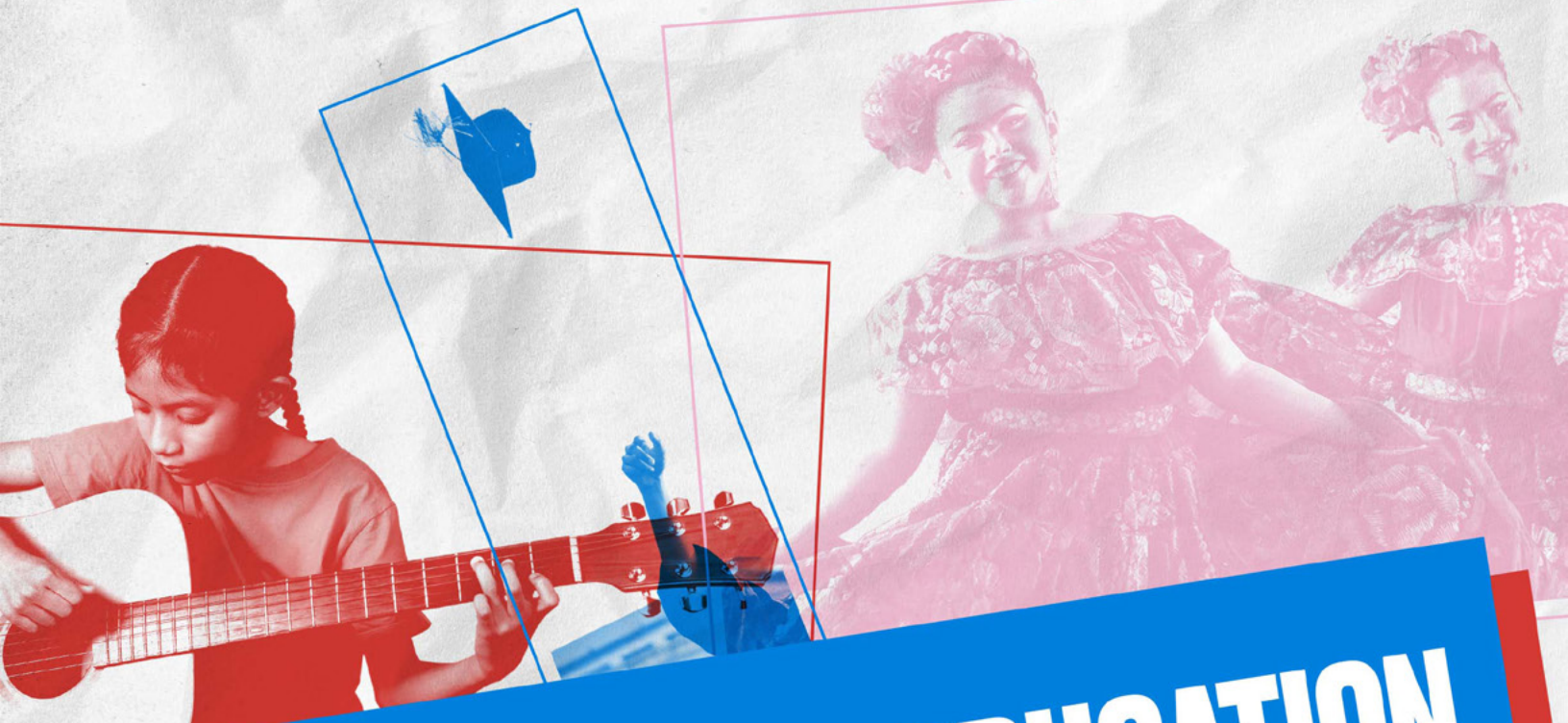

STRATEGIC ARTS EDUCATION PLANNING GUIDE:

EXPANDING ACCESS TO THE ARTS IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY – 4TH EDITION

CREATE CA

LA COUNTY artsed COLLECTIVE

Los Angeles County Arts & Culture

STRATEGIC ARTS EDUCATION PLANNING GUIDE:

EXPANDING ACCESS TO THE ARTS IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY – 4TH EDITION

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First Edition (online), 2007
Second Edition (online and PDF), 2009
Third Edition (online and PDF), 2016
Fourth Edition (online and PDF), 2022

Published by:

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The Los Angeles County Arts Education Collective is the regional initiative dedicated to making the arts a core part of every child's growth and development. The Arts Ed Collective is coordinated by the LA County Department of Arts and Culture.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This guide evolved from the *Community Arts Education Project*, a planning process and publication jointly developed by the California State PTA and the California Alliance for Arts Education in 2001. Previous editions were titled The Insider's Guide to Arts Education Planning. Authors include:

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- 2nd Edition: Elizabeth Lindsley, Ed.D. and Dana Powell Russell, Ed.D. 2009
- 3rd Edition: Kimberleigh Aarn and Peggy Burt 2016
- 4th Edition: Kimberleigh Aarn and Peggy Burt 2022

SPECIAL THANKS

We extend our gratitude to the many authors, contributors, and advisors who have supported the development of this guide over time, including Joe Landon, Sibyl O'Malley, Jim Thomas and Denise Grande, as well as work provided by earlier authors, Elizabeth Lindsley, Ed.D, Dana Powell Russell, Ed.D, and Patty Larrick. This new edition is the result of the collaborative vision provided by Tom DeCaigny and Adelaide Kuehn of Create CA and Denise Grande and Megan Kirkpatrick of the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, which coordinates the LA County Arts Education Collective, the regional initiative dedicated to making the arts a core part of every child's growth and development. Thanks also to Pat Wayne, formerly of Create CA, who has always believed in the power of strategic planning to create change. Thanks to Sarah Anderberg of the CCSESA (California County Superintendents Educational Services Association) Arts Initiative for her ongoing support of county-level strategic planning, implementation support and training over the years. Finally, a sincere thanks to the Funder's Council of the LA County Arts Ed Collective who have ensured equitable access to strategic planning for ALL LA County School Districts.

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Support for the 4th Edition provided by:

Create CA and the Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this new version, ***Strategic Arts Education Planning Guide: Expanding Access to the Arts in Schools and Community – 4th Edition***, formerly ***The Insider's Guide to Arts Education Planning*** is to provide a technical step-by-step approach to strategic planning for arts and arts education based on the Technology of Participation methods (ToPs Methods) developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ica-usa.org). This guide assumes prior knowledge in the arts as well as strategic planning, and in particular training in the ToPs methods, including Group Facilitation Methods and Participatory Strategic Planning.

In the first two editions, the focus was on the delivery of arts education within the school day. The 3rd edition expanded access to the arts through thoughtful and intentional extended learning arts experiences providing greater access to the arts, whether delivered before, during or after school. In the 4th edition, we extend and include arts education beyond the schools and into the community with attention paid to culture, wellbeing and equity for young people who have historically been excluded from arts experiences.

Target Audience:

The suggested audience for this 4th edition are professional coaches, strategic planners, arts educators, and community arts leaders who will lead groups through a strategic planning process. The guide contains scripts and suggested formats that experienced facilitators can use and adapt.

This hands-on, how-to planning process for schools, districts, counties, and communities will enable teams to assess, envision, and implement the arts within the context of developing skills and creativity, supporting arts education as:

- equitable, discrete arts curriculum as well as arts integrated with other curricular areas
- healing-centered arts engagement
- culturally relevant and responsive teaching and learning practices

- well-integrated Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
- innovative skill development for entering the creative economy
- inclusive practices grounded in global awareness

Values:

To lift up well-being, empowerment, empathy, diversity, equity and inclusion for all.

Background and Context:

Field-tested by experienced Arts Education Planning Coaches and County and District Arts Teams, this guide offers promising practices, innovative ideas, templates and strategies to navigate the challenging terrain of arts education planning. Create CA and the Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective are pleased to offer this 4th Edition of the guide as a tool and catalyst for strategic planning throughout California and beyond.

The guide grew out of the Community Arts Education Project (CAEP), a 2001 jointly sponsored initiative of the California Alliance for Arts Education and the California State PTA. The project fully engaged members from both the community and the district/county in building an arts education vision and plan for all students.

The original project was conceived as a hands-on technical assistance process that enabled districts/counties to assess current arts learning programs and funding allocations, identify gaps in delivery, and create strategic plans to ensure equitable access to the arts for all students.

Over the years, the Arts Education Planning Coaches have developed and refined this process, rooted in the ToPs methods, through practice in the field working in collaboration and with the support of the LA County Arts Ed Collective, the California Alliance for Arts Education (now Create CA) and the the CCSESA Arts Initiative

"Developed by the LA County Arts Education Collective and adopted by the LA County Board of Supervisors, the Arts for All Children, Youth, and Families: Los Angeles County's New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education, presents an expanded approach with strategies that reach beyond school to include arts instruction for all students, across all grade levels, in all public schools; expanded opportunities for arts education after school; year-round community-based arts learning; access to careers in the creative economy; arts-based programs and services provided in collaboration with multiple LA County departments that support children, youth, and families; and a prioritization of historically underserved populations. It is intended as both an aspirational policy statement and a roadmap for practitioners and leaders to advance youth development over the next decade."
Regional Blueprint for Arts Education | Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective

Strategic Planning Historical Timeline in California

2003-2011	Strategic planning began under the auspices of the California Alliance for Arts Education
2011-present	Strategic planning offered through the Arts Ed Collective, the California Alliance for Arts Education, The California Arts Project and the CCSESA Arts Initiative. Sample LA County District Arts Plans are available on the website: School Districts | Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective
2020	Los Angeles County New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education published.
2021	California Alliance for Arts Education merges with Create CA
2022	Create CA provides support for Strategic Planning on the website Create CA with a directory of coaches, sample plans and the updated Guide.

Transformative Systems Change

Through shifting cultural practices, educational systems are poised to provide students with access to a broader scope of creative and artistic experiences. By questioning the status quo, and embracing that arts education provides students with expansive critical thinking and a growth mindset, one begins to develop a greater understanding of the possibilities that live within the five arts disciplines and the elements of each discipline.

The practice of strategic planning leverages opportunities to provide all students with access to an arts education where they discover and gain the literacy of each art form, including dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts. Culturally responsive pedagogy lifts up students' heritage, lived experiences and backgrounds. Students develop vocabulary, technical skills and historical context along with the ability to respond and connect to and through the arts.

When we frame the conversation around arts education, the California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Standards) form the structural support.

Philosophical Foundations and Lifelong Goals of the California Arts Standards

"The standards are grounded in the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) vision of artistic literacy—the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts—which is further articulated in the philosophical foundations and lifelong goals in Table 1. Fluency in the language(s) of the arts is the ability to create, perform/produce/present, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms that are unique to the arts. An artistically literate person is able to transfer arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts (NCCAS 2014, 17).

For more information see the California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve. California Arts Standards – Content Standards (CA Dept of Education) The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the *California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Standards)* on January 9, 2019.

The purpose of system-wide planning in arts education is to:

- Improve access to arts education for all California students through a planning process that engages constituents and community members;
- Identify strengths, gaps, challenges and opportunities to create a well-articulated system of arts education from PK-12th grade and beyond;
- Identify, cultivate, and empower arts education leadership among the diverse spectrum of community members and sectors charged with implementing equitable arts education in schools, after-school and in communities;
- Assist parents in becoming advocates in their student's schools for sustainable arts learning;
- Build community based partnerships and collaborations with resources (people, facilities, and sustainable funding) available for arts teaching and learning.

Projected outcomes:

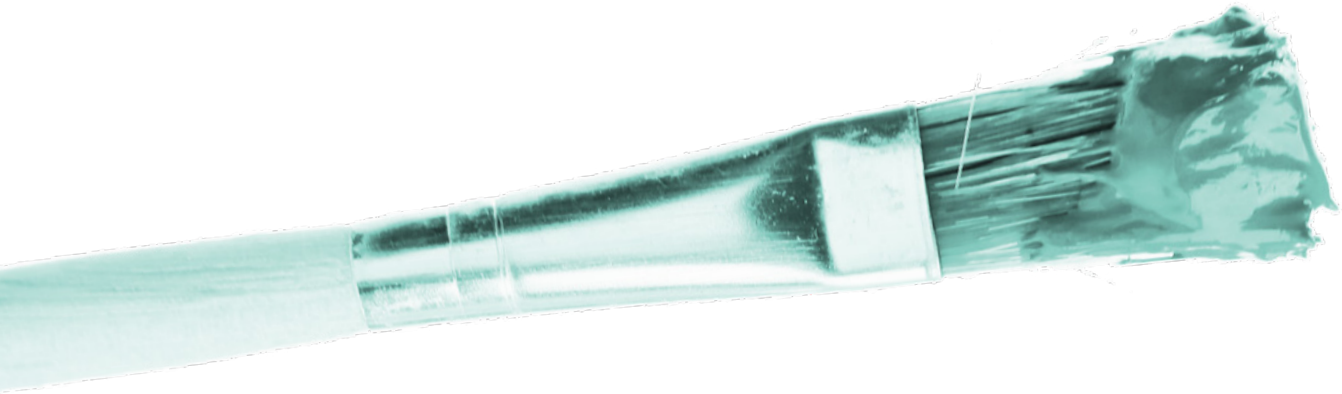
- **A long-range (5-year) Strategic Arts Plan:** The action plan, budget recommendations, and policy created from this process provide a long-range strategic plan for implementation of an equitable, inclusive, culturally sustaining, comprehensive, standards-based delivery of arts instruction.
- **Awareness and Advocacy:** The planning raises community awareness and develops new relationships between the district/county and community members.
- **Model for Promising Practices:** The planning and subsequent long-range implementation methods provide models for other school districts, counties and communities, both statewide and nationally.

Institute of Cultural Affairs Methods for Strategic Planning

The planning process that is described in the guide is adapted and based on facilitation methods from the Institute of Cultural Affairs, a global nonprofit ica-usa.org. The methods aspire to engage full participation from a broad variety of constituents.

The values of deep listening and respect permeate the planning process methods. The idea is that every member of the team has an important piece of the larger puzzle, and each individual offers a unique perspective that will contribute to the greater good and shared vision of increasing student access to arts education. All views are heard and considered without labeling any person as right or wrong.

The methods allow a group to find common ground and bridge differences. This approach empowers a group to take action, and participants leave knowing exactly what their roles are in actualizing the plan.



KEY CONCEPTS

Definitions of terms used throughout this guide.

Arts Education (sometimes shortened to *arts* or *VAPA-Visual and Performing Arts*) refers to the PK-12 Arts Standards and Arts Framework adopted by the California State Board of Education, including the disciplines of dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts.

Standards-based refers to arts education programs, curricula, instructional materials, instruction, and assessments that are not merely aligned with the state standards, but rather are directly and intentionally founded on, derived from, and fully reflective of the Artistic Processes presented within the *California Arts Standards for Public Schools - Prekindergarten through Grade 12 (2019)* and the *California Arts Education Framework for Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2020).*

Equity - Equity and Access (CA Dept of Education) - Ensuring equity in education is a necessary component in narrowing the achievement gap. Teachers and school leaders ensure equity by recognizing, respecting, and attending to the diverse strengths and challenges of the students they serve. High-quality schools are able to differentiate instruction, services, and resource distribution to respond effectively to the diverse needs of their students, with the aim of ensuring that all students are able to learn and have their needs met.

Diversity: The demographic mix of a specific collection of people, taking into account elements of human difference, but focusing particularly on race and ethnicity, LGBTQ+ populations, people with disabilities and women. LA County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative

Cultural Responsiveness requires individuals to be culturally competent. This competency involves having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. New York State Education Department. CCSESA Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Arts Teaching and Learning in Action

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a process that promotes overall well-being and helps youth and adults to better embrace their emotions, to feel and express those emotions effectively, and demonstrate empathy for self and others. *CASEL Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.*

Healing Centered Arts Engagement: As arts-based youth development work continues to evolve across partners in the Arts Ed Collective, the idea of "healing-centered" approaches have emerged as central to reimagining and creating an LA County where all youth—and especially youth who have been historically precluded and excluded—engage in arts all year, every year. To learn more about the emerging field of Healing Centered Engagement, especially as it relates to arts based youth development, download the Arts Ed Collective zine Healing-Centered Engagement—Reflections and Insights from the Field.

