

ABOUT AEMS: ARTS EDUCATION IN MARYLAND SCHOOLS ALLIANCE

AEMS: Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance was initiated by the Maryland State Arts Council in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education in June of 1992 in response to growing concern about the diminishing quality as well as quantity of arts education.

There were two motivating factors:

- The importance of cultural literacy in society as a whole.
- The intrinsic value of the arts to the individual and the many significant ways the arts affect children.

Incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1997, AEMS Alliance believes that every child in Maryland is entitled to participate in the arts within their educational experience. Accordingly, AEMS Alliance actively advocates local and statewide educational policy to ensure that every child in Maryland has high-quality opportunities for learning both in and through the arts.

To build support for high-quality, systemic arts education--in dance, music, theatre and visual arts--for all Maryland schoolchildren, AEMS Alliance concentrates on the following areas:

- I. Documentation of the importance of arts education.
- II. Addressing issues and policies that pertain to arts educators.
- III. Building support--on an individual school, local system, and state level--for arts education.

AEMS: Arts Education in Maryland Schools
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Evaluation Tool Kit

Assessing the Effectiveness of School Arts Partnerships

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This Evaluation Tool Kit was created to assist arts organizations in assessing the effectiveness of existing arts education partnerships and programs in the state of Maryland.

How are Maryland arts organizations and schools working together? What lessons have been learned? How can arts organizations measure whether their education goals are being met?

This *Evaluation Tool Kit* can aid in building and sustaining collaboration among arts organizations and educational institutions.

The Tool Kit addresses the following:

- ✦ How can these aspirations be achieved through educational programs and partnerships?
- ✦ What outcomes should be measured in arts education collaborations, and how do we interpret "success?"
- ✦ How can program and partnership successes be translated into new funding, new programs, and new partnerships?

Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance realizes that arts education partnerships take on many forms, from "one-time" programs to on-going mutual collaborations. AEMS Alliance wants to explore the richness of the full range of Maryland's arts education partnerships, and to describe successful partnerships that benefit from the social and political environment and the engagement of the partners, as well as their desirable outcomes.

The Evaluation Tool Kit was developed by Carolyn Darrow, Evaluation Consultant to Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance, with the guidance of Nancy Smith, Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance Executive Director; Mary Ann Mears, Chairperson; and in collaboration with Evaluation Task Force members Dick Disharoon, Chair; Harriet Lynn, Beth Miller, and reviewers Lillian Hasko, David Markey and Stacy Sanders. Dr. Burt Barnow of the

Johns Hopkins Institute of Policy Studies provided valuable assistance. Much of the evaluation discussion question content here was adapted from the "Basic Guide to Program Evaluation," written by Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD, available at www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/evaluatn.htm. Information on outcome-based evaluation has been summarized from an overview provided by The United Way of America at www.unitedway.org/outcomes/.

What Is Evaluation, and What Can It Do For Me?

Evaluation is the method organizations, corporations, and governments use to determine if their activities are effective and efficient. Benjamin Franklin was one of the first to describe *cost/benefit evaluation* when he wrote that, in order to make the best decisions, he always wrote down on paper the pros and cons involved, considering them against each other to determine his decision.

Evaluation results are also a powerful means by which nonprofit organizations can secure further funding and disseminate programs that work throughout the field.

Evaluation comprises useful research conducted prior to making organizational decisions, and examines previous decisions to determine where improvements can be made. Evaluation results are also a powerful means by which nonprofit organizations can secure further funding and disseminate programs that work throughout the field.

Evaluating arts programs can often be a very difficult task, given the many intangible benefits to be weighed against tangible

costs. Many organizations question how they can quantify their outcomes, without realizing that a well thought-out evaluation can be one of their strongest fundraising tools.

This tool kit will provide ideas and resources for determining what impact your arts education collaborations will have vis-a-vis process and outcome.

Process evaluation looks at the implementation of the program or partnership and answers the question, "What did we do?" Process evaluation can also be used to examine the functioning of the partnership. Measurable outcomes may assist arts organizations to develop a better ability to communicate and collaborate with education partners, more sustainable programming, higher staff morale, and other indicators.

