

Tennessee

Tennessee Arts Commission
Kim Leavitt, Director of Arts Education

General Information

Organization Mission Statement

To stimulate and encourage the presentation of performing, visual and literary arts throughout the state and to encourage public interest in the cultural heritage of Tennessee.

Arts Education Mission Statement

The Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) believes that every preK-12 student should be provided a complete education through curriculum based arts instruction, including the teaching of core arts subjects and integration of the arts throughout the curriculum. The Commission recognizes the importance of arts learning to the community as a whole, and the Arts Education Program supports projects outside of school settings for adult learners, senior citizens, at-risk youth and underserved populations. While striving to advance comprehensive arts education in Tennessee through the Value Plus Schools program, the Commission will continue to help communities across the state establish effective arts education programs for learners of all ages.

Arts Education Program Overview

TAC's Arts Education Division historically functioned primarily as a grant-making entity focused on funding artist-in-residence and teacher training programs. In 2005, the Commission expanded its impact beyond grant making by implementing targeted initiatives designed to strengthen arts learning in K-12 settings, after-school programs, and in lifelong learning environments. All projects must have professional performing, visual, literary or traditional artists at the core of the educational experience. One large-scale statewide initiative, the Value Plus Schools Program, is currently being implemented. Value Plus was selected by the U.S. Department of Education to be featured in a national case study on successful arts integration models

With an annual operating budget of \$1.5 million for arts learning, grants and programs are offered in seven categories:

- Artist in Residence
- Teacher Training
- Community Learning (lifelong learning)
- Funds for At-Risk Youth (after-school/summer projects)
- minigrants (quick turn-around grants)
- Teacher Incentive grants (made to individual educators, including teaching artists, to fund professional development opportunities in arts integration)
- student ticket subsidy (field trip admission and transportation)
- Value Plus Schools Initiative (arts integration pilot funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the Tennessee General Assembly)

Grant Programs

Types of Arts Education Grant Programs

- residency program
- in-school arts education
- out-of-school-time arts education
- lifelong learning in the arts
- arts education program/project support for arts organizations
- quick funds/minigrants
- other: Teacher Incentive grants provide classroom teachers, arts specialists, teaching artists, arts administrators and principals with funds to attend professional development in arts integration.

Groups Eligible for Grant Programs

- pre-K centers
- public schools
- private/nonparochial schools
- private/parochial schools
- charter schools
- home school groups
- regional/local arts agencies
- arts organizations
- non-arts organizations
- arts education alliance or similar statewide organization

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

113 grants

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

\$ 997,000

Additional Comments on Arts Education Grant Programs

Grant programs are designed to help fill gaps and provide targeted funding to underserved populations. Funds for at-Risk Youth grants may be applied for only by Title I schools or arts organizations partnering with social or human service agencies to provide arts learning programs in after-school or summer camp settings. To support arts integration, funds are available through Teacher Incentive, Artist-in-Residence, and Value Plus Schools programs. Community Learning grants support projects for learners of all ages.

Major Initiatives & Partnerships

Value Plus Schools Initiative

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Education and the Tennessee General Assembly, Value Plus Schools is a comprehensive, whole-school model centered on arts integration. Value Plus is undergoing a rigorous five-year evaluation process.

Artist Corps Training

This program offers targeted training in service learning for rostered teaching artists in partnership with Volunteer Tennessee and AmeriCorps. It is tailored to the Serve America Act, which calls for artists to provide support to public schools.

Public Awareness Campaign

This \$300,000 advocacy campaign, in partnership with Tennesseans for the Arts, features billboards, public service announcements, an arts education DVD and print media designed to rally support for arts education and integration in schools.

Funding for Arts Education Program from Sources Other Than NEA and State General Fund

U.S. Department of Education (Arts Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant), Tennessee General Assembly (funds earmarked for Value Plus Schools)

Artist Residency Program

Artist residency program is administered by the state arts agency office.

- Mandatory orientation is provided for artists.
- Optional training is provided for artists.
- Entities other than schools may not apply to sponsor a residency.

Fee Structure for Teaching Artists

- \$500 per day
- There can be additional compensation outside of the fee structure. The minimum amount is \$500/day, but TAC makes it clear to schools and artists that the fee structure is set by the individual artist. Additional factors impacting fees are travel, lodging, food and materials (which artists often prefer to supply).

