State Arts Agency Arts Education Managers
2012 Professional Development Institute

October 2-4, 2012

Notes

Agenda

For more than 20 years, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) have supported the Professional Development Institute (PDI) for state arts agency arts education managers. The PDI provides meaningful leadership development and technical assistance for this diverse field. As a result, arts education managers remain knowledgeable leaders in their field through a peer network that new and seasoned managers find invaluable. This event helps state arts agencies and the NEA attain their mutual goal of advancing excellent arts education nationwide. The 2012 PDI was convened in conjunction with the NASAA Assembly 2012 conference.

The focus of this year's PDI was to examine models of influence and how state arts agency arts education managers can effectively make the case for arts education. Invited speakers included NASAA Chief Executive Officer Jonathan Katz, Arts Education Partnership Director Sandra Ruppert, Colorado Department of Education Content Specialist for the Arts Karol Gates, Colorado Creative Industries Arts Education Manager Sheila Sears, and representatives from the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National School Boards Association and the Parent Teacher Association. Peruse the PDI speaker and presenter bios.

These proceedings are structured as a personal log designed to summarize the PDI and recap the highlights of what was learned during our time together.

Reflections on the 2012 Professional Development Institute

By Kim Whitt, Arts Education Director, Mississippi Arts Commission, and Chair, Arts Education Advisory Group

The focus of this year's Professional Development Institute was to examine models of influence and how state arts agency arts education managers can effectively make the case for arts education to develop innovative partnerships for a coordinated delivery of arts education. State arts agency arts education managers explored the following **guiding goals:**

- Learn and build skills to communicate effectively the value of arts education.
- Develop, refine and implement strategies to communicate effectively the importance of arts education.

The **New Managers Orientation** on October 2 welcomed a handful of new managers to our network. New managers were given a crash course on programs, resources, and tools from the NEA and NASAA. The new managers also met with NEA Director of Arts Education Ayanna Hudson. New arts education managers are assigned colleague mentors from other state arts agencies when they first join our network. To reinforce these connections, the PDI orientation session provided time for new managers and mentors to meet in person and speak about their individual professional development goals.

At the **opening session and dinner,** we were welcomed by DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Executive Director Lionel Thomas and Arts Education Program Manager Carlyn Madden, Ayanna Hudson, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Executive Director and National PTA board member Philip Horn, and Maine Department of Education and State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) Visual and Performing Arts Specialist Argy Nestor.

The DC Youth Slam Team got our creative juices flowing with inspiring spoken word performances. When I say "spoken" you say "word"! Their energy carried us through the next day and a half. Following the performance, the managers participated in a **"poetry minute"** icebreaker worksheet and sharing activity. Several managers recited their poems to the group. Manager poetry minutes were sprinkled throughout the PDI, allowing us the opportunity to learn a bit more about each other.

Following these introductory activities, the PDI continued with a full day of work at the Charles Sumner School on Wednesday, October 3. NASAA CEO Jonathan Katz's keynote on **models of influence** suggested multiple ways in which state arts agencies can influence both policy and practice. For advancing the arts learning movement, he suggested strengthening infrastructure, practicing policy entrepreneurism and designing programs for return on investment. In my state, it is past time to come to the table and craft a unified vision and voice for arts education and arts in education together that is more strategic and selective with clear goals in mind. I e-mailed my top six arts education leaders and shared

Models of Influence

Key Factors

- Effective Infrastructure
- Successful Policy Entrepreneurship
- A Strategic Agenda Designed to Unite, Support and Attract Investment

this speech, asking for their support and commitment to shared vision, mission and efforts toward a complete education that includes the arts—shared vision being the key. In Mississippi, we are in the midst of an extensive arts education survey and the Whole Schools impact study, which will serve our policy entrepreneurism and inform program revision and development. All programs not only should be cost effective in these austere times, but should have substantial return on investment measurable against the vision, mission and goals to nourish the arts learning movement. I intend to use these models of influence for building value and creating demand, equity, and access to the arts for everyone in and out of preK-12.

The **state-level partnership presentation** by Karol Gates and Sheila Sears provided a clear example of two state agencies working toward a common mission and focus. Gates and Sears spoke about their participation in the Education Leaders Institute (ELI), where they identified key recommendations and collaborators to reinvigorate the arts in Colorado and build strong systemic support for arts education throughout their state. Their plans were clearly designed and skillfully executed with the help of a variety of other state partners and key influencers.

Following the Colorado presentation was a national panel discussion about **perspectives on education and the arts,** moderated by Arts Education Partnership Director Sandra Ruppert. The panelists were asked a series of questions that were developed by the Arts Education Advisory Group and Sandra Ruppert. Panelists gave the managers a three-tiered perspective on how we can work collectively toward a complete education that includes the arts; arts and education working together because education is a state issue; and arts education is education. Ruppert advised us that research, evidence and facts alone cannot affect policy; it is the story that connects and causes change.