Outcome evaluation answers the questions, "Did it work?" and "What are the measurable outcomes for participants?" These measurements will tell you whether your program had the impact you and your funders were expecting. An outcome evaluation may indicate, for instance, if a higher percentage of students excel in school by utilizing the *Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts* or the *Voluntary State Curriculum for the Fine Arts*. Outcomes may also be measured less directly—for example, is attendance increasing at events sponsored by your arts organization?

Ben Franklin's approach of "costs and benefits" summarizes it all together. When you combine this analysis with the Process and Outcome Evaluations, you begin to build a strong argument for the effectiveness and efficiency of your programming, compared to costs. When you can quantify that your program was "worth it," you incorporate sustainability into your educational work in your community.

Definitions

Evaluation: the method organizations, corporations, and governments use to determine if their activities are effective and efficient

Process Evaluation: looking at the implementation of the program or partnership, and answering the question, "What did we do?"

Outcome Evaluation: answers the question, "Did it work? What are the measurable outcomes for participants?"

Cost Evaluation: weighs the cost of the project against the outcomes and asks, "Was it worth it?"

When you can quantify that your program was "worth it," you can build sustainability into your educational work in your community.

Process Evaluation: What Did We Do?

Process evaluation answers the question “What did we do?” concerning both the implementation of the project and the internal structure of the organization(s) or partnership involved. This is a separate issue from an Outcome Evaluation, which answers the question “Did it work?”

A Process Evaluation usually concludes with recommendations for improving the implementation of the program, the structure of the partnership, or both.

Process evaluations typically are carried out in conjunction with outcome evaluations. In the example on the right, an outcome evaluation of six schools might show that students in the three schools receiving programs did indeed improve in school attendance, providing a strong recommendation for program implementation in the remaining three schools.

Process evaluations can stand alone if the organization wishes foremost to investigate their structure and capacity, relationship

to partners, and implementation of programs. Process evaluation can be undertaken to describe to others in the field how the program was *actually* implemented, so “best practices” can be more easily replicated. Process evaluation of organizational structure is sometimes called “self-assessment,” and many leadership courses for nonprofit organizations touch on issues of using evaluation to determine organizational capacity building needs.

PROCESS EVALUATION GUIDELINES¹

Before beginning any evaluation, you must consider what questions you want answered. This is determined by what you want to know; questions can be generated by a brainstorming/ discussion group within the organization or partnership. Some clusters of questions on the process of partnering with educational institutions follow. An arts organization can use these questions as a starting point for discussions of partnership goals and the structures necessary to fulfill them.

CASE STUDY

An organization plans to carry out arts education programs at six elementary schools, but has run into difficulties.

An Outcome Evaluation shows:

- Only half of the students had the expected program outcomes, such as higher school attendance or improvement in other previously decided outcome indicators.

A Process Evaluation reveals:

- The program was only implemented in three schools instead of six, accounting for the low percentage of improved student outcomes.
- Areas of poor communication with school staff and administrators are identified, which resulted in reduced program implementation in three of six planned schools.
- A previously expected funding source became unavailable, further impairing implementation.

¹Adapted from the “Basic Guide to Program Evaluation,” written by Carter McHamara, MBA, PhD, available at www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/evaluatn.htm

PROCESS EVALUATION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ✓ On what basis was the decision made that educational outreach programs were needed? How do the partners decide that new programs are feasible? Who is consulted? Are participants involved in determining needs?
- ✓ What is required of staff in order to deliver the product or services? How are staff trained in delivering the product or services? Is there any formal staff training about new educational programs? Do staff roles evolve with the program?
- ✓ How do education partners come into the program? How are sites selected for education programs? How accessible are program offerings—does the program reach all public school students, a percentage of all public and private school students, or a percentage of all young people in your area, whether in or after school?
- ✓ How are programs or services selected? How are goals and standards set? How are curriculum and calendars decided?
- ✓ How does the arts organization communicate with the educational entity? How involved are each of the partners during planning, implementation, and assessment? How is it decided what is required of participants? How are expected outcomes and goals determined?
- ✓ From the educational entity's point of view, what type of experience does the education staff generally have? Is it easy for them to communicate their needs to the arts organization? Are procedures needed or in place to resolve disputes?
- ✓ What do partners and participants consider to be strengths of the program? What do staff consider to be strengths of the program? What do staff and/or partners recommend to improve the program? Are procedures needed or in place to seek and incorporate feedback? Is feedback sought from participants?
- ✓ What typical complaints are heard from staff about this specific program? From partners? From participants?
- ✓ On what basis do partners decide that the product or services are no longer needed?