Additional Comments on Residency Program

Historically, TAC has placed emphasis on curriculum based residencies. However, feedback from folk and traditional artists revealed feelings of alienation at having to conform to the rigors of curriculum. Consequently, the residency program recently was redesigned to be more inclusive of artists who provide valuable learning experiences that may not be curriculum based. A three-tiered system exists to assist artists in self-identifying the services they wish to provide and to offer schools clearer options for selecting an artist that best fits their programming needs:

Arts Appreciation Artist (AAA): The main focus of an AAA is to provide students with an interactive classroom experience that exposes them to a specific art form and increases their appreciation for that art form. Instruction is experiential and hands-on, with an emphasis on artistic skills, techniques and vocabulary. Lessons are not based on curriculum standards or integrated with non-arts subjects. Teachers are provided with an outline or written narrative of the lesson/unit.

Arts Curriculum Artist (ACA): The main focus of an ACA is to deepen student understanding and participation in a specific art form through lessons based on national and/or state art curriculum standards. Instruction is experiential and hands-on, with an emphasis on artistic skills, techniques and vocabulary. Assessment of student learning is based on process over product. Teachers are provided with a written lesson plan that includes the targeted arts standards, learning objectives and mode(s) of assessment.

Art Integration Artist (AIA): The main focus of an AIA is to provide interdisciplinary residencies that authentically connect arts and non-arts curriculum standards. National and/or state arts standards are used. Instruction is experiential and hands-on, with an emphasis on exploring a non-arts concept through teaching artistic skills, techniques, vocabulary, and/or social and historical context. Assessment of the student learning process for both art and non-arts subjects occurs. Teachers are provided with a written lesson plan that includes the targeted arts and non-arts standards, learning objectives and mode(s) of assessment.

Teaching Artist Roster Program

Teaching Artist Roster Basics:

- Out-of-state artists may apply for artist roster.
- Roster artists are required for residency program.
- A panel is used to select roster artists.
- Applications for roster are reviewed twice per year.
- To retain eligibility, artists must reapply every two years.

Annual Events

Value Plus Schools Summer Intensive

Principals, classroom teachers, arts specialists and teaching artists participating in the Value Plus Schools program attend an annual four-day arts integration institute.

Arts Advocacy Day

This annual statewide advocacy event on Capitol Hill, in partnership with Tennesseans for the Arts, is designed to make legislators more aware of arts education and other arts related events in their respective districts. The importance of continued funding for the arts in all settings is the primary focus.

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. The director of arts education coordinates the Value Plus Schools Summer Intensive, which provides specific training for classroom teachers in arts integration. Additionally, she offers workshops and in-service trainings related to arts integration, curriculum development, evaluation, and arts education advocacy.
- For arts specialists, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. The director of arts education coordinates the Value Plus Schools Summer Intensive, which offers training for arts specialists in aligning content with national and/or state arts curriculum standards and guidance on cross-curricular integration. Additionally, arts specialists can participate in specialized in-service trainings and workshops on arts integration, curriculum development, evaluation and arts education advocacy.
- For teaching artists, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. Artists Corp Tennessee is a new TAC program that aligns with the Serve America Act. It provides service learning training to rostered teaching artists. The Value Plus Schools Summer Intensive provides sessions for teaching artists in arts integration.
- For school administrators, professional development is administered by the state arts agency office. The Value Plus Schools Summer Intensive is accredited through the state Department of Education's Tennessee Academies for School Leaders. Principals who attend the full event receive 20 hours of credit.

Additional Comments on Professional Development Services

In coordination with Tennesseans for the Arts and a newly launched public awareness campaign, the Arts Education Program is currently designing professional development around arts learning advocacy. PowerPoint presentations, an AE advocacy DVD, PSA's, and billboards have been developed that arts specialists, parents and other arts advocates can use when speaking in public forums to policy makers and other citizens.

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: 40
- Home-schooled students participate.
- Schools specifically for at-risk students participate.
- number of regional semifinals: three

Poetry Out Loud Resources and Activities

- Teacher Workshops (stipend provided); Student performance Workshops with teaching artists

Additional Prizes and Awards

- medals, certificates and poetry books
- Additional prizes were purchased.
- TAC pays for winning teacher to attend finals in DC; TAC gives \$1000 to winning teacher; \$500 to teacher-runner up. TAC gives \$1,000 to winning student and \$500 to the runner-up. This supplements awards given by Poetry Foundation and National Endowment for the Arts.

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

In the past, regional arts councils have assisted in disseminating information to schools. State funds have been used to purchase awards.

Resources & Publications

Publications and Media Resources Provided:

- arts education handbook
- arts education newsletter
- arts education advocacy toolkit
- cultural resources directory including arts education
- statewide data/research on arts education in schools
- arts education blog
- social networking, e.g., Twitter or Facebook
- video or audio CD
- other: public service announcements and a documentary on Value Plus Schools are have been released.
- data from Value Plus Schools supporting the benefits of arts integration
- Value Plus School teachers use various listservs.

