

SOUTH CAROLINA arts COMMISSION

From Page to Stage: Theatre Brings Reading to Life

Ashley Brown, Arts Education Director

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This pilot program hopes to narrow equity gaps in access to quality arts-based programs that support ALL students as they develop 21st Century skills to become College and Career ready. Before getting to the specifics of this pilot, it is important to understand a little background. Between 2014 and 2015 two major things happened...

The Profile of the SC Graduate was released, outlining the knowledge, skills, and characteristics necessary for 21st Century learners to be college and career ready. The Profile was adopted by public and private sector (pretty much all the major players in SC). The arts align with nearly every item listed. The Profile has become the North Star in SC and every student should have equal access to a quality education that equips them with the knowledge, skills, and characteristics outlined.

Additionally, Act 284: Read to Succeed legislation was passed on June 5, 2014, with full implementation to take place by the 2017-18 school year. The goal of *Read to Succeed (R2S)* is to ensure all students graduate from high school with the reading and writing skills they need to be college-and-career ready. One of the largest aspects of R2S is if a student is not reading at grade level by the end of 3rd grade they will be held back. R2S focuses on 8 areas, but for this pilot we are focusing on summer reading camps for rising 3rd and 4th graders who are reading below grade level – to address summer learning loss.

The SC Arts Commission has a flexible funding category which was created to develop pilots that can eventually scale up and serve students throughout SC. These Pilots rely heavily on partnerships (include non-profits, state entities, universities, and school districts). They focus on students in rural and high poverty areas, which in most of SC go hand-in-hand and are a long-term commitment (3-5 years) to develop sustainability.

The Pilot highlighted in this presentation is a reading camp at Kenneth Gardner Elementary in rural Williamsburg County. Students participate in reading camp in the morning and theatre camp in the afternoon. What we hope to show with this pilot is the arts (in this case theatre) help decrease summer learning loss, especially for the lowest performing students. Every school in the district has very similar demographics, which makes for a good pilot – our control group (another elementary school) is nearly identical in demographics. A few statistics about the area:

- county population: 34k
- per capita income: \$12k
- school district population: 5k
- 100% title 1/100% free and reduced lunch
- still clear racial divide between public and religious schools

Both Kenneth Gardner and the control school used the same Scholastic curriculum, both camps are 6 weeks, 4 days per week. Kenneth Gardner added 2 hours of theatre camp in afternoon, with a curriculum developed by 3 Teaching Artists and a Reading Specialist.

Partners in this Pilot are the SC Arts Commission (funding and coordination), SC Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities (teaching artists and curriculum development), University of SC Department of Theatre and

Dance (teaching assistant for classes, assessment module development/data analysis by Dr. Peter Duffy and a post-doc researcher), and Williamsburg County School District (access to MAP data, commitment from schools, transportation, lunch, etc. to extend school day).

The methodology used for assessment includes MAP (measures of academic progress) scores in Reading, Language Use, Math, and Science (mining to reflect growth in reading), Fountas & Pinnell reading assessment (mining to reflect growth in reading), and the Torrence test of creative thinking (mining to reflect creative thinking – to help develop a new assessment module for summer arts programs). For curriculum development, assessment includes video observation (mining to adjust and grow curriculum) as well as daily teacher reflections.

So far, the data has shown an increase in engagement, attendance, and for reading assessment the needle moved most for lowest performing students. In year one 36% of students had less learning loss than previous two years. In year two 30% of students had reading retention gain and 58% of students had reading retention same or gain.

The results from this Pilot will address equity gaps in both funding and programming. More than half of the students in SC are in a situation where there is not enough funding to provide the programs and services mandated by the state. There is a major programming and funding gap for over half of the students in the state.

To address programming equity gaps: once the pilot is fully developed we will be able to scale up and make it available for other districts. The curriculum continues to evolve based on observations and data. The professional development offered, not only to arts teachers, but also to grade level teachers, teaching artists, and classroom assistants will add arts based tools to everyone's tool boxes.

To address funding equity gaps: if the data continues to show that this camp moves the needle on reading retention and decreases summer learning loss, it will provide opportunities for schools and districts to apply for and receive funding from diverse sources. The SC Arts Commission is requesting legislative funding specifically to scale up pilot programs. Schools and districts can apply for a variety of diverse grants: food and transportation, SC DOE summer reading partnership grants, SC DOE arts curricular grants, and SCAC arts education projects grants.

But really all of this is working toward the big picture to ensure that EVERY student in SC, regardless of race, family income, or geographic location have the support and access to programs as they grow into 21st Century learners and become college and career ready.

Rebecca Engelman, Arts in Education Director
North Dakota Arts Council

HOW TO START A REVOLUTION....

