, which is offered year-round. Professional development activities include an annual week-long residential summer institute, mini institutes, peer days and teacher-artist collaborations throughout the year.

The development, implementation and lessons learned from HOT Schools feed most other arts education work.

### **Teaching Artist Pilot Mentorship Program**

The pilot is designed to help *Directory* artists strengthen their skills, understanding, and abilities, particularly in the areas of developing, documenting, and assessing high quality arts learning experiences. Artists are invited to participate in the pilot as a coach or as a scholar.

The goal of the program is to continue to develop an expanding pool of artist coaches and leaders.

Artists participating in this pilot program will attend and provide professional development that will enhance programs and the delivery of arts learning, strengthening capacity and services offered by CCT's *Directory* Teaching Artists.

### **Poetry Out Loud**

Established a partnership with Saint Joseph College, Carol Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities in West Hartford, to implement *Poetry Out Loud* (POL) program. The Carol Autorino Center will collaborate with CCT arts in education staff on all aspects of conducting Connecticut Poetry Out Loud in FY10.

### **New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals (NECAP)**

Collaborate with the arts agencies of the New England states, other organizations, and individuals to advance the field of the artist-educator, increase access to quality professional development, develop a regional network and support a community of teaching artists.

## **Artist Residency Program**

***Artist residency program is administered by the state arts agency office.***

- Mandatory orientation is provided for artists.
- Mandatory training is provided for artists.
- Residency related training is provided for sponsors.
- Entities other than schools may apply to sponsor a residency.

### ***Fee Structure for Teaching Artists***

- \$250 per day
- There can be additional compensation outside of the fee structure. HOT Schools Program pays \$250 for four contact hours per day, but other residency fees set by artists: HOT Schools provides volume work and teaching artists agree to a set fee for HOT Schools work. For all other residency work, artists set and negotiate fees with presenter.

### ***Additional Comments on Residency Program***

Artists cannot apply for funding but presenters can apply to engage artists/groups that have been juried onto the CCT roster. This holds true for teaching and performing artists as well.

# Teaching Artist Roster Program

## ***Teaching Artist Roster Basics:***

- Roster artists are required for residency program.
- A panel is used to select roster artists.
- Applications for roster are reviewed every two years.
- To retain eligibility, artists must reapply. (Check with the agency for details.)

## ***Additional Comments on Teaching Artist Roster***

CCT would like to improve its eligibility monitoring and fully develop its mentor program. From time to time, CCT uses nonroster artists (e.g. Poetry Out Loud Professional Development Workshops, and Summer Institute Presenters), but tries to direct opportunities to those on the roster.

# Annual Events

## ***HOT Schools Summer Institute***

A hallmark of the HOT Schools program is the HOT Schools Summer Institute, open to educators from within Connecticut and nationwide. The week-long residential conference offers multiple learning tracks, seminars, workshops, and interactive demonstrations and performances focused on particular arts disciplines, arts integration, democratic practice, and partnership strategies for the development of higher-order thinking skills in young people. Institute faculty includes national experts and noted artists as well as Connecticut HOT School teachers, teaching artists and arts organization educators.

The Institute offers professional development in the HOT Schools approach for teachers, principals, parents, teaching artists and educators from arts organizations. The HOT Schools approach fosters learning communities that recognize and celebrate each child's unique voice. The lessons learned can be adopted and adapted by schools, arts organizations, individual teaching artists, and state and local arts agencies interested in understanding school culture change, curriculum integration and arts infused program design. Working collaboratively at the Summer Institute encourages relationship building and the establishment of lasting creative partnerships between and among artists, teachers, parents, arts organizations and other educators.

## ***HOT Schools Workshops***

Several full-day workshops are offered for specialist and classroom teacher teams to introduce, explore, examine and create arts integrated units.

## ***Show and Tell***

Staff conducts a series of regional workshops to inform constituents of various CCT funding, learning and participation opportunities best suited for them.

## ***Poetry Out Loud***

CCT conducts teacher workshops, student/teacher workshops for the top two winners in each participating school, and state finals.

## ***Artist Showcase***

This intermittent offering gives teaching and performing artists an opportunity to demonstrate their programs and make connections with presenters.

### ***Arts Organization Convenings***

CCT has begun to provide one to three opportunities per year for arts organization educators to meet over specific topics.

### ***Additional Comments on Annual Events***

At the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, agencywide staff professional development is coordinated and conducted by CCT arts education staff.

