

Arts for Children & Youth in Philadelphia
Policy Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, May 15th

Key Statements & Conclusions

1. **Develop infrastructure for advocacy and communication**
2. Focus on **local issues**—
 - High school reform
 - Arts education benchmarks and assessment
 - SRC policy
3. **Include charter schools** in first 24 months and **give preference to schools with a Pre-K** component
4. Require **schools provide data and demonstrate need** to be eligible for participation

Meeting Minutes

Vision — Steering Committee approved a vision and 10-year projection that is now up for discussion among subcommittees. Please note the extension to arts AND culture.

Discussion and Recommendations

- Third paragraph needs rewording: “...unique community wide effort to streamline efforts...”
- *Stimulate* better support, not just streamline.
- At three paragraphs, the vision too long. **Elevator speech and tagline needed.**

10-Year Projection —Emphasized role in the city’s economic prosperity agenda.

Discussion and Recommendations

First bullet and sub bullets—“*The district and schools allocate adequate budget line items...*” Our initiative is broader than “the district”. Speaks to the struggle between going too broad and being overwhelmed, and going narrowly and excluding many of the people we want to include. Vision should start with Philadelphia, but **explicitly state that it will be encompassing in the future.**

As repeated attendees to Philadelphia arts institutions and venues, **people living in suburbia represent a powerful segment** with a voice in Harrisburg, and **we must have their support.** Every cultural institution should have one page in their programs about this initiative to promote awareness and encourage suburban participation.

Other counties might do their own similar / related efforts. We create a model, which creates envy and demand, and that leads to funding. Instead of us saying this is something everybody should have, it will be something people want.

Areas of Focus for Years 1 & 2—

- *Philadelphia* – Philadelphia vs. Region discussion addressed above
- *Public schools* – The Steering Committee chose to focus only on public schools for the first 24 months

Discussion and Recommendations

Independent public schools are not part of SRC, but charter schools are and they represent a huge portion of Philadelphia schools. Chair of appropriations committee of the House is a supporter

of charter schools, and we don't want to upset that by specifically excluding charter schools. Saying "public schools" is broad enough to be inclusive.

We don't have data for arts education in charter schools because they don't have to report it, which is an opportunity for us. **We can require data for participation in this initiative.**

Policy target: Schools must demonstrate need to be included in the initiative. Can also go to **Research Subcommittee for their gap analysis.**

- *Elementary grades K-8* – The Steering Committee decided to focus on K-8 because of the perceived greater need in that area.

Discussion and Recommendations

Elementary school, middle school and high school are structured differently, and the structure we build in elementary will not translate to high school. Look at it K-12 perspective, but build a different plan for each segment because the approach and logistics will vary. Reaching young people before they decide to disengage from school (elementary level), and reaching young people who have already decided that they are disengaged (high school level). K-5 is perhaps the area where we can logistically get the most accomplished the fastest, and we can create momentum to move forward.

Attention is increasingly being turned to high schools; it would be foolish for us not to capitalize on that. We can offer programmatic support at elementary level, but we can leverage political support for programming at high school level—sports. Principals make faculty allotments decisions. Some high schools cannot afford full curriculum because of number of students in the building, and that is where the greatest need lies.

Including the Pre-K cohort was discussed in Steering Committee, and one idea was to implement in phases. Perhaps we can create three subgroups of the Programs subcommittee: Pre-K, K-8, and High School.

It will be recommended to the Steering Committee and Programs subcommittee to include K-12 over next 24 months, and to explore opportunities at the high school level. A preference will be given to elementary schools with a Pre-K component.

- *A mix of "high arts need schools" and "lower arts need schools"* – The Steering Committee discussed breadth vs. depth implementation of the initiative, and decided on a mixed approach.

Discussion and Recommendations

Administrative professional development around arts education should be added to 24 month focus.

How we define "need" is an issue. Only looking for the presence of an arts education provider may give skewed view because:

- Often the kids *decide* if they want to participate. (Not mandatory.)
- Parents are unaware of the opportunity and don't encourage participation.
- Arts instruction may not be adequate. Issue of *quality* arts instruction.