Or in this case... “Jumping off the cliff and designing your airplane on the way down.”

1. For many years Arts Ed in ND has remained the same,
 - A variety of high-quality programming in the east and larger communities ...
 - ...and minimal, poor quality in the west and small towns,...
 - Considered by many as “ good enough”
 - The arts in our schools had not improved, and in some cases, were disappearing.
2. As the feds worked to replace NCLB, education in ND was at a tipping point. ...
 - And an opportunity to get the arts front and center was at hand...
 - To know where to start we needed to conduct a DATA Survey which required:
 - funding, support for ND DPI, and manpower.
3. So I went forth to align the stars;
 - I sang about the arts to all who would listen
 - Rubbed elbows with politicians and the Department of Public Instruction
 - Spoke to the legislature about additional funding and sought support from local and regional organizations.
 - I even conducted a conference call with NEA to try and convince DPI to apply for an Arts Works grant.
4. But resistance blocked me at every direction
 - The oil boom busted- which lead to state-wide budget cuts
 - DPI was under fire over **CORE** standards.
 - Between standards and dwindling budgets Schools were anxious and confused
 - And, the state Superintendent, up for re-election, resisted anything to do with federal funding
 - I was in for a long-term fight
5. But word was out that ESSA would focus on “well-rounded” education and keeping the arts in the conversation would be critical!
 - Rather than waiting for a DATA survey, could we go micro?
 - Use our STEAM grant, dive deep with one school and get a ‘snippet’ of DATA?
 - A variety of approaches were considered
 - With backbone structure and experience working in rural and Native communities, I thought Turnaround Arts might be it!
6. I had to get DPI to the table to gain support so
 - I invited their staff to our annual Picturing Writing workshop.
 - After seeing how the language of pictures and writing could be integrated to support both English and Native literacy, and hearing the positive comments from the participants
 - DPI jumped on board to partner and expand the workshop.

7. Through our collaborative efforts we provided a workshop for instructors working in Native, below poverty, SIG, and Title I schools
 - Where teachers received two credits, manuals and a classroom pack of high quality art supplies.
 - Discussions ensued on other ways the arts might be used to improve student learning.
 - When articles concerning Turnaround at tribal schools in Montana and Minnesota were shared
 - The seed was planted and the door opened.

8. Knowing that applications would not be received until after 2016 elections.
 - We worked to find and prepare schools.
 - Solen Middle, Cannonball Elementary and Standing Rock Elementary and Middle Schools
 - All low-performing, 100% Native and located on the Standing Rock Reservation were selected.
 - Out of the blue we received a new deadline
 - And rather than wait, DPI decided to move forward

9. The Director of Federal Programs and I took a leap of faith, and wrote the application.
 - In February National came to do a site visit...
 - And we drove down Highway 1806 to meet with teachers, administrators and Tribal leaders.
 - In March we received notification that we had been accepted.
 - We were officially on a roll!

10. The next several months we were drinking out of a fire hose!
 - We scrambled to leverage federal funds
 - Found a fiscal agent
 - Hired a Program Director and Coordinator
 - Went to the White House for the official welcome
 - Sent school teams to the TA Summer Retreat
 - And started planning for the our launch in October

11. Meanwhile the protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline was boiling over
 - And highway 1806, the main route to our TA schools, was ground Zero.
 - As tensions increased parents and students found their community and schools in turmoil.
 - With Impassable roads, disturbed bus routes, fluctuating attendance, and frequently cancelled or delayed school....
 - Our launch for Turnaround Arts could not have come at a worse time.

12. National TA pressed on
 - The free concert, promoted as “Turnaround Arts Sings with Standing Rock”...
 - And emceed by a candidate for state office, quickly took on a political tones
 - Protestors, who were provided free tickets saw the event as support for their cause.
 - Backlash ensued in the news and on social media.
 - Shortly after, Solen and Cannonball schools asked to be released from the TA program.

13. As our remaining schools moved forward, our state’s ESSA plan was beginning to gel
 - I worked with DPI to ensure the plan listed the Arts in their entirety...
 - And included the arts a strategy for addressing indicators of success.
 - To support projects aimed at increasing arts access, like TA, I updated the STEAM Grant to the Arts in Education Collaboration Grant

14. Back at SR, the Program Director was having trouble pulling **DATA** from our schools

- Rather than risk damaging this fragile relationship, we stepped back.
- Using the new Collaboration grant, we built trust by working with the school's Technology Team to create a project that included online PD, portfolios, use of survey tools and **DATA**
- Time will tell if we've been successful

