

Venture for Alaska's Youth

Arts Education in Alaska

August, 2014




ALASKA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS


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Produced by Alaska State Council on the Arts, in partnership with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development and Alaska Arts Education Consortium, a member of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network.

Alaska's students deserve an education that will prepare them for success in today's increasingly competitive workforce.

Creativity, innovation and critical thinking skills are essential to lead Alaska into the future. Learning in and through the arts is a proven method to instill these qualities in students so that they are poised to solve the complex problems of today—and tomorrow.

The Alaska State Council on the Arts is investing in Alaska's youth, to equip them with the tools they need to thrive. Through our appropriation from the State of Alaska, as well as support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rasmuson Foundation, we support high-quality arts education for students throughout our great state. However, there is much more we all need to do to ensure that our students are getting the best education possible to prepare them for success in the 21st century marketplace.

In 2009, the Alaska State Council on the Arts published *On Thin Ice*, which detailed the quantity and level of arts education in Alaska. *Venture for Alaska's Youth* is an update to that census research and a report on our advancement in the past five years. While we have made some strides and are no longer on thin ice, we now embark on the path to ensure that the power of arts education is harnessed fully to cultivate the next generation of Alaska's leaders.



Shannon Daut
Executive Director, Alaska State Council on the Arts

The legislature formed the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) in 1966 to ensure that the arts would play a significant part in the educational experience of Alaska's students. The Council coordinates the well-known and popular Artists in Schools Program, hosts academies to develop artists as Teaching Artists, and together with the Juneau Arts & Humanities Council sponsors the annual Poetry Out Loud competition, which attracts several thousand Alaska students. With support from the Alaska Arts Education Consortium and assistance from the Department of Education & Early Development, the Council has now updated the 2009 status report on K-12 arts education in Alaska. In this new, seminal report you will learn more, as I did, about our achievements and the continuing challenges of our schools.



Mike Hanley
Commissioner, Alaska Department of Education
and Early Development

Dr. Annie Calkins, *Researcher and Author, Venture for Alaska's Youth, 2014*

Introduction

In 2008 the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA), in collaboration with the Alaska Arts Education Consortium and Alaska School Administrators Association, conducted a comprehensive statewide survey to compile baseline data on the state of arts education in schools and districts across Alaska. The study detailed the quantity and level of arts education programs and funding, the preponderance of highly qualified teachers and the barriers to providing arts instruction. The study, published in a 2009 report titled *On Thin Ice*, was designed to inform policymakers, district administrators, teachers, parents, University faculty, business leaders, Native organizations, arts advocates and organizations, and the Alaska community about the status of learning in and through the arts in our schools.

Venture for Alaska's Youth is the five-year follow-up to the *On Thin Ice* report. It details the changes and advancement of arts education in Alaska schools. The metaphorical ice has thickened, and we are now in a position to begin the venture to strengthen support for student learning through arts education.

ASCA and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) remain committed to ensuring that all Alaskan students have access to high-quality arts experiences as a regular component of their K-12 education.

Forty district administrators (75%) responded to the 2014 survey. These districts serve 121,794, or 92%, of all students in both urban and rural settings. This response rate is higher than in 2008, when 32 districts, representing 89% of Alaska's students, completed the survey.

The information in this report can serve as a catalyst for creative conversations in schools, districts and boardrooms. Collectively, we have made some gains in arts education in the last five years. For example, short case studies of four districts reported here give evidence of positive impacts when district leaders commit to active inclusion of the arts as a core subject. At the same time, we are also stagnant in some areas. Looking closely at this statewide data prompts reflection at the local level:

- ▶ Has our district introduced or increased arts education for *all* students?
- ▶ Are teachers more confident and equipped to teach the arts, integrate them with other subjects and assess what students are learning in and through the arts?
- ▶ Does our community actively support students engaged in arts activities and help fund the arts when budget reductions are required?
- ▶ Is there a collective agreement that the arts are important to Alaska – to our current and future economy, the identity we project to the world, and as an essential component of the legacy we leave for future Alaskans?

If so, arts education is more imperative than ever.