Outcome Evaluation: Did it Work?

Outcome Evaluation answers the question “Did it work?” and requires at least some process evaluation as background information on what was actually accomplished, and how. Both the structural capacity of the arts organization and the way the program was implemented will influence successful outcomes of the program. Further, trying to carry out an outcome evaluation without any consideration of the process is only answering the question “Did it work?” without answering “How and why?”

Emphasis on outcomes should help prove that your arts organization is indeed conducting the right program activities to bring about the required benefits.

Outcome Evaluation determines the benefits (outcomes) to the participants in arts education programs. Usually these outcomes are agreed upon in advance, using specific, measurable indicators. Many funders are relying more on performance-based grants to nonprofit organizations, which can provide more accountability when administered correctly. Emphasis on outcomes should help prove that your arts organization is indeed conducting the

right program activities to bring about the required benefits. Data from outcome evaluations can be persuasive to funders, partners, and the public.

Outcomes for arts education programs can be viewed in terms of enhanced learning and demonstrable student skills, or more enhanced conditions such as increased creativity, resilience, and self-reliance.

Direct Outcomes can be measured by many means, including testing participants

before and after the program to show their progress. Another tool for measuring outcomes is the *Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts*. (For a copy, contact AEMS).

Outcomes can also be less directly attributed to results of your programming, but equally important to your mission, such as greater community familiarity with your organization.

Indirect Outcomes can be measured using well-designed surveys. Outcomes shouldn't be confused with program outputs or units of service. For example, the number of students who participated in a program is an output; the number of students whose knowledge of an art form improved due to participation in a program is an outcome.

OUTCOME EVALUATION DESIGN²

The United Way of America (www.unitedway.org/outcomes) provides an excellent overview of outcomes-based evaluation. Outcome evaluations must be well-designed and well-implemented to gather persuasive data; design issues can cloud the validity of results from this type of analysis. Often organizations will “pilot,” or test, an outcome evaluation on one or two programs before using it for all programs, to ensure that the evaluation design measures the correct indicators accurately. Additionally, gradual introduction of outcomes-based evaluation can familiarize staff with evaluation methods and motivations, securing their essential cooperation.

²Adapted from The United Way of America www.unitedway.org/outcomes/

OUTCOME EVALUATION STEPS

1 Identify major program outcomes.

Reflect on your organization's mission and ask what impact you want to have on participants. For example, if your mission is to provide improved arts education to students, then ask what benefits this will have for those students (see Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts for ideas).

2 Choose the most important outcomes.

Prioritize the outcomes and pick the top two to four most important ones.

3 Specify indicators to suggest outcome achievement.

This can be the most important and enlightening step, and possibly the most challenging and confusing. Consider that your organization is going from intangible concepts, such as increased self-esteem, to specific activities, such as improved attendance or better grades.

4 Identify what information is needed to show these indicators.

A process evaluation will interact with your outcome evaluation at this point, as you verify that the program is carried out according to original plans, and indicators remain valid measurements.

5 Decide how information can be efficiently and realistically gathered.

Keep in mind your partners' needs and capabilities. For example, the school where your programs are implemented may keep student progress reports that your organization may use. It is important to include all partners in determining which indicators are reasonable and feasible. Schools will also need to determine issues of privacy regarding school records.

6 Analyze and report the findings.

Always start with your organization's evaluation goals, especially when analyzing data. This will help organize data and focus the analysis. For example, if an organization wanted to improve its program by identifying its strengths and weaknesses, it could organize the data accordingly. If it wanted to fully understand how a program works, it could organize data in the chronological order in which participants go through the program. If it were to conduct an outcomes-based evaluation, it could categorize data according to the indicators for each outcome.