Common Core State Standards. "Educational standards describe what students should know and be able to do in each subject in each grade. In California, the State Board of Education decides on the standards for all students, from kindergarten through high

school. Since 2010, a number of states across the nation have adopted the same standards for English and Math. Having the same standards helps all students get a good education, even if they change schools or move to a different state. Teachers, parents, and education experts designed the standards to prepare students for success in college and the workplace." Advocates for Arts Education promote the integration of the arts into the Common Core. Information on the State of California Common Core Standards can be found at Common Core State Standards

CA State Standards for teaching and learning may be found at: Teaching & Learning (CA Dept of Education)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR ARTS EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA

From the 1970s, through the 1990s there was an erosion of arts instruction in the California public schools. The Ryan Act of 1970 narrowed the scope of elementary teacher preparation to the exclusion of the arts, and later in that decade Proposition 13 decreased the property taxes available to local schools. Districts were compelled to cut staff and programs, disproportionately impacting the arts. Entire generations of teachers did not have arts education as a vital component in their pre-service teacher training programs. An emphasis on standardized testing and the impact of the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2002, left little time in the school day for arts learning.

As a result of *No Child Left Behind*, there was an increased emphasis on standardized testing, and it was found that "what is tested is taught." Since the arts were not included in the battery of standardized tests, they were often overlooked or squeezed out of busy schedules. Some school districts offered a double period of math and language arts studies for students who fell behind, further eroding time for arts instruction within the school day for those who could benefit the most.

However, in recent years, there has been a growing resolve among educators and policymakers and community members to ensure access and equitable opportunities in the arts for all youth. In today's climate there are a number of factors that contribute to the growing understanding and awareness that – especially in California – we are training the workforce of the 21st century; a workforce that must be fueled by creativity and innovation. The influence of the Internet and social media, as well as a constant barrage of digital images are shaping the youth of today. There are students who compose original music, create their own films, design websites and dream of being entrepreneurs before they leave middle school.

Funding for the arts has had a dizzying array of revenue streams over the years. The patchwork of inconsistent application of funding has included use of Federal/Title funds, state funds, regional funds, grant funds and district funds. While there have been a few major efforts, there hasn't been wide-spread consistent, or predictable public funding support for arts education. Even though CA Education Code mandates arts education, implementation of the arts has been uneven.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Administrators, educators, artists and community members, can all contribute to dismantling systemic racism by deepening awareness of social justice practices and understanding and avoiding characteristics of white supremacy.

Many of these conversations can lead to adoption of sustaining, culturally relevant pedagogy, anti-racist principles and the determination to support authentic mental, emotional and physical healing for communities. We recognize that many districts and county offices of education have been working to develop their own language and policies around diversity, equity and inclusion. Here are some resources to consider when there's a need to deepen understanding as the strategic plan unfolds and evolves.

LA County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII)

Strengthening Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Arts and Culture Sector

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are often used in combination with each other because each means something distinctly different. *LA County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative Report*

The D5 Coalition, a national coalition working to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in philanthropy, has defined them as follows:

Diversity: The demographic mix of a specific collection of people, taking into account elements of human difference, but focusing particularly on race and ethnicity, LGBTQ populations, people with disabilities and women.

Equity: The promotion of justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the underlying or root causes of outcome disparities within our society. Inclusion: The degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision making processes within an organization or group.

Inclusion: The degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision making processes within an organization or group.

Strengthening Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Arts and Culture Sector for All Los Angeles County Residents

Historically Excluded or Precluded, Historically Underserved

Specific groups of people who over many years in the past, which may extend into the present, have been denied or prevented from accessing resources or opportunities by institutions, systems, and/or dominant power structures. This may include Black, Indigenous and other youth of color, current or former foster youth, as well as youth who are currently or formerly unhoused, impacted by the justice system, LGBTQ+, migrants, English language learners, living in poverty, in rural areas, and/or with disabilities.

Further reading: Responding to Marginalization of Students of Color in K-12 Education - Cognia - The Source

Racial Equity Statement from Create CA

The Create CA commitment is to work to address root causes of inequities, including elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that allow detrimental outcomes to persist.

Create CA recognizes that within the current public pre-K-12 education system there is inequitable access to the arts. Particularly, African American, Latinx and Indigenous students experience significant barriers to access, participation and success in arts learning that are directly linked to pervasive racial inequities in our educational system. Create CA believes every student has a right to a well-rounded education that includes the arts and the benefits they bring.

Racial Equity Statement from Create CA

Arts for all Children Youth and Families: Los Angeles County's New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted the initial Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education to establish comprehensive, sequential K-12 arts instruction for every public school student in the County. The new Arts Ed Blueprint speaks to a widespread understanding within the field of youth development that children grow up in families and communities, not just in schools and sets new targets for achieving scale, equity, and quality in arts education—in school, after school, and in conjunction with communities to meet where they are and to culturally sustain the voices of those historically excluded.

As defined in the Los Angeles County New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education:

SCALE - Every young person in every neighborhood has year-round opportunities for learning in the arts, in school, after school, and in their community.

EQUITY - Every young person, regardless of race, culture, language, income, religion, national origin, legal status, place of residence, gender identity, LGBTQ+ status, or ability receives high-quality, culturally sustaining arts education. Children and young people who have been historically excluded or precluded from learning in the arts receive the resources and investments required to meet their needs.

QUALITY - Instruction is intentionally designed to build artistic, technical, and creative skills; encompass a variety of art forms and genres; connect arts learning to other areas of study, growth, and development; reflect the culture, language, and heritage of the learner; introduce the learner to cultures, languages and heritages of others; expose young people to creative careers; and recognize the region's rich cultural diversity.

IN-SCHOOL ARTS EDUCATION - Learning in the arts that takes place during the school day as part of an integrated or discrete, sequential arts curriculum.

AFTER- SCHOOL ARTS EDUCATION - Learning in the arts that takes place outside of school hours, either on a school campus or for youth who are part of a specific school community, and which is designed to augment or deepen in-school arts education.

COMMUNITY- BASED ARTS EDUCATION - Learning in the arts that takes place in neighborhood or community settings, or among young people who consider themselves part of a particular community, and which is designed to be either independent from or in alignment with in-school or after-school arts education

White Supremacy Culture

National Education Association definitions around White Supremacy Culture:

White Supremacy Culture is a form of racism centered upon the belief that white people are superior to people of other racial backgrounds and that whites should politically, economically, and socially dominate non-whites. While often associated with violence perpetrated by the KKK and other white supremacist groups, it also describes a political ideology and systemic oppression that perpetuates and maintains the social, political, historical and/or industrial white domination.

White privilege is a set of advantages and/or immunities that white people benefit from on a daily basis beyond those common to all others. White privilege can exist without white people's conscious knowledge of its presence and it helps to maintain the racial hierarchy in this country.

White fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.

See: White Supremacy Culture Resources | NEA

The website: White Supremacy Culture, offered by Tema Okun, explores many aspects of White Supremacy Culture in the current context and provides resources to support conversations and gives suggested antidotes to help create change.

There are many approaches to recognizing the need to advance diversity, equity and inclusion within the Strategic Planning process. When developing your strategic plan, we encourage you to weave in thoughtful practices for diversity, equity and inclusion, to raise awareness and to make sure everyone is included in the conversation and that the planning team is truly reflective of the needs and dreams of the families and students that make up the school community.

EVOLVING PRACTICES

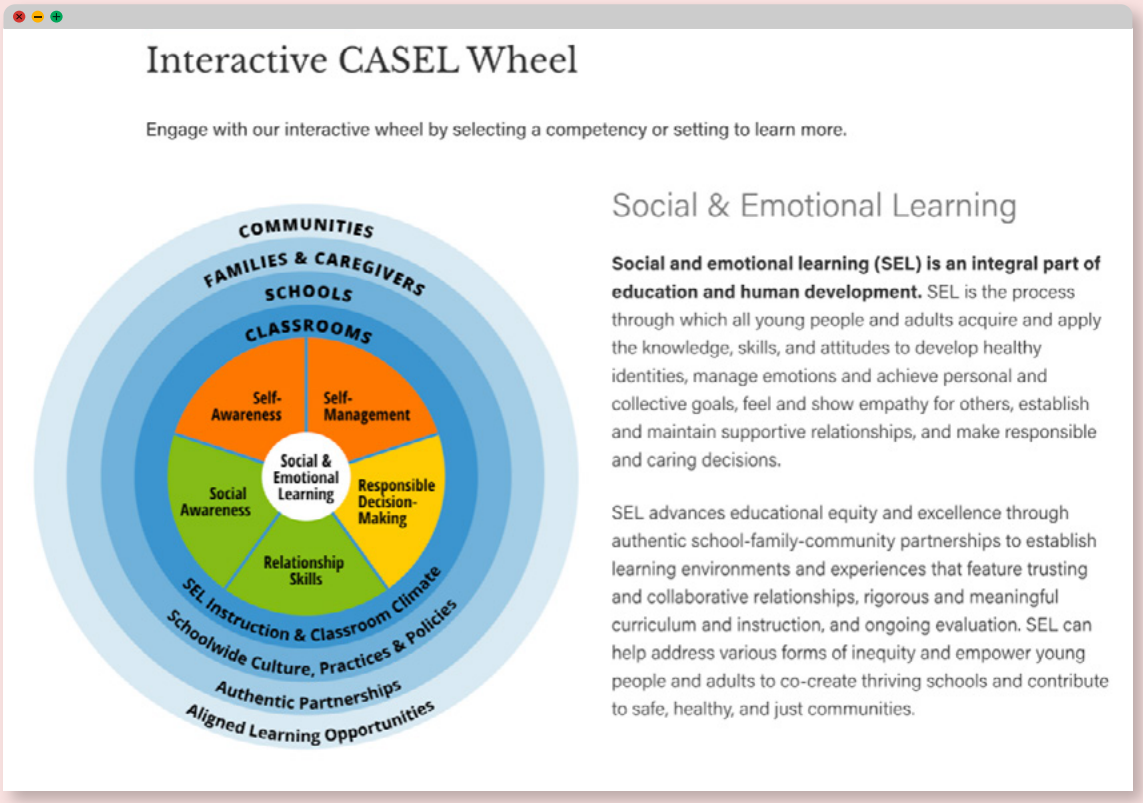
Improving Students' Physical and Mental Health

Long before the COVID-19 pandemic there was increasing evidence that the conditions of poverty—especially concentrated poverty—take a tragic toll on the physical and mental health of students. This warrants significant investments in mitigating the impact of this toll in order to improve student outcomes. Congress recognized this problem, in part, through the creation and rapid increase in funding for the ***Title IV-A Student Support and Academic Enrichment*** program. The Biden Administration's request would build on these efforts through a $1 billion investment for a new School-Based Health Professionals program to support the mental health needs of our students by increasing the number of counselors, nurses, and mental health professionals in our schools, and building the pipeline for these critical staff, with an emphasis on underserved schools."

For full text see: Statement by Miguel Cardona Secretary of Education on the Policies and Priorities of the US Department of Education | US Department of Education.

CASEL, The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, has helped grow social and emotional learning (SEL) from a promising theory to an essential part of education.

See the CASEL website for additional SEL resources.



New Jersey ArtsEd SEL: The Center for Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning

Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning Framework: A Synergistic Pairing

Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework is designed to illuminate the intersection between arts education and social-emotional learning to allow for the intentional application of appropriate teaching and learning strategies, with the overarching goal of enhancing Arts Education.

Arts Educators often address different aspects of the SEL in their everyday practice either through individual or across multiple competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making). In some cases, these competencies are being addressed in a tacit way, without making explicit connections to the visual and performing arts standards.

This framework is the result of careful consideration of the synergistic connections between the **five SEL competencies and the eleven anchor standards in the visual and performing arts**. The essential questions and enduring understandings that resulted from a detailed crosswalk provide a clear understanding of these connections. The Framework, including lesson examples, provides Arts Educators a greater understanding of how SEL connects to and influences the artistic process. The Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning Framework is designed to empower Arts Educators to intentionally embed social-emotional learning.

SELARTS website

LA County Creative Wellbeing Curriculum Guide

Creative Wellbeing is an approach for fostering communities of wellness, especially for systems-impacted youth, those who are vulnerable to becoming systems- impacted, and the adults who support them. This approach provides culturally relevant, healing-centered, arts-based workshops for young people under 25 and professional development coaching for youth-serving adults—educators, service providers, and community based organizations.

Introduction To Creative Wellbeing Approach Resources

Today's schools and communities are being challenged to embrace technology in a way that we have never seen before. Having arts and arts education at the center of this conversation is critical as students navigate a world driven by design thinking and creativity.

Advances in Technology in Arts Education

STEAM and Maker Spaces. It is a well-established fact that "STEAM" is vital to the delivery of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math formerly referred to as "STEM". The advancement of STEAM means that more people will adopt practices on how to better integrate the arts into all of these subject areas in the years ahead.

The emergence of *Maker Spaces* on school campuses can blend the best of an arts studio, a science lab and an innovation center designed to unleash creativity. Providing students with access to these kinds of spaces emphasizes the intersection of the arts and sciences and cultivates the top skills desired by 21st century employers. School sites are also reimagining other spaces within schools to make these kinds of innovative spaces available to all. In certain cases, recycled and upcycled materials are being used to spark imagination and innovation. As new career pathways develop, students who have access to this kind of open-ended problem solving, creativity and project-based learning will thrive. Making Makerspaces Work for All Students | Edutopia.

Benefits of Arts Education

Extensive research has demonstrated that arts education engages students in learning, contributes to higher academic achievement, increases graduation rates, and is fundamental to building empathy, wellbeing and overall human growth and development.

> "Education in the arts contributes to students' cognitive development, strengthening the ability to perceive, observe, make connections, recognize relationships, be flexible in thinking, and accept ambiguity. Each arts discipline provides a unique way of thinking, seeing, engaging, and understanding the world. The arts require students to recognize qualitative relationships, distinguish differences and similarities in these relationships, imagine and consider possibilities, interpret abstract concepts and figurative meanings, and take unpredicted and unexpected circumstances and transform them into advantageous opportunities." **California Arts Education Framework for Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve**. The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the *California Arts Education Framework for Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Framework)* on July 8, 2020. The *Arts Framework* supports the *California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve, (Arts Standards),* which were adopted by the SBE in January 2019.

Arts education fosters creativity and innovation through the processes and practices inherent in arts education, such as

- flexible thinking;
- creative problem-solving;
- inquisitiveness;
- perseverance;
- problem identification;
- research;
- interpretation;
- communication;

- precision; and
- accuracy.

These creative practices provide opportunities for students to learn within an individual discipline and transfer knowledge, skills, and habits to other contexts and settings. Processes involving the interplay of artistic skills, individual voice, and the unexpected, permeates the arts in academic and professional settings. The arts synthesize logical, analytical thought with playful unexpectedness, providing students with extraordinary opportunities to exercise their creativity through the artistic processes. Learning in the arts, therefore, requires an environment in which students are encouraged to imagine, investigate, construct, and reflect (NCCAS 2014 as cited in CA Arts Framework).

The Creative Economy

In California, the creative economy was responsible for a total value added gross regional product (GRP) impact of $687.6 billion in 2020 – the equivalent of roughly 23% of the state's GRP. Directly employing almost 1.4 million people and supporting a total of 3.9 million workers across the state, the creative economy outperforms industry sectors like government, manufacturing, health care, and retail trade – sectors that often receive greater economic development, talent development, and policy support.Employment in the creative economy industries is highly transformative in terms of income generation. Average annual wages across the creative economy were $158,500 in 2020, whereas average annual wages economy-wide were $76,500. (Otis Report on the Creative Economy 2022, Otis College of Art & Design).

In her book, *Why Our Schools Need the Arts*, Jessica Davis (Harvard University Project Zero) says

> "The arts provide ways for children to create and communicate their own individual cultures, to experience the differences and similarities among the cultures of family or nationality that are imprinted on different forms of art, and to discover the common features of expression that attest to a human connection contained in and beyond difference" (2008). [As cited in CA Arts Framework 2020.]

A State-Wide Perspective

California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)

A scan of the state of California shows that 57 out of the 58 counties in the state have significant designated rural areas. This can pose some specific challenges relative to geography and access to resources such as teaching artists, arts organizations and cultural institutions. Leaders throughout our state, organized through CCSESA's 11 regions, work as designated region leads and county leads to support and extend equity and access to arts education for all students. There are significant advances made by these leaders through strategic planning, professional learning and networked communities of practice.

As a strategic response to serve the entire state, CCSESA has made strides in culturally responsive pedagogy, arts integration and assessment through the myriad of modules offered through the CCSESA Arts Initiative: Creativity at the Core. These no-cost modules for professional learning can be accessed through the CCSESA website: CCSESA Arts Initiative.

"**The California Arts Project** (TCAP)

The California Arts Project is a collaborative, statewide network of teachers and university scholars with the singular goal of expanding student access to and improving student artistic literacy development in dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual, and career arts. They do this through

designing and providing comprehensive, discipline-focused professional learning for educators, building educator leadership, and creating and nurturing collaborative networks of TK-12 educators and university faculty.