Venture for Alaska's Youth: Comprehensive Arts Education

The 2014 survey queried superintendents and District administrators about key components of a comprehensive arts education and the supports necessary to ensure access to the arts for all students. The following elements are essential for delivering comprehensive arts education to Alaska's students:



Charting the Course: Arts Curriculum and Instruction

A well-developed arts curriculum and regular, sequential arts instruction for elementary and secondary students, including arts-rich experiences in every Alaskan community.



Pathfinders: Qualified Teachers

Highly qualified and/or trained arts teachers to deliver arts instruction and support the integration of the arts across other content areas.



Bedrock: Professional Development

Professional development for both arts specialists and regular classroom teachers that provides them with best practices and tools for delivering discipline-based arts instruction and integrating the arts into other subjects across the curriculum.



Provisions: Budget and Resource Allocation

Budget and resource allocation for staffing, materials and arts activities, including appropriate space and time for arts learning.



Blazing Trails: Leadership and Policy

The development of school and community leadership to support and implement policy around arts education as a core element of a quality education for students in the 21st century.

Survey Findings



Charting the Course: Curriculum and Instruction

Although all but four Alaskan school districts surveyed provide some arts education, there is great variation in the scope and depth of what is offered. Arts instruction at the elementary level occurs less frequently than at the secondary level. As is the case nationally, Music and Visual Arts are offered much more frequently than other arts disciplines in Alaskan schools.

Arts Curriculum in Place

2009 → 2014
11 Districts → 21 Districts

Arts Graduation Requirement

2009 → 2014
6 Districts → 9 Districts

- ▶ The number of districts with a written, board-adopted arts curriculum almost doubled in the last five years; eighteen had K – 12 curriculum, three had only secondary curriculum.
- ▶ Visual Arts curricula existed in 20 of the 40 districts. This may be the residual outcome of Project ARTiculate, a grant-funded project that disseminated the Fairbanks School District Visual Arts curriculum across the state.
- ▶ Theater/Drama curricula is implemented in 15 districts, 10 reported that they offered Theater courses in 2014 and 11 reported that certified teachers taught a Theater course last year.
- ▶ Thirty districts reported that teachers designed and administered arts assessments. Only Kuspuk School District required district-wide assessments. Five districts had no arts assessment of any kind.
- ▶ Nine Alaskan districts required one arts credit (or half credit) for graduation – Bristol Bay, Copper River, Cordova, Dillingham, Juneau, Kenai, Kuspuk, Pribilof Islands and Wrangell. Graduation requirement titles ranged from “Visual Arts” or “Cultural Arts” to “CTE, Fine Arts or Foreign Language.”

2009

Band	21
General Art	20
Photography	20
Drawing/Painting	17
Ceramics	14
Video/Film Production	14
Alaska Native Arts	12
General Music	11
General Theater	8
Orchestra	7

TOP TEN Secondary Art Courses by district offerings

2014

Band	24
General Art	23
Choir	22
Drawing/Painting	17
Digital Arts	16
Ceramics	14
Photography	14
Alaska Native Arts	13
Video/Film Production	11
General Theater	10

In at least 23 districts, elementary students received formal Visual Arts instruction; 22 districts provided Music. The length of time was typically in 30 – 40 minutes/session (22 districts). Eighteen districts provided Native Cultural Arts instruction, often as part of a Bilingual/Bicultural program.

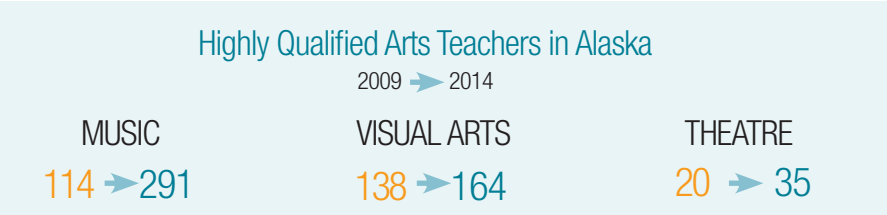
- ▶ The most common frequency was weekly arts instruction (11 districts).
- ▶ Four districts reported no arts instruction at all for elementary students.
- ▶ Secondary students are most likely to have the opportunity to take elective classes, predominantly traditional survey classes in Music and Visual Arts. In the last five years, Digital Arts and Film Production have emerged as popular elective courses in over a dozen Alaskan districts. Similarly, Media Arts rose to prominence as an area of high interest and need.