Highlights of publications include the Artist in Residence Guide for Teachers and Artists, a handbook in designing residencies that includes both the teacher and artist perspective; the Evaluation Handbook, a user-friendly manual on how to design evaluation methods for arts learning projects; Value Plus Schools Lesson Database, an on-line searchable database of arts integrated lesson ideas; Value Plus Schools Review, a full-color newsletter highlighting projects and current progress of the six Value Plus Schools; a Facebook page for Value Plus Schools; a wiki for Value Plus Schools participants, listservs for Value Plus School peer groups; a Value Plus Schools documentary (in development); arts education public service announcements; arts education advocacy DVD; and arts education advocacy PowerPoint presentations.

Evaluation & Assessment

Assessment of Student Learning in the Arts

- Assessment training is provided. As part of grant workshops, evaluation of all programs, including arts education, is highlighted. The Evaluation Handbook is available to download on-line. All grantees must complete a program evaluation form. Value Plus Schools are provided in-depth training in assessing learning through arts integration.
- Sample assessment tools are provided. Currently, several tools including teacher observation rubrics, lesson checklists, readiness surveys, self-assessment surveys and other instruments are part of a five-year evaluation method for Value Plus Schools. Tools currently are provided only to Value Plus Schools.
- The Survey of Higher Education, administered by TAC in 2008, provided pertinent information on the depth and quality of arts integration at the preservice level in higher education institutions across the state. As part of the public awareness campaign, a survey of principals measuring the frequency and scope of core arts programs in K-12 public schools is being developed. The state department of education is partnering with TAC to administer the survey.

Program Evaluation for Grantees

- Evaluation tools and frameworks are provided for grantees. The Evaluation Handbook may be downloaded from the Commission's Web site.
- The Artist in Residence Guide for Teachers and Artists contains suggestions for evaluating student learning.
- All grant applications contain narrative questions requiring an explanation of program evaluation, tools and how results will be disseminated. The scoring mechanism used by panelists includes up to 10 points (on a 100-point scale) for evaluation. In addition to the above requirements, all arts education applicants must submit copies of evaluation instruments that will be administered during the proposed project.

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

- formal external evaluation
- quantitative and qualitative grants data
- participation data
- financial data
- performance measurements
- surveys and feedback forms
- focus groups and town hall meetings
- direct observations

Utilization of Evaluation

The entire structure of TAC's arts education program is based on evaluation. Until 2004, the arts education program functioned primarily as a grant-making entity. Following a statewide arts education needs assessment in 2005, several recommendations were made through feedback obtained from surveys, focus groups and town hall meetings. These recommendations formed the infrastructure for the TAC's arts education program as it exists today.

Ongoing surveys and qualitative feedback that are administered by TAC, in relation to meeting the goals of its strategic plan, continue to inform TAC's arts education work.

The Value Plus Schools program is yielding valuable data about the impact of arts integration in public schools and effective practice in administering whole-school reform models.

Arts Education Staffing & Network Contacts

State Department of Education Arts Curriculum Specialist

Dr. Jeanette Crosswhite

State Alliance for Arts Education

Tennessee Alliance for Arts Education. TAC's director of arts education is an ex officio Alliance board member. TAC provides grant support for the Alliance's programs.

Arts Education Program Staff, Job Title, FTE

- Kim Leavitt, Director of Arts Education, 1.0
- Ann Brown, Arts Education Special Projects Coordinator, 1.0

Staff Biographies

Kim Leavitt oversees seven grants programs and coordinates arts learning programs statewide. She is the project designer and coordinator of TAC's Value Plus Schools program, an arts integration initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education and recently selected for a national case study on successful arts integration models. She is the former chair of the state arts agencies' Arts Education Advisory Group, has been a featured speaker at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the U.S. Department of Education, and served as a grant panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts. A native of Buckhannon, West Virginia, Leavitt holds a B.A. in theatre arts, an M.A. in communication arts and an M.A. in English. Before joining the Tennessee Arts Commission in 2004, she was a high school language arts teacher, taught public speaking and theatre courses for Austin Peay State University and the University of Kentucky, and served as managing director of theatre education and community outreach for the Renaissance Center in Dickson, Tennessee.

Ann Brown joined TAC in 2009. A native of Illinois, she received a Bachelor of Music degree in music education from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and served as a K-8 public school music teacher. Before joining the Tennessee Arts Commission, Brown worked with a variety of nonprofit arts organizations and music festivals in developing educational materials and implementing community engagement programs. Currently, she is completing her master of arts studies in arts administration from the University of Oregon.