The California Arts Project (TCAP) is one of the nine California Subject Matter Projects."

GUIDING DOCUMENTS: THE CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE, CALIFORNIA ARTS STANDARDS AND THE CALIFORNIA ARTS FRAMEWORK

California Education Code

Existing state laws mandate arts education in California for pupils in grades 1 through 12. As stated in Section 51210 of the California Education Code, "the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6... shall include instruction ... in visual and performing arts including dance, music, theatre and visual arts, aimed at the development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression." Section 51220 of the California Education Code identifies a similar course of study for grades 7 to 12.

California Arts Standards

The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the *California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Standards)* on January 9, 2019.

"The California Arts Standards provide guidance toward achieving a common goal: for all California students to fully participate in a rich and well-rounded arts education. An arts education helps children and youth make sense of the world, communicate their unique ideas across boundaries, and discover who they are as individuals and as members of various groups. Students who experience a quality arts education, one that seeks to honor the aesthetic and enduring over the efficient, have an opportunity to engage in complex and nuanced thinking around meaningful work" (Eisner 2002 as cited in the CA Arts Standards].

Because a sequential arts education, provided as core subject matter, is essential for every California student from the earliest years through high school graduation and beyond, the California *Education Code* requires courses of study in the arts to be offered to all California students.

Artistic processes as outlined in the CA Arts Standards

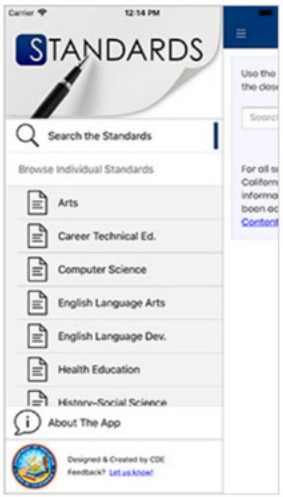
The CA Arts Standards are organized around Artistic Processes that include Creating, Performing/Presenting/Producing, Responding, and Connecting. These processes are the cognitive and physical actions by which arts learning and arts making are realized. Each of the arts disciplines incorporates the artistic processes that define and organize the link between the art and the learner. The Standards emphasize *process over product*.

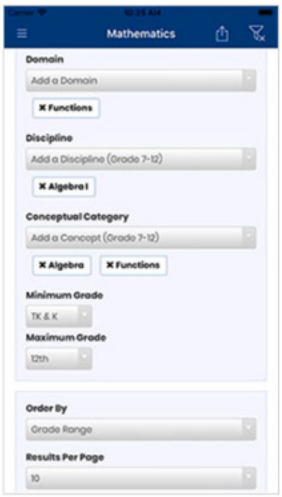
California Arts Standards Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards (NCCAS 2014, 13)

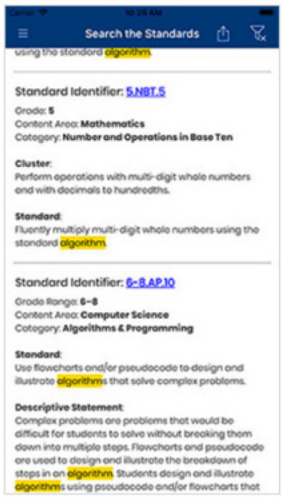
Artistic Processes	Anchor Standards: Students will....
Creating Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work	1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. 2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. 3. Refine and complete artistic work.
Performing *(dance, music, theatre)* Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation **Presenting** *(visual arts)* Interpreting and sharing artistic work Producing *(media arts)* Realizing and presenting artistic ideas and work	4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. 5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation, 6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
Responding Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning	7. Perceive and analyze artistic work. 8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. 9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
Connecting Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context	10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. 11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

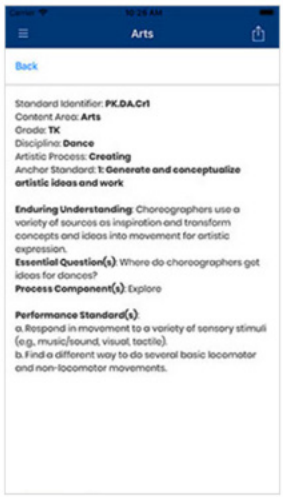
CA Standards Application

There's an app for that! This mobile application contains the 12 California content standards – from Arts through World Languages. The application is designed so educators can quickly find, search, and sort relevant standards across disciplines to aid in instructional planning and assessment. This is a free download available for Apple, Microsoft, and/or Android devices. You can find more information about the mobile application on the CA Standards Mobile Application web page.









"A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song."

Maya Angelou (1928–2014), American author, poet, singer, civil rights advocate, and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom

The California Arts Education Framework

The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the *California Arts Education Framework for Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Framework)* on July 8, 2020. Curriculum frameworks provide guidance to educators, parents, and publishers, to support implementing California content standards.

This Framework includes the vision and goals for arts education in California, and the vital role of the arts disciplines in each and every student's cognitive, social, cultural, and emotional development.

Arts Integration as outlined in the California Arts Education Framework

The CA Arts Education Framework defines arts integrated instruction as "co-equal instruction in which students are learning and being assessed equally in one or more arts disciplines through the *Arts Standards*' four artistic processes and one or more other subject areas. To deepen and expand students' learning through co-equal arts integration, the intersection of the content areas authentically connect while addressing, assessing, and forwarding the learning objectives equally in all subjects. In this way arts integrated instruction can augment and extend discipline-specific arts and non-arts learning."

LOCAL CONTROL AND LEGISLATIVE ADVANCES

In 2013, under then Governor Jerry Brown, the State of California enacted a new method of allocating funds for school districts statewide, called the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). This formula seeks to give additional funds to those districts where it is needed most. The formula takes into consideration the needs of student population groups such as those that are English Language Learners or those who have Special Needs. The advent of the LCFF means that California schools have greater autonomy in determining the best use of funds for their district.

To ensure that each district is making the best use of new funding, there is a mandate for a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Districts are mandated to solicit and receive input from parents, teachers and students as they consider priorities for their LCAP. Under the LCFF, all local educational agencies are required to prepare an LCAP, which describes how they intend to meet annual goals for all pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities as identified in the Education Code (Section 52060(d)). The LCAP is a place where districts with strong Arts Educations Plans have been able to articulate goals to ensure that every student has access to high quality arts education within the school day.

California school districts began to include specific priorities for the arts inside the LCAP. These may include ongoing funding for an Arts Coordinator, allocation for facilities, for arts specialists and for professional learning, to name a few. Each district updates their LCAP annually within a three year cycle and is required to make their LCAP available to the public and school community on their websites.

In December of 2015, **ESSA, "Every Student Succeeds Act"** was signed into federal law. As noted on ed.gov: The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. The law builds on key areas of progress in recent years, made possible by the efforts of educators, communities, parents, and students across the country. The previous version of the law, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, was enacted in 2002. NCLB represented a significant step forward for our nation's children in many respects, particularly as it shined a light on where students

were making progress and where they needed additional support, regardless of race, income, zip code, disability, home language, or background. The law was scheduled for revision in 2007, and, over time, NCLB's prescriptive requirements became increasingly unworkable for schools and educators. Recognizing this fact, in 2010, the Obama administration joined a call from educators and families to create a better law that focused on the clear goal of fully preparing all students for success in college and careers.

Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Federal Funds Program

The purpose of Title IV, Part A funds is to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, local educational agencies (LEAs), schools, and local communities to:

- Provide all students with access to a well-rounded education;
- Improve school conditions for student learning; and
- Improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

The California Department of Education (CDE) announced a 2018 Request for Applications (RFA) to fund the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) competitive grant projects, authorized under Title IV, Part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The 2018–19 California State Budget Act, Senate Bill 840, Chapter 29, authorized $44,080,000 that became available through the 2018–19 fiscal year for this purpose. ***The bill also required the CDE to prioritize the awards to applications that enhanced visual and performing arts education*** and utilize these funds as part of a comprehensive strategy to expand access to physical and mental health care.

Many of the California counties and districts that were awarded funds in the competitive round utilized their funding for access to arts education in both the well-rounded education and technology categories.

Currently LEAs are allocated funds from Title IV, Part A, based on student demographic and population statistics. It is up to the leadership to determine how those funds will be allocated. Arts advocates have been successful in voicing their desire to see the funds supporting the arts aligned to the original intention of the legislation.

Arts Education Advocacy

Advocacy has long been a critical component of sustaining the arts in our schools. Adopting a proactive approach to building public, educational, workforce, and political value for PK-12 arts learning is absolutely essential. Advocacy takes place at the local level with school and district administrators, at the state level with elected officials, and at the national level with congressional representatives.

We encourage you to get informed and make your voice heard, and information and tips regarding advocacy can be found in the Resource Appendix and in Chapter 9 of the CA Arts Framework. Please note that there may be limitations for educators as it relates to direct legislative advocacy due to contractual agreements. Community members, allies and the broad coalition of advocates supported by CREATE CA stand ready to support and connect to advocacy efforts on behalf of schools, districts and county offices.

How to Use This Guide

There are certainly many proven methods to fulfill the basic requirements of a strategic plan—collect current data, determine need, create a shared vision, decide on priorities, and develop a viable plan. Strategic plans that are **built by consensus** with key constituents will have a greater chance of ultimate success—and will ensure the delivery of a comprehensive education in the arts for all students.

Achieving consensus and full engagement from the community, teachers, and administrative and school board leaders is a key aim of these methods. While there is not just one way to plan, we believe there are strategic and equitable approaches that can maximize the success and eventual implementation of those plans. These approaches take time; they take building relationships, cultivating relationships, and recognizing the environment of historic pain and misunderstanding. Through patience and lots of listening to the voices that have been marginalized, healing may begin to emerge allowing space for authentic collaboration and the creation of new approaches.

The process described in *The Expanding Access Guide* is just one way to achieve the end goal of a thoughtful district-wide, community or county-wide plan. The guide is filled with tips, techniques, exercises, lessons learned, and examples culled from our extensive work in the state of California. While there is a suggested step-by-step process indicated, you should feel free to use sections of The Guide that best suit your circumstances. Every district, community and county has a distinct culture and customary approach to planning.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW

The planning process consists of seven stages, and each one is a critical step in building a sustainable arts plan in your district, organization, or county. In Stage 4, the Guide offers a process for In-Person Planning, and a separate section for Virtual Planning. Although the preparatory steps and concluding steps are the same whether you are in-person or online, the actual “center stages” are slightly different. The overall progression of the stages is summarized below:

STAGE 1. Building an Arts Planning Team

This stage involves the building of a core planning team that represents the diverse range of constituents in your school, district, organization or county level, including leadership and community.

STAGE 2. Assessing the Current Arts Education Offerings

The first charge of the planning team is to collect and analyze information about the current arts education system and offerings in order to identify strengths as well as challenges.

STAGE 3. Establishing an Arts Education Policy

Once the planning team understands the current arts education offerings, it is highly recommended that the team create an overarching district-level or county-level policy for adoption by the governing body or consider adoption of the CREATE CA “Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning.”

"The Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning" is a statewide initiative for school districts, counties and organizations to demonstrate their commitment to equitable arts education for all students, regardless of their background, culture, language or geographic location." createca.org

Create CA leads a statewide effort to encourage school districts and organizations to become an Arts Equity *DISTRICT or CHAMPION by adopting the Resolution or Declaration*.

STAGE 4. Generating the Strategic Plan

In this stage, the planning team engages in an intensive series of focused conversations and work sessions, through which the vision, strategic directions, and action plan will be articulated.

STAGE 5. Developing a Funding Strategy

Once the goals are established, it is critical to assess the current funding landscape and future prospects in order to develop a realistic, sustainable, phased plan for the funding and rollout of the arts education program.

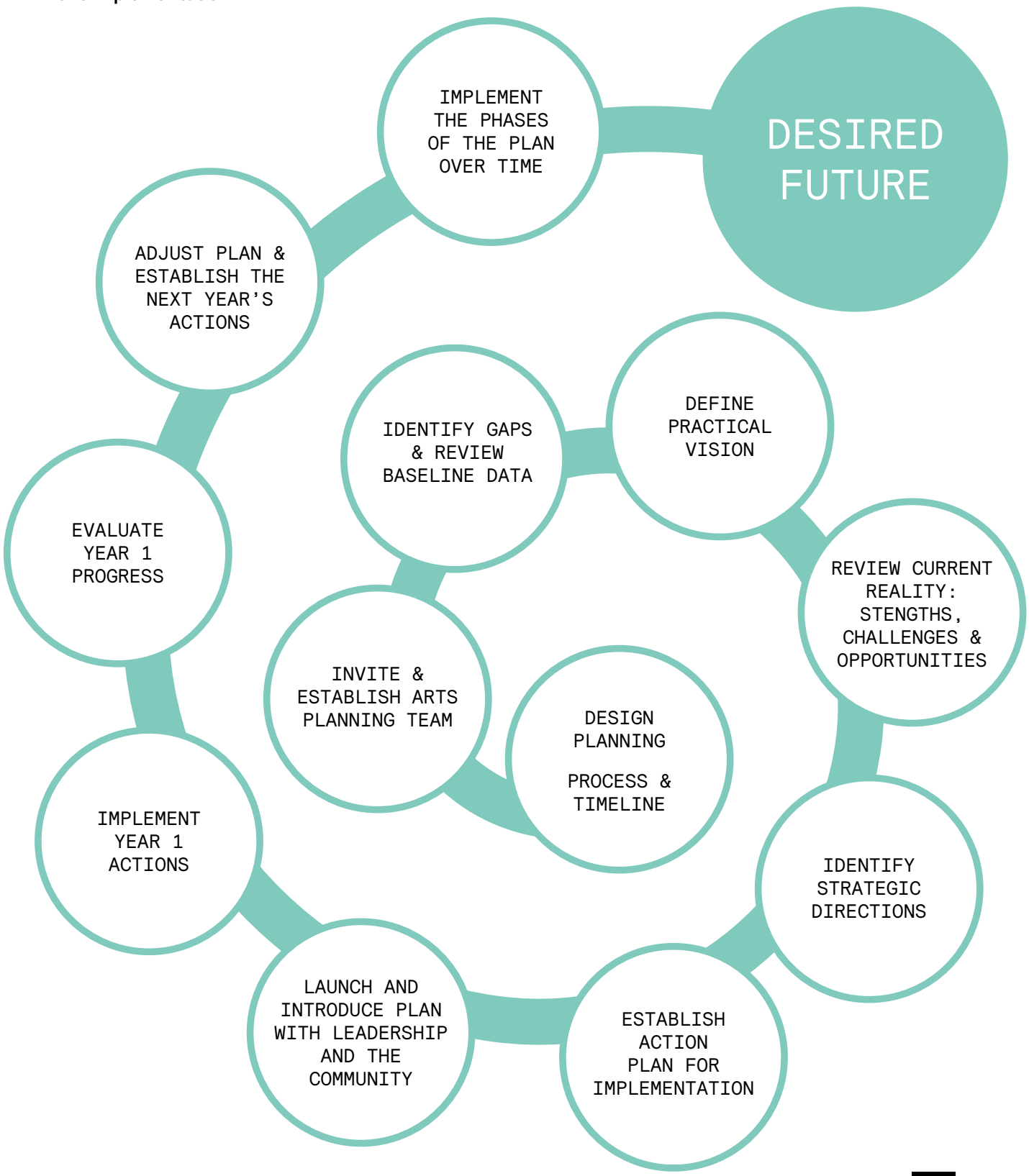
STAGE 6. Launching and Introducing the Plan with Leadership and Community

To increase visibility, commitment, and accountability for the plan, it is suggested that the team create a launch event, focus group, or other method to celebrate the plan.

STAGE 7. Implementing the Plan

This section will help you create a proactive system for launching, monitoring progress, and sustaining the momentum of your strategic arts education plan in the years ahead.

The Strategic Planning Spiral is a visual representation of the entire process, depicting the steps of the planning process. It accurately reflects the ongoing cyclical nature of strategic planning and implementation.



STAGE 1

BUILDING AN ARTS PLANNING TEAM

One of the critical elements of success in arts education planning is assembling a diverse, inclusive and representative team. By engaging and cultivating relationships with district, county and community leaders and involving students, parents, teachers, arts providers and supporters, a strong collaborative effort will be fostered. The alignment of the county/district and community coming together creates a fabric that is strong, inclusive, supple, and flexible. It is this weaving together as a diverse team with a shared vision that allows new ideas, relationships, and energy to emerge.

A wide range of individuals and community sectors have an invaluable role to play in serving the schools, districts, community members, administrators, educators, students and parents to create, implement, and advocate for equitable arts learning experiences. Most importantly, it's wise to have individuals on the team who are passionate about the arts and who demonstrate leadership in being able to support the implementation of the arts plan.