Panelists included:
Kathleen Branch, Director, National Advocacy Services, National School Boards Association
Bradley Hull, Deputy Executive Director, National Association of State Boards of Education
Mary Pat King, Director of Programs and Partnerships, National Parent Teacher Association

The following are the questions and some notes on panelists' answers:

Who are your constituents and where do the arts fit in?
KB: The National School Boards Association provides services to local school boards advocating for equity and access to education. They have a relationship with the Kennedy Center awarding $10,000 to a district that incorporates the arts.
BH: At the National Association of State Boards of Education, the state superintendent (chief), legislature, governor and state board of education all work together to strengthen the state board to renew evidence-based policy.
MPK: At the National Parent Teacher Association, parents, teachers and students work as a nonprofit for access to high-quality education. Areas of focus include School of Excellence, Reflections Program, The Magic of a Moment.

What are your challenges and opportunities to include the arts in a complete education?
KB: Challenges include budget cuts to Title 1 and Disabilities Act.
BH: Challenges include informing a diverse group of volunteers who deal with multiple layers of issues from around the country. This group must support research that the arts teach us to understand the whole and that the arts are a part of a complete education.
MPK: Challenges include building stronger relationships with an informed and united voice, especially empowering the parents. Opportunity for collaboration with state arts agencies rests in the Reflections Program.

What are your strategies and how do you communicate with your constituents for including the arts in a complete education?
KB: Lobby state legislators for policy and resolution. Work as a core group of grass-roots members and lobby in D.C. to paint the picture for congresspeople.
BH: Surveys, conferences and individual state status; research development, briefs, resources and essential questions in order to gather and disseminate.
MPK: Newsletters, websites, tool boxes, templates, training webinars on how the standards relate to the arts.

What do you need from state arts agencies to support a complete education that includes the arts? What can we do to help you secure a place for the arts at the table for these conversations?

1. Determine who the influencer is on the state school board and build a relationship providing them with resources and trends in order to get to Congress.
2. Understand the school board members' approach and tailor the message about constructivism.
3. Understand the national conversation (e.g., Council of Chief State School Officers) and integrate the arts, showing why they are helpful.
4. Provide a glossary of terms as a language around which to unite.
5. Continue to inform about available state arts agency grants.
6. Find the common ground.
7. Show data from ArtsEdSearch.org.

Overall, this panel gave a face to the local, state and national level organizations that work toward quality education that can be approached to include the arts. This helped me understand what specifically is needed on each level and what is a priority to move this work forward.

Small Group Work and Reflection at Regional Tables

Time was given for each region to reflect on the morning presentations using mind mapping. Managers broke into regional groups and determined a top priority, topic or issue and came up with resolutions that individual states or regions could offer. This activity asked us think about our models of influence and working on all levels—local, state and national—to accomplish a unified goal. Being a visual learner, this method helped me visually organize the many pieces to the regional puzzle and how we could work efficiently.

Putting Ideas into Practice: Learning to Craft Our Stories with SpeakeasyDC

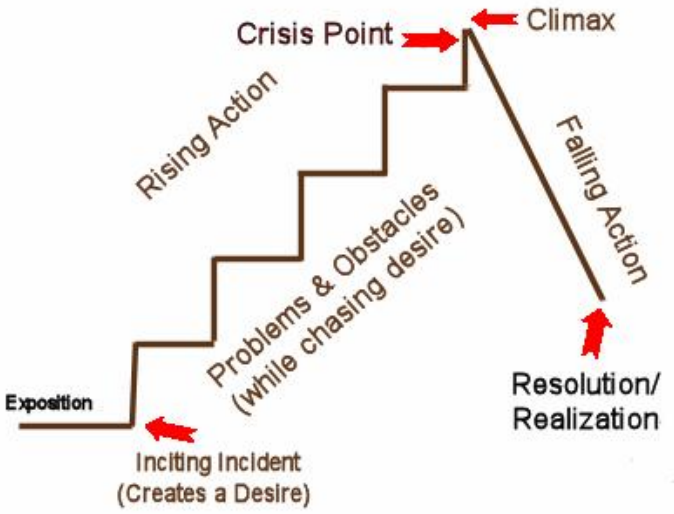
SpeakeasyDC teaching artists presented a two-hour session to develop arts education managers' understanding of effective narrative storytelling and how it can be used as a tool to communicate the value of arts education. Goals of the session were for participants to gain an understanding of story structure and the qualities of a good story, share stories with one another, find potential "story seeds," and observe the coaching and story development process.