If we only look to see if the school has an arts teacher, the school won't be determined "needy".

Policy target: Not just that the teacher is in the building, but that the education delivered is quality. Walk-thru protocol that can be used to make our decision of which schools to focus on. (Can we take this from another city?)

- Site visits
 - How arts educator acts and engages with students
 - Availability of arts educator and programs (access for all students?)
 - Number of students a single arts educator serves
 - Professional development opportunities for arts educator
 - Amount of time children spend with arts educator
 - Adequate funding for supplies
- *Focus on supporting schools &*
 - *FTE policy and breadth strategy* – These final two bullets begin to address arts education from a systemic perspective. Breadth and Depth.

Discussion and Recommendations

We must be more explicit in Out of School Time as an opportunity. Conversation was truncated in Steering Committee because of time, but it is an issue that needs to be addressed. We must **specifically define what we mean by arts education in school and OST**, and provide **framework for OST programming** even if we don't do anything programmatically in the first 24 months.

What do we need to say / demonstrate / show **within two years**? Suggestions:

- Core curriculum taught in experiential manner.
- Professional development of staff.
- Best in practice activities.
- Best in practice at the district.

Arts education must be **sequential, discipline based, and integrated**. We have to create more detail of what that means and what is necessary to implement it in schools, and what that might look like OST, and the necessary policies to get us there. **Need feedback and report from Programs Subcommittee on these issues.**

Changing the cultural attitude is a huge job—we need parents, teachers, principals involved in a discussion. **Develop an infrastructure for advocacy and communication.** We need context for why it matters before we can argue for sequential arts education. **Within two years we need momentum building and shared understanding.**

Policy Grid Discussion —

National Policy:

AFTA's message is don't attempt to go national; **focus on local issues.**

National funding policies trickle down to arts in education programs that Philadelphia schools receive. Bush's **proposed budget eliminates arts education entirely**, but there is pushback.

NCLB reauthorization will likely not be front burner issue until next year. Some clashes between NCLB requirements and state requirements.

State Policy:

Arts benchmarks have been developed and approved for grades K, 3, 5, 8, and 12, and are currently being developed for grades 1 and 2. **But there is no formal assessment.**

State code says children must be taught by a certified teacher at age 11 (6th grade). Arts specialist is not certified.

City Policy:

High schools are in a reform planning process and there is **no conversation about arts education.**

Arts education implementation is to be in compliance with policy stated in second box on page 6. It is not necessarily in policy for the school district, but it is in the handbook; it is the district's choice on how to carry it through even though they are given guidelines. **Assessment, marking guidelines explaining to teachers what should be in markings for music dance, visual arts. Dennis will email to OMG to distribute.** The challenge is to get a systemic understanding of where we stand.

These 3 issues need to be addressed to advance arts education.

1. Human capital issue around practitioners including OST practitioners.
2. Having appropriate curricula replicable and vehicle to share practices that are evidence based.
3. Partnership capacity—nonprofits that can be part of delivery system must have the capacity play their role.

Are there city policies / programs in schools that we might take advantage of, private money in schools that might create opportunity? Should an Arts & Culture Officer be appointed, make sure our vision is aligned with his or her agenda.

Tasks and Homework:

1. OMG will **draft a statement** for people to send out (Gretchen and Dennis will provide people). Call **215 400 4040** to **register to testify for SRC policy.** **Gretchen will send PCCY's testimony as a template letter** to give ideas on what to write. Three people at SRC, in addition to Chairwoman Glenn may be leaving in the coming months, so this issue needs to be at the forefront of the rest of the SRC's mind.
2. Fill out policy grid.
3. Identify what is happening outside of here that resonates with arts in education agenda. **How do we link our agendas to other agendas?**
4. **Contact legislators** regarding the education budget. Advocate now through June 30th. **OMG will disseminate PA School Funding Campaign flyer.**

REMINDERS

Next meeting moved to June 26th because of the AFTA Conference
June 26, 9-11 am, William Penn Foundation Board Room.

Magda Martinez will co-chair the Policy Subcommittee.