INVITING THE TEAM AND CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Listed below are some examples of who to consider for diverse representation on your planning team.

Suggested membership:

- Arts Coordinators (at district or county level)
- Career Technical Education (CTE) faculty and staff
- Community members whose voices may not traditionally be heard including tribal leadership
- Continuation/Alternative High School Teachers
- County Department leads
- Designated English Language Development Teachers
- Development/ Grant writing professionals
- Directors of Curriculum and Instruction

- Education/Philanthropic Foundation Leadership
- Elementary and Secondary teachers (visual and performing arts educators as well as multi-subject credentialed teachers and teachers from other disciplines)
- Guidance/ College and Career Counselors
- Local Arts Councils or Arts Commission Leaders
- Local business and other community partners
- Local Teaching Artists and Arts Organizations who provide professional arts and cultural programming
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and Social Emotional Learning leaders
- Parents of diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Principals
- Professionals who serve youth within the juvenile justice system
- Professionals who work within Culturally Relevant and Responsive Teaching and Learning
- Providers of professional learning in the arts
- PTA/PTO Leadership
- School Board members
- School Sites Leads in arts, behavioral health, school counselors, etc.
- Social and Restorative Justice leaders and supporters
- Special Education Teachers
- Students/Alumni of diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent

LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR YOUR ARTS PLANNING TEAM

Strategic Planning Coach

We have found that having a coach to guide the efforts creates confidence and capacity within the team. We specifically call this person a coach (rather than a consultant) because they are trained to focus the efforts of the team to:

- Work with the Team Leads to design the overall timeline and planning process
- Facilitate and document the entire process
- Facilitate the group process in line with the ToP method of facilitation The Institute of Cultural Affairs
- Motivate and encourage the team along the way
- Write and edit documentation and the final plan
- Support the presentation for adoption at the governing board level

All of the coaches are experienced in arts education and may, at times, offer expert advice. Their primary purpose is to evoke the wisdom of the group. When there is a need, the coach will take on the role of arts education advisor, providing resources aligned to the team members' needs.

How to find a coach:

If you are in need of a coach, you can contact Statewide:

- Create CA www.createca.org
- Los Angeles County Arts Education Collective https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org
- CCSESA Arts Initiative: CCSESA Arts Initiative

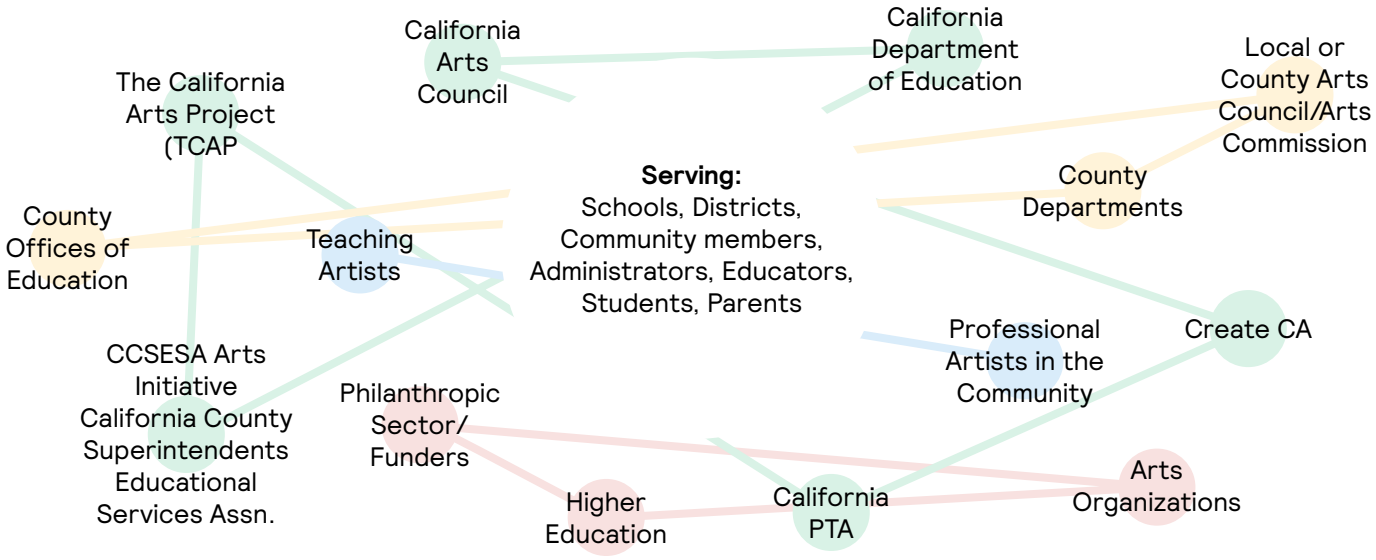
Team Leads

It is highly effective to appoint one or two people to work with the coach to:

- Plan and design each meeting
- Identify individuals who will participate on the team
- Debrief between meetings
- Facilitate a physical space or virtual meeting links
- Create and send communications to the team members such as invitations to meetings, reminders, follow up information, etc.
- Support the final document with review and input
- Help to present the plan for adoption at the governing board level

For consistency, it is recommended that all members of the team attend every meeting. However, there may be individuals who contribute to a particular aspect of the planning process—such as policy development or budget planning—who will attend only certain meetings. The process is flexible enough to accommodate that as well. We suggest that the total number of people on the team not exceed 20-25.

This diagram illustrates how the interconnected components of the ecosystem that is the California Arts Environment can support you and the team you develop. These individuals and sectors all play a role in your arts education planning and implementation process.



FACILITATING MEETINGS

The process that is outlined in this guide for arts education planning is based on a method developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ica-usa.org) called "Group Facilitation Methods and Participatory Strategic Planning." This participatory and inclusive method incorporates a number of tools and techniques that encourage full engagement by team members. It develops an atmosphere of mutual respect that allows the flow of creative ideas and innovation. The method has been applied to a number of different fields with demonstrated success all over the world. The important underlying assumptions of this approach to planning are:

- Each person who is key to implementation of the plan is represented on the planning team.
- Every voice will be heard and is honored.
- The methods are very flexible and can be combined with most other approaches to group decision making or learning.

It is always a good idea to either have the group create norms or offer some for their adoption. Some of our coaches have found the Seven Norms of Collaboration (The Adaptive Schools) to be useful.
SEVEN NORMS OF COLLABORATION

The list below gives a brief introduction to the *Participatory Values* that are the foundation of the methods used in this guide. This introduction provides the safety a group needs, especially when they know each voice will be honored.

Participatory Values

- Slow down
- Trust the process
- Stay with the question
- Honor and welcome each voice
- Let others talk before you speak again
- Limit cross talk
- Discuss programs and concepts, not people
- Listen with respect and assume good intent
- The outcome will be greater than the sum of the parts

Materials Checklist for In Person Meeting Facilitation

- ☐ 1 Chart Pad and Easel
- ☐ Colorful broad tip markers – 1 per person plus 3 or 4 for the Facilitator
- ☐ Baskets to hold pens and other supplies on participant tables
- ☐ Toys, fiddle objects, clay or pipe cleaners to inspire kinesthetic participation
- ☐ 1 or 2 Sticky Walls*
- ☐ Repositionable spray mount adhesive (for preparing Sticky Walls)
- ☐ Wide painter's tape (for hanging the Sticky Walls)
- ☐ Transparent tape (for connecting completed columns of half-sheets and title sheets)
- ☐ 100+ half-sheets of 8 1/2 x 11" paper (at least 50 each of 4 pastel colors)
- ☐ 50 full-sheets of 8 1/2 x 11" (at least two colors - white or pastel colors)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Name tags and Sign In Sheet

**A Sticky Wall is a 5' x 12' piece of rip-stop nylon fabric sprayed with repositionable spray mount adhesive. Spraying the fabric with repositionable adhesive creates a reusable surface on which sheets of paper can be posted and moved around during your planning sessions. To purchase a Sticky Wall online, visit ica-usa.org. Alternatively, you can spray craft paper cut from a large roll for one-time use. Repositionable spray mount adhesive is available at art supply stores in standard spray cans.*

Materials Checklist for Virtual Meeting Facilitation

- ☐ A Professional video conferencing account with breakout rooms and chat enabled (Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams or other platform may be used).
- ☐ Send an orientation sheet/ guidance for access to a virtual platform such as:
  - ☐ Mural (https://www.mural.co/)
  - ☐ Miro (https://www.miro.com)
  - ☐ Google Workspace (slides, JamBoard, docs, drawing board)
- ☐ Handouts as needed
- ☐ Set up your screen instructions, Zoom and virtual sign in protocols
- ☐ Facilitator prepared slides or templates for participation (*vision, strengths & challenges, strategic directions and implementation planning*)
- ☐ Music to create a welcoming environment or for breaks
- ☐ Encourage participants to name themselves, including pronouns on their screen
- ☐ Encourage participants to participate with video on to maximize the interactive tone of the ToP method
- ☐ Encourage participants to remain muted unless speaking

Setting Timelines and Agendas

The arts education timeline and planning process will vary based on whether you conduct in-person or virtual meetings. The number of meetings and the length of meetings will be custom for each planning group, but there are models listed below that you can use as general guidelines. The pace will vary from place to place and this scheduling model should be adjusted for your use.

Below are examples of team meeting calendars and planning timelines, which can serve as a springboard for your Design Team to determine the most effective structure and rollout for the strategic planning process in your district. Keep in mind that these examples can be adapted in various ways based on your needs.

4-Day In-Person Strategic Planning Process

It is suggested that a small team collect data on the current arts education program prior to the first meeting.

First Meeting (4-6 hours)

- Opening Activity
- Introduce overview of the strategic planning process and participatory values
- Review Data as it is available from the districts, the California Arts Education Data Project or other sources
- Conduct Practical Vision Workshop
- Closing

Second Meeting (4-6 hours)

- Opening Activity
- Identify Gaps in the Data Report (Based on what we know, what's missing?)
- Professional Learning to broaden perspective around key priorities for arts education such as policy development, equity, social emotional well-being, social justice, racial equity, etc. (can be done during any of the meetings).
- Define Strengths and Challenges to Achieving the Vision
- Closing

Third Meeting (4-6 hours)

- Opening Activity
- Create Strategic Directions to Address Challenges and Activate the Vision
- Set Priorities (Priority Wedge)
- Begin Action/Implementation Planning- Phase I
- Closing

Fourth meeting (4-6 hours)

- Opening Activity
- Review Strategic Directions
- Continue Implementation Planning - Phase II
- Closing

3-Day In-Person Strategic Planning Process

It is suggested that prior to the first meeting, a small team collect data on the current arts education programs. A follow up meeting will be needed to refine the written plan.

Day 1 (6 hours)

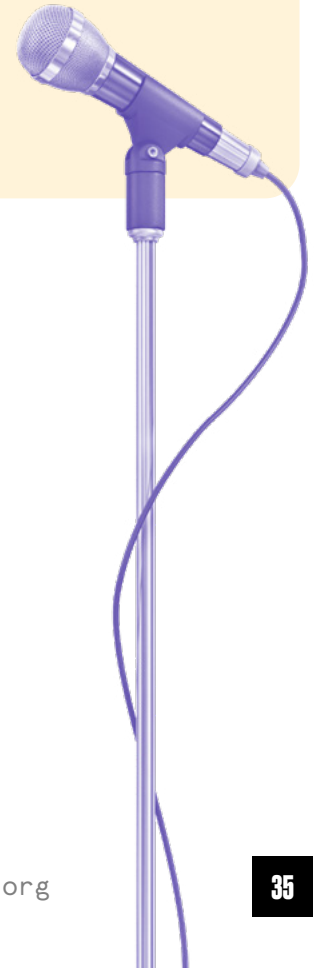
- Opening Activity
- Norms or Participatory Values
- Introduce overview of the strategic planning process
- Review Data as it is available from the districts, the California Arts Education Data Project or other sources
- Conduct Practical Vision Workshop
- Closing

Day 2 (6 hours)

- Opening Activity
- Professional Learning to broaden perspective around key priorities for arts education such as policy development, equity, social emotional well-being, social justice, racial equity, etc. (can be done during any of the meetings).
- Define Strengths and Challenges to Achieving the Vision
- Create Strategic Directions to Address Challenges and Activate the Vision
- Closing

Day 3 (6 hours)

- Opening Activity
- Set Priorities (Priority Wedge)
- Action/Implementation Planning-Phase I and Phase II
- Closing



Virtual Strategic Planning Process

It is suggested that the whole team meets approximately 6 sessions, with the leadership team continuing to meet to refine the written plan for an additional few sessions. Most groups find that a 2 hour or 2.5 hour session is sufficient.

Meeting on Zoom or another online platform will facilitate the planning process in a virtual environment. In addition, online whiteboard tools such as Miro* or Mural** can provide a virtual workspace for strong collaboration among all participants. The Google suite may also be utilized, with a combination of Google Slides, Google Docs and Google Drawing spaces.

Prior to the first session, it is suggested a small team collect data on current arts education offerings.

Note: In this format, leaders will need to set aside additional time to develop an arts education policy.

SESSION 1 AGENDA

- Opening Activity
- Norms or Participatory Values
- Overview of the Strategic Planning Process
- Practical Vision Workshop
- Closing and Next steps

SESSION 2 AGENDA

- Opening Activity
- Review Data as it is available
- Professional Learning to broaden perspective around key priorities
- Define Strengths and Challenges to Achieving the Vision
- Closing and Next Steps

SESSION 3 AGENDA

- Opening Activity
- Create Strategic Directions to Address Challenges and Activate the Vision
- Set Priorities (Priority Wedge)
- Closing and Next Steps

SESSION 4 AGENDA

- Opening Activity
- Action/Implementation Planning- Phase I
- Closing and Next Steps

SESSION 5 AGENDA

- Opening Activity
- Action/Implementation Planning- Phase II
- Closing and next steps

SESSION 6 AGENDA

- Opening Activity
- Writing and Editing the Plan
- Closing and Next Steps

*Miro https://miro.com/

**Mural https://www.mural.co

STAGE 2

ASSESSING CURRENT ARTS EDUCATION AND REVIEWING BASELINE DATA

COLLECT YOUR DATA: TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Before launching into the strategic planning process, it is suggested to assess the current status of the district's or the county's arts education programs and funding. Some of the key questions that need to be addressed are:

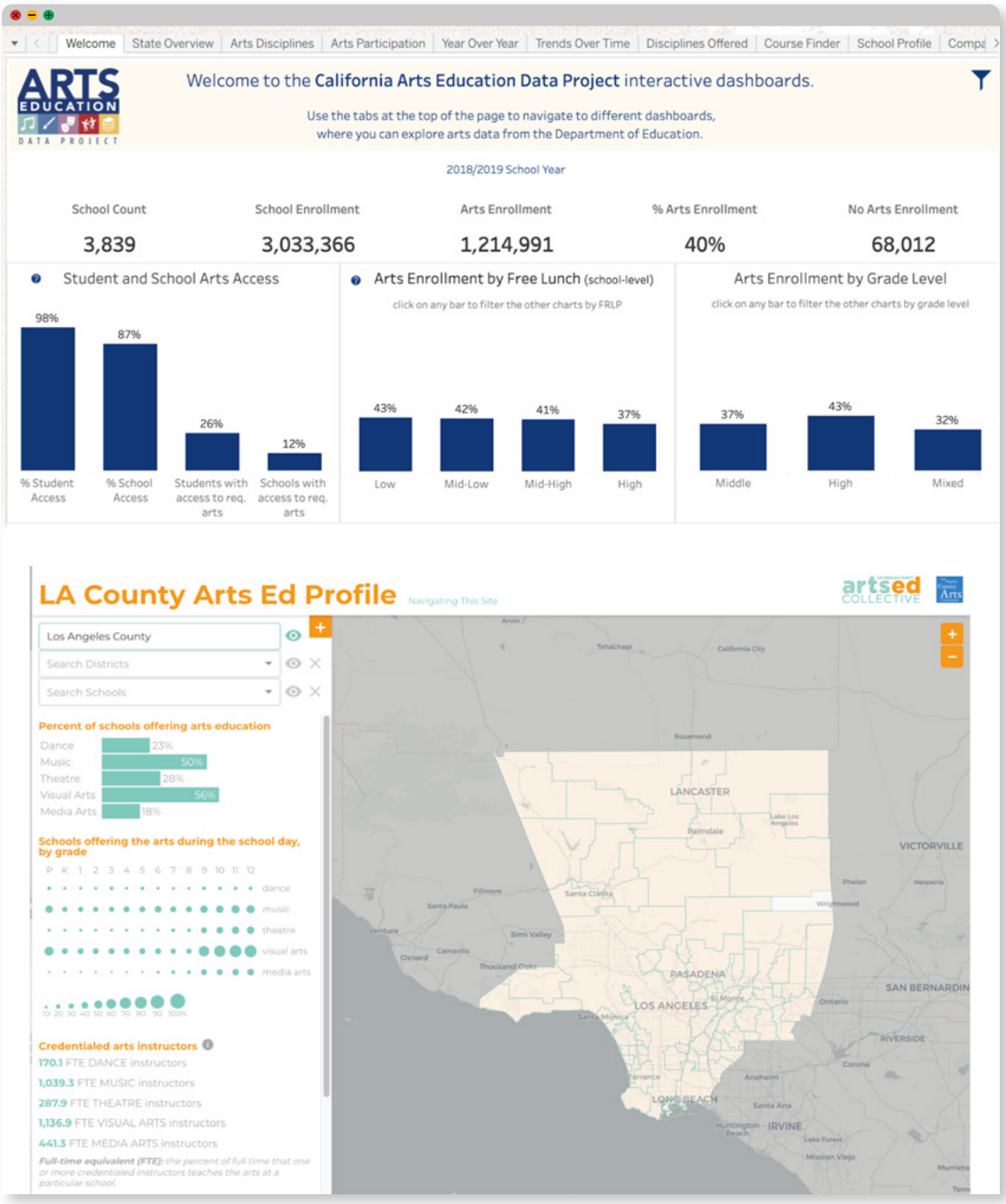
- What is currently being taught? Who is teaching it and when?
- Which arts disciplines and experiences are being offered in our elementary schools? Middle schools? High schools?
- What is offered in terms of arts integration?
- What is offered across discipline/multi-disciplinary projects?
- Which of our students have access to arts instruction? Which do not?
- To what extent are our instructional programs aligned with the state arts content standards?
- How are our arts programs funded?
- How do we make our arts programming and instruction visible to the community?