Though we have made significant progress, we fall far short of the goal to ensure that all Alaskan students receive arts instruction and engage in a variety of arts experiences during their K – 12 education. As many as 10,000 Alaskan students do not currently receive any formal arts education.



Pathfinders: Qualified Teachers

Over the last five years the number of Highly Qualified arts teachers in Alaska increased significantly. Districts are now required to identify and report to the state and parents, the teachers in their district who are Highly Qualified to teach each secondary subject, including the arts. DEED and local districts have more reliable, valid teacher certification data than five years ago, which may account for the surprising increase in the number of arts teachers. There were definitely more Highly Qualified arts teachers in Alaska in 2014, even if they were not teaching arts courses.



- ▶ Four urban districts – Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai, Anchorage – had itinerant elementary Visual Arts Specialists teaching children and modeling arts lessons for teachers.
- ▶ 22 districts have at least one Music teacher to deliver elementary Music instruction.
- ▶ 12 rural districts reported no Highly Qualified Music teachers and 15 had no Highly Qualified Visual Arts teachers - the two most commonly taught arts disciplines. As a result, if those districts were to offer arts courses they would be taught by generalists without an arts credential.
- ▶ 17 districts had Highly Qualified Digital/Media Arts teachers.



Bedrock: Professional Development

At the state level, professional development in the arts and/or arts integration was provided for teachers through the Alaska Arts Education Consortium Basic and Special Topics Institutes, the Anchorage School District Summer Academy and events such as the Fairbanks Summer Fine Arts Festival.

- ▶ 14 districts (39% of respondents) reported No Professional Development in the arts was offered in the previous school year – a figure matching the report from five years ago.
- ▶ 15 districts (42%) offered workshops led by Artists in Schools during residencies.
- ▶ 11 districts (33%) provided district-wide in-service sessions in the arts.
- ▶ Other training occurred during school in-services, credit courses, large group presentations with visiting artists and/or workshops with professional artists, or arts groups, usually sponsored by local arts organizations.

Degree of Interest in Arts Professional Development by Arts Discipline # of districts

	Great Need	Moderate Need	Little Need
Arts Integration	20	13	3
Digital/Media Arts	15	14	4
Native Cultural Arts	14	12	8
Music	12	12	10
Theater/Drama	10	16	5
Visual Arts	9	21	5

The greatest need for professional development was in Arts Integration, where teachers learn skills and strategies to integrate the arts across the curriculum. Most of the districts that noted this need were rural districts without art specialists.

The next highest topic of need was teacher training in Digital/Media Arts, which we presume reflects a strong interest by students in using the rich variety of technology tools for creation and communication. Native Cultural Arts was also an area of high need and interest.

Not surprisingly, Music was the area where the highest number of districts (10) indicated little interest in training. Music had the highest number of Highly Qualified teachers, many of whom belong to professional organizations and pursue specialized training in their fields, suited to their talents and instructional assignments (band, choir, orchestra, etc).



Provisions: Budget & Resource Allocation

Funding was noted as the biggest obstacle to providing comprehensive arts education.

Compared to 2008, more Alaskan districts (24) are using district operating funds for arts education. Grants, Native organizations and business partners also financially support arts education activities, more so than five years ago. This may signal a growing recognition by communities of the value of providing arts education to all students.

In 2008, over half of the districts indicated that federal mandates resulting from the No Child Left Behind legislation were the biggest barrier to providing arts education. The 2014 research revealed that barrier has dissipated; schools and districts have evidently adjusted to accountability demands on instructional time and the rigors of regular testing.

In addition to DEED general district funds, the ecosystem of support and subsidy for arts education in Alaska is relatively strong. Partnerships are key to arts education delivery:

- ▶ The Alaska State Council on the Arts' Artists in Schools program for professional development as well as short term arts instruction
- ▶ The Rasmuson Foundation for assistance with transportation and after-school arts programming
- ▶ Tribal councils and the federal Alaska Native Education grant program for funding traditional, indigenous and cultural arts experiences.
- ▶ Local arts organizations that actively support and partially subsidize arts education in their districts.



