

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Arts Council
Michael Eddens, Oklahoma Arts Council

General Information

Organization Mission Statement

To lead, cultivate and support a thriving arts environment, which is essential to quality of life, education and economic vitality for all Oklahomans.

Arts Education Mission Statement

Ensure that every student in Oklahoma K-12 public schools has some form of access to arts education activities.

Arts Education Program Overview

The Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC) supports quality arts education in schools through:

- grants, which support quality classroom instruction, K-12 arts education program development and implementation, and arts education professional development;
- staff services, which develop programs to train qualified teaching artists throughout the state, provide technical and professional assistance to schools on grant submissions and program design, and foster dialogue between nonprofit community organizations and schools;
- public information, which delivers guiding principles and evaluation methods in arts education to schools, arts organizations, and others providing arts education;
- partnerships, which effect systemic change in support of quality arts education in public schools;
- advocacy, which works to communicate the value of arts education to policymakers through current local and national research and local case studies.

OAC Education Objectives: support the implementation of arts education as part of the core curriculum in K-12 schools; support opportunities for lifelong learning through the arts; support arts education professional development for artists, arts educators, classroom teachers and community arts providers.

OAC Education Strategies: increase the number of schools benefiting from arts education programs funded by OAC; educate policymakers regarding the value/necessity of arts education; educate stakeholders on public policy relating to arts education; provide information about arts education effectiveness, program development and resources; develop mechanisms to help organizations assess and provide services to constituents with special needs that assure equal opportunity to participate in the arts; increase opportunities for lifelong learning in the arts; support new and existing programs designed for professional development; research and disseminate best practices in arts education and arts learning.

OAC Education Desired Outcomes: every child in Oklahoma will have access to quality arts education; increased public awareness and appreciation of art—its many forms and applications for the community, economy, public policy and cultural learning; public policy and community behaviors that recognize the economic and cultural impact of the arts in the lives of Oklahomans.

Grant Programs

Types of Arts Education Grant Programs

- in-school arts education
- general operating support for arts education organizations
- arts education program/project support for arts organizations
- quick funds/minigrants

Groups Eligible for Grant Programs

- public schools
- private/nonparochial schools
- charter schools
- regional/local arts agencies
- arts organizations
- non-arts organizations
- arts education alliance or similar statewide organization

Multiyear Grants

Multiyear grants are available for two years

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

92 grants

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

\$ 466,411

Major Initiatives & Partnerships

Small Grant Support for Schools

The purpose of the Small Grant Support for Schools Program (SGSS) is to encourage schools to bring the arts into their classrooms, either to enhance the programming that they are already providing or to fill in gaps in areas of need. Individual schools sites may request up to \$2,500 in grant support for the implementation of hands-on instruction in any recognized art form. Recognized art forms include dance, literary arts, music, media arts, theatre, visual arts and traditional arts.

The SGSS program allows schools to apply for funds directly from OAC with no requirement to apply through their district. The program also requires only a 25% match of the total requested amount. Funds are to be used primarily to pay for the costs of instruction, with 25% of the funds available for consumable teaching resource materials.

SGSS grant proposals are reviewed and awarded based on artistic quality, educational merit, evaluation and access, community need and appropriate budget structure.

Arts in Alternative Education

OAC's Arts in Alternative Education Program (ALTED) provides funds to assist with hands-on instruction and participation in the arts in alternative education programs in public schools in Oklahoma. Offered through a partnership of the Oklahoma Arts Council and the state Department of Education, the program is designed to motivate students whose needs are not met by traditional educational services.

ALTED sites may request up to \$5,000 for programs to be implemented starting in the fall of each academic year. Remaining funds may be administered for spring semesters if available. There is no cash match required for the ALTED grant award, so applicants have greater flexibility as to the scope of programming they are able to provide for their students.

Funds are to primarily be used to pay for the costs of instruction, with 25% of the funds available for consumable teaching resource materials. Portions of this funding may be used to pay for student travel to program-specific field trips that support the educational goals specified in their program design.

ALTED grant proposals are reviewed and awarded based on artistic quality, educational merit, evaluation and access, community need, and appropriate budget structure.

Visual Arts in Schools Pilot

The OAC Visual Arts in Schools Program (VAS) was designed in response to legislation that established a revolving fund account for the provision of visual art teachers to school districts that have no full-time visual arts in any of the schools in their district. The goal of the program is to nurture commitment to quality visual arts instruction in school districts and communities that otherwise lack such motivation. Plans are to unveil the VAS Program by spring 2010. Eligible school districts will be those with very limited financial or professional resources as demonstrated by both their overall student population and their proximity to metropolitan areas that host organizations with quality arts education programming available to schools.

The VAS program will be administered via two models. The first model is through direct grants to school districts. With matching funds, school districts may request up to \$40,000 for the first year of implementing the program, and \$32,000 per additional year, for up to three years. The funds are designated for the placement and administration of full-time visual art instruction in their schools. Funds may be used for teacher salaries and administrative costs, and for program start-up costs of up to \$8,000.

The second model holds the same funding structure, however eligible applicants may be visual arts training hubs. Training hubs may be higher education institutions, arts organizations, or large school districts with the demonstrated capacity to deliver quality visual arts instruction to schools. These training hubs will oversee and administer visual arts instruction to one or more small schools districts that qualify for the program.

Performing Arts Corps Pilot

The OAC Performing Arts Corps (PAC) was designed to meet the needs of small, rural schools in Oklahoma. These schools have very limited financial, cultural or professional resources, making it difficult for them to access most arts related programming. The schools that the PAC will serve are schools that, due to their small size, have little to no exposure to the quality performing arts and therefore are likely unaware of the power these art forms hold for dynamic educational initiatives or for the personal growth of individual students. The pilot program was unveiled in fall 2009.