We began developing our own stories by learning the six keys to effective storytelling:

1. Know your audience and the purpose for telling your story.
2. Identify a protagonist.
3. Create vivid images and characters—show, don't tell.
4. Build tension. Identify what's at stake and make your listeners care.
5. Share the protagonist's thoughts and feelings and allow him/her to be vulnerable.
6. Convey a universal truth.

The teaching artists gave us handouts on **storytelling fundamentals** and a visual story line called the arc (below). We shared pair-shared stories then filled in a classic story outline that helped us craft a story based on the arc. Several managers shared with the larger group the story they crafted and then we all "unpacked" the content, learning more about what makes a good story.

Four managers had the opportunity to work more in depth and one-on-one with the teaching artists later that day.



Visual Story Line

The following is a reflection of this process from Mississippi Arts Commission Whole Schools Initiative Director Jodie Engle:

> Being able to talk about the "work" of arts education in a way that is personal and impactful to others is a challenging skill for me; the workshop format provided a "safe environment" to explore and make mistakes. The conversations we had allowed us to dig deeper into our four stories. This allowed us to learn to listen more intently, make suggestions and support risk-taking (especially with those who felt vulnerable). I appreciated the opportunity to work on a different story during this one-on-one time. The final story I told the next day was one I've delivered many times in workshops. I felt like I was giving too many details and not enough moments to create a deeper "buy-in" for the audience. This opportunity allowed me to choose my words more carefully to leave the audience with something they could relate to while hearing a lesson learned.

Illinois Arts Council Arts Education Manager Tatiana Gant led all PDI participants in a **guided reflection** on how the PDI activities that day intersect with our own work. This visual reflection prompted us to address certain aspects of our work and determine priorities, distractions and topics of focus. While Tatiana asked us specific questions, she guided us to give them symbols and list the players or topics most likely to "live there." I personally respond to guided reflection, but always wish I had more time to think about and then answer the questions. It is a format I return to periodically for my own planning.

The **fellowship dinner with SEADAE** was an open invitation by SEADAE for any interested arts education manager. It was a warm and exciting time to get to know our SEADAE representatives in another setting and discuss ways we could advance our common goals.

Thursday morning, October 4, was the **final PDI gathering** before the full Assembly 2012 conference began. We began our morning with the four managers who were selected to work with SpeakeasyDC. The managers shared the stories they had worked on and discussed elements of their story that they strengthened by working with the teaching artists. We also had some time for personal mind mapping. We then entered into a wonderful time of reflection where we all contributed thoughts and ideas around what topics and themes resonated with us and will be applied to our work, and participated in a "hot and cool" reflection about the structure of the PDI.

Regional lunches provided some down time for each region to discuss topics and priorities. We shared our state stories and refined our vision for moving forward. This time always helps us bring the message home and catch up on what is happening in each of the states.

On Thursday afternoon, the **Arts Education Managers' Peer Session** during Assembly 2012 began with Ayanna Hudson's poetry minute. She addressed our group and emphasized focusing on the student, using a collective impact delivery approach and building capacity through assessment. We were encouraged to do the research to develop arts education common ground through the data and statistics. She discussed the status of ELI, saying that the alumni states would convene in December.

National Updates:

- Kristen Engebretsen shared The Arts Education Field Guide, available for download on the Americans for the Arts website.
- Lynn Tuttle and Karol Gates addressed the group about the National Standards for Arts Education, being revised by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards. The revised standards will embed assessment and will make connections to arts integration. They will be 21st-century skills–based, with habits of mind being the enduring understanding.
- Kennedy Center National Partnerships Program Director John Abodeely spoke about the Alliance for Arts Education network's symposium to be held in April 2013.
- Michael Holtmann, special assistant to the deputy chairman for Programs and Partnerships at the NEA, spoke about Poetry Out Loud.
- Paddy Bowman, director of Local Learning at the National Network for Folk Arts in Education, shared folk arts resources with the group, including

http://www.locallearningnetwork.org and the book, *Through the Schoolhouse Door*.

- National PTA Arts in Education Manager Ethan Clark spoke about the National PTA's Reflections program.
- National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards Director Traci Slater-Rigaud encouraged us to check out the website for the new National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards 2013 grant application (deadline January 31, 2013).
- Sandra Ruppert spoke about ArtsEdSearch and the upcoming Arts Education Partnership Spring Forum.

I currently am developing my models of influence in every facet of my work, from teaching artists, preservice teachers and early childhood education to community arts learning. The tools I learned at this PDI will better equip me to organize thoughts, alliances and partnerships to impact coordinated delivery of arts education and get closer to a complete education that includes the arts for all Mississippi students. I was inspired by my peers and by those doing similar work at different levels. I realized we all have our hurdles. The story of arts education in Mississippi is continuing to be written. I feel more empowered now to speak the truths it reveals.

Kim Whitt