Blazing Trails: Leadership And Policy

There is a cadre of district and school leaders with passion and experience in the arts who can be engaged to help develop and strengthen arts education across Alaska. Thirty one administrators, from Superintendents to Elementary Principals and every level in between, were cited by name on the survey for their strong interest and district leadership in the arts. Nine of them have participated in Administrator Arts Retreats sponsored annually by the Alaska Arts Education Consortium.

At the policy level, ASCA's *New Visions* initiative helps foster leadership at the district level by supporting cross-sector teams working to develop policies and curriculum that advance arts education in their communities.

When queried about strong or outstanding district arts and culture programs, superintendents or district administrators most often cited Music (18) and Visual Arts (17). Ten districts were proud of their Native Arts programs. Seventeen respondents described specific teachers, schools and/or activities as Outstanding; their pride was evident in comments such as, "In the 4th year, after re-introducing the music program in the Tok School, students won a couple of regional and statewide prizes."

— Alaska Gateway
Superintendent, 2014



Elementary students from Gustavus School work with resident artist Roblin Gray Davis to create masks using a casting process. Following the completion of the residency in FY14, some teachers built on the mask project, where students developed masks that expressed meaning. Photo courtesy Gustavus School.

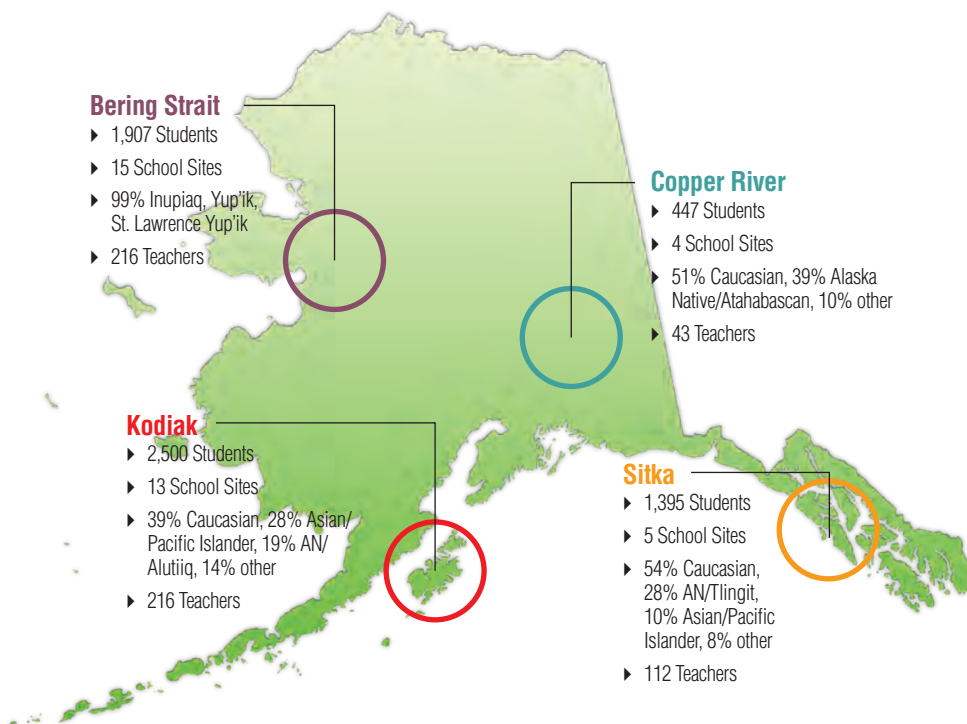


Teaching artist Justine Pechuzal worked with students in Sand Point to develop murals that reflect their community. Pechuzal's approach to mural development involved the whole community. Photo courtesy Aleutians East Borough School District.

