

Indiana

Indiana Arts Commission

Susan Britsch, Community Development Manager/Arts Education Coordinator

General Information

Organization Mission Statement

On behalf of the people of Indiana, the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) advocates engagement with the arts to enrich the quality of individual and community life.

Arts Education Program Overview

The Indiana Arts Commission helps strengthen arts education in Indiana by providing assistance to enhance arts education delivery, support and resources. IAC hopes to increase access to arts education resources for educators, artists and arts organizations as well as increase public awareness of the value of whole child education and in lifelong learning in the arts.

IAC has made arts education in the state one of its top priorities. IAC convened regional meetings in summer 2007 with teachers, educators, business leaders, arts organizations, cultural institutions, artists, and community members to discuss the issues that are most important to the arts community. Through these discussions, a formal strategic planning process, and the leadership of the Commission, a five-year plan was developed with clear goals and objectives in place. Addressing the increasing need for arts education has become the most urgent issue.

IAC has reconfigured its staff to include a program officer specifically charged with the responsibility to forge partnerships and facilitate cooperation with the arts and educational communities to advance arts education in a systematic and proactive fashion. It has been more than a decade since IAC had a staff member dedicated to the area of arts education. With an increase in funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and interest drawn from the Indiana Cultural Trust, in 2008 IAC resurrected an Arts in Education granting program aimed at providing support to all K-12 Indiana schools for arts related projects. Schools may partner with an arts organization, artist, or cultural group to provide quality programming in the classroom.

Most of the frontline arts education work is accomplished through IAC's Regional Partner System, which encompasses each county in the state. This system allows for grant making (operational and project grants), technical services, information and referral, and cultural planning to be provided directly to local communities. Among the state's grantees and cultural institutions are a number who are at the forefront of arts education in America, with model programs, extensive staff and the like. These include Music for All, the Indianapolis Children's Museum, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and Young Audiences, among others. Many of these institutions maintain a staff or roster of teaching artists in their area.

IAC continues to work with advocacy groups, advisory groups and committees to maintain appropriate attention to the growing and changing needs for arts education statewide. Additional resources are always being explored in an effort to support and expand the quality work being done inside and outside of the classroom.

Grant Programs

Types of Arts Education Grant Programs

- in-school arts education
- general operating support for arts education organizations

Groups Eligible for Grant Programs

- public schools
- private/nonparochial schools
- private/parochial schools
- charter schools

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

16 grants

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

\$ 110,000

Major Initiatives & Partnerships

Regional Arts Partnership

A cornerstone of IAC's structure is a network of regional partners that enhance the delivery of services and move the decision making about IAC funds closer to the people. Arts providers, educators, and citizens have better access to services and there is increased public awareness and advocacy for the arts at the community level.

Statewide Data Collection

IAC has initiated the collection of basic statewide data from current Department of Education public records. Partners, such as universities and organizations, are being identified to assist in the expansion of existing and limited data to develop a more comprehensive and current base of information from which to draw.

Arts Education Summit

In June 2009, IAC collaborated with Young Audiences of Indiana to host a one-day statewide summit that included speakers from Iowa, Illinois, Washington and Indiana. Teachers, administrators and artists discussed issues such as teacher mentoring and best practices in the classroom.

Annual Events

Institute for Artful Teaching

Administered by Young Audiences of Indiana, the Institute serves primary school teachers and administrators in best practice workshops aimed at the area of arts integration. Young Audiences of Indiana receives funding in IAC's Major Arts Organization category and partial funding for this event.

Poetry Out Loud

Partnering with the National Endowment for the Arts and Poetry Foundation, IAC continues to host this annual poetry memorization and recitation competition.

Arts Educators Association of Indiana State Conference

Arts Educators Association of Indiana is a statewide service organization that receives partial funding for this event.

Indiana Music Educators Association State Conference

Indiana Music Educators Association is one of four statewide service organizations receiving partial funding for this event.

Professional Development Services

Provision of Professional Development Trainings, Workshops and/or Institutes

- For classroom teachers, professional development is administered in partnership with another organization. Young Audiences Institute for Artful Teaching, for Indiana educators.

Additional Comments on Professional Development Services

IAC is considering offering an Arts in Education Grant workshop through its regional partner system that would bring together teachers, teaching artists, organizations, and administrators. The workshop would give providers an opportunity to learn more about grant programs and successful grant-writing techniques. Measurements of potential interest are being explored.

Poetry Out Loud

Poetry Out Loud Administration

- in-house with other state arts agency staff

Poetry Out Loud Participation

- number of schools participating in Poetry Out Loud statewide: 17
- Schools specifically for at-risk students participate.

Poetry Out Loud Resources and Activities

- documentation
- Indiana poet laureate visits classrooms to promote and recruit for the Poetry Out Loud program and offers a free reading and workshops on successful interpretation and recitation. Information is provided to the regional partners for statewide dissemination of marketing information and materials.

Additional Prizes and Awards

- trophies for each school champion and additional trophies for the state champion, first runner-up and second runner-up
- Additional prizes were purchased.

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

Reduced fees from the Indianapolis Public Library, Bardach Awards, and local catering companies.

Resources & Publications

Publications and Media Resources Provided:

- arts education blog
- social networking, e.g., Twitter or Facebook

Blogging, social networking and on-line resources are in the early stages of development. Teachers have asked for better ways to communicate and access to additional resources. Each avenue of delivery is being explored for potential use and effectiveness.

Evaluation & Assessment

Program Evaluation for Grantees

- Evaluation tools and frameworks are provided for grantees. Assistance with evaluation is available on a case-by-case basis depending on specific program goals. A Department of Education staff member is available to assist with any specific needs as well as with updates to current curriculum standards.
- Applicants and their partnering artists/organizations are asked to develop goals and evaluations for their proposed project. Schools develop or utilize existing evaluation tools to determine success. Final reports require a narrative discussion of outcomes along with any qualitative and quantitative data collected.

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

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

Utilization of Evaluation

This is the first year of this program. Evaluation will be used to determine the continuing direction of the program based on the needs of the partnering artists, schools, students, teachers and parents.

Arts Education Staffing & Network Contacts

State Alliance for Arts Education

Arts Education Association of Indiana partners informally on advocacy and delivery of services.

Arts Education Program Staff, Job Title, FTE

Susan Britsch, Community Development Mgr/Arts Education Coordinator, 1.0

Arts Education Coordinator's Split Responsibilities

- other areas of work: regional partnership liaison, grant making and reporting, technical services, information and referral, miscellaneous program officer
- percent of time dedicated to arts education program: 50%

Staff Biography

Susan Britsch has a studio art degree from Morehead State University, Morehead, Kentucky, with an area of focus in drawing and printmaking. She spent three years with the Indianapolis Art Center as a program manager for the outreach department, which offered discipline based arts education to low-income communities in the Indianapolis metropolitan area. Britsch has five years of experience as a recreation leader for a juvenile justice facility in Kentucky, where she initiated and facilitated an introductory visual arts class funded by VSA arts of Kentucky.

Concluding Thoughts & Additional Comments

Arts education in Indiana has been experiencing many setbacks at both the state and local level. The general direction of the Department of Education is moving toward remediation and raising test scores in math and reading, which continues to narrow the curriculum. Efforts are being made for inclusion on the state education roundtable and a general increase in advocacy to help lend voice to the arts as a vehicle for increased student interest, participation and graduation. Such challenges are viewed as an opportunity for change and growth in an area that has seen very little in recent years.