In recent years, many survey instruments that assess the status of arts education have been developed and tested. For the purpose of district-wide planning that is based on an accurate and fairly detailed assessment of what currently exists throughout the district, we suggest that it is best to capture the data at each school site, and then combine the results to gain a complete overview of instructional offerings.

Create CA, with the support of Quadrant Research developed an interactive, color-coded dashboard for the state of California. You can view arts participation for secondary level by school-level, district, county and statewide. Data is added annually, allowing the project to show change since 2014. The dashboard does not include information on grades PK-5, as California elementary schools are not required to report arts education data. (Data Source: California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System – California's K–12 longitudinal data system and the Common Core of Data file from the National Center for Education Statistics.)

The LA County Arts Ed Collective developed the LA County Arts Education Profile to learn about the quantity, quality and equity of arts education. Through a survey administered to all 2,277 public schools in LA County they found that nearly every school offers at least some arts instruction, and most schools offer at least two disciplines. At the same time, they found troubling inequities that reflect disparities in the wider society. See the Resource Appendix for a sample of the LA County Survey that provides a complete list of survey questions. The profile includes a feature to compare districts side by side. Many districts and counties create their own surveys to better understand the diversity of offerings at districts or school sites. LA County Arts Ed Profile

The following screenshot is taken from 2018-2019 data from the [Create CA Arts Education Data Project]:



KEY COMPONENTS TRIANGLE

A representation of Content, Infrastructure and Sustainability for Arts Education

The elements of equitable and sustainable arts programming and instruction may be divided into the following focus areas. The focus areas noted below are suggested outlines, and are not meant to be prescriptive. Variations will arise across districts, counties and regions.

CONTENT

Curriculum and Instruction

- The districts have an articulated, sequential curriculum based on the California Arts Standards adopted by the State of California.
- Arts disciplines are authentically integrated into other curricular areas where possible and preferred.
- Districts and counties increasingly offer all arts disciplines during the school day and/or after-school.
- Instructional methodologies provide individual, small-group, and large-group opportunities to study the arts.
- When and where possible, each arts discipline is delivered as a discrete sequential subject, with its own body of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking.
- Instruction is focused on meeting students where they are, uplifting student voice and choice and making student inquiry, creation, reflection and response central to arts learning.
- Different ways of learning and knowing (UDL- Universal Design for Learning) are explored through the arts providing opportunity for all students, including English Learners, students who need support for special needs, and students of differing abilities.
- No student or group of students are excluded from arts opportunities.

Student-Centered Assessment

- Assessments capture evidence of the students' ability to identify, create, describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate their own work and the work of others in relation to not only the arts standards but also within community and cultural norms.
- Assessments should include the opportunity for students to be self-reflective, contribute to the measures upon which the evaluation is based, and be grounded in student inquiry.

Professional Learning

- Those primarily responsible for providing instruction in the arts (multiple subject teachers, arts specialists, teaching artists and community members) receive ongoing professional learning that is focused on strategies for delivering equitable arts learning experiences.
- County, school and district leaders and community actively seek out and implement effective professional learning models and practices that align with their local context.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Administration, Coordination and Teaching Personnel

- Educators and others responsible for providing arts instruction, have relevant knowledge and training that qualifies them to teach the arts.

- The County, district or school has one or more coordinators for the arts who provide leadership, vision, planning, communications and resources.
- All levels of administration are aware and supportive of the strategic plan for arts education.

Spaces, Equipment and Supplies

- The County/District has dedicated spaces, equipment, technological tools and supplies at all school sites to support instruction in the arts.
- A maintenance program is in place, to ensure that equipment and supplies are routinely checked and, as necessary, replaced or upgraded.
- The spaces used for the arts are evaluated on a regular basis, and when additional space is needed, additional space is made available for the arts for the delivery of effective instruction.

Community Partnerships and Collaborations

- The arts programs provide students with engaging opportunities to attend exhibits and live performances at arts and cultural organizations throughout the community that reflect diverse cultural values and identities, including the cultures of the student population..
- Arts learning experiences and curriculum are expanded and enhanced through relationships with local artists, artistic resources, and arts organizations throughout the community, including access to online resources beyond geographic boundaries.
- Partnership opportunities are expanded to potentially include mental health providers, social justice/restorative justice communities, youth development and leaders in the community who advocate for the well-being and creative self expression of all youth.

SUSTAINABILITY

Values and Policy

- Leadership supports a policy, declaration, values statement or resolution that is shared with the community supporting arts education for all students.
- The Strategic Plan for Arts Education articulates and reflects the mission, vision, voice and values of the community served.

Funding

- Sufficient, sustainable, equitable funding is in place for robust arts learning experiences and instruction for all students including those historically underserved.
- The administration develops budgets that support and sustain high quality and equitable arts programs.
- The arts are reflected in the LCAP-Local Control Accountability plan.
- A combination of public and private funds may create diverse revenue streams for the arts, but not reduce the need for an ongoing commitment from the District, County or Organization.

Ongoing Evaluation

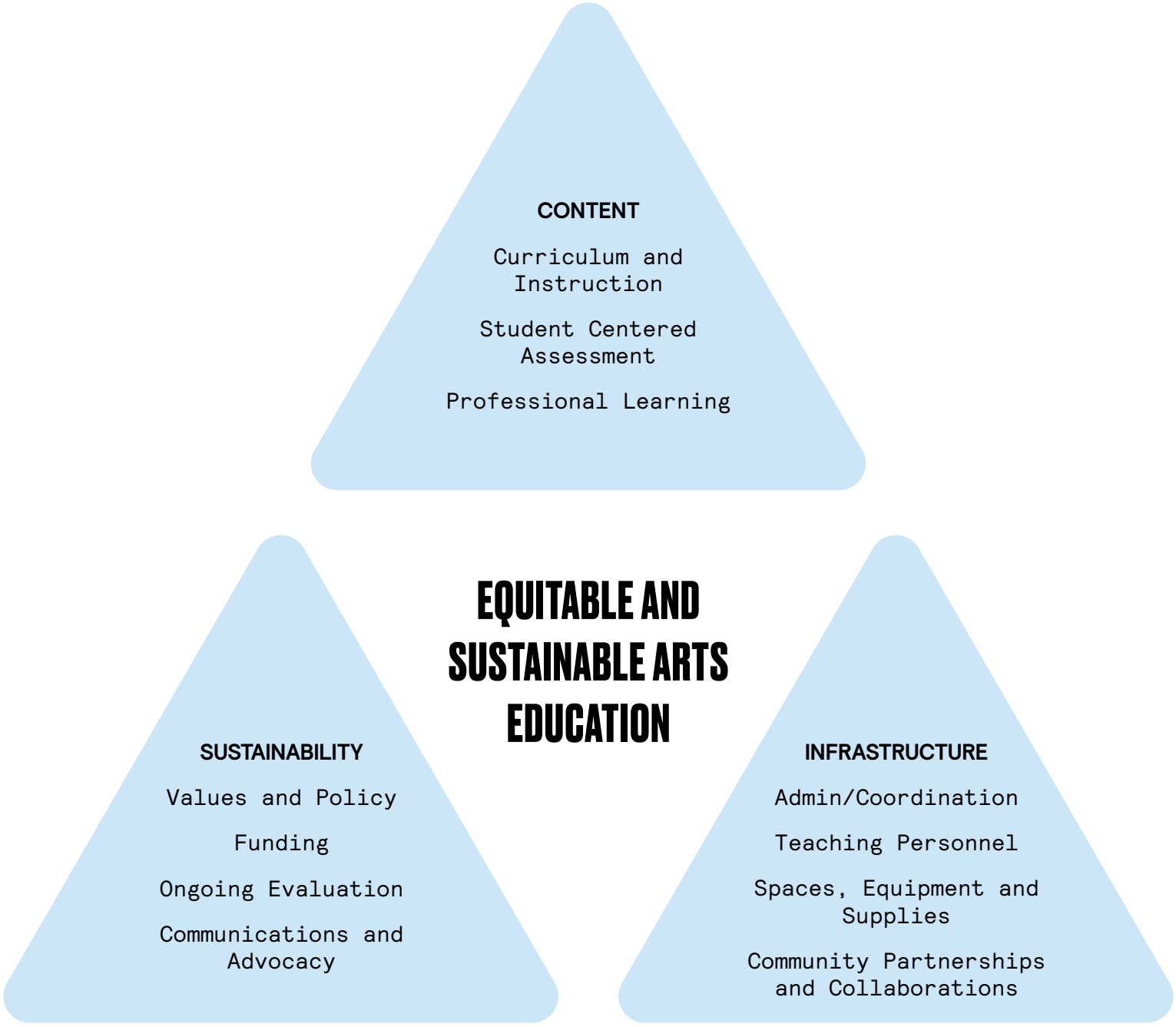
- Ongoing evaluation of arts programming and educators is conducted on a regular basis.
- Programming and instruction are developed and refined in accordance with the evaluation results.

Communications and Advocacy

- Arts education policies, budget development, decisions, and activities are carried out in a transparent, collaborative manner.

- The County/District regularly invites local leaders and elected officials to participate in exhibitions and performances of student work, as well as observation of everyday learning in arts classes.
- The arts have a coordinated digital presence for communications through a website or social media to communicate ongoing arts opportunities, practices and student culminating performances, exhibits, or projects.
- The Strategic Arts Planning Team may transform into an arts leadership team responsible for ongoing communications, advocacy and implementation efforts..
- Leadership is aware of current policies and pending legislation related to the arts and keeps the community educated and abreast of developments in this area.

KEY COMPONENTS OF EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ARTS EDUCATION



INTRODUCING THE FOCUSED CONVERSATION

A Focused Conversation is a structured format that is designed to invite and honor all voices and perspectives. Covered thoroughly in the Institute of Cultural Affairs training in Group Facilitation Methods, the protocol includes questions for facilitators to guide on four levels: Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, and Decisional. Your coach will guide you through this method. For more information see ica-usa.org

The Focused Conversation below is designed to help your arts planning team explore the key components of the "Triangle" for equitable, sustainable arts education in the areas of Content, Infrastructure and Sustainability.

STAGE 2 Key Components of an Equitable and Sustainable Arts Education

Creating a common understanding around equitable and sustainable arts education is essential. By clearly defining what is required, the team will develop a shared language, philosophy, and vision of arts education for their unique local context. The conversation helps each team member to be heard and clearly articulate their voice and ideas for laying the groundwork to develop an arts plan.

Focused Conversation

Topic: To reflect on the *Key Components of an Equitable and Sustainable Arts Education Triangle*

Purpose: To develop a deeper understanding of the full depth and breadth of building an infrastructure for arts education. To experience new possibilities for viewing what creates a strategic arts education plan.

Context: We have taken a look at the Triangle that contains the key components of an arts education program. We are now going to spend a few minutes discussing how this might inform our arts education planning efforts as we move ahead.

Objective: What is one thing you notice about the triangle? How is it structured?

Reflective: What was your first reaction when you saw the triangle structure and its components?
What do you find most intriguing?
Where on the triangle do you find yourself getting overwhelmed?
Where do you have questions or concerns?

Interpretive: Which area do you think holds the most promise/opportunity for us?
Which area do you think will be the most challenging for us to implement?
Is there anything missing from the triangle?
Are there any areas that you feel are irrelevant to our plan?
How might this deepen our collective understanding of arts education?

Decisional: Where do you see the highest priority emerging?
How might today's conversation inform the development of our strategic plan?

Closing: Thank you for taking the time to reflect on this. When we create a balance of content, infrastructure and sustainability we set the stage for developing a solid strategic plan!

COLLECTING PROGRAM DATA

Understanding the current status of your county or district arts education offerings ensures that your strategic plan will be based on grounded realities. Effective data collection is an important first step, and provides a valuable baseline for measuring progress in future years. This section explores possible approaches for collecting data about your county or district's current arts education.

School, District or County Surveys

TIP: If a survey tool is not available, you can designate a person to collect the arts education program data at each site and report back to the team using a method that works well for your district.

A survey is intended to provide an understanding of the status of arts instruction at all levels, PK-12. Think of this in terms of who, what, when, where and how the arts are delivered.

When compiling results, the team will have a clear picture of arts offerings across the community. In addition, gathering information about arts integration, which may not be reflected in discrete courses, is valuable. Empower a few members of the team to determine the funding sources that are utilized for arts education across the district or the county and report back to the team.

In order to expand equitable access, cross check the arts instruction across the community. Areas of greatest need may surface as well as pockets of excellence. This will provide a sense of direction for identifying needs and potential opportunities for expansion.

A survey is intended to identify systemic issues related to arts education at the district level. This includes staffing, priorities, and as well as financial and material resources.

In addition to the arts education offerings and staffing, the number of community partners, and the district demographics are reported. All districts are invited to participate in this data collection effort.

In collecting data, select the method (or group of methods) that will yield the highest rate of return in your context— whether that be an online survey, a series of interviews or a combination of methods. Whatever tools you use to collect data, be sure to collect it from the people who know the most about the delivery of arts instruction in your county, school or district.

The California Arts Education Data Project

At the middle school and high school level, arts instruction is generally provided in elective courses. Information about course offerings and enrollment is reported to the California Department of Education each year by the school district and is made available on the California Arts Education Data Project hosted by Create CA. This searchable resource shows county level, district level and school site level data for secondary.

The California Arts Education Data Project through Create CA (the new California Alliance for Arts Education) is committed to supporting and hosting the platform through communications and advocacy. *This project makes data for each California school visible on a user-friendly color-coded web format*. See createca.org for more information.

The Arts Ed Profile online tool presents data about arts education provided in LA County public schools and districts. You can look up any school or district in LA County. Data is from responses to the Arts Ed Profile survey and from the California Department of Education. See LA County Arts Ed Collective for more information.

High School Graduation Requirements

In California, the current high school graduation requirements include one year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language OR one year of career technical education. However, the University of California/California State University (UC/CSU) A-G admission requirements now include one full year of the visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art and two years of foreign language required; three years recommended. As a result of this requirement, many districts have adopted the UC/CSU admissions requirements as their graduation requirements, or are augmenting their course offerings to allow their students to be competitive applicants to the UC/CSU system. Graduation Requirements - High School (CA Dept of Education)

ASSESS YOUR ARTS EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT: METHODS TO REVIEW BASELINE DATA

Once the data is collected and summarized, the Arts Planning Team will review and analyze the information to gain a better understanding of strengths and gaps in instructional delivery and then begin to surface ideas relating to first action steps and priority areas.

STAGE 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: Focus Area - Data Analysis Lenses

To dive deeper into the current state of the arts within a county or district, the following questions can serve as Data Analysis Lenses. This activity engages the Arts Planning Team in discussions about specific focus areas of arts data, followed by share-outs or reports to the whole group for further discussion.

