

Arts for Youth Framework

Contextual Analysis

- Nationally the No Child Left Behind act and other educational policy changes have continued to narrow curricula in schools, effectively squeezing out non-tested subject areas, including the arts out of daily instruction. NCLB is up for reauthorization and many education advocates have begun to organize to ensure that the revised act provides opportunities for a richer, more diverse educational experience that includes the arts.
- Across the country, many cities are taking on a systems change approach to arts education. Philadelphia can learn from cities that have been successful in these efforts, such as Dallas, Los Angeles, Alameda County, and New York City.
- Access to arts and cultural experiences and education is a matter of equity. According to the Philadelphia School District, as of February 2008, 28% of elementary schools offer no music or art, and 19% of high schools offer no music or art; the majority of these schools are in north Philadelphia.
- Mayor Michael Nutter and his administration has committed to reinstating a Philadelphia Office of Arts and Culture. The mayor’s administration has also begun to reform the after-school field in Philadelphia and is deeply engaged in education reform efforts.
- The School District of Philadelphia was taken over by the state in 2001 and since then has been led by a School Reform Commission who have ushered in an ambitious set of reforms, including a renewed focus on the role of the arts.
- More recently, the School District of Philadelphia has seen significant changes in leadership, infrastructure, and strategy.
- The Greater Philadelphia region has rich community-based arts programming and great arts and cultural wealth. There are numerous arts education programs offered in Philadelphia and neighboring county schools, although there is on-going concern for sustainability and scalability of this programming.
- The School District of Philadelphia continues to suffer from a major budget crisis, district funding for the arts is difficult to appropriate.
- Currently there is limited connection and coordination between in-school and out-of-school time arts instruction.
- While it is important from a policy perspective to take a regional approach to this systems change work, it is frequently difficult to translate efforts that begin in Philadelphia in the neighboring counties.

Assumptions

- About Arts and Learning and Youth Development**
- Arts, culture, and creativity are essential for the education and well-being of our youth, families, neighborhoods, and city.
 - An education in and through the arts will increase students’ motivation and educational attainment.
 - A broad range of arts-related experiences is essential for children and youth: this includes arts exposure, aesthetic awareness, integrated arts education, discipline-based instruction, and art making.
- About Arts for Youth Strategy**
- A community-wide collaborative approach is the best strategy for effecting system level change.
 - There is a need to develop multi-level, diverse and representative partnership as vehicles towards local systemic change.
 - Communications, public-will building, and advocacy efforts are integral parts of the arts education systems change agenda.
 - There is sufficient power and motivation within the Philadelphia community to drive systemic change in this arena.
 - The systems change strategy is not about creating new programs, but rather coordinating and growing existing assets to bring arts education experiences in and out of school time to scale – reaching all children and youth in the region.
 - We will be able to identify the appropriate partnership or coalition management team to lead and administer this initiative.
 - Community-based organizations, arts and culture organizations, teachers, and after school providers have a baseline level of capacity and an appetite to provide enhanced arts education programming to children and youth.
 - Given the tools, data, and access they need to be effective, families and educators across the city will mobilize in support of equitable arts education.
- About Sustainability**
- Enough public and private support exists to generate sufficient revenue streams in support of this initiative.
 - There is a need to demonstrate and communicate the results of effective arts education programs to casemake and ensure long term sustainability.
 - Building public will and support for the value of arts education as excellent education will help ensure sustainability of this effort.

Strategic Focus
Arts for Youth is a community-wide effort to increase access to and coordination of high quality and sustainable arts education opportunities for all children and youth in the Greater Philadelphia area.

Goals

- Develop a leadership entity that can manage a city-wide partnership to implement the Arts for Youth blueprint.
- Build strong partnerships between diverse stakeholders as the driving force behind arts education systemic change.
- Empower and organize communities and key stakeholders to advocate for district, city, regional, and state level policies to support the systems change work.
- Support, coordinate, and bring to scale arts education programming during in- and out-of-school time for all children and youth.