New Visions for Arts Education in Alaskan Schools: Four Case Studies

In 2009, the Alaska State Council on the Arts, partially in response to the *On Thin Ice* research, developed a new initiative, *New Visions*, to “work with targeted districts to establish and implement arts curriculum in order to research and develop model arts education programs in rural and urban Alaska.”

In consultation with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, three diverse districts were invited to participate in the five-year initiative, with the goal of increasing access and quality to arts learning for all K - 12 students. The original districts selected were Bering Strait, Copper River and Kodiak Island. In 2013 the Sitka School District was added and began planning its local program. Since that time, each district has made positive growth in the areas of Curriculum and Instruction, Qualified Teachers, Professional Development, Budget and Resource Allocation, and Policy/Leadership development. Each district planned activities tailored to their unique needs and realities, accounting for the complex ecosystem of standards and testing requirements, budget reductions and constraints, long-distance communication challenges, teacher/administrator turn-over, contract negotiations, and school improvement mandates.



Bering Strait School District

In Year One of the *New Visions* program BSSD's Arts Action Team crafted an overall vision for their work and the District:

The Bering Strait School District recognizes the importance of the arts in education. Purposeful, intentional teaching and learning of the arts: improves the quality, scope, and relevance of education; fosters positive relationships among students and teachers; acknowledges and utilizes multiple intelligences and learning styles of students; nurtures the creativity, imagination, talents, and personal expression of individuals. Students who create, perform, and actively participate in cultural activities and the arts develop critical 21st century skills alongside an appreciation for a sense of beauty and meaning in life. Every student in the BSSD should have multiple opportunities throughout their educational career to learn about, explore, participate in, express themselves, and enhance their understanding of content and the world around them through the arts.

This vision, tenaciously embraced by a revolving group of District administrators, principals and teachers, guided the development and renewal of an annual Action Plan, entitled "Reinvigorating the Arts". Broad in scope and realistic in detail, the Plan propelled staff toward achievement of significant outcomes, all of which were "firsts ever" in this district, including:

- CI Adoption of a Visual Arts curriculum (the first since the 1980s) that includes a study of Bering Sea artists
- CI Purchase of five Project ARTiculate Visual Arts Kits for each site, along with a rotating set of additional kits that annually circulate across the District
- PD Co-sponsorship of a two week intensive Basic Arts Institute in 2013
- QT Hiring two highly qualified arts teachers in 2012, who provided sequential Visual Arts instruction to all K – 12 students in two village schools
- CI Expansion of the Artist in the Schools program to include half the schools each year, implementing visual and performing arts instruction and experiences
- CI Creation and dissemination of a series of twelve Cultural Arts Kits, in collaboration with the Bilingual staff

Copper River School District

Within three years of involvement with *New Visions*, the Copper River School District (CRSD) newspaper headline read "Artists, artists everywhere! The arts are ALIVE in the CRSD". The significance of this lies in the fact that this district had previously made no mark on the arts education landscape of Alaska, though it had boasted very high test scores in "the basics." Cumulative outcomes of involvement of the CRSD in *New Visions* include:

- LP The School Board adopted a 1-credit Fine Arts Requirement in 2012
- CI District staff drafted, piloted and adopted a K – 8 Visual Arts curriculum, added content listings for high school core-content courses, and worked to integrate social studies and science curricula with the arts by developing thematic kits

- CI Full year Visual Arts elective courses are offered at both high schools; there is a Theater elective in one school
- CI All students in grades 6 – 12 participate enthusiastically in Poetry Out Loud school and district level annual competitions. Poetry Out Loud is now an important component of the local English/Language Arts curriculum
- PD All CRSD staff participate in hands-on integrated arts training at district in-services led by local teachers who attended a summer Basic Arts Institute
- CI Two plays and three school murals culminated five AIS residencies in CRSD. Residencies, a new phenomena in Year One, are now a permanent addition to the instructional calendar
- LP During new hire interviews prospective staff are queried about arts background, training and/or interests, so that CRSD staff can integrate more arts with all disciplines
- CI In its commitment to offer arts instruction the District devised ways to contract with local painters, choral directors and music instructors to offer during and after school programs, including home students