15. To sum it up - this leap of faith has yet to provide **DATA**...

- But what we did get was a ..
- A working partnership with DPI
- Over 290 teachers trained in PW
- 10 schools receiving Collaboration grants for projects to increase art access
- And two schools, 43 teachers and 210 students in the Turnaround Arts program.
- Which in the end, is so much better just than "Good Enough"

1. Today I'm going to talk about four events. Three have already taken place. The fourth represents Phase II of our initiative addressing ESSA and the Arts for middle and high schools. In Phase II we hope we can synthesize the first three events to begin to produce concrete actionable recommendations for policymakers as they roll out New Mexico's ESSA plan.
2. Event #1: In 2013, our Department of Cultural Affairs commissioned the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of New Mexico to do a study on Renewing the Creative Economy of the state. The 250-page report gives less one page to arts education, but they are important words and they remain part of our strategic plan to support expansion of high quality arts education programs K-12.
3. The authors urge policy makers to "implement strategies to ensure the effective administration of the 2003 *elementary* Fine Arts Education Act and advocate for the extension of the Act to middle and high schools."
4. Specifically, the Public Education Department should create a professional staff with specific responsibility for the administration of the fine arts program. This arts-based staff should:
 1. Ensure that school districts and charter schools demonstrate both fiduciary and high-quality compliance within the program guidelines.
 2. Offer more opportunities, easier access, and incentives for engaging in content-specific, fine arts education professional development and networking for fine arts educators and administrators, as well as those involved in the assessment of district arts programs.
 3. Expand the Act to middle and high school students with appropriate funding equity.
6. Event #2: To comply with the ESSA requirement for stakeholder engagement, last fall, our Secretary of Public Education embarked on a listening tour across the state. The purpose was to engage communities to advance New Mexico education, and gather information from constituents in preparation for the writing of the state's ESSA plan.
7. Our Public Education Department partnered with New Mexico First, a non-partisan public policy organization, to facilitate 19 regional meetings throughout the state. They surveyed, in English *and* Spanish, those who could not attend, and wrote a final report detailing feedback from the survey and meetings. Occasionally, parents, particularly in rural communities, spoke up and asked, "What about the arts as a way to engage and keep students in school?"
8. New Mexico submitted its ESSA plan in spring 2017. It was approved this summer by the US Department of Education. To read it, you might think that New Mexico has finally declared war on the achievement gap for students who are English language learners, students who are homeless, incarcerated, living below the poverty line, and students with disabilities. But, "What about the arts?"
9. What do you do when the arts do not rate an appearance in your state's plan, except as a one-word mention in a line about 21st Century Community Learning Centers?
10. How can we demonstrate that for New Mexico's students, investing in high quality arts programs is *less* risky for the at-risk?

New Mexico Arts wanted to know, "What do our middle and high school principals have to say about arts education in their schools?"
11. Event #3: To help answer these questions, we contracted with New Mexico First, the Education Department's survey designer and facilitator, to help us design a survey of middle and high school principals at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

What did we learn? The 27% response rate and the comments provided a glimpse into which disciplines were offered at each school,...
12. ...including grade level and instructional hours;
the number of and support for fine arts teachers – including their professional development;
types of assessments currently in use;
high school graduation requirements, if any;

outside funding;

parent advisory councils, if any;

and barriers to and innovations for providing high quality fine arts instruction.

13. 81% of survey takers cited lack of funding as the main barrier to providing sequential, standards-based fine arts instruction. Lack of qualified and/or available teachers were mentioned by over 70% of schools.

Three-quarters of the schools did not require fine arts coursework to graduate from high school. Over 60% of those schools were *not* in favor of adding such a requirement. We felt that principals were candid in their responses.

14. Which brings us to Event #4. Partnering once again with New Mexico First, we will ask our working group of 20 statewide education stakeholders, to take into account past recommendations and roadblocks, and discuss opportunities for expanding the arts within the context of the state's ESSA plan.

The opportunities are:

Title I Part A: The inclusion of arts-based and arts-integrated programs to improve academic outcomes of academically at-risk students.

Title I Part B: The development of assessments aligned to state arts standards.

Title II Part A: The inclusion of Professional Development for arts educators.

15. Title IV Part A The inclusion of arts education programs to address district gaps in providing all students with a well-rounded education.

And, Title IV Part F: The national programs operated through the US Department of Education that provide funding for the development of innovative arts education programs for students, and arts professional learning programs for educators.

Wish us luck!