Funders (and potential funders) will be interested in a report that includes an executive summary of conclusions and recommendations; a listing of what sections of information are in the report (the table of contents); a description of the organization and the program under evaluation; an explanation of evaluation goals, methods, and analysis procedures; a conclusions and recommendations section; and any relevant attachments, such as evaluation questionnaires or interview guides. Your organization may deliver the report as a presentation, accompanied by an overview, or funders may want to review the report alone.

OUTCOME EVALUATION ANALYSIS GUIDELINES³

Always make copies of your data and store the master copy. Use the copy for making edits, cutting and pasting, and other data manipulation.

Guidelines for analyzing quantitative (tabulation of survey responses and questionnaires) and qualitative information (verbal or essay answers from interviews, focus groups, or questionnaires) are listed in the shaded boxes on this page and the next.

COST EVALUATION: IS IT WORTH IT?

Once your organization knows what was done, and what the outcomes are, one can ask whether it was worth undertaking from your organization’s perspective. An entire science of cost/benefit analysis has grown up around this question, largely from a financial and business perspective. Some benefits are nearly impossible to measure, as are some costs, which can make even the basic calculations difficult. It may be most beneficial for your organization—unless you have a trained cost/benefit analyst on staff—to return to Benjamin Franklin’s simple pro and con columns on a sheet of paper. This can be a useful brainstorming tool to focus thinking on the costs (in staff time, travel, salary, and so on) your organization is willing to incur to achieve the benefits you anticipate.⁴

Quantitative Analysis Process

1. Tabulate the information. Add up the numbers of ratings, rankings, yes’s, or no’s for each question. Many surveys or questionnaires include evaluation rubrics such as “On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 = never and 5 = always; The instructor made the class interesting 1 2 3 4 5.”
2. Depending on the question, consider computing a mean (average) score.
3. Consider computing the percentage of respondents giving a specific numeric answer. The percentage may not be very meaningful unless the survey is sufficiently large, but the percentage may be an easier way to convey results.
4. If the sample size is small compared to the number of participants, consider conveying the range of answers: “20 students rated the instruction “1—poor 30 responded 3, 20 rated the instruction 5—excellent,” and so forth.
5. Consider representing the information graphically—an easy approach to making your information analysis meaningful.

³Adapted from www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm#anchor1581634 Carter McNamara, 1998

⁴For further reading; Boardman, Anthony E. et al, Cost-Benefit Analysis: Concepts and Practice, New Jersey; Prentice Hall, 1996

GENERAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Qualitative Analysis

1. If confidentiality or privacy of participants is an issue, ensure anonymity of respondents. Keep all records only as long as necessary.
2. Read through all the data and organize comments into similar categories, for example, concerns, suggestions, strengths, weaknesses, similar experiences, program inputs, recommendations, outputs, outcome indicators, etc.
3. Attempt to identify patterns, associations, and causal relationships in the themes. For example: “All students who attended programs in the evening had similar concerns; most participants came from the same geographic area;” and so on.
4. Construct a written narrative from the information you have discovered.

Interpretation

1. Attempt to put the information in perspective. Compare results to what you expected or promised; to any common standards for your services; to your original program goals (especially if a program evaluation); to accomplished outcomes (outcomes evaluation); or simply build a description of the program’s experiences, strengths, and weaknesses (especially if conducting a process evaluation).
2. Consider recommendations to help program staff improve the program, or conclusions about program operations or meeting goals. Include all involved staff in the feedback and recommendation process. *Focus on constructive, collective ideas for improvement, not criticism.*
3. Record conclusions and recommendations in a report document, and associate interpretations to justify your conclusions or recommendations.

Reporting

1. The level and scope of content depend on the intended audience. If a document model is available—such as a previous report—use it.
2. Staff need a chance to carefully review and discuss the report prior to release. Create action plans from evaluation recommendations, including who is going to do what about the program and by when. Focus on collective responsibility for improvements, not criticism.
3. Make a record of evaluation activities for reference if similar evaluation is needed in the future. Record lessons learned and recommendations for future evaluation design.

