

*Access to and the quality of arts education is a state, district and locally determined condition.* The following environmental characteristics empower local communities to make this determination for students.

- A persistent challenge is securing sustainable, classroom based, sequential K-12 arts instruction in multiple disciplines.
- As No Child Left Behind (NCLB) matures, its mandates such as “adequate yearly progress” and “highly qualified teachers” are debated and defined at the state level.
- Education is between 50 & 70% locally funded.
- Two schools of thought reign in education reform: that which seeks increases in standard practice and that which seeks increased site-based control. Arts education tends to flourish in the latter, where discretionary funds are greater, where winning the support of education decision-makers is more likely and effective, and where adherence to federal and state mandates such as those in NCLB is *creatively* met.
- The greatest challenge for arts education is the disparity of how and why it is provided. Without the assumed necessity of federal reporting requirements that benefit math, science and reading, the arts are accessible where a person or group of people set the community expectation that they are taught and/or gather resources to do so. Arts education access and quality is dependent on local leadership.

In light of the amount of public education design taking place at the state and local level, Americans for the Arts will provide leadership through a series of local convenings meant to advance arts education in a given service area and contribute to national knowledge.

## GOALS

The purpose of the local convening is to align Americans for the Arts network and resources with the development of a local community’s arts education work, responding to the regional environment, needs and resources. In so doing, we bolster local arts education advancement work in speed, effectiveness or both. The goals are as follows.

- To increase the number of local communities with ongoing, arts education advocacy infrastructure.
- To contribute to existing arts education advocacy work in local communities.
- To increase multi-sector community support for arts education, focusing on public education.
- To network local advocates in order to share information with each other and provide resource-input to national work.

## TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Target participants are based on the organization of the local arts education community. Each community’s success has depended on its unique opportunities, participant skills and resources. Given local environments, Americans for the Arts seeks to convene the best of a community’s arts education resources, as well as education decision makers that local arts education leadership immediately acts upon. All are welcome. A generalized list of target participants includes the following.

1. Local arts education stewards, in whatever capacity they are employed
  - Local arts agency arts education staff
  - Arts education organization staff
  - Teaching artists
  - Teachers and other education staff
  - Others
2. Local public education decision makers
  - Parents
  - School board members
  - Superintendents
  - Principals
  - Teachers
3. Local public education stakeholders including funding, political, municipal and higher education staff.

## CORE CONTENT ELEMENTS

The most important aspect of these partnerships is that content is driven by the needs of the local community that is served by the conference. Local priorities will be the priorities of the convening and programming will respond to the school district(s) and communities served. Day 1 will focus on collecting and planning for expansion of current efforts. Day 2 will focus on direct influence of education leaders, including cultivation.

Day 1: Education of Arts Education Network members to influence education gatekeepers

- Delivery of curriculum about successful arts education stewardship
- Arts education coalitions: methods, models, etc.
- Identification of local leaders and participants for ongoing work
- Peer group discussions
- Discussion of resources, strengths, weaknesses and opportunities
- Action plans for identified immediate and future goals for arts education advancement

Day 2: Direct influence of education gatekeepers

- Endorsement and anecdotes by supportive, representative education decision-makers
- Inspirational, exemplary programs showcasing student learning or teaching artists in practice
- Presentations of research on the arts meeting local education challenges (academic achievement, prosocial factors, dropout rate, engagement, etc.)
- Curricula on gatekeeper support methods such as budget, scheduling, and curriculum including arts integration
- Local arts education service providers tradeshow for education staff

Follow up: Local program alumni network

- Successful leaders from one area consult with others and lead a national network of local activists
- Peer-to-peer network of local efforts to steward arts education
- Americans for the Arts hosts conversations (conference calls, blogs, listservs, annual convention meetings) and provides technical support

### **WHO WOULD DELIVER THE PROGRAM**

Presenters would represent a balance of local and national leaders. Local speakers add the following value.

- Retain focus on local issues and education landscape
- Begin the local network we seek to create for lasting impact
- Provide regional visibility to local leaders
- Minimize expense

National speakers add the following value.

- Provide national clout and external expert reputation
- Increase the special event value of the convening to a local community
- Address community-based knowledge gaps.

### **STRUCTURE AND COSTS**

The program will be structured as a convening, with geographic scope and content determined by local partners, resources, strengths, and needs. What the local market brings to the table is an important question—particularly in communities with nascent support for arts education. Local funding support is as integral to these convenings as local goals are to content, in order to involve and cultivate funder participants for the network these convenings will support.

#### **Keynote presentation - \$2000 plus travel and expenses**

A presentation up to one hour in length that frames a key issue with inspiring anecdotes and relevant case materials. The keynote may be delivered by the President & CEO of Americans for the Arts, a member of our senior leadership, or a selected national level expert carefully matched based on availability and topic.

#### **Training session - \$2500 plus travel and expenses**

A two- to three-hour session that frames a key issue with customized research and helpful comparisons among similar American communities. This option is particularly suited to fit inside existing conferences and training programs.

#### **Half-day program - \$5000 plus travel and expenses**

A three- to four-hour program that presents a keynote followed by facilitated topical breakouts and a wrap-up session.

#### **Full-day program - \$10,000 plus travel and expenses**

A six- to seven-hour program that presents a keynote followed by facilitated breakouts, including a focus on specific local and regional cases with time for associated working groups. The full-day program is presented by a team of Americans for the Arts staff, key experts, and locally-identified group leaders and facilitators.

#### **Two-day program - \$25,000 plus travel and expenses**

A combination of keynotes, general sessions, breakouts, and working groups are designed to meet in-depth goals and training objectives. The two-day program is presented by a team of Americans for the Arts staff, key experts, and locally-identified group leaders and facilitators. Small meetings or special events with business, civic, education, and arts leaders may also be incorporated.

### **Materials & Logistics**

All programs include speakers and facilitators, customized presentations, and high-quality printed materials, as well as web-based tools available to only to attendees for continued research, advocacy, and professional networking. Americans for the Arts also provides web-based promotional support, event registration, and evaluation. Local partners are responsible for planning and promoting the event locally. Event locations, housing, food & beverage, and transportation logistics are also the responsibility of the local partners.

### **Partnership Funding**

Americans for the Arts works within the arts and funding communities to cover the cost of local programs, including the development of joint fundraising proposals and registration fee schedules. As an organization, we are committed to finding solutions that do not compromise existing funding relationships. A sample budget for each program level is enclosed.