Kodiak Island Borough School District

“Steady, healthy, positive movement” characterized the *New Visions* work in Kodiak over the five-year time span. Among the systemic protocol changes and significant outcomes in Kodiak:

- CI Developed Student Learning Plans in the arts as well as core subjects in 2013 to be monitored for growth throughout every student's K – 12 education
- LP Sustained a STEAM focus to instruction – adding creativity in the arts to science, technology, engineering and math instruction and professional development. Kodiak leaders are outspoken advocates of STEAM at the state level
- LP Nurtured a productive relationship with the Kodiak Arts Council, which, in Year Five, took over logistical management and facilitation of the district-wide Artist in the Schools program
- PD Offered two Teaching Artist Academies to further train over fifteen local artists interested in offering school residencies throughout the district
- CI Pioneered the use of video technology to deliver Music instruction to remote sites
- CI Completed a six year review of their K – 12 Arts curriculum that includes strands for Music, Visual Arts, Drama and Dance

Sitka School District

The district joined the *New Visions* network in 2013 and during its first year of planning have addressed two goals from their Arts Action Plan. Notably, through an iterative process involving dozens of district staff and community leaders, the Sitka Board of Education adopted ACT – Arts, Culture and Technology – Standards that will guide integrated curriculum development starting in the fall of 2014.



Students at Williwaw Elementary School in Anchorage rehearse and perform during an Artists in Schools residency with artist Janet Carr-Campbell. Residency liaison Heidi Martinson, an educator at Williwaw, notes the following in her final report. "This residency provided opportunities for our students to improve their physical coordination and to express themselves artistically through music and movement. It also assisted in language development, through memorization of lyrics, vocabulary development, comprehension and expression of a story through singing. Teachers reported through our survey that this residency was a very positive experience for both them and their students. We had comments from the teachers that students who normally struggled academically and socially showed improvement in participation and attitude." Photo courtesy Ann Gray and Williwaw Elementary School.



Alaska and the National Context

Alaska, the “Last Frontier,” is unique. A distinct, often fiercely independent spirit characterizes its people in their dealings with the federal government, neighboring states and countries. This is true with matters ranging from the environment and natural resources to education policy and regulations. Alaska has not been a “Common Core” state as most others have been, choosing instead to forge our own path to determine what is important for all students to know and be able to achieve as they move through the public school system.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known until its reauthorization as the No Child Left Behind Act) defines “core academic subjects” as “English, reading or language arts, math, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography.”

In Title 4 of the Alaska Administrative Code, the fine arts are included as one of ten subjects for which “the state public school system is to provide a working knowledge of” along with English, mathematics, science, geography, history, skills for a healthy life, government and citizenship, technology and world languages (4 AAC 04.030. Subjects). Likewise in Title 4, arts is included with those 10 subjects as having content standards “set out in the department's publication entitled *Alaska Standards: Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students*” (4 AAC 04.140. Content standards). Alaska's State Board of Education included the arts as one of ten core subjects in 1994. Development of state Standards in the arts followed, along with other subjects, in 1996. More recently, as the Common Core gained momentum across America, new Alaska Standards in Reading, Writing and Math were adopted.

“The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS), a consortium of national arts and education organizations, recently completed a revision of the 1994 voluntary national arts standards that include the four original disciplines (Dance, Music, Theatre, and Visual Art) as well as new Media Arts standards.” The teams developing these standards included representatives from the national arts education professional associations from each discipline, the College Board, State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education, and individual educators, artists and stakeholders from across the country.

— Arts Education Partnership. A Snapshot of State Policies for Arts Education.
March, 2014

To date, no action has taken place to revise the 1996 Alaska Fine Arts Standards. To update the Standards, a review of the national Core Arts Standards and standards from states with similarities to Alaska should be conducted. District leaders, policymakers, artists, teachers and community members will then be able to adapt what has been effective elsewhere to meet the unique cultural, linguistic and geographical characteristics of this Great Land, where local districts are responsible for developing curriculum and establishing the amount of time dedicated to arts instruction.

Nationally, 26 states have an arts graduation requirement. Alaska is not one of them. The current Governor Performance Scholarship does not require any arts course credits in order to earn scholarships to the University of Alaska; the arts are a sub-set of Social Studies elective options, along with World Languages.

