

# Montana

**Montana Arts Council**  
**Beck McLaughlin, Education & Web Services Director**

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## General Information

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

The Montana Arts Council (MAC) is the agency of state government established to develop the creative potential of all Montanans, advance education, spur economic vibrancy and revitalize communities through involvement in the arts.

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

The Arts Council has three arts education grants. Deadlines are ongoing for all these grants. The Artists in Schools and Communities Grant supports a wide range of residencies (lasting from one day to two years) by professional working artists. The emphasis in this grant program is on learning the fundamental skills and knowledge of an art form with attention to the Montana Standards for Art, an assessment of learning and activities that are accessible to all students. Special project grants are available for professional development, curriculum development and the like.

The Professional Development Grant is given throughout the year to enable the Council to respond to artists', organizations' or teachers' professional development needs. The Teacher Exploration of the Arts Grant is for elementary classroom teachers, or K-8 teachers with an elementary endorsement, who are asked to teach visual art or music and do not have a background in that subject, who wish to work one-on-one with a professional working artist to develop the teacher's skill in a particular artistic discipline. When a teacher is more comfortable with an art form themselves, they are more apt to use the arts in their classroom.

MAC's on-line arts education Artist Registry lists professional working artists available for school and community residencies. The folklife section of the MAC Web site has many arts oriented lesson plans and activities.

Current topics in arts education and examples of best practice are available in the *State of the Arts* newspaper, published every two months. An e-mail newsletter is sent to arts educators every two weeks that offers grant opportunities, resources and articles of interest.

A 16-minute streaming video recently was added to the Council's Web site to help arts educators and advocates clarify the importance of arts education in schools—how it impacts Montana's children, cultural heritage and communities. Images highlighting Montana arts organizations, artists, students and teachers make this a project that reflects Montana values and priorities while also providing solid statistical arts education research that is nationally recognized and respected.

The Arts Council has a close working relationship with the Montana Alliance for Arts Education (MAAE) to provide professional development for teachers and teaching artists. The two organizations give presentations to school administrators and trustees at their annual conference on the resources available to their schools.

## **Grant Programs**

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

- residency program
- in-school arts education
- out-of-school-time arts education
- lifelong learning in the arts
- general operating support for arts education organizations
- arts education program/project support for arts organizations
- quick funds/minigrants
- other: \$500 Teacher Exploration of the Arts Grant for elementary classroom teachers, or K-8 teachers with an elementary endorsement, who are asked to teach visual art or music and do not have a background in that subject, wishing to work one-on-one with a professional working artist to develop the teacher's skill in a particular artistic discipline. The teacher's time is the match.

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

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

### ***Multiyear Grants***

Multiyear grants are available for two years

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

44 grants

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

\$ 114,000

# Major Initiatives & Partnerships

## ***Montana Alliance for Arts Education***

The MAC and MAAE partner to provide professional development to teachers and teaching artists in Montana.

## ***Statewide Arts Education Yearly Assessment (SAEYA)***

This is a partnership with the Idaho Commission on the Arts, Utah Arts Council, Wyoming Arts Council, MAC, and Western States Arts Federation to survey arts education in the schools annually for the next three years and every third year thereafter.

## ***VSA arts of Montana***

Partner with VSA arts of Montana to provide teachers, teaching artists and arts organizations' staff training in accessibility.

# Artist Residency Program

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

- Optional training is provided for artists.
- Entities other than schools may apply to sponsor a residency.

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

- The fee structure is set by the artist rather than the Arts Council. The artist must be paid at least \$500 per week (20 hours). The highest paid artist on MAC's registry is \$1,500 per week. Artists are also paid for travel, meals and lodging.

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

The MAC residency program spans a one- to two-day visit up to a two-year residency. The deadlines for grants are ongoing and are funded on a first-come, first-served basis if the grant meets the criteria and funding is still available. Ninety-five percent of applications are funded. The education director works with the applicant so their residency or project can meet the criteria. The Council has an arts education 800 number that rings to the education director.

# Teaching Artist Roster Program

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

- Out-of-state artists may apply for artist roster.
- A panel is not used to select roster artists. Artists must complete a satisfactory residency funded by the Arts Council before they can apply to the registry. They then submit an application and it is reviewed by staff and outside experts.
- Applications for the Artist Registry are reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- To retain eligibility, artists must reapply. (Check with the agency for details.)