16. Credits:

Tim Keller Photography

Slides 3 – 5: *Building on the Past, Facing the Future: Renewing the Creative Economy of New Mexico*, Jeffrey Mitchell and Gillian Joyce, University of New Mexico Bureau of Business & Economic Research

Slide 10 quote: *Albuquerque by Six*, V. B. Price

Slides 11 – 15: Special thanks to Garrison Keillor and Warren Buffett

Slides 11 – 13: *Survey Report: Fine Arts Education in Public Middle and High Schools*, New Mexico First

Slides 14 – 15: *ESSA Mapping opportunities for the arts*, Arts Education Partnership + Education Commission of the States

Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning

Josy Miller, Ph.D.
Arts Education Programs Specialist
California Arts Council

*For the NASAA Arts Education Manager Professional Development Institute
September 2017*

[Opener with image & title]

Good morning, everyone! It is my great honor and pleasure to get to introduce to you the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning, drafted and disseminated across the State of California earlier this year. The Declaration reads as follows:

[Slide w/Article 1 image]

Article 1. All students have the right to equitable access to PreK-12 free, coherent, and sequential standards-based arts learning that is part of the core curriculum and that provides both integrated and discrete visual and performing arts learning opportunities; and the right to equitable outcomes as a result of this access, without distinction on account of race, culture, language, religion, national origin, geographical location, or legal status.

[Slide w/Article 2 image]

Article 2. All students have the right to special protection for every student's artistic and aesthetic development. The right to protection from policies and practices that exclude or preclude certain students or populations from equitable access to and success in powerful and coherent arts learning PreK-12.

[Slide w/Article 3 image]

Article 3. All students have the right to arts learning that is culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant, with attention to those populations that have traditionally been excluded or precluded, such as English Learners, students of color, foster youth, homeless youth, students in poverty, migrant students, and special needs students.

[Slide w/Article 4 image]

Article 4. All students have the right to arts learning programs in every school, district, and community that are funded and supported with the necessary resources, including qualified administrators, teachers, teaching artists, and other staff, adequate materials, and appropriate facilities to support powerful culturally and linguistically responsive arts learning.

[Slide w/Article 5 image]

Article 5. All students have the right to educators, leaders, and parents/community who are knowledgeable about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of arts learning for individual students, families/communities, the nation, and global society

[Slide w/Article 6 image]

And finally, Article 6. All students have the right to be brought up in school and community environments that value and protect the arts and equity as essential to the full development of every student, and that demonstrate those values/beliefs in their public policies and practices.

[Slide re: CREATE CA]

The Declaration was drafted by members of CREATE CA, our state's arts education collective impact organization. The CAC is a founding member alongside the CA DOE, the School Boards Association, the CA Alliance for Arts Education – our advocacy partner, the County Superintendents' Association, and the State PTA.

[Slide re: CA Data Project]

The concept of the Declaration emerged in response to California's participation in the Arts Education Data Project. Data reported to the CA DOE revealed stark disparities in arts course access and enrollment across the State. In the graphic you see here, counties pictured in orange or red fall below the average annual student enrollment rate, while those in blue fall above that rate. The average enrollment is only 38%.

[Slide w/ Bar chart overlay]

The interactive online tool allows you to drill down to the school site level to view enrollment information. In the table report that overlaid income and race/ethnicity data on top of the enrollment numbers, the disparities grew even more prominent. As you can see from the chart here, African-American and Latinx students are significantly overrepresented in their lack of access to arts courses.

[Slide re: Process of Drafting the Declaration]

So we got to work. The Equity subcommittee of CREATE reached out to stakeholders statewide to begin to craft the articles of the Declaration. Though the Data Project highlighted disparities in access and enrollment, the Declaration also ended up speaking to other issues of educational equity, including culturally responsive curriculum, appropriate facilities and funding, and educator preparedness.

[Slide re: Student Voice]

Once the Declaration was drafted, we realized there was a crucial element missing: student voice. The Equity committee partnered with educators around the state to work with students to rewrite the articles in their own words. These new articles replaced the rights of an abstracted individual with empowered self-articulations: "I have the right to succeed;" "I have the right to resources;" "I have the right to be supported." These revised articles now accompany the originals side-by-side in all published versions of the Declaration.

[Slide re: Action Steps]

The task then became turning concepts into action. It is one thing to embrace a statement of values; it is quite another to utilize those values to drive funding decisions and curriculum development. So CREATE drafted a model school board resolution to accompany the Declaration that mapped out specific action steps that a board could take to take to move the needle on increasing the realization of these student rights.

[Slide re: Current Work]

CREATE CA is now working with partners throughout the state to promote adoption of the Declaration and accompanying Board resolutions, and supporting Districts in developing strategic arts plans that specifically articulate the right to equity and take collective action to realize it.

[Concluding Slide]

It is our sincere hope that this work will lead to an arts education landscape in California that is more accessible, more equitable, and more responsive to the multiplicity of cultures that make up our state, and that are reflected in all our children. Thank you.