

Arts for All
Goal #2
Action Plan for Professional Development for Educators

Background

In September, 2002 the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted *Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education*. This document, developed through year-long community consultations with policymakers, implementers, and recipients of arts education, asserts that “every public school student in Los Angeles County will receive a high-quality K-12 education of which the arts are an intrinsic part of the core curriculum,” and outlines four goals to achieve this vision. The implementation of the Blueprint is spearheaded by the Executive Committee of the 55-member Los Angeles County Task Force on Arts Education.

The second of the *Blueprint’s* goals states that “Implementers and policy makers will have sufficient tools, information, and professional development to achieve sequential K-12 arts education” (Appendix A.) It is to this goal that the Professional Development Subcommittee of the Arts for All Task Force addresses itself. Under the leadership of the Music Center Education Division and California State University Los Angeles, the subcommittee is comprised of LA County-based arts organizations, K-12 educators, school district arts coordinators and directors of instruction, representatives of higher education, and nonprofit providers of professional development.

The importance of professional development to the success of the *Blueprint* cannot be overstated. High-quality professional development as envisioned here refers to rigorous and relevant content, strategies, and organizational supports that ensure the preparation and career-long development of teachers and others whose competence, expectations and actions influence the teaching and learning environment. Professional development serves as the bridge between where prospective and experienced educators are now and where they will need to be to meet the new challenges of guiding all students in achieving to higher standards of learning and development in the arts.

Currently, many K-12 teachers, whether general classroom teachers at the elementary level or credentialed arts teachers at the high school level, are not prepared to incorporate the State-adopted Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) standards in their classrooms. Due to a thirty-year lapse of arts education in the schools, many teachers themselves have little or no exposure to the arts experience. The professional development effort needs to be as much about demonstrating the enormous potential of the arts to open doors for students’ learning as it is about providing model lesson plans and best practices for instruction.

As the Professional Development Subcommittee has gone about its planning for Goal 2, there was a recognition that it could not accomplish Strategy E (“provide in-service professional development for general classroom teachers, specialists in non-arts subjects, and credentialed arts teachers to enhance capacity to provide instruction to the VAPA standards and to strengthen capacity to assess student performance in the arts”) without coordination with the other strategies outlined in Goal 2 and with the efforts being undertaken to work with districts to develop arts education plans that is the basis of Goal 1.

In January 2004, the subcommittee articulated four priorities:

- Review and organize arts education professional development resources in order to help districts access quality programs and identify areas where there are gaps or overlap. *Currently, there exists no compendium of information about models and best practices of professional development for arts education. Additionally, there exists no countywide survey of organizational capacity to deliver quality professional development.*
- Work with the Vanguard Districts to support the development of a professional development strand within their district plans, and to assist in formulation of initial professional development efforts. *Without imposing solutions on districts, the subcommittee hopes to provide access to information and criteria to help them choose the professional development program that will best serve district needs. This also involves helping districts to conduct an assessment of their existing capacities and needs.*
- Help districts align quality professional development and written curriculum materials to support and advance their goals for sequential arts education. *The subcommittee recognizes that professional development is ideally aligned with the curriculum. This plan proposes to work in concert with the effort to assist districts to adopt quality curriculum materials (Goal 2, strategy D.)*
- Develop a model framework for ideal teacher preparation in the arts, based on partnerships between schools, universities, and arts organizations. *This goal looks both at pre-service education for teachers, and for the role that institutions of higher education can play in providing in-service professional development.*

Through support from the Arts for All Pooled Fund, a collaborative of funders committed to support implementation of the *Blueprint*, the Executive Committee of the Task Force contracted with a consultant to work with the subcommittee to develop an implementation plan. In a series of meetings with stakeholders (*below*), the following strategies and action steps were articulated. These address the issues outlined in the priorities above, but each has been honed to integrate into other *Blueprint* initiatives already underway and to facilitate implementation by designated partners.

Action Plan

Assign responsibility to a staff person to coordinate partners to implement this plan.

- *Leadership partner: Los Angeles County Arts Commission*
- *Funding partner: Los Angeles County*

Strategy #1

During Phase I Technical Assistance, work with Arts for All districts to develop the professional development component of their long-range plans based on who will teach the arts in the district and how their respective roles will be coordinated or aligned.

Action Steps

- Create written compendium on best practices in professional development, including a review of existing national and local models and incorporating the new standards for professional development adopted by the California Department of Education. Target publication date: May 2006.
 - *Leadership partner: Los Angeles County Arts Commission*
 - *Working Group: Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Los Angeles County Office of Education, San Francisco Arts Commission, Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley*
 - *Funding partners: Arts for All Pooled Fund, The Boeing Corporation, The Flora Family Foundation, The Walter & Elise Haas Fund*
- Share models for district consideration as they develop their district plans (*Goal 1, strategy A*)
 - *Leadership partner: The California Alliance for Arts Education/Coaches*
 - *Funding partner: Arts for All Pooled Fund as part of Phase I TA*

Strategy #2

During Phase II Technical Assistance, work with Arts for All districts to align quality professional development and written curriculum materials.

Action Steps

- Convene district leaders to review and consider range of existing arts curricular materials and to develop model tool to assess capacity of educators to use curricular materials (*Goal 2, strategy D*)
 - *Leadership partners: Los Angeles County Office of Education, Arts Coordinators, Professional Development Committee of Community Arts Teams*
 - *Funding partner: District funds for teacher release time*

- Assess the capacity of educators to teach adopted curricula
 - *Leadership partners: Los Angeles County Office of Education, Arts Coordinators, Professional Development Committee of Community Arts Teams*
 - *Funding partner: N/A*

- Further define professional development component of district's long-range plans to address targeted areas for focused attention and any outstanding needs based on assessment (*Goal 1, strategy A*)
 - *Leadership partners: Los Angeles County Office of Education, Coaches, Arts Coordinators, Community Arts Teams*
 - *Funding partner: Arts for All Pooled Fund as part of Phase II TA*

- Evaluate and redefine professional development component of district's long-range plan as needed (*Goal 1, strategy A*)
 - *Leadership partners: Los Angeles County Office of Education, Arts Coordinators, Professional Development Committee of Community Arts Teams*
 - *Funding partner: N/A*

Strategy #3

Provide tools and resources to enable Arts for All districts to provide effective professional development.

- *Overall Leadership partner: Los Angeles County Arts Commission*
- *Funding partner: Los Angeles County*

Action Steps

- Identify internal district resources to provide desired professional development
 - *Partners: Coaches, Arts Coordinators, Community Arts Teams*

- Develop county-wide criteria for effective professional development provided by community resources based on compendium and other best practices
 - *Partners: Music Center Education Division, Armory Center for the Arts, LAUSD, and committee of community arts resources (MOCA, LACMA, etc.)*

- Survey capacity of community resources (arts organizations, artists, universities) to provide professional development based on criteria
 - *Partners: Music Center Education Division, Armory Center for the Arts, LAUSD, and committee of community arts resources (MOCA, LACMA, etc.)*

- Review and organize professional development resources, identifying where there are gaps
 - *Partners: Music Center Education Division, Armory Center for the Arts, LAUSD, and committee of community arts resources (MOCA, LACMA, etc.)*

- Provide professional development for community arts resources to provide model professional development, building capacity to address identified gaps (*Goal 2, strategy F*)
 - *Partners: Committee of community arts resources*
 - *Funding partner: Dana Foundation*

- Create a searchable database of quality professional development on www.LAArtsEd.org, expand database annually (*Goal 2, strategy A*)
 - *Funding partner: Los Angeles County Information Technology Fund*

- Market this resource to districts on annual basis

Strategy #4

Enlist involvement of higher education to provide outstanding pre-service preparation to allow generalists and credentialed arts teachers to be successful as they begin teaching in Arts for All districts.

Action Steps

- Convene leaders from Cal State University Trustees, higher education, and the Association of CA School Administrators to develop a model framework for ideal teacher and administrative preparation in the arts, examining partnerships between districts, universities, and arts organizations
 - *Leadership partners: Cal State LA and Cal State Long Beach*
 - *Funding partner: Arts for All Pooled Fund*

- Survey current status of arts education in pre-service programs for teacher and administrators based on model framework
 - *Leadership partners: Cal State LA and Cal State Long Beach*
 - *Funding partner: N/A*

- Provide incentive grants to foster partnerships between districts, universities, and arts organizations to develop, pilot and evaluate model pre-service programs
 - *Leadership partners: Arts for All Executive Committee*
 - *Funding partner: Arts for All Pooled Fund or other funder TBD*

Stakeholder Meeting Attendees

Janet Addo, Arts for All Project Director, Los Angeles County Office of Education
Kris Alexander, Executive Director, The California Arts Project
Leonardo Bravo, Director of Arts Education, P.S. Arts
Stacy Brightman, Director of Community Programs, Los Angeles Opera
Richard Burrows, Director, Arts Education Branch Los Angeles USD
Susan Cambigue-Tracey, Director-Curriculum & Teaching Artist Development, Music Center Education Division
David Catanzarite, California Educational Theatre Association
Lorraine Cleary, Director of Professional Development, Armory Center for the Arts
Dr. David Connors, Chair-Music Department, CSU Los Angeles
Diana Cummins, President, California Dance Educators Association
Kathleen Duba, Assistant Superintendent, Pasadena USD
Dr. Diane Fiello, Assistant Superintendent, Culver City USD
Elizabeth Gerber, Assistant Museum Educator, Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Doris Hausmann, Director of Arts & Education, Armory Center for the Arts
Ayanna Hudson Higgins, Arts Education Director, Los Angeles County Arts Commission
Suzanne Isken, Director of Education, Museum of Contemporary Art
Susan Kao, Intern, Los Angeles Opera
Jan Kirsch, Director of Professional Development, Inner City Arts
Sofia Klatzker, Arts Education Coordinator, Los Angeles County Arts Commission
Terry Lenihan, Asst. Professor in Art Education, Loyola Marymount University
Susan McGreevy-Nichols, National Director of Planning & School Support, GALEF
Toni Marich, CSU Dominguez Hills
Peggy Nguyen, Intern, Inner City Arts
MaryAnna Pomonis, Visual Arts Teacher, Hoover High School/ Glendale USD
Judy Scalin, Co-Chair, Director of Dance, Loyola Marymount University/ Department of Theatre & Dance
Carl Selkin, Dean, CSU Los Angeles/ College of Arts & Letters
Mark Slavkin, Vice President of Education, Music Center Education Division
Gwin Wheatley, Consultant, Consult'her
Melinda Williams, Director-Education, Music Center Education Division
Selase Williams, Dean, CSU Dominguez Hills/ College of Arts & Sciences
Terry Wolverton, Consultant, Consult'her