Recommendations

LP

Update the 1996 Alaska Fine Arts Standards, and Develop Media Arts Standards.

As the DEED implements new standards in Reading, Writing and Math, a plan for revisions to the arts standards in the near future should be developed, in partnership with ASCA, the Alaska Arts Education Consortium and Alaska Society for Technology in Education.

CI

Support innovative approaches to integrating the Arts into Science, Technology, Engineering and Math instruction.

Initiate actions at the state level to link STEM approaches and projects with arts education, recognizing creativity as the wellspring for both.

Creative ideas often begin by transforming information or techniques from one discipline to another. As our knowledge base expands, educators will continue to move away from teaching core information toward teaching that engages students through discovery, assessing, and applying skills in new and innovative ways.

— Randy Pembroke, Dean and Professor, Conservatory of Music, University of Kansas City Missouri, Co-Researcher and Advisor with the Center for Creative Studies

CI

Draft a career ladder for the Arts and Communications cluster

Convene representatives from the Department of Labor, University of Alaska, DEED, ASCA and the Alaska Arts Education Consortium to invite diverse districts to review and begin to draft course content for this ladder. Develop incentives for interested districts to pilot the sequence.

LP

Continue to devise multiple opportunities for district and school administrators to receive training in the arts.

This should include (1) hands-on experiences, (2) summaries of current research on arts disciplines and arts integration, (3) exemplars of effective arts programs in Alaska and the nation, and (4) strategies for communicating the value of arts education with school boards and school Site Councils, parents, teachers and local community members.

PD

Support teacher training, for arts specialists and general classroom teachers at all grade levels.

The instructional impact of high quality, intensive arts training on Alaskan teachers has been documented in three editions of a report (2008, 2010, 2012) issued by the AAEC called “Lasting Impact.” This longitudinal research investigated how teachers used what they had learned in two-week summer Basic Arts Institutes four years after their participation. The reports offer convincing evidence of the importance and value of such training for teachers and students alike.

QT

Develop statewide collaborative efforts to strengthen pre-service teacher training and arts education policy infrastructure.

Devise and implement strategies to engage the University of Alaska and other post-secondary institutions in teacher training and mentoring, policy development, research and leadership in arts education.

BR

Research and report on how other states fund arts education through multiple sources and partnerships.

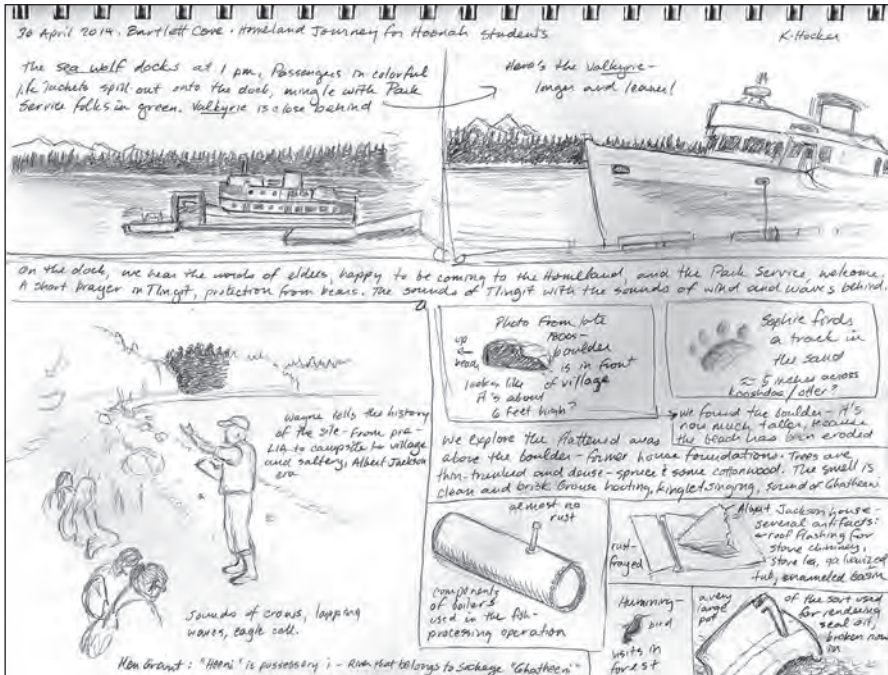
Craft a strategic, long range plan for funding arts teachers, professional development for teachers and administrators, artist residencies and curriculum development at the local, regional and state levels.