Advance Preparation

In utilizing a sticky wall, place Focus Areas horizontally across the top and Grade Levels spans (elementary, secondary) down the side. *If using a virtual platform, the above can be applied in Miro, Mural or Google Slides/ Docs.*

Instructions for Use of the Data Analysis Lenses

Distribute the questions to small groups. Groups may be divided by focus areas or by grade-level groups (e.g., elementary, middle, and high school).

Assign one member of each group to take notes where they may:

1. Chart the responses of the group on a chart paper (what is currently in place)
2. Record one Key Recommendation (per Focus Area or per grade span)
3. Support small groups to work through the questions as they look at the data summary charts.

This exercise can serve to illuminate what is known about arts offerings, and also what is not yet known. If a particular gap is identified, a team member may be activated to do the research and come back to the group about arts offered at a particular district or school site as needed.

STAGE 2 ACTIVITY: FOCUS AREA - DATA ANALYSIS LENSES

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

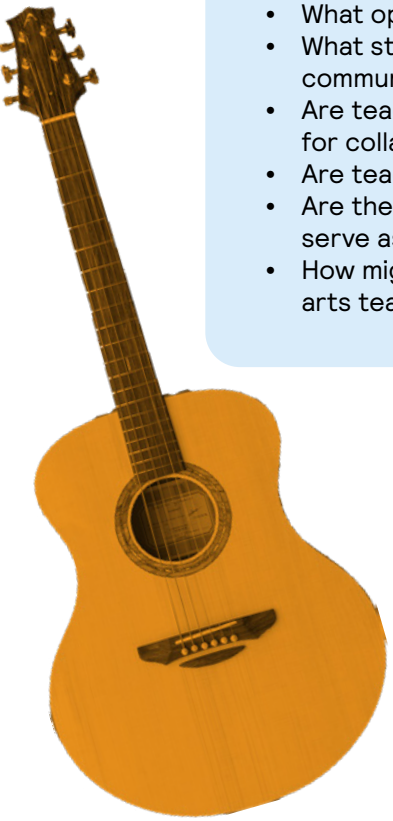
- Are the arts taught as discrete disciplines?
- Is any written curriculum being used? If so, in which arts disciplines?
- Does curriculum include the Artistic Processes as outlined in the California Arts Standards for Public Schools PK-12th Grade (creating, performing/presenting/ producing, responding and connecting) as well as application to other disciplines and to careers)
- Are the arts integrated into other content areas? Do the arts support Social Emotional well-being and the needs of English Learners and Special Education students?
- Is curriculum aligned to support student achievement according to the arts content standards at every/any grade level?
- Are lessons culturally relevant to your students across all disciplines and grade levels?
- Where are there examples of sequential arts instruction, either within a course, or through a series of courses?

STUDENT-CENTERED ASSESSMENT

- How is student work assessed? How are students graded?
- How are students contributing to the measures upon which their work is evaluated?
- Are student assessment strategies embedded in the curriculum?
- Where are there examples of formal assessment tools and measures for evaluating student progress in the arts?
- Do any arts courses, instruction, experiences support students to maintain digital portfolios of their work over time?

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- What opportunities do teachers currently have for professional learning in the arts?
- What structures are in place for arts communities of practice/ professional learning communities to share promising practices?
- Are teaching artists supported to work with credentialed teachers/ arts specialists for collaboration in professional learning?
- Are teachers supported to attend conferences or summer institutes?
- Are there existing professional learning practices in other subject areas that can serve as a model for designing professional learning in the arts?
- How might professional learning needs differ for multi-subject teachers, credentialled arts teachers/ arts specialists, teaching artists/artists and parents?



STAGE 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: FOCUS AREA - DATA ANALYSIS LENSES

ADMINISTRATION/COORDINATION AND PERSONNEL

- Who is teaching the arts?
- Do arts teachers have an understanding of arts education as described in the CA Arts Standards and Framework?
- Is there an arts coordinator or arts Teacher on Special Assignment (Arts ToSA) at the district or county level?
- Are there designated arts leads at each school site?

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

- Which community arts resources are being used to complement, enhance, or expand instruction in the arts? (e.g., performances, residencies, field trips, professional artists, etc.)
- What other non-arts agencies are supporting arts instruction? (e.g., higher education, businesses, local government)
- What is the focus and nature of our existing partnerships and collaborations?

SPACES, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- Which schools have appropriate spaces for the different arts disciplines? (music rooms with storage, visual arts classrooms with sinks and ventilation, risers for choirs, stages for theatre, dance spaces with proper floors, etc.)
- Are there community facilities/spaces that are being used for school-based arts programs and/or instruction?
- What equipment and/or supplies are currently available and how are they utilized and maintained? (instructional materials, art supplies, kilns, musical instruments, costumes, props, scripts, etc.)

ONGOING EVALUATION

- How are the arts evaluated on an ongoing basis?
- How is the Strategic Arts Plan used as a way to measure progress over time?
- What metrics or benchmarks are used to determine what success looks like in the arts over time?
- Are there examples of data-driven evaluation methods in other subject areas that can serve as models for arts program evaluation?

COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

- To what extent do school, district and county leaders regularly communicate with faculty, staff, parents, and the broader community about the value of arts learning in our students' education?
- Does the district regularly invite local leaders and elected officials to participate in exhibitions and performances of student work, as well as observation of everyday learning in arts classes?
- To what extent is county or district arts leadership aware of current policies and pending legislation related to arts instruction in schools?

- Does the district keep the community educated and abreast of developments in this area?
- Is there an ongoing team effort to support advocacy at the district, county or state-level?
- *Note: For ongoing advocacy support, visit www.CREATECA.org for resources and opportunities.*

FUNDING

- How are the arts funded? What funding streams exist at the district level?Are the arts included in school site plans?
- Are the arts included in the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)?
- To what extent are arts education policies, budget development, decisions, and activities carried out in a transparent, collaborative manner?
- How are private funds (Education Foundation, PTA/PTO, etc) distributed? Can they be brought into alignment with the values and vision of the plan?
- Are grant opportunities to support the arts pursued where appropriate?
- Are Title funds (federal funding) applied to the arts?
- What role does the County Office of Education/Departments play in supporting the arts at the district?

ANALYZING THE CURRENT STATE OF ARTS EDUCATION

The following Focused Conversation serves as *an example* for leading the Arts Planning Team through a thoughtful conversation that poses a series of questions, moving from the objective to the decisional levels. The format invites whole group participation. This is a method developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ica-usa.org) and it is assumed that leaders have some training in these methods.

STAGE 2 FOCUSED CONVERSATION | Understanding the Current State of Arts Education

Purpose/Aim

To more fully understand the current status of our county or district's arts education program PK-12 in preparation for strategic planning.

To generate excitement about what the needs are and to support the planning team with developing actions for addressing the needs.

Context

We have spent some time taking a careful inventory of the county/district's existing arts education programs. Now that we have this information it will allow us to move forward in drafting a plan for the future. First we'll take a few minutes to review the data. Then we'll discuss what we notice and our reactions to it, followed by a look at strengths and gaps, and finally discuss how this informs our planning moving forward.

Facilitator Note: At the objective level, it is helpful to go around the room and have each person give a brief answer. After the go around at the objective level, you can open the reflective, interpretive and decisional questions up to the group. Use the questions below to guide the conversation. **It is not**

necessary to ask every question, but it is recommended that they be asked in the sequence of as presented (objective, reflective, interpretive, decisional).

Questions

Objective:
What is one thing that stands out for you?
What arts disciplines are being taught? Not being taught?
Are any standards-aligned curricula being used? If so, in which disciplines?
How much time is dedicated to arts instruction?
Who is teaching the arts? (Credentialed Teachers, Specialists, classroom teachers, teaching artists, etc.)
Which community resources and partnership are used to support arts instruction?

Reflective:
What was your first reaction to the data?
What are you proud of?
What do you find inspiring?
Where do you feel disappointed?
What are you concerned with?

Interpretive:
What are our current strengths?
What insights are you having regarding our arts program?
What appears to be a gap that needs to be filled?

Decisional:
What would we need to do in order to have a comprehensive arts curriculum for all students?
What action ideas or improvements has this data triggered for you?
What is missing from the data that we know definitely exists in our district and/or school site programming?
What needs to be documented to complete this picture?

Closing

Thank you for taking the time to collect and review this data. We now have a much clearer picture of our strengths and our needs for improvement, and we can see where to focus our efforts. This is an important beginning for our Arts Planning Team.

ASSESSING YOUR CURRENT ARTS EDUCATION FUNDING

Another helpful step is to gain an understanding of the total amount of funds that are currently spent on arts education. This can be one of the most elusive areas of research because the total current funding for arts education may come from many different sources. These sources may include the LCAP, Title Funds, program funds, education foundations, assistance leagues, booster clubs, PTA, service clubs, parents, and assorted site-based funds, grants, fundraisers, parcel tax and bond measures.

The following questions can guide you as you attempt to determine the current level of funding for the arts. A select number of team members may need to focus on funding throughout the planning process. The district budget office should be able to provide information about salaries, equipment, and supplies. The funding at the County level varies across the state. Inquire with your budget office for more information.

As you analyze your funding profile, consider these guiding questions:

- What funding sources are being tapped for the arts? (teacher salaries, instructional supplies/materials/equipment, etc.)
- What non-district funds are utilized for the arts? (As noted above, education foundation, special programs or grants, etc.)
- Are community partners providing financial support for the arts?

Each district will have different protocols for capturing funding information. The purpose of data collection and data analysis in STAGE 2 is to tell the story of the arts as it currently exists. A broad understanding of how funds are allocated to the arts is useful, and the process is flexible enough to allow for circling back if more information is needed during the development of the strategic plan.

TIP:
The California County Superintendents Educational Services Association has traditionally provided support for arts education at the County level. See CCSESA Arts Initiative for more information.

STAGE 3

ESTABLISHING AN ARTS EDUCATION POLICY

Many districts or counties adopt an arts education policy that clearly anchors the values held by the community. This "best practice" is considered to be a key indicator in the successful delivery and sustainability of the arts. It is recommended that the Arts Team consider the value of policy development and adoption along with the plan.

The first step in policy development is for each team member to gain an understanding of shared values around arts education. It is certainly helpful to review policies developed by others, but ultimately "one size does not fit all." Making it your own will go a long way to powering the implementation of the plan.

REVIEWING A SAMPLE ARTS EDUCATION POLICY

The following serve as examples of an arts education policy and an arts education resolution. The "Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning" was developed by CREATE CA and has been adopted broadly across the state. Arts Planning Teams may review both of these approaches, or develop their own custom policy.

An Arts Policy is a statement of belief and a clear declaration that the arts are core curriculum and of intrinsic value. It is important, however, for the Arts Team to carefully work through the process and decide which approach fits and/or adheres to any district or county guidelines. Some districts prefer a narrative format, others bulleted lists. Some have existing policy structures, so that an arts education policy may fit into an existing structure, rather than standing on its own.

STAGE 3 Arts Education Policy Sample

ARTS EDUCATION POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes that the arts, including dance, music, theatre, media arts and visual arts, are part of core curriculum for all PK-12 students and that the value and the benefits of receiving arts education has been extensively documented. The Board also recognizes that instruction in the basic skills and content knowledge of the arts develops perceptual abilities that extend to all careers and areas of life. An arts education enables students to develop an appreciation of the arts, critical and creative thinking skills, initiative, self-esteem, wellbeing and confidence. It is also recognized that in our multicultural state, the arts build bridges and help pupils broaden their perspectives and understand their world and the diverse cultural influences that surround them. Communication, imagination, and information are keys to career opportunities, education, and a life-long appreciation of the arts. Therefore: It is the policy of this School District to educate all students so they can experience, perform, produce, and appreciate the arts.

The Board of Education recognizes that a comprehensive curriculum includes sequential PK-12 instruction in the arts for all students in all grades. The arts education program should enable students to achieve the goals outlined in the Content Standards for California Public Schools, which include the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards. The Board of Education supports the need to provide adequate funding for PK-12 Arts Education and recognizes that, in times of budget cutbacks, reductions must be distributed equitably across subject areas, rather than eliminating arts programs. In order to implement standards-based, sequential PK-12, and comprehensive arts education, with equity and access for all, the Board of Education supports the need to provide the following:

- A standards-based arts curriculum with assessment
- An Arts Coordinator(s) or Arts ToSA (Teacher on Special Assignment) who provides leadership, vision, planning, and resources for the arts
- Qualified teachers in all the arts at all grade levels and in all disciplines, supported by ongoing standards-based professional learning in the arts for classroom and arts teachers
- Opportunities during school hours for arts teachers to collaborate
- Standards-based instructional materials and resources, including, but not limited to, equipment, facilities, textbooks, and technologies that support learning
- Visual and performing arts spaces that are appropriately designed and equipped for the unique requirements of the arts
- Opportunities to showcase student learning/work in across sites and in the community
- Opportunities for students to experience a wide variety of artistic styles, venues, and performances including working with professional artists, community programs, cultural organizations, and field trips
- Opportunities for students in elementary and middle grades to work with and gain exposure to the arts programs at the other schools through school visits, assemblies, workshops, mentoring programs and other such activities
- Community resources, including business as well as parent involvement, partner with schools to provide additional supplemental funds and resources for arts programs, but this does not supplant the need for ongoing sustained, district or county level funding.
- An ongoing, inclusive, system of communications that welcomes the community into engaging in and with the arts at the district or county level.

The Focused Conversation below is designed as a way to review sample arts education policies.

STAGE 3 FOCUSED CONVERSATION | Reviewing A Sample District Arts Policy

Topic: To review a Sample Arts Education Policy

Purpose: To review a sample policy that highlights the components of a comprehensive arts education system, ensuring that the Board of Education will value and sustain equitable access to the arts over time.

Context: We have selected a policy to review. Since we now have a good understanding of the existing arts education programs, we can develop a clear statement of beliefs about the value of, and need for arts education PK-12. Let's take a look at the sample and see where our ideas and beliefs are reflected. First we'll silently review the sample policy. Then we'll discuss what we notice, our reactions, and how the sample policy might inform our own arts policy.

Facilitator: Use the questions below to guide the conversation. It is not necessary to ask every question, but it is recommended that they be asked in the sequence presented.

Objective: Name one topic that the sample policy covers.
What is one thing you notice about how the policy is formatted?
How would you describe the way the information is communicated?

Reflective: What was your first reaction to this policy?
Where are you anxious as to whether our Board would adopt it?
Where are you confident?
How might the policy be helpful to furthering our goals?

Interpretive: What is the importance of adopting a policy?
What kinds of changes would you suggest in the samples you reviewed?
What other commitments or beliefs do we need to consider?
How could we weave some of our own already existing elements into this type of a policy?
Who do you see represented in this policy? Who is not represented?
What questions does this raise for you?

Decisional: What do you recommend we include in our policy?
What parts would you leave out?
How will we make our policy accessible to the greater community?
What actions will we need to take to move the policy towards adoption?
Who would like to be on the small group that takes our ideas and writes up a draft?

Closing: Thank you for taking the time to review this policy. I believe we can adopt some of this language, add our own, and craft a clear message about the value of arts education in our district or county.

REVIEWING THE DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL STUDENTS TO EQUITY IN ARTS LEARNING

Developed by CREATE CA, the following Declaration includes the "student voice" starting, "I have the right..." A powerful approach, this has been used in public presentations with School and County leadership and adopted at the Governing Board level.

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL STUDENTS TO EQUITY IN ARTS LEARNING

CREATE CA defines EQUITY in Arts Education* as the right of every student to engage and succeed in powerful, high quality, standards-based arts learning PreK-12. All students from every race, culture, language background, geographic region, and socioeconomic level must have the opportunity to fully develop their own artistic, cultural, and linguistic heritage while expanding opportunities to study and explore artistic expressions across different cultures and time periods.

**We define arts education to include courses of study and interdisciplinary learning in dance, music, theatre, and visual and media arts, aligned with the State Standards and reflecting the provisions of the California State Education Code.*

1. The right to equitable access to PreK-12 free, coherent, and sequential standards-based arts learning that is part of the core curriculum and that provides both integrated and discrete visual and performing arts learning opportunities; and the right to equitable outcomes as a result of this access. without distinction on account of race, culture, language, religion, national origin, geographical location, or legal status.

I have the right to participate and succeed in high-quality courses in all the arts disciplines as part of my basic education, regardless of my background, culture, language or place of residence.

2. The right to special protection for every student's artistic and aesthetic development. The right to protection from policies and practices that exclude or preclude certain students or populations from equitable access to and success in powerful and coherent arts learning Prek-12.