Arts for Youth Framework: Leadership and Organizational Capacity

Key Activities

- Develop an appropriate management team, staffing structure, business plan and financial management system for the leadership entity.
- Identify diverse funding sources and develop multiple revenue streams to sustain the Arts for Youth effort.
- Develop an Arts for Youth identity and communications strategy to educate the public about the effort.
- Strengthen leadership and partnership facilitation skills, as well as advocacy and constituent building capacities.
- Build capacity to collect and interpret data to inform planning, programming, and partnership development.
- Develop a strong relationships with key implementation partners including school districts, arts providers, public officials and others.
- Develop growth plan to scale efforts from the City of Philadelphia to the five county region.



Intermediate Outcomes (Years 2-3)

- The Arts for Youth leadership entity is acknowledged by the community as the authority on arts education in Philadelphia. The leadership entity is beginning to establish such a reputation in several of the adjacent counties.
- Arts for Youth has a clearly articulated, well developed, diversified, and realistic sustainability plan.
- The Arts for Youth leadership entity has expanded its capacity to manage the effort, specifically with regard to management, collaboration, advocacy, and content expertise.
- Financial, data management, and communications systems are in place.



Long-term Outcomes (Years 5-10 plus)

- A leadership entity coordinates arts education efforts across the region. The organization is recognized nationally as a successful model.
- The leadership entity continues to strive in light of leadership and staffing changes.
- The leadership entity is supported by adequate funding streams from multiple sources. Funding is both diversified, consistent, and long term.
- Evaluation systems are in place and lessons learned are distributed to the field on a regular basis.

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Arts for Youth Framework: Local Partnerships

Key Activities

- Define roles and responsibilities for community partners in support of Arts for Youth programming, communications, and advocacy efforts.
- Ensure that the Arts for Youth partnership has appropriate membership and representation, including diverse arts and cultural institutions, school districts, policy makers, the business community, parents and students.
- Clearly define advisory, funding, and implementation roles for partners and hold them accountable to fulfill these roles.
- Build connections with higher education institutions and arts and culture organizations that train teachers and teaching artists as a strategy to develop a highly qualified teacher pipeline.
- Develop relationships with school districts and city government in an effort to change school-level culture to support the arts as central to a quality education.
- Establish community input/stakeholder feedback mechanisms.
- Build partner capacity to take on systems level work.
- Develop partnerships with stakeholders outside of Philadelphia in the five surrounding counties.



Intermediate Outcomes (Years 2-3)

- Community involvement and stakeholder feedback is institutionalized.
- Arts for Youth partners and stakeholders see themselves as arts education change leaders and system builders.
- The Arts for Youth partnership includes key stakeholders from the Greater Philadelphia area.
- Operating procedures, partnership goals, and partner roles are formalized including through MOUs and other formal documents.
- Formal and informal communications methods for the partnership are clearly established and implemented. Communications mechanisms exist to link in school, out of school, and community stakeholders.



Long-term Outcomes (Years 5-10 plus)

- The Arts for Youth partnership is robust, and resilient to economic and political changes.
- Business leaders, arts organizations, public schools, parents, students, and politicians share the same vision of high quality, arts and arts education experiences in and out of school time for children and youth.
- Partners from all five counties make significant contributions to the Arts for Youth effort.

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Arts for Youth Framework: Communications and Advocacy

Key Activities

Communications

- Develop and implement a strategic communications campaign at the grassroots and decision-maker levels, with a strong focus on public will-building
- Increase partner organizations' capacity around strategic communications. Provide opportunities for partners and stakeholders to develop their policy entrepreneur skills.
- Select target audiences and key communications vehicles. Develop a communications implementation plan, conduct message testing, and refine the Arts for Youth brand so that it resonates with the community.
- Engage the media as a vehicle for messaging focused on the value of arts education.

Advocacy

- Organize and empower students, parents, educators, and other community members to advocate on the local, state, and national level on behalf of arts education.
- Identify and develop action plans for key policy opportunities.
- Articulate a short-, mid-, and long-term policy change agenda and corresponding advocacy strategy (for example, pass arts education policy in Philadelphia and reinstate the Office of Arts and Culture).
- Develop strong relationships with local and state level policymakers in support of Arts for Youth.