# Annual Events

## **Montana Educators Association-Montana Federation of Teachers *Annual Teacher Conference***

MAAE and MAC provide 12 to 16 two-hour arts education workshops for the statewide annual teacher conference.

# Professional Development Services

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

- For classroom teachers, professional development is administered in partnership with another organization. MAC and MAAE partner to provide professional development to teachers and teaching artists in Montana.
- For arts specialists, professional development is administered in partnership with another organization. MAC and MAAE partner to provide professional development to teachers and teaching artists in Montana.
- For teaching artists, professional development is administered in partnership with another organization. MAC and MAAE partner to provide professional development to teachers and teaching artists in Montana.
- For school administrators, professional development is administered in partnership with another organization. MAC and MAAE partner to provide a workshop on resources in arts education available to schools at the annual conference of school superintendents, principals and school board trustees.

## ***Additional Comments on Professional Development Services***

MAC and MAAE provide professional development workshops for teachers at the annual statewide teachers' conference, the annual reading conference and the Montana Small School Alliance in several small rural towns around the state.

# Poetry Out Loud

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

- in-house with contracted staff

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

- number of schools participating in Poetry Out Loud statewide: 56
- Home-schooled students participate.
- Schools specifically for students with disabilities participate.
- number of regional semifinals: 4

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

- classroom teacher training

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

- plaques for first, second and third place winners
- Additional prizes were purchased.

# Resources & Publications

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

- arts education newsletter
- cultural resources directory including arts education
- statewide data/research on arts education in schools
- video or audio CD
- streaming video or audio
- other: arts education articles in the arts council's newspaper, *State of the Arts*, published every two months

A 16-minute presentation (streaming video and PowerPoint formats) is designed to help arts educators and advocates clarify the importance of arts education in the schools – how it impacts Montana's children, cultural heritage and communities. Images highlighting Montana arts organizations, artists, students and teachers make this a project that reflects Montana values and priorities while providing solid statistical arts education research that is nationally recognized and respected.

Additionally, every two weeks an arts education e-mail newsletter is distributed that contains grant opportunities, resources and articles of interest.

## **Evaluation & Assessment**

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

- Assessment training is provided. The Arts Council provides a day-long workshop for teaching artists every two years that includes training in developing assessment tools.
- MAC is working to have Montana's Office of Public Instruction acknowledge the Arts Council and the teaching artists who do residencies as a valuable resource for assessment in the arts.

***Program Evaluation for Grantees***

- Grant applications require a description of the process for student assessment of the learning objectives or program evaluation for special projects. Each grantee's final report is a form of program evaluation; reflecting on the narrative questions and providing the quantitative data offers a good summary of their program's results.

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

- quantitative and qualitative grants data
- participation data
- financial data
- performance measurements
- surveys and feedback forms
- interviews
- focus groups and town hall meetings
- direct observations

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

A summary of the Likert scales on MAC's final report forms offers an overview of how the grantees and artists perceive the outcomes of a residency. A compilation of the narrative questions gives a more fine-tuned picture of the success of the residency on several levels. At the end of each grant year the education director scans all the grant applications and final reports and notes on a matrix whether several criteria have or have not been met. These criteria are the priorities for the arts education program. When the matrix is compared to the previous years' outcomes, patterns emerge and influence slight redirection and at times large changes in the program.

MAC also uses the statistics provided by the grantees to track individuals in various groups and counties served, cost per student, rural versus urban grantees, new sponsors, number of community events and other indices.

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

### ***State Alliance for Arts Education***

Montana Alliance for Arts Education. MAC and MAAE partner to provide professional development to teachers and teaching artists in Montana. The two organizations provide presentations to school administrators and trustees on the resources available to schools.

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

Beck McLaughlin, Education and Web Services Director, 0.69

### ***Arts Education Coordinator's Split Responsibilities***

- other areas of work: agency Web site
- percent of time dedicated to arts education program: 75%

### ***Staff Biography***

Beck McLaughlin holds a bachelor's degree in arts administration and an interdisciplinary master's degree in dance and education from the University of Oregon. From 1985-1995, she was a member of the Montana Arts Council's Artist Registry and worked with more than 1,000 students per year in public schools throughout Montana. In 1989, McLaughlin received an individual artist fellowship in theatre from the Montana Arts Council. She was codirector of a touring theatre company, Aleph Movement Theatre, and education director at the Myrna Loy Center, where she managed the Arts Plus Program.