



SURPRISING SOLUTIONS: ARTS EDUCATION

MISSISSIPPI ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION

Introduction: At the **Arts Front and Center Forum**, breakout groups considered recommendations contained in the MAAE's new publication, *Mapping the Future of Arts Education*. MAAE board members facilitated an idea exchange during the sessions to generate additional recommendations that could be implemented at the local or state level. The following notes represent a summary of discussion notes recorded within each breakout group.

The ideas and recommendations presented here reflect the thinking of individuals who attended the Arts Front and Center Forum. They are published here in hopes that citizens across the state of Mississippi will take appropriate and timely action to support arts education in their local community.

NOTES from the Arts Front and Center Forum breakout groups March 23, 2007

Policy Makers:

- Effective support of the arts by policy makers can be generated if we have opportunities to "educate" them in a formal setting, such as a special presentation to the legislators and governor as a WHOLE group.
- Ask Hank Bounds to allow us to present to district school superintendents at one of the meetings he has with them in Jackson.
- Ask to be keynote speakers and/or conduct workshops at conferences for school administrators. Audiences with these groups would require a very powerful presentation by a very powerful speaker, but it could help us take several giant steps forward.
- Develop a creative workforce.
- Inform policymakers about the benefits of arts education (legislators, state superintendent, district superintendents, principals); get a special audience with them.
- Reduce the dropout rate.
- Equalize the gap between high & low economic groups through the arts
- Look at starting arts education in the pre-kindergarten program

Higher Education:

- Professional development training for teachers in integrated/valued/academic areas.
- Accreditation standards – include creativity and problem solving in certification standards.
- Higher education teacher education faculty have minimal background in the arts and may be insecure.
- College programs are being cut to 124 hours, calling for a courses that integrate arts learning into the teacher education program.
- MSU will be doing an arts integration institute (for college undergraduate and graduate credit) this summer, June 11-15. Note: this course has been rescheduled for fall 2007.
- Need a philosophical shift in how we look at learning, placing more value on the arts.
- Students need times to apply and put into practice what they learn in class.
- Become an advocate of the arts and the infusion of the arts in undergraduate and graduate methods classes.
- Create collaborations for assignments to infuse arts in methods classes.
- Collaborating not advocating!
- Do a survey: What is the picture now? Where are the values? K-12 schools, higher ed., museums, arts councils, churches; value of the arts in daily lives; interdisciplinary instruction.
- Inventory our current programs, partnerships, collaborations.

Educators 7-12:

- MAAE should survey students, parents; arts courses that could be available. Where is the greatest interest? Include an MI survey.
- Build collaboration in communities for arts education.
- Optimize student learning through rigorous arts instruction.
- Give scholarships
- Tag likely dropouts; use the arts to encourage.
- Have recognition banquets
- GEAR UP – film making
- Address special education students' needs through the arts
- Include arts in High School Re-design
- Art on demand
- MAAE connected to community arts
- Parent support groups for the arts in schools
- Survey students
- Address program inconsistencies.

Educators K-6:

- Higher education needs to teach arts integration in teacher education courses
- Train school board members, superintendents, teachers through MDE (make training equal across the state for all)
- Actively seek grants, using arts to narrow achievement gaps, develop Professional Learning Communities; training for teachers must be on-going
- Suggest to all arts organizations that certified “arts” specialists attend education conferences with district funding

- Schedule common planning time: divide grade level into teams, each team designs lesson plans for one subject area, grade level puts one complete plan together & shares with “correct people”
- Teachers at each grade level meet with arts teachers weekly
- Use computer to access common lesson plans
- Present quality staff development for classroom teachers, including certified arts specialists... EMPOWER teachers
- For funding: use arts program as collateral (self-sustaining)
- Teachers share best practices
- Gain support from the superintendent and school board

Artists:

- Add more artists to the artist roster
- Hold events for children, including disabled students
- More artist residencies (artists in the school)
- More professional development with regular education teachers to use arts while teaching their basic subjects (arts integration)
- NEED a leader to assist in expressing the need for arts education to other leaders throughout the state
- Bring artists together to look at how we can increase the participation of the arts in the schools and the community
- Place a link on the MDE website for educators to be able to find artists that are available to work in the schools
- Place more visual art in all classrooms statewide
- Be sure that the arts are represented in all Career Days
- TELL parents about the importance of arts education

Citizens:

- Elementary schools MUST have a music and art teacher in each school
- Cross training for teachers, all arts disciplines
- Include more field trips, on-site experiences, or museums in school planning
- Get policy changed for attendance, miss class, not absent if you go to schools
- Students who attend a museum will then appreciate art, value it; build it or create it, they will come
- We should advocate for the arts, tell the world how, be positive, market ourselves (change perceptions)
- Advocate for all arts groups (music, dance, theater, visual art)
- Bring museums to the schools
- Find our community voice
- Set up telling trees: tell your neighbor, tell your city, tell your state, tell your country