## **Professional Development Services**

### ***Provision of Professional Development Trainings, Workshops and/or Institutes***

- For classroom teachers, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. Professional development workshops, two-day institutes and HOT Schools Summer Institute. Professional development workshops for Poetry Out Loud.
- For arts specialists, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. Peer days are offered for related arts teams and for arts specialists and classroom teacher partner teams.
- For teaching artists, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. All teaching artists are required to attend an orientation. CCT conducts sessions at the HOT Schools Summer Institute specifically for teaching artists and hosts other convening opportunities for them.
- CCT participates in planning and implementation of the New England Consortium of Arts Education Professionals annual professional development institute for teaching artists, and the Lesley University three-day conference for teaching artists.
- For school administrators, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. The Arts in Education senior program manager conducts three meetings each year for HOT Schools principals to discuss issues, successes, and challenges to them as administrators of an arts whole-school change model, and as administrators in general.
- CCT conducts leadership workshop for HOT School student senators, their parents, and their senate advisors.
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are provided for all HOT Schools professional development.

## **Poetry Out Loud**

### ***Poetry Out Loud Administration***

Saint Joseph College, Carol Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities

### ***Poetry Out Loud Participation***

number of schools participating in Poetry Out Loud statewide: 20

Schools specifically for students with disabilities participate.

Schools specifically for at-risk students participate.

### ***Poetry Out Loud Resources and Activities***

- evaluation
- documentation
- residency model
- classroom teacher training
- workshops in conjunction with state finals
- CCT has featured Poetry Out Loud competitors and champions at the HOT Schools Summer Institute.
- Provides workshops for students

### ***Additional Prizes and Awards***

- Varies year to year; typically books, trophies, medals, certificates.
- Additional prizes were purchased and donated.

### ***Partners, Funders or In-kind Donors That Support the Poetry Out Loud Program***

- Partner with Saint Joseph College, Carol Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities to manage program
- Presenting venues donate space and time and contribute to food, supplies, technical and audio-visual needs and the like.

## **Resources & Publications**

### ***Publications and Media Resources Provided:***

- social networking, e.g., Facebook
- other: HOT Schools booklet overview describing this program
- summer institute booklet
- submissions to agency newsletter
- on-line and printed directory of teaching artists and performing artists
- informal social networking groups (e.g., wikis, Google groups, Ning) focused on topics

## **Evaluation & Assessment**

### ***Assessment of Student Learning in the Arts***

- Assessment training is provided for teachers and teaching artists.
- Sample assessment tools are provided. HOT Schools rubric is available to program participants (teachers, administrators, parents, and teaching artists) and others on request. Industry resources are shared with HOT Schools participants and other constituents.
- Additional work in assessment includes conferencing, planning, collaborating with state Department of Education, working with schools and districts as the need arises.

### ***Program Evaluation for Grantees***

- Evaluation tools and frameworks are provided for grantees. Resources and best practices are shared on request and through professional development and convening opportunities.

### ***Methods of Self-Evaluation of State Arts Agency's Arts Education Program***

- quantitative and qualitative grants data
- participation data
- financial data
- surveys and feedback forms
- interviews
- focus groups and town hall meetings
- direct observations
- undergoing formal assessment

### ***Utilization of Evaluation***

Program feedback, best practices, and evaluations inform CCT's planning process.

## **Arts Education Staffing & Network Contacts**

### ***State Department of Education Arts Curriculum Specialist***

Scott Shuler

### ***Arts Education Program Staff, Job Title, FTE***

- Bonnie Koba, Senior Program Manager, 1.0
- Amy Freidman, Program Associate, 1.0

### ***Staff Biographies***

Bonnie Koba began her tenure with HOT Schools in 1994, when she took a key role in writing her school's application to become a HOT School. She was employed as an observational evaluator by Arts Market, the HOT School Program's assessment firm, in 1997, joined the HOT Schools staff as a consultant in 1998 and joined the Commission staff in 2005. Koba has contributed significantly to crafting the direction of the HOT Schools Program. She works collaboratively on program design and implementation with participating schools and works with nationally recognized consultants in the area of arts in education to design professional development for teachers, teaching artists, parents, and administrators. Koba represents Connecticut on regional and national arts in education consortiums including New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). She currently represents New England on NASAA's Arts Education Advisory Group. She is a former executive director of Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind.

Amy Freidman assists in the management of several programs including Poetry Out Loud, HOT Schools, directory of teaching artists, Creative Collaborations and the Early Learning Arts Grant. She joined the Commission in 2007, having come from AMS Planning & Research, where she served as an arts management consultant and project manager for five years. At AMS, Freidman managed a number of operational, strategic and business planning projects, as well as program evaluations and facility assessments nationwide. Prior to AMS, she served as education coordinator at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, where she coordinated their artist-in-residence program and served as regional coordinator for the Early Learning through the Arts©/New Jersey WolfTrap Program. She also worked at The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, first as programs coordinator, where she coordinated main stage usage from contract to curtain, and then as educational programs coordinator for the nationally recognized PARTNERS (Partners in Arts and Education Revitalizing Schools) program. Freidman has a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Hartford and an Ed.M. from Harvard University.