Intermediate Outcomes (Years 2-3)

- There is a significant shift in the dialogue of arts education so that, as a city, we have a shared understanding of why arts are essential for the development and education of our youth.
- Communications plan has been developed and is being implemented and evidence of its success can be seen by the expansion and diversification of people engaged in the Arts for Youth initiative.
- A community of advocates has been created that can easily and quickly mobilize on behalf of arts education issues.
- The Arts for Youth effort continues to advocate for and ensures that Philadelphia's arts education needs are being met while beginning to expand communications efforts in surrounding communities.
- Arts for Youth has had several significant policy wins.
- Local policymakers are familiar with Arts for Youth leadership and its overall mission.

Long-term Outcomes (Years 5-10 plus)

- Arts education is valued by lawmakers as evidenced by passage of policies that support expansion of arts in schools and communities.
- Community members view arts as an integral discipline to student academic excellence – community voice is empowered to advocate on behalf of the arts.
- The Greater Philadelphia region is recognized nationally as an arts-rich city that has a workforce which is well-equipped with 21st century skills.
- Arts for Youth has achieved many significant policy wins in multiple school districts and multiple counties, and is focusing advocacy efforts at the state level.
- An Arts for Youth constituency is well developed and can be mobilized to advocate for policy change as necessary



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Arts for Youth Framework: Programming

Key Activities

- Work with school districts, arts providers and out-of-school time providers to ensure that children and youth have access to a baseline amount of high quality arts education experiences and in-depth arts learning opportunities.
- Establish thresholds of high quality arts education programs, provide technical assistance and support to providers and organizations to increase their capacity to provide high quality, equitable programming (For example, establish a common framework to assess quality arts programming across a variety of settings and circulate and RFP to vet organizations that have the appropriate capacity and program quality to participate in this effort). Build provider capacity to scale-up arts programming in a long-term sustainable way.
- Bring existing community-based and school-based arts programs to scale.
- Use data to assist the school district and individual schools to identify arts education needs and work with partners to support those needs both during the school day and during out of school time.
- Develop integrated arts curriculum in collaboration with both in and out of school arts providers and school districts that is aligned with state arts standards.
- Build an infrastructure to connect arts organizations, out-of-school time providers, and other arts education service providers with school level staff including principals and teachers.
- Create and provide high quality, sequential, and shared arts education professional development opportunities for teachers, arts providers, teaching artists, and youth development staff working in- and out-of-school time.
- Build systems for collecting and disseminating lessons learned for the field and systems to showcase student work through performances, exhibitions, etc.
- Facilitate learning communities and resource sharing, especially with regard to establishing a framework to assess quality

Intermediate Outcomes (Years 2-3)

- An increasing number of schools are linking in-school programming with after school arts opportunities. Quality of arts education experiences in targeted schools is increasing.
- Increasing number of students are benefiting from collaboration between schools and arts and cultural providers, teaching artists, and out-of-school time providers.
- The ratio of “high arts need schools” to “lower arts need schools” is decreasing.
- There is a growing number of external, community-based arts providers that provide high quality, sustainable arts education programming to schools.
- Teachers, teaching artists, and out-of-school time providers are receiving sustained, quality professional development in the arts and arts integration.
- Arts for Youth programs are beginning to be implemented at schools in counties outside of Philadelphia.

Long-term Outcomes (Years 5-10 plus)

- Quality arts programming is being provided by schools, community-based organizations, and after school providers. There are direct and explicit linkages between the arts experiences provided in school, out of school, and in the community.
- Arts instruction is adequately funded, values artists and their craft, and offers opportunities for their professional development.
- All children and youth in the Greater Philadelphia region have access to an established baseline of arts experiences and opportunities in all disciplines and benefit from a curriculum that integrates the arts with other core subjects.
- Teaching artists, certified arts teachers, and classroom teachers have shared planning time and high quality, sequential professional development that is supported in school and organizational budgets.