I have the same right to fully develop my creative potential at every grade level and not be excluded for any reason.

3. The right to arts learning that is culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant, with attention to those populations that have traditionally been excluded or precluded, such as English Learners, students of color, foster youth, homeless youth, students in poverty, migrant students, and special needs students.

I have the right to engage in arts education that reflects, respects and builds on my culture, language and background.

4. The right to arts learning programs in every school, district, and community that are funded and supported with the necessary resources, including qualified administrators, teachers, teaching artists, and other staff, adequate materials, and appropriate facilities to support powerful culturally and linguistically responsive arts learning.

I have the right to receive the resources I need to be successful in my arts studies in dance, music, theatre, media and visual arts, including the proper supplies and facilities, and especially qualified teachers and curriculum that honor all cultures and languages.

5. The right to educators, leaders, and parents/community who are knowledgeable about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of arts learning for individual students, families/communities, the nation, and global society.

I have the right to be supported by leaders in my community and school who understand the benefits of an arts education to prepare me for college, career and life.

6. The right to be brought up in school and community environments that value and protect the arts and equity as essential to the full development of every student, and that demonstrate those values/beliefs in their public policies and practices.

I have the right to learn and practice the arts in a positive environment where everyone understands and acts on the knowledge that I am engaging in valuable and important work.

REVIEWING THE MODEL RESOLUTION FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The following Model Resolution is available as a template on the createca.org website, so that districts and county offices of education and arts organizations can bring a customized resolution to the Governing Board for adoption. Badges for Arts Equity District and Arts Equity Champion can be displayed on the website of those organizations that choose to adopt the Resolution and Declaration.

STAGE 3 Model Resolution from CREATE CA

The Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning *outlines each student's right to have access to high-quality public arts education, regardless of their background, culture, language or geographic location. By signing this Declaration your district commits, over the next five years, to:*

- Prioritize expanding access for ALL students to high-quality public arts education;
- Develop a strategic arts plan; and
- Show progress in overall student participation in the arts, as demonstrated in arts education data.

Resolution to Adopt the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning

WHEREAS, [School Board Name] acknowledges that arts learning – which includes dance, music, theatre, and visual and media arts – is an essential part of a comprehensive education for all students, pre-K-12, to prepare them for college, career and life.

WHEREAS, arts learning promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, supports overall academic achievement and nurtures skills that help all students in [District Name] succeed in school and in life.

WHEREAS [School Board Name] recognizes that particular groups of students experience significant barriers to access, participation and success in arts learning and that these barriers are directly linked to historical, persistent and pervasive inequities in our educational system.

WHEREAS, we do adopt this declaration as follows:

Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning

1. The right to equitable access to pre-K-12 free, coherent and sequential standards-based arts learning that is part of the core curriculum and that provides both integrated and discrete visual and performing arts learning opportunities; and the right to equitable outcomes as a result of this access, without distinction on account of race, culture, language, religion, national origin, geographical location or legal status.

   Every student in the [District Name] has the right to participate and succeed in high-quality courses in all the arts disciplines as part of their basic education, regardless of their background, culture, language or place of residence.

2. The right to special protection for every student's artistic and aesthetic development. The right to protection from policies and practices that exclude or preclude certain students or populations from equitable access to and success in powerful and coherent arts learning pre-K-12.

   All students have the same right to fully develop their creative potential at every grade level and to not be excluded for any reason.

3. The right to arts learning that is culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant, with particular attention to those populations that have traditionally been excluded or precluded, such as English Learners, students of color, foster youth, homeless youth, students in poverty, migrant students and special needs students.

   All students have the right to engage in arts education that reflects, respects and builds on their culture, language and background.

4. The right to arts learning programs in every school, district and community that are funded and supported with the necessary resources – including qualified administrators, teachers, teaching artists and other staff; adequate materials; and appropriate facilities – to support powerful culturally and linguistically responsive arts learning.

   All students have the right to receive the resources they need to be successful in their arts studies in dance, music, theatre, and media and visual arts, including the right supplies and facilities and especially qualified teachers and curriculum that honors all cultures and languages.

5. The right to educators, leaders and parents/community who are knowledgeable about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of arts learning for individual students, families/communities, the nation and global society.

   All students have the right to be supported by leaders in their community and school who understand the benefits of an arts education to prepare them for college, career and life.

6. The right to be brought up in school and community environments that value and protect the arts and equity as essential to the full development of every student and that demonstrate those values/beliefs in their public policies and practices.

   All students have the right to learn and practice the arts in a positive environment where everyone understands and acts on the knowledge that they are engaging in valuable and important work.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the [School Board Name] recognizes the powerful impact that an arts curriculum has in the cognitive and social development of students and its role as an essential component of a comprehensive education;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the [School Board Name] adopts this Declaration and commits to taking the following actions:

{Note: School boards select which actions they will take and can add others as they see fit}

- ☐ Post the Arts Equity District badge on the district's website and social media channels.
- ☐ Ask all staff members to encourage students to participate in visual and performing arts courses that will help promote academic achievement, express creativity and support social development.
- ☐ Review our district's secondary-level schools data in the California Arts Education Data Project to analyze and understand where we currently stand and report the findings at a future board meeting.
- ☐ Use the Data Project findings to explore establishing a strategic arts plan that will help our district achieve and fulfill the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning.
- ☐ Dedicate appropriate resources – such as utilizing academic materials that align with state standards, creating or adding staff positions and providing suitable facilities that allow our students to participate in visual and performing arts learning.
- ☐ Promote arts learning that honors all cultures and languages by developing staff capacities, identifying community resources and creating opportunities for students to contribute to the design of their learning.

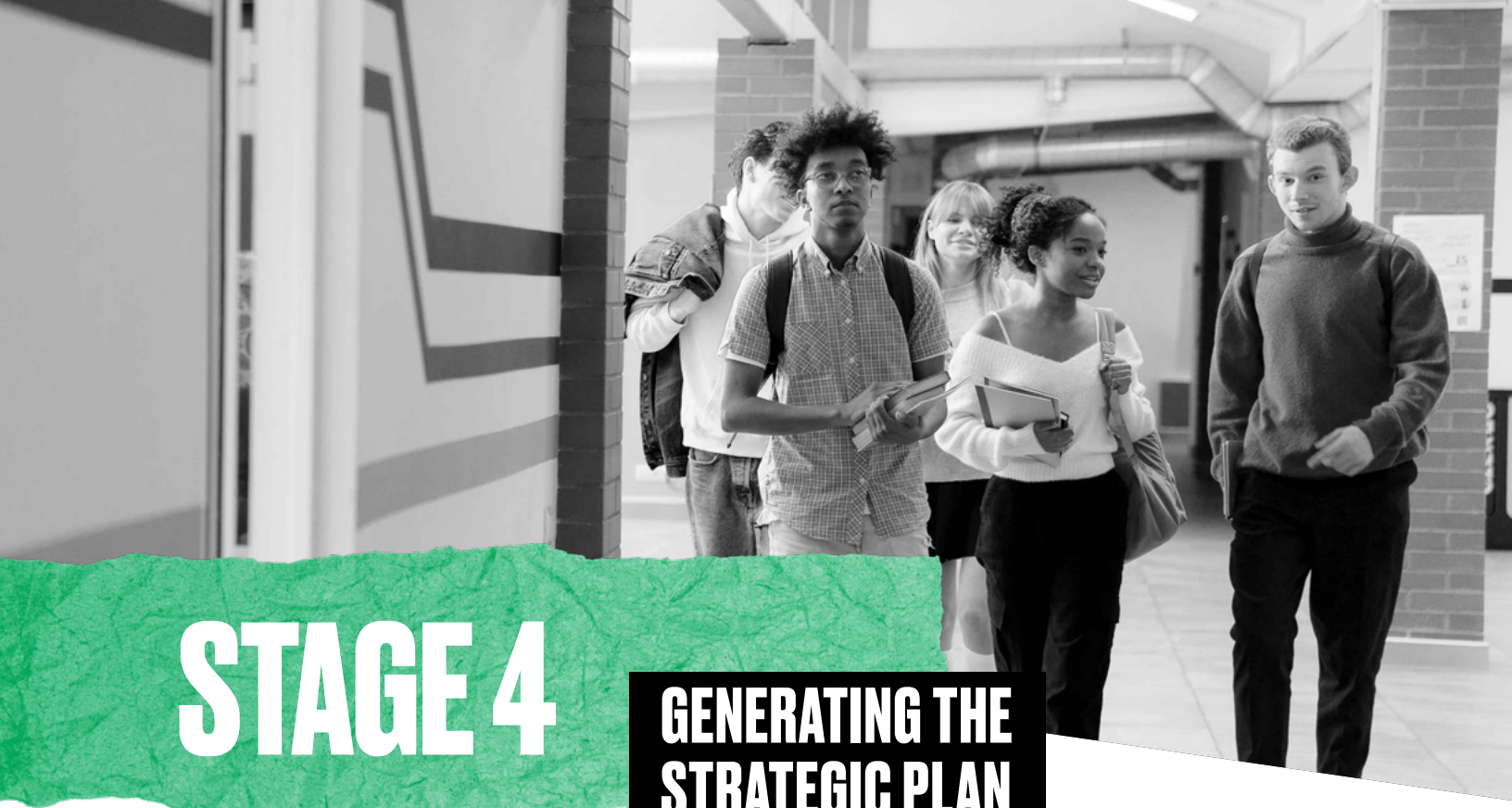
Adopted by the [School Board Name]

[DATE]

The Focused Conversation below is designed as a way to review the Create CA Model Resolution.

STAGE 3 FOCUSED CONVERSATION | Model Resolution and the Declaration of Rights of All Students

Topic:	Model Resolution and the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning from Create CA.
Purpose:	To bring the team together to review and consider the value of adopting the resolution to support the arts planning effort.
Context:	We are going to look at a Model Resolution that is based on the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning from Create CA. The resolution is meant to be customized by each district or county to bring a focus to the need for access and equity in offering arts education for all students. Spend a few minutes reading through the Declaration document, noticing especially the student voice in italics. Next read through the Model Resolution. Highlight things that stand out or where you have questions. We are looking at this resolution in light of what we might like to include in our own resolution to bring to leadership for adoption for our district or county when our arts plan is completed. When you are finished reading the documents, we will begin our conversation.
Objective Level:	What did the resolution include? What parts were there? How was it organized?
Reflective Level:	What was your first reaction? How do you think others will respond? Were there places where you were surprised? Were there places where you were concerned? Were there places where you were inspired? What other feelings did this bring up?
Interpretive Level:	What needs to be altered for our district? How could this best be used/ offered to the School Board How might we provide this for parents and students to embrace? How could we use it as a tool for transformational change?
Decisional Level:	What are our next steps?
Closing:	Thank you for reviewing the work from Create CA. Understanding that these are rights for all of our students will guide our time together.



STAGE 4

GENERATING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The preceding stages have led to the point where the team can begin planning based on the information gleaned from the earlier steps. Understanding your community, understanding what is offered in the district, county or community, taking a look at current funding and developing a shared philosophy and policy are all critical stepping stones.

The strategic planning process takes courage, determination, and vision to uncover what is possible for the district or county. It also requires letting go of the "lack of" mentality. We've all been in situations where we accomplished great things in spite of challenges. Using the process we are suggesting allows a group to move forward with authentic consensus and powerful momentum.

As depicted in the diagram in the Introduction and on the next page, the strategic planning process is a spiral. You may find that you need to circle back to revisit priorities, strategies and opportunities. As you begin to build out the components of the plan, new ideas will emerge and become clear.

TIP: The workshops and conversations in this chapter have been developed utilizing the Group Facilitation Methods established by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. For more information or training in these methods, visit ica-usa.org.

The Strategic Planning Spiral is a visual representation of the entire process, depicting the steps of the planning process. It accurately reflects the ongoing cyclical nature of strategic planning and implementation.

PREPARING TO FACILITATE AN IN-PERSON PLANNING SESSION

At this point, your team will have decided whether the planning will proceed with in-person meetings or virtual/online meetings. The following instructions for the planning process will include first, the traditional methods used for in-person, and then secondly, the process for virtual online meetings.

STEP 1 : Define a Practical Vision

The next step in strategic planning is to establish a shared practical vision. The focus question: **"In 5 years, what do we want to see in place for the arts as a result of our actions?"** creates a powerful position from which to plan.

We have explored the key components of an equitable arts education program, we may have developed an Arts Education Policy, and we have familiarized ourselves with the current status of arts education. Now we need to get practical and specific about what we can implement in the next 3-5 years.

Below, you will find a workshop script to guide your team through the process of identifying the key elements of your vision.

STEP 1 – WORKSHOP: DEFINE A PRACTICAL VISION

PREPARATION:

Put up the Sticky Wall with blue tape. Use repositionable spray adhesive to prepare the wall.

- Write out the focus question with a dark marker on a half chart sheet as illustrated below.

In 5 years, what do we want to see in place for the arts as a result of our actions?

IN PERSON

- Make dark markers available to each participant.
- Have full sheets available – preferably an inviting color such as gold – for brainstorming.
- Cut half sheets of all one color for the ideas (40-50).
- Have a group of 10-12 half sheets of a different color for the symbol tags.
- Have full sheets available in another color for Title cards (10-12).
- Have invisible tape handy to tape the sheets together for documentation after the workshop.

FOCUS QUESTION

Write the focus question out and post on the physical sticky wall. Make sure it is big and bold enough that all participants can view the question easily (see example above).

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The group should first confirm the intended timeframe for the strategic planning process (e.g., 5 years). It is important that it is far enough into the future that people can imagine change happening over the course of that time. This workshop is the first step in the strategic planning process.

We will be identifying strengths that provide momentum towards our vision, the challenges or obstacles that stand in our way, and the strategies we can use to overcome our challenges and move us toward our shared vision as the process unfolds.

FOCUSED CONVERSATION VISUALIZATION

In order to have each person in the room open up to creative possibilities, it is exciting to take a little trip into the future. Here is a suggested guided visualization that the facilitator will read aloud while the team members silently answer these questions in their own minds. Facilitator starts speaking with the “opening.”

STEP 1 – FOCUSED CONVERSATION: PRACTICAL VISION	
Topic:	**Visualization: Moving into the Future**
Purpose:	To identify a shared vision – get everyone on the same page.
Context:	To feel a sense of shared identity and that we each bring something unique to this team/this planning and can create something bigger together.
Opening:	Visions, hopes and dreams are what we want to see become reality. They arise from experiences in our own lives yet are currently beyond our grasp. We need to step beyond what is, into a future we can imagine. Each of us carries with us some level of anticipation and hope for the future of a situation. We come to a planning session expecting to make a positive contribution. Each individual’s insight is needed to create the shared vision of the group. I am now going to take you 5 years into the future. It is 2027-2028. We have a news reporter and camera crew who are coming to the schools in our district/community. They want to report on, and celebrate the

progress we have made over the last 5 years, since we came together to create a new Strategic Plan. I want you to go along on a walking tour of some of our campuses where arts education is taking place.

Objective Level: What do you see?
What is on the walls of our schools/classrooms?
What sounds do you hear?
What sort of music do you hear? What sort of dance do you see?
Are the students drawing, painting? Are they practicing, rehearsing, performing?

Reflective Level: What draws you in as you witness the arts that are being offered?
What feelings are you experiencing?

Interpretive Level: What are the district teachers saying about the arts instruction?
About the professional learning they have received?
What are the parents saying? What are the students saying?
What kind of changes have we seen in terms of arts integration? What changes have occurred with discrete arts instruction?
What is now in place that we could have only dreamed of a few years ago?
What opportunities now exist for our students? What new partnerships and collaborations have developed?
Who is helping us to fund our programs?
Who is helping us to teach and deliver our programs?

Decisional Level: What are the first steps we can take to make this dream a reality?
Let's take a look at our focus question.

VARIATIONS ON THE FOCUS QUESTION:

Based on whether you are working with a County Department, County Office of Education, Government Agency or Nonprofit Organization, your question might be something like this:

What Services and Supports will the County Office of Education provide to the districts to provide access and equity in arts learning for all students?

In addition, you may consider customizing the question according to the needs of the planning team in pre-meetings with leadership.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

After the visualization, invite the team members to spend some time brainstorming, quietly by themselves. Instruct each person to take out the sheet of paper and list 10-12 things that they would like to see in place in the arts education program in 5 years. It is important that this process be done in silence with each person bringing forth their best thinking without discussion or conversation.