The mission of the PAC is to increase the awareness and value of the arts and arts education in these rural schools and communities by providing them with easy access exposure to the arts via one-day arts experiences. These experiences feature a visit by highly qualified professional performing artists. Each visit includes a minimum of two one-class workshops, for both students and teachers; one all-school performance with educational content related to the content delivered in the workshops; and a school copy of additional curriculum and activities that may be implemented by classroom teachers after the performing artist has visited the school. The desired outcome of this program is that schools will recognize the impact that quality performing arts can have on a student's education and the overall school climate, resulting in the schools making a commitment to further arts programming for their students.

Teaching Artist Roster Program

Teaching Artist Roster Basics:

- A panel is used to select roster artists.
- Applications for roster are reviewed every two years.
- To retain eligibility, artists must reapply. (Check with the agency for details.)

Professional Development Services

Provision of Professional Development Trainings, Workshops and/or Institutes

- For classroom teachers, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. OAC offers site visits, consultations and workshops to schools, districts, organizations, conferences and the like to provide instruction on programming design as well as technical assistance for implementation of quality arts education programs.
- For teaching artists, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. Every two years, the Oklahoma Arts Council provides a teaching artist in-service day in conjunction with its New Teaching Artists Orientation. This program features ongoing professional development in curriculum design, teaching methods, scheduling, access to schools, and policies and procedures for OAC teaching artists. OAC also provides a teaching artist track at its statewide arts conference for any interested artists regardless of whether they are OAC teaching roster artists.
- For school administrators, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. OAC offers site visits, consultations and workshops to schools, districts, organizations, conferences and the like to provide instruction on programming design as well as technical assistance for implementation of quality arts education programs.

Additional Comments on Professional Development Services

OAC holds regional town hall meetings in communities across the state to explore and meet specific needs in regard to arts programming. In these meetings, OAC offers individual or group consultations and workshops to provide instruction on programming design.

Poetry Out Loud

Poetry Out Loud Administration

- with partner organization: Oklahoma Humanities Council

Poetry Out Loud Participation

- number of schools participating in Poetry Out Loud statewide: 26
- Schools specifically for at-risk students participate.
- number of regional semifinals: 5

Poetry Out Loud Resources and Activities

- residency model
- classroom teacher training

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

Sonic, America's Drive In; Oklahoma City University; East Central University, Ada; Lawton Public Library; Northeastern State University, Tahlequah; Stillwater High School

Resources & Publications

Publications and Media Resources Provided:

- arts education annual report
- arts education advocacy toolkit
- cultural resources directory including arts education
- arts education support services: OAC promotes on its Web site the availability of arts education staff to consult with applicants on model arts programs, program design for OAC grants and technical assistance.

An annual report of all OAC programs is published that includes the arts in education program. It is distributed to all state legislators and council members. A summarized version is published in one of OAC's semiannual newsletters each year. Information includes the number of schools served through OAC grant programs, the total dollar amount of grants awarded, a location distribution report of the communities and legislative districts served, school districts served, school sites served, and number of students served.

The Arts Education Advocacy Toolkit is posted on the OAC Web site with links to documents pertaining to arts education within the state of Oklahoma and to information, resources, and arts education advocacy organizations both within the state and nationally. OAC's cultural resources directory is posted on the Web site and includes links to information and organizations that pertain to the cultural resources within the state and nationally.

OAC's Oklahoma Cultural Treasures Web page features biographies of individuals who have been identified by both the state's governor and OAC as Oklahoma Cultural Treasures or Oklahoma Cultural Ambassadors. An Oklahoma Cultural Treasure is an individual who is considered especially precious or valuable by a particular period, class, community or population. Among the criteria for the selection are that the designee must be 70 years of age or older, be a bearer of intangible cultural assets and have outstanding artistic or historical worth. An Oklahoma Cultural Ambassador award traditionally honors native Oklahomans who have made an impact in the arts, achieving national and international acclaim for their work.

Evaluation & Assessment

Program Evaluation for Grantees

- Grant applicants are asked to identify at least one form of evaluation from two separate lists, which will be used to assess program success and student learning. Applicants are given the freedom to select and design their own evaluation tools and methods but must demonstrate their effectiveness. As a follow-up to the pick list (the two possible evaluation methods to choose from) applicants must then describe their evaluation methods/process and provide three sample items or questions from their evaluation tool. In addition, applicants are to provide a copy of their evaluation tool as support material to their application.

Methods of Self-Evaluation of SAA's Arts Education Program

- participation data
- performance measurements
- surveys and feedback forms
- focus groups and town hall meetings
- direct observations

Utilization of Evaluation

The information is used to identify needs, problems and trends that influence the level and quality of participation in OAC's arts education grant programs. Surveys, focus groups and town hall meetings allow the Arts Council to understand the dynamics of individual experiences (whether positive or negative) and why they exist. Performance measurements are used to ensure quality and professionalism among teaching artists and to gauge the effectiveness of the strategies and skill level of the arts education staff.

Arts Education Staffing & Network Contacts

State Alliance for Arts Education

OAC has no formal relationship with the Oklahoma Alliance for Arts Education, however the Alliance consults with OAC on issues related to arts education, advocacy goals, recognition and awards, and programming as they are deemed appropriate.

Arts Education Program Staff, Job Title, FTE

Michael Eddens, Arts Education Director, 1.0

Staff Biographies

Michael Eddens, a native of Oklahoma, joined the Oklahoma Arts Council staff in 2008. He brings to the position 10 years of teaching experience in one of Oklahoma's toughest inner-city schools, and a strong academic and intellectual approach to visual art education. He attended Oklahoma City University, completing a bachelor of fine arts with emphasis in drawing and painting in 1993. He returned to complete a master's degree in gifted and talented education in 1996.