The emergence of digital media in the past decade has enabled what is widely seen as a democratization of knowledge, a movement in which collective intelligence and quick access to information may supplement or even surpass the role of formal education. The ability to merge self-expression and mass communication has given youths who have grown up during this era of transformative technology new ways to create, learn and share—often without the assistance or direction of adults. Perhaps no area has been as influenced by these changes as the arts. With the appeal of music, visual and interactive media to youth culture, the arts have opened new paths to civic participation, learning, and entrepreneurship.

—Kylie Peppler, *New Opportunities for Interest Driven Arts Learning in a Digital Age*, Report commissioned by the Wallace Foundation. July, 2013



Teaching artist Javier Barboza and a student at Blatchley Middle School in Sitka work on an animation project together. Photo courtesy Alaska Arts Southeast, Inc.



In FY14 resident teaching artist Kathy Hocker documented the Homeland Journey for Hoonah students during her residency at Hoonah School. Students worked with Hocker to develop their observational drawing skills and scientific journaling, and collaborated with Tlingit master carver Gordon Greenwald, who worked with students to incorporate form line into their observational illustrations of birds.



Folk dance teaching artist Susan Michaels, worked with all 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade classes in Keet Gooshee Heen Elementary School in Sitka. A KGH Barn Dance was held on Friday February 14, 6:30-8:30pm. Live music was provided by local contra dance band, Fishing for Cats and the dance was called by Ms. Michaels. It was attended by 175+ community members. Photo courtesy Alaska Arts Southeast, Inc.

Research Methodology and Survey Process

In early April 2014, Alaska's 53 superintendents were invited to complete an online survey about arts education. The survey, similar in scope and content to the 2008 edition that informed the *On Thin Ice* report, was reviewed by six administrators to ensure clarity and brevity. District leaders were encouraged to participate in the survey by DEED administrators. Department staff followed up with districts that had not responded within a three-week time frame, urging their participation.

For purposes of this survey the four arts disciplines contained in the Alaska State Standards were referenced: Visual Arts, Music, Drama and Dance. Native Arts were added to reflect their prominence in Alaskan communities and schools. Media Arts has emerged as a credible arts discipline since 2008 and therefore was included on the list of options in several questions. Arts integration was an option in various questions on the survey, and garnered much interest from district leaders, particularly in rural settings.

Alaskan Districts Responding to 2014 Arts Education Survey

(* = also responded to 2008 survey)

Alaska Gateway	Kodiak *
Aleutians East	Kuspuk *
Anchorage *	Lower Kuskokwim *
Bering Strait	Lower Yukon *
Bristol Bay	Matanuska- Susitna *
Chatham *	Mt. Edgecumbe *
Chugach	Nenana *
Copper River	Nome
Cordova	North Slope *
Denali *	Northwest Arctic *
Dillingham *	Pelican *
Fairbanks *	Petersburg *
Hoonah	Pribilof Islands *
Hydaburg *	Sitka
Iditarod *	Southeast Island *
Juneau *	Southwest Region
Kake	Tanana
Kenai *	Wrangell *
Ketchikan	Yukon-Koyukuk *
Klawock	Yupit





ALASKA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS



The Alaska State Council on the Arts works to enrich the cultural life of Alaskans by encouraging and supporting excellence in the arts, providing opportunities for every Alaskan to experience the arts, promoting the practice and enjoyment of the arts in Alaska, and guiding the development of the arts throughout the state.

For more information

Web: education.alaska.gov/aksca

Social: [Facebook.com/ArtsAlaska](https://www.facebook.com/ArtsAlaska)

Phone: 907.269.6610

Email: aksca.info@alaska.gov

Office: 161 Klevin Street, Suite 102, Anchorage, AK 99508

