

Colorado

Colorado Council on the Arts
Sheila Sears, Arts Education Manager

General Information

Organization Mission Statement

The mission of the Colorado Council on the Arts (CCA) is to promote the cultural, educational, and economic growth of Colorado through development of its arts and cultural heritage.

Arts Education Program Overview

Learning both in and through the arts provides powerful tools that help students develop knowledge and abilities critical to their scholastic achievement and engagement in learning. In fact, a recent study revealed that Colorado public schools offering more arts education have higher academic achievement and lower drop-out rates, regardless of student ethnicity or socioeconomic status. In addition, the arts can support positive self-esteem and the acquisition of skills essential in becoming a successful adult in the workplace and in the community. The Colorado Council on the Arts offers grants, commissions research and sponsors programs that expand access to quality arts education for young people:

- The Arts, Creative Learning and Student Achievement – a 2008 study showing higher student achievement at high schools with more arts;
- YouthReach – grants for community organizations to support arts based youth development programs during out-of-school time;
- Success through Art (StART) Grants – grants for schools and districts that want to use arts education as a strategy for student success;
- Poetry Out Loud – national poetry recitation contest sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation;
- Ties That Bind – on-line toolkit to help teachers incorporate Colorado's folk arts and traditional art forms into the K-12 curriculum.

Grant Programs

Types of Arts Education Grant Programs

- in-school arts education
- out-of-school-time arts education
- arts education program/project support for arts organizations
- quick funds/minigrants

Groups Eligible for Grant Programs

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

Multiyear Grants

Multiyear grants are available for two years

Poetry Out Loud

Poetry Out Loud Administration

- in-house with arts education staff
- in-house with contracted staff

Poetry Out Loud Participation

- number of schools participating in Poetry Out Loud statewide: 40

Poetry Out Loud Resources and Activities

- documentation
- classroom teacher training
- visiting artists

Additional Prizes and Awards

- books, journals, gift cards, trophies
- Additional prizes were donated.

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

Ghost Road Press, Tattered Cover Bookstore, Lighthouse Writers Workshop, Whole Foods, Lakewood Cultural Center, Beanstalk Marketing

Resources & Publications

Publications and Media Resources Provided:

- statewide data/research on arts education in schools

2008 Study of Arts Education in Colorado: The Arts, Creative Learning & Student Achievement. A first-of-its-kind study of arts education in public schools by the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Council on the Arts. The reader-friendly report includes tips on how parents, educators, policymakers, and leaders of arts organizations can help increase access to arts education in Colorado's public schools. The summary and full report are available at

www.coloradoarts.state.co.us/programs/education/study/index.htm

Evaluation & Assessment

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

Arts Education Staffing & Network Contacts

State Department of Education Arts Curriculum Specialist

Karol Gates

Arts Education Program Staff, Job Title, FTE

Sheila Sear, Arts Education Manager, 1.0

Arts Education Coordinator's Split Responsibilities

- other areas of work: grants counseling, support, grant panel facilitation, planning
- percent of time dedicated to arts education program: 90%

Sheila Sears is the Arts Education Manager for the Colorado Council on the Arts, overseeing CCA's youth-focused programs and facilitating statewide outreach and grants development and counseling. Past professional experiences include consulting with a variety of non-profits in arts, education, and community services, and serving as Education Director for Walden Family Playhouse, Executive Director of Young Audiences of Colorado, and Executive Director of Fremont Center for the Arts. She also has served as a consultant to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program for the Colorado Department of Education. Sears has also served on review panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and the President's Committee on the Arts & Humanities, and is involved in the Colorado STEM Network and the Colorado Creative Careers panel.