As a facilitator, it is important to give people enough time to complete the list without feeling rushed. Suggest to the group that the ideas should be quite specific. For example, *instead of all of the arts for all of the students, every elementary school has offerings in music PK-5. At the end of the brainstorming, ask participants to asterisk their top 4-5 ideas.*

PAIR SHARING AND CLARIFYING IDEAS

Invite the team members to work in partners and discuss their ideas. Take the clearest ideas and write them out with a marker horizontally across half-sheets of paper. The aim is to generate 35-45 ideas among the group. Use the following guide to determine the number of ideas each pair should generate:

10 participants	5 pairs	6-8 ideas per pair	30-40 ideas
16 participants	8 pairs	4-5 ideas per pair	32-40 ideas
20 participants	10 pairs	4-5 ideas per pair	40-50 ideas

To ensure that the ideas are clearly visible to the group when posted, invite the participants to: WRITE BIG, write 5-7 WORDS PER CARD, and 1 IDEA PER CARD.

SYNTHESIZING THE IDEAS

Set Up the Wall in Advance

- If a sticky wall is not available, you may want to put several sheets of chart paper up on a blank wall and be sure to spray them with adhesive.
- Spread out 9 half sheets (vertically) as placeholders for tags across the top of your wall with symbols such as heart, star, sun, flower, spiral, etc.

Collect and Organize the First Round of Ideas

- The facilitator collects 2-3 half-sheets from each pair. Ask for the clearest and most compelling ideas.
- It is very important to read each idea aloud as you affix it to the wall or group discussion. It is suggested that you put them in a “smile” format to give room for the cards to be paired up.
- Ask the group: Are there two ideas that show a similar accomplishment or have a similar intention? Begin to make vertical columns with pairs of ideas below the tags with symbols.

Collect and Organize the Second Round of Ideas

- The facilitator collects another round from the team members, or the group moves their ideas to the discussion area. Continue to read the ideas as you affix them to the wall or workspace.
- After the second round, it is helpful to put a quick tag name at the top of the column on the symbol note. Once the tags have been identified, participants can tag their remaining cards before they pass them forward.
- Continue to categorize all the ideas into columns that describe a similar idea or outcome. It is important to collect all of the ideas, even if they are duplicative. This shows the group where there is particular energy around an idea. Before you move on, be sure to ask each team member to look at their brainstorming sheet to make sure that there isn’t anything missing from the wall.

IN PERSON

Create a Title for Each Column

- The facilitator then guides the group in coming up with a richly descriptive title for the column, possibly using the convention of "adjective, adjective, noun." Once the title is determined, cover the symbol card at the top of each column with a full sheet of paper (horizontally) with the name that describes the contents of that column.
- The title should be 5-7 words and highly descriptive.
- Consider the following prompts to help the group name each column:
  - What words in this column stand out to you? (Underline the words.)
  - What's your gut reaction/emotional response to the words in this column?
  - What are some themes, ideas, insights that this column holds?
  - What name best describes what this column is about?
- Go to a deeper level of consensus rather than just labeling the column; continue until all of the columns are titled. Example: Engaged and Active Community Members as Partners in the Arts.

TIP: The Titles are considered to be Vision Elements (ultimate outcomes) that will guide the plan. Some teams may want to see the Title Cards as Goals. Others may choose to see them as Focus Areas of the plan. However your team decides to move through this consensus workshop, you are developing an overall framework to guide the plan. Don't become too concerned about the naming conventions, but rather focus on creating a sense of shared ownership around the team's Vision.

STEP 1 – FOCUSED CONVERSATION: REVIEWING THE PRACTICAL VISION

Topic:	Reviewing the Practical Vision
Purpose:	To understand what the group has created and to feel a sense of collaboration, consensus and community through the planning process
Context:	You have all contributed to our Practical Vision. You have offered your brainstorming, worked together to refine your ideas, and develop meaningful titles for our Vision Elements. Let's take a moment to say those Titles/Vision Elements out loud. Why don't we begin with you... *Each person reads one of the Title cards at the top of the column aloud.* As you hear those vision elements out loud, I want you to reflect back to the exercise we began with. I asked you to imagine yourself 5 years out in time, walking a person around the district. As you see our Vision, think about how we can bring this to reality. We call it a Vision because it's where we want to go. We call it "practical" so that we can ensure that our actions are realistic and doable.
Questions	*Objective:* As you look at the wall what are you seeing? Where are the columns particularly long?

IN PERSON

Reflective:
Which of these ideas speaks personally to you?
Are there ideas on the wall that make you uneasy?
Are there ideas that are exciting, energizing?

Interpretive:
What new ideas are coming to you as you see what's up there?
Which do you think would be hardest to implement?
Which seems easiest?

Decisional:
If you were to choose, which area would you like to start on right away?
Which area would have the greatest impact right away?

Closing: This has been important work describing specifically and clearly what we want our arts education program to include. Creating a vision that is tangible and vivid will frame the next steps in our planning process, and will motivate our work during the next 5 years. Thanks for your insights and participation.

Below is an example of documentation of the Practical Vision Workshop. The facilitator documents the results of the visioning workshop in the form of a table by first taping the columns vertically and then typing the contents of the cards into a word table. The documentation of the Practical Vision will be used for the next steps of the planning process.

In 5 Years, What Will Be In Place In The Arts As A Result of our Actions?

CONTENT				INFRASTRUCTURE			SUSTAINABILITY		
ARTS CURRICULUM	***ARTS INTEGRATION***	***COLLEGE & CAREER PATHWAYS***	***PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT***	***STAFFING & SCHEDULING***	***STUDENT ACCESS***	***AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING***	***STUDENT VOICE***	***COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS***	***SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT***
Arts-Standards Based Vertical Articulation	Integration of STEM and culture into arts to give students a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them	Early preparation for CTE, College and Career Readiness	Intentional Professional Development & Recognition Opportunities for All	Staffing & Scheduling for all PK-12th grade scholars during the instructional day	Equitable access to all Art Forms Pre-K to 12th Grade	Increased after-school participation in arts programs due to elimination of barriers	Arts are Used to Empower Student Voices	Ongoing Community Partnerships and Engagement to Celebrate VAPA-Centered Initiatives	Reliable Data and Supportive Funding Cycle
Top down expectations per Arts Standards Vertical art lessons between elementary/ middle/ HS –go to each other's campuses Age appropriate elementary arts experiences Music in K-2 MS instructional day dance and theatre Levelled visual arts courses at HS level More dance and theatre Multi-cultural music and arts in all schools Varsity Art, Dance, Acting, Singing Groups (ex. Letter Jacket/Next Level Goal)	SEL & Arts Integrated Curriculum Integration of culture into arts curriculum Lots of STEAM Branding gaps between arts & STEM and between arts Integrated emphasis on Creativity Art history education=deeper knowledge of self VAPA as a leverage for language learning & expression	Practical application Artist Workshops (work in field) Defined Arts Career Pathways (connect to people in the field) Students creating music electronically like pop stars HS Students teaching elementary students CTE as a form of training	Sustainable Arts PD for all Teachers/Admin and Counselors Cognitive Development in each art form taught and understood Encourage/recog nize teachers for creating new art projects	Arts (Visual and Performing) in the school day with use of itinerant arts teachers ES certificated instructors (vis arts, theatre, dance) Permanent (or itinerant) elementary visual arts teachers Equity and Access in HS via block schedules	Increased VAPA access for EL students (A-G) Access to arts classes district-wide Common access to Music, Dance, Art, Theatre at all sites. Equity – can look different Equitable access to VAPA for all students	Transportation for students who participate in after school arts programs Afterschool Club Opportunities (transport, outside school schedule) Improved District to Student Communication Transportation to events and more events Transportation for students who participate in VAPA afterschool events	Student Arts Council to Empower Youth Student podcast highlighting VVUSD experiences SEL Relations in communications between students and teachers Student Advisory Council with real power & input Frequent student voice opportunities Service based projects where VAPA students can help on campus (community service)	Celebration of Arts Festival Collaborative partnerships to showcase arts in the community Full parental and community understanding and support of the integral role of the arts in academics & student life Frequent family voice opportunities Parent involvement opportunities in and out of school Increased Community VAPA opportunities. Bridge across sites/community events Design platforms for students to showcase their talents A Performing Arts Facility – State of the Arts Theatre for district-wide performances.	Meaningful, relevant data systems Sustainable funding in place Performance art practice facilities and storage on site

STEP 2: DESCRIBE THE CURRENT REALITY - STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The next step in strategic planning is to identify the strengths – the momentum propelling us toward our vision – as well as the challenges or blocks that may stand in the way of reaching our shared vision. The script below will guide your team through this important next phase of conversation, consensus-building, and decision-making.

STEP 2- WORKSHOP | Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Topic: **Identifying Strengths and Challenges**

Purpose: To analyze our current reality and use it as a springboard for moving into action by articulating both our strengths and our perceived challenges. To stimulate breakthrough thinking that ignites action.

Context:

Strengths are assets that have the potential to work in your favor.

Example Strengths may include:

- Dedicated teachers
- All elementary school students receive music
- Administrators at sites are very supportive
- Parents see value in the arts
- VAPA Coordinator in place

Challenges are:

- Roadblocks between what exists and our vision of the future (e.g., the scheduling demands on schools that may lead to less time allotted to the arts);
- Patterns of behavior or belief systems that needs to change;
- Causes of a frustration, not just a symptom;
- Clues to what is not happening, not a lack of something.

Example Challenges may include:

- Fragmented coordination
- Unmotivated staff
- Conflicting access to multiple disciplines

Challenges are not “problems.” Problems are things you fix, and you cannot fix an obstacle. You can respond to it, impact it, or go around it. It is part of your community and institutional environment. The group will determine, “What will need to change for us to reach our vision? Why is it still going on?”

LACK OF

Challenges are also not a "lack of" something, for example a lack of money, time, or space. They are real blocks.

Problem	Underlying Challenge
Lack of time	• Too many competing priorities • Focus unclear * Responsibilities unclear
Lack of money	• Don't know the real cost of things • Budgeting process unclear • Financial priorities elsewhere • Budget has not been addressed
Lack of people/staff	• Limited buy-in from staff for what is expected • Ineffective recruiting and retention process • Unrealistic job descriptions

Frequently these challenges and obstacles are not obvious. They are like cataracts. You do not see them directly, yet they cloud your vision and blind you to what is in front of you. Institutions that do not deal with their self-images, attitudes, procedures, policies and structures, can become entrenched in their convictions and may even fall short in delivering on their mission.

Using the "lack of" handout like the one below may help participants avoid "lack of" thinking and get to the real challenge.

IN PERSON

LACK OF

ORGANIZATION	RELEVANCE	PRODUCTIVITY
disorganized	inappropriate	debilitating
fragmented	irrelevant	misused
inaccessible	narrow	ineffective
incoherent	obsolete	inefficient
overlapping	outdated	neglected
unbalanced	outmoded	obstructed
uncoordinated	unsuitable	unproductive
unsystematic	vague	stalled

EXPECTATIONS	STABILITY	MOTIVATION
competing	inadequate	apprehensive
conflicting	insecure	confusing
contradictory	insufficient	devalued
illogical	sporadic	discouraging
impractical	unstable	incompetent
inflexible	unsustainable	unclear
restricted	volatile	uninspiring
unrealistic	weakened	unmotivated

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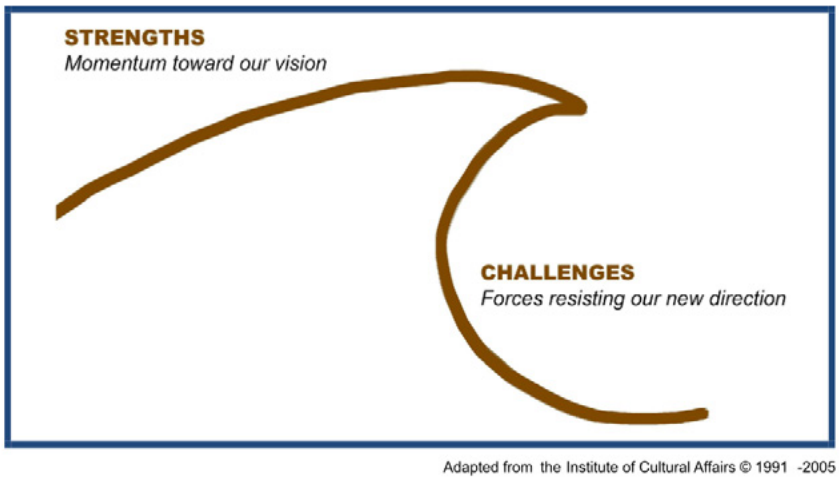
Root Causes

As a facilitator you may need to guide your group to dig deeper to the real root causes of the challenge. Showing an image of the dandelion may help guide the conversation about underlying causes. The quality of the truth-telling in this section leads directly to innovative actions in the next section of the planning. Just like dandelions in your lawn; they will persist until you dig out the whole root.

THE STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES WAVE

Use 2-4 pieces of chart paper on the sticky wall. Draw a large wave similar to the example below. Use one color for strengths (such as green) and one color for challenges (such as red) for the wave.



REVIEW THE VISION

Ask members of the group to read the Vision Elements/Goals (Titles) from the previous workshop. Ask the group to silently consider each of the elements.

Questions

- Chart the ideas from the group in a single color on the left side of the wave.
- What are the strengths that will help us achieve our vision?
- What opportunities and assets exist in our community that can support/enhance our efforts to achieve our vision?

Identify Challenges

For this part of the exercise, the group may find it helpful to refer to the “No Lack Of” chart for ideas about how to articulate the challenges more clearly.

- Chart the ideas from the group in a single color on the right side of the wave.
- What are the challenges or obstacles within our district that will get in our way?
- What challenges exist in our community that may hinder progress toward our vision?

Closing

- Read through all the strengths aloud. What stands out for you? (Highlight 5-7 items)
- Now, let's repeat this for the challenges. Which challenges are most pressing? (Star 5-7 items)
- As you look at the challenges, are there some that are similar and come together to indicate a bigger challenge? (Chart 5-7 key challenges on a separate sheet)
- What are possible actions we could take to impact these challenges and release our vision? Ask the group for a few ideas. These ideas do not need to be charted; they serve as the transition into the next planning step.
- Facilitators may choose to open the floor for ideas around new opportunities or possibilities as they are arising in the group.
- We will now move on to the process of creating actions to move forward.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY YOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide your plan. In this method we develop key actions to impact our most pressing challenges. In this way, we can create actions that impact underlying causes and challenges, and inspire real, sustainable changes. These actions will also give us ways to measure change as we move into implementation.

The following workshop outlines the way the team can develop creative, innovative actions that will deal directly with the challenges and move the group toward the desired vision.

STEP 3 – WORKSHOP | Identifying Strategic Directions

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide the plan and focus our actions. Instead of looking at our Practical Vision alone, we develop creative, innovative actions that will deal with the challenges directly.

Next, the group is guided to focus on creative action ideas that will address the challenges and support movement towards the vision. Once these ideas are generated, they will be organized around a similar intent or outcome.

Holding the Vision Alongside the Challenges. The image below demonstrates how we simultaneously hold both the vision and the challenges in mind in order to determine the most strategic, high leverage actions. You may want to share a diagram with the group such as the following:

IN PERSON

SHARED VISION

What we really want for our youth.

CREATIVE TENSION

CURRENT CHALLENGES

What is working against us in reaching our vision.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

What we will do to make our vision a reality.

Anchoring Strategic Thinking

Purpose: To support the group with creating concrete action ideas that will address the underlying challenges and activate the vision.

In person, to emphasize the innovative and creative thinking you want to foster, you may use an exercise like passing around a common object like a paper cup, pen or paper clip.

The facilitator may ask individuals to bring the object toward the zoom camera that will be endowed with a new meaning. One idea that works well on Zoom is to use a balled-up piece of paper. Ask each person to "take" a piece of paper and ball it up. Using crumpled paper as an imaginary ball, individuals toss the ball, one by one, to someone else by moving the crumpled paper towards the camera. The person selected, imagines catching the ball and then transforms their crumpled ball into something new. This continues as each person suggests an "uncommon" use for the object. The concept that is being demonstrated is the wealth of imagination that exists in a group with diverse perspectives.

To get people to think strategically, you can make reference or show an image such as one below to open up thinking around down board thinking that takes place in chess—anticipating the chain of potential results from a single move.

There is also the example of leveraged action, or how hitting the right pin in bowling, brings all the pins down for a strike. Where in our district/county/community might one small action cause several things to change?

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WORKSHOP FOCUS QUESTION

Write the focus question on a large sheet of paper and affix to the wall. Make sure it is big and bold enough that all participants can view the question easily (see example below).

> What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move toward our vision?

ADVANCE PREPARATION OF THE STICKY WALL

Facilitator puts up 9 boxes—each is half of a chart paