

Programs Subcommittee Meeting I

University of the Arts, Terra Hall

Meg Long, Facilitator

April 15th, 9:00-11:00am

I. Recap, Vision, and Defining Committee Roles

During the March 6th meeting, Gigi Antoni from Big Thought in Dallas made us think about what it would take to bring arts education, learning in and through the arts, in and out of school time, in a discipline-based, sequential manner to Philadelphia. Smaller groups worked on a vision, resulting in rich discussions where common issues arose: stress for in *and* out of school time arts experiences, continuum of arts education and arts experiences, a broad definition of arts, and a big picture. We are synthesizing, making a more refined vision, and making a list of what the vision will really look like. **The vision and notes are available online, and the subcommittees will have the opportunity to weigh in on the final vision statement.** Long term vision is 5-10 years. We can't make this happen immediately, but the goal is to begin chiseling plan on how we can get there.

The four categories for break outs-turned into subcommittees, and each will meet monthly for next 3 months. OMG's role is not as content experts, but to facilitate sessions, take notes, share info, make sure work that is happening in subcommittees is shared and informing one another. Over the next 9-12 months, we will develop a blueprint for bringing arts education to Philadelphia. Extending arts education, and arts experience opportunities in and out of school for *all* children in Philadelphia, not just those in public schools, but those who home-schooled, are in private, parochial, archdiocese, or alternative schools, who have dropped out, and otherwise. Perhaps traditionally "children and youth" means through the pre-teen years, but at this stage, we are talking about high school students too. We're looking at a broad definition now, as we go forward, there may be a strategy to focus on an age subset.

Geography of the initiative is something for discussion. We don't know if it will be just Philadelphia proper, or if it will extend to the entire region. Some think it is easier to start at the city level, while others bring a policy prospective and believe that a case for Philadelphia alone will not be successful in state government. Perhaps in the 10 year perspective, it is regional, but to get there, we have to achieve some success at the city level. This might also serve as the model of which children to target first—develop a strategic roll-out plan starting with public schools and moving to reach other students.

II. Role of the Programs Subcommittee

1. Continue discussion of **defining quality programming** in and out of school time, arriving on indicators of quality that are accepted and in practice.
2. Discuss **existing frameworks** of criteria used in other cities.
3. **Develop criteria for participation** by arts providers. While we all want to participate, there will likely be providers that will not have the capacity or will not meet certain criteria. (i.e.

Criteria for inclusion set forth by Big Thought). For organizations that don't meet criteria, there should be a clear path for improvement.

III. Discussion

A. Who is Missing from the Table?

The school district, an important constituent to involve, has representation in the Policy Subcommittee, but who is missing from this initiative? Are there specific individuals and types of people we should reach out to? The idea is not to make this large subcommittee even larger, but to strategically access those who can carry the voice.

- Key person in any school is the **principal**, otherwise there are scheduling issues and other problems. Principals are pivotal to *quality* programming.
- **Vice principals** may be easier to reach, and often know more of what is going on inside the classroom
- **District administrators** are also key targets
- **Parents**, especially of children who are disabled or home-schooled
- **Professional development organizations / networks**

B. Defining “Quality” and “Arts Provider”:

Standards (state, school district) must be compliant with national standards, and are pivotal to in school / after school time. Aligning our programs with those standards will help us to get buy-in from school, funding, etc., and will help ensure quality programming. These standards shouldn't include just arts standards, but curricular standards as well. The Policy Subcommittee is going to do a synthesis of standards to determine where the policy pressure points lie and who the stakeholders are. This information will inform upcoming Programs tasks.

Outside arts providers, arts professionals and teaching artists are individuals experienced in the arts who provide arts as an integral part of mission and part of programming in / out of school curriculum.

It is mandated in Pennsylvania that certified arts teachers are in middle and high schools. In elementary school it is mandated that arts are core, but the arts expected to be taught by classroom teachers, who are often ill-prepared to teach in these areas, especially digital arts. There are approximately three theater teachers in Philadelphia, with similar numbers for music and dance. “Arts professional in every school” is defined so nebulously that one teacher from any discipline covers it, sometimes if they are simply “language arts” teachers. There is discussion for an art OR music teacher in every school, but presently about 75% of elementary and high schools have access to one discipline-based arts teacher. Further, arts teachers in schools are really considered “prep teachers”, with almost no integration with classroom teacher.

In order for this effort within school time to be successful and meaningful, arts teachers need to be fully integrated and have the same status as classroom teachers. Discipline-based teachers have to have same significance as classroom teachers, and all arts disciplines have to be represented. There has to be a true relationship and collaboration between the school and the arts providers, with a commitment to be there. This type of relationship-building will take 3-5 years.

Cross-curricular programs are particularly successful because they can be developed so that they are appropriate for the age / grade, and they link to other core subjects. A continuum that includes an integrated component, but also a discipline-based element, and some reciprocity between other curricular areas across the classroom. We have to present our initiative to the principal or teacher by matching art with specific standards and ways that the arts support existing educational goals. This play will meet goals, x, y, and z, and that is why it is of value.

There is currently a provision in Pennsylvania that allows artists to come into classrooms to work within a school system for up to 300 hours during the year as arts educator without certification. The rule is a means to bypass certification process, and it lacks a standard of measurement for quality. It is necessary that the principal backs it because the artist has to be paid.

C. Messaging:

The way in which we go into schools and support arts teachers that are already there is critical. Arts teachers become fearful when arts organizations are utilized to put arts in schools, they fear principals are going to meet arts requirements that way, without using the budget to pay an arts teacher salary. We're asking teachers to do so much already, if we add to their ever growing list, we aren't going to get their buy-in. We have to find ways to help teachers see that this initiative will be beneficial to them.

There is a constant need for art to have to prove itself and its value. We need to **reposition the arts**, because the value is there, we just have to express it accurately. We must avoid common clichés like “arts for arts sake”, because it undermines the true value and benefits of the arts.

D. Thresholds of Readiness:

There should be an investment as arts providers in **improving learning environment at schools**. Children have to be set up properly so that teaching artists can be effective. For example, Assembly—it teaches children to sit and be quiet for long periods of time, and then get up and present something. When the teaching artist arrives, children can be quiet, and then get up and present. Square dancing, duck duck goose, these activities teach things that can cross over. That is the kind of change principals and school districts pay attention to. Our reality is that environment won't change unless we are proactive.

E. Creating a Schematic

We need to structure what we do so that there is sequential programming and communication, but we can't create a new plan for each school. Creating a schematic that can be tailored to the needs of individual principals, teachers, students, and schools is an area for exploration. We don't necessarily have to develop new programs; we just have to find a way to connect.

Judy Hellman of the Mural Arts Program created a 5-category blueprint in NYC —

1. **Making art** to construct meaning of the world, personal vision, communication;
2. **Literacy and the arts** develop vocabulary for discussing art;
3. **Making connections** in art form or experience to history, to societies, to cultures, to world at large to other artistic disciplines;
4. **Working with communities and cultural resources** connecting with local, national, international institutions, online resources, local artists;

5. **Exploring careers and lifelong learning** in the arts to think about goals and pursuing arts in institution of higher learning and overall appreciation of the arts that carries on. This might be a template for us to look at.

Based on the discussion, other areas that could be included in the development of a schematic or a template that defines elements of quality include:

- **Logistical requirements:** appropriate space, resources allocated for materials, sufficient time for instruction, shared planning time with generalist/classroom teachers and teaching artists, artists in residence
- **Adherence/fulfillment of standards** both in the arts and other curricular areas
- **Partnership approach:** engagement requires long-term commitment and buy-in from the school leadership – preferably the principal and/ or the assistant principal. In addition to buy-in, the school and arts partners/teaching artists should agree to and commit to the “rules of engagement”...meaning identifying the needs of the school and the arts provider up front, and having both parties agree on how best to meet these needs. For the arts provider this may mean establishing some basic requirements from the school (space, time, assembly practice, etc.) and for the school, this may mean having the arts provider support the academic goals of the school.
- **Engaging the student in the full creative process:** curricula should insure that students participate as observers of arts, as well as makers of arts to fully benefit from the creative process

IV. Homework

In preparation for designing an RFP, please draft a short document, 1 to 1 ½ pages max, in which you address the following:

- * 1-2 sentence statement of work that you do, and whether it is in school or out of school or both
- * Successes (bulleted)
- * Challenges encountered (bulleted)
- * How you've addressed / overcome challenges (bulleted)
- * If you can, share feedback you have received from schools.

Second, if you are aware of any frameworks or templates that you think would add value to this conversation, please send them to Meg to circulate to the group. **Please send everything to Meg Long meg@omgcenter.org by Tuesday April 29th**. She will compile the information and circulate it approximately one week prior to the next meeting with an agenda.

Next meeting is Tuesday May 20th. This information will be circulated and posted, please come prepared. **Next session will focus on developing framework focuses on lessons learned and core elements we can agree to.** Meg will look into holding the June meeting later in day to accommodate school employees.

V. Steering Committee

The Advisory Committee was an ad hoc committee established to plan March meeting, and now they are solidifying their role as leaders and decision-makers. Two representatives from each subcommittee will serve on Steering Committee, which is taking the place of the Advisory Committee. The Steering Committee currently has representation from funders and decision-

makers, and as initiative continues, we may add business community and other representatives. But for now Steering Committee is small so that information flows. Structure is not necessarily permanent, and as needs evolve, so will the Steering Committee and the process. Steering Committee will become the face of the initiative, and will give a public presence when we need to fundraise.

The Programs Subcommittee votes for Ray Cohen of the Philadelphia Arts Education Partnership to co-chair the Steering Committee.