This tool kit provides ideas and resources for determining what impact arts education collaborations are having in terms of *Process* and *Outcomes*. It is designed to assist and strengthen arts organization involvement in education, and to publicize success stories from this involvement.

Organizations use evaluation methods to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of their activities. Evaluation is used to make strategic decisions, and also to examine previous decisions and determine where improvements can be made. Evaluation results are one of the most powerful tools nonprofit organizations have to secure further funding, and disseminate information on “programs that work” to their colleagues in the field.

Although evaluating arts education programs is a difficult task, many Maryland arts organizations are quantifying their outcomes and examining their process and using evaluations as one of their strongest fundraising tools.

Evaluation results are one of
the most powerful tools
nonprofit organizations have
to secure further funding.

**THE FOLLOWING APPENDIX
INCLUDES WORKSHEETS THAT MAY BE USED TO AID YOU
IN YOUR EVALUATION PROCESS.**

PROCESS EVALUATION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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Decision-making process considerations: On what basis was the decision made that educational outreach programs were needed? How do the partners decide that new programs are feasible? Who is consulted? Are participants involved in determining needs?

Notes:

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Staffing Resources: What is required of staff in order to deliver the product or services? How are staff trained in delivering the product or services? Is there any formal staff training about new educational programs? Do staff roles evolve with the program?

Notes:

?

Collaborative Partners: How do education partners come into the program? How are sites selected for education programs? How accessible are program offerings—does the program reach all public school students, a percentage of all public and private school students, or a percentage of all young people in your area, whether in or after school?

Notes:

PROCESS EVALUATION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

? **Program design:** How are programs or services selected? How are goals and standards set? How are curriculum and calendars decided?

Notes:

? **Participation:** How does the arts organization communicate with the educational entity? How involved are each of the partners during planning, implementation, and assessment? How is it decided what is required of participants? How are expected outcomes and goals determined?

Notes:

? **Additional resource consideration:** From the educational entity's point of view, what type of experience does the education staff generally have? Is it easy for them to communicate their needs to the arts organization? Are procedures needed or in place to resolve disputes?

Notes:

GENERAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Qualitative Analysis

- If confidentiality or privacy of participants is an issue, ensure anonymity of respondents. Keep all records only as long as necessary.
- Read through all the data and organize comments into similar categories, for example, concerns, suggestions, strengths, weaknesses, similar experiences, program inputs, recommendations, outputs, outcome indicators, etc.
- Attempt to identify patterns, associations, and causal relationships in the themes. For example: “All students who attended programs in the evening had similar concerns; most participants came from the same geographic area;” and so on.
- Construct a written narrative from the information you have discovered.

Interpretation

- Attempt to put the information in perspective. Compare results to what you expected or promised; to any common standards for your services; to your original program goals (especially if a program evaluation); to accomplished outcomes (outcomes evaluation); or simply build a description of the program’s experiences, strengths, and weaknesses (especially if conducting a process evaluation).
- Consider recommendations to help program staff improve the program, or conclusions about program operations or meeting goals. Include all involved staff in the feedback and recommendation process. *Focus on constructive, collective ideas for improvement, not criticism.*
- Record conclusions and recommendations in a report document, and associate interpretations to justify your conclusions or recommendations.

Reporting

- The level and scope of content depend on the intended audience. If a document model is available—such as a previous report—use it.
- Staff need a chance to carefully review and discuss the report prior to release. Create action plans from evaluation recommendations, including who is going to do what about the program and by when. Focus on collective responsibility for improvements, not criticism.
- Make a record of evaluation activities for reference if similar evaluation is needed in the future. Record lessons learned and recommendations for future evaluation design.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS PROCESS WORKSHEET

* Tabulate the information. Add up the numbers of ratings, rankings, yes's, or no's for each question. Many surveys or questionnaires include evaluation rubrics such as "On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 = never and 5 = always; The instructor made the class interesting 1 2 3 4 5."

* Depending on the question, consider computing a mean (average) score.

* Consider computing the percentage of respondents giving a specific numeric answer. The percentage may not be very meaningful unless the survey is sufficiently large, but the percentage may be an easier way to convey results.

* If the sample size is small compared to the number of participants, consider conveying the range of answers: "20 students rated the instruction "1—poor 30 responded 3, 20 rated the instruction 5—excellent," and so forth.

* Consider representing the information graphically—an easy approach to making your information analysis meaningful

OUTCOME EVALUATION STEPS WORKSHEET

1

Major program outcomes: Reflect on your organization's mission and ask what impact you want to have on participants. For example, if your mission is to provide improved arts education to students, then ask what benefits this will have for those students (see *Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts* for ideas).

Notes:

2

Outcome Priorities: Prioritize the outcomes and pick the top two to four most important ones.

Notes:

3

Indicators: This can be the most important and enlightening step, and possibly the most challenging and confusing. Consider that your organization is going from intangible concepts, such as increased self-esteem, to specific activities, such as improved attendance or better grades.

Notes:

OUTCOME EVALUATION STEPS WORKSHEET



Indicator definitions: A process evaluation will interact with your outcome evaluation at this point, as you verify that the program is carried out according to original plans, and indicators remain valid measurements.

Notes:



Information use: Keep in mind your partners' needs and capabilities. For example, the school where your programs are implemented may keep student progress reports that your organization may use. It is important to include all partners in determining which indicators are reasonable and feasible. Schools will also need to determine issues of privacy regarding school records.

Notes:



Analysis and reporting: Always start with your organization's evaluation goals, especially when analyzing data. This will help organize data and focus the analysis. For example, if an organization wanted to improve its program by identifying its strengths and weaknesses, it could organize the data accordingly. If it wanted to fully understand how a program works, it could organize data in the chronological order in which participants go through the program. If it were to conduct an outcomes-based evaluation, it could categorize data according to the indicators for each outcome.

Notes:

Additional Resources

Evaluation Techniques for Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts

Youth Arts Development Project: Handbook and Tool Kit

Americans for the Arts
Call (800) 321-4510

The kits cost \$75.00 and include a handbook for planning and evaluating youth arts programs, a videotape that can be used as an advocacy tool to show potential funders the power of youth arts programs, and a diskette that contains sample data collection forms, contracts, and other materials used frequently in youth arts programming.

Arts Education Partnership

www.aep-arts.org/LP/LPindex.html

A private, nonprofit coalition of education, arts, philanthropic, and government organizations that promotes the essential role of arts education in enabling all students to succeed in school, life, and work. Learning Partnerships gives guidelines for effective partnerships & evaluations.

General Resources and Research Organizations

www.artslynx.org/heal/rsrch.htm

Well-organized and annotated web-based resources for evaluation, including research

on the value of public arts programs, arts in therapy and early childhood development, and research on the value of community partnerships in promoting the arts.

Resources for Arts Education

21st Century

Community Learning Centers Program

www.ed.gov/21stcclc

Detailed information including applications, answers to frequently asked questions, a searchable database of grantees, and more.

After School Resources

www.afterschool.gov

Connection to federal resources that support children and youth during the out-of-school hours. Includes community success stories, educational activities for children, access to government guides and research. Also offered is a database of more than 100 grant and loan programs along with links to private non-profit organizations and publications.

Americans for the Arts

ww3.artsusa.org

Supports the arts through private and public resource development, leadership

and public policy development, information services, and public education and awareness. Connect to the National Arts Information Clearinghouse and arts education sections. Link to local arts councils across the country, many of which fund or run programs for young people.

ArtsEdge

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org

Access information, resources, and ideas that support the arts as a core subject area in the K-12 curriculum on this site established by the Kennedy Center and the National Endowment for the Arts.

ArtsLynx

www.artslynx.org/artsed

Music, theater, visual arts, cultural history, dance, and film education resource links. Includes links to advocacy resources, funding, administration, and more.

The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)

www.aahperd.org

The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) is the largest organization of professionals supporting and assisting those involved in

physical education, leisure, fitness, dance, health promotion, and education and all specialties related to achieving a healthy lifestyle

Coming Up Taller Awards Program

www.cominguptaller.org

Recognizes some of the outstanding after-school, weekend, and summer programs that are currently fostering the creative and intellectual development of America’s youth, particularly for children from at-risk communities.

Connect for Kids: Guidance for Grownups

www.connectforkids.org

Connect to this information center to learn more about children’s issues and their needs, along with examples of community programs and initiatives that address those needs. Also visit the special section on the arts and youth development.

EDSitement

edsitement.neh.gov

Link to top humanities sites and view online lesson plans and activities related to the humanities for children at home and in school on this site developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Council of the Great City Schools, and MCI WorldCom.

Empire State Partnership for the Arts

www.espartsed.org

The project focuses on student achievement of the New York State Learning Standards while

contributing to the improvement of teaching and learning in New York State schools.

Federal Funds for Food in After-School Programs

www.frac.org

Learn more about using federal child nutrition programs to serve snacks and meals to children in after-school programs. Visit the “Building Blocks” section of the site.

Federal Resources

for Educational Excellence’s (FREE) Arts Links

www.ed.gov/free/s-arts.html

A list of art resource links of organizations supported by U.S. Federal government agencies.

The Foundation Center

www.fdncenter.org

Information on more than 600 grant makers, including private foundations, corporate grant makers, and community foundations.

The Future of Children

www.futureofchildren.org

Information and analysis of major issues related to children’s well being. Provides link to the journal produced by the Packard Foundation.

Libraries for the Future

www.lff.org

Learn about efforts to revitalize the role of public libraries in our changing communities.

Music Educators National Conference

www.menc.org

Organization information plus a list of links for music educators.

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

www.nasaa-arts.org

News from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and links to state arts agencies, many of which fund and/or operate arts education programs.

The National Art Education Association

www.naea-reston.org

Introduction and information about NAEA membership, awards, publications, subscriptions, conventions, and other material.

The National Dance Association

www.aahperd.org/nda/

The National Dance Association (NDA/AAHPERD) leads in promoting and supporting creative, artistic and healthy lifestyles through quality services and programs in dance and dance education

National Endowment for the Arts

arts.endow.gov

Learn about the NEA, its partnerships, publications, and grants programs. Find resources, links, field reports and features on artists and arts organizations.

AEMS EVALUATION TOOL KIT

National Endowments for the Humanities

www.neh.gov

Information on grants for projects in history, language, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities and for access to NEH publications.

The National PTA's Reflections Program

www.pta.org/reflections05/about.asp

The Reflections Program is structured for PTAs to recognize students at the local, council, district, state, and national levels. Entries are first judged at the local level, where selected works are chosen to represent the PTA at each subsequent level—council, district, or state—depending on each state PTA's structure. Once entries reach the state level, the state PTA may select entries to submit to National PTA. Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit are recognized at the annual National PTA Convention and displayed in a virtual gallery on National PTA's website.

Nonprofit Gateway

www.nonprofit.gov

A central starting point to access federal agencies.

President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

www.pcah.gov

Created by Executive Order to encourage private sector support and to increase

public appreciation for the arts and humanities through publications, projects and meetings.

US Department of Education

www.ed.gov

Latest news about national education issues, education related publications and statistics, and information on the offices and programs at the department.

Wolf Trap Education Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts

www.wolf-trap.org/institute

Find out about teaching preschool children basic academic and life skills through participation in performing arts activities.

Young Audiences

www.youngaudiences.org

Information on community collaborations and programs designed to bring the performing and visual arts to children. Includes links to its national affiliates, as well as other arts education sites.

Publications

US Department of Education

Call (877) 4ED-PUBS

www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html

Helpful information and free publications available.

Champions of Change:

The Impact of the Arts on Learning

aep-arts.org/champions.html

Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development

www.aep-arts.org

Coming Up Taller: Arts and Humanities Programs for Children and Youth at Risk

Call (202) 682-5409 or fax an order to (202) 682-5668

Creative Partnerships for Prevention: Using the Arts and Humanities to Build Resiliency in Youth

US Government Printing Office

Call (202) 512-1803

Gaining the Arts Advantage

Call (202) 336-7016

Making the Connection Between Arts Education and Current Research

www.aems-edu.org

Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts: Summary Documents

www.aems-edu.org

Parents Tool Kit

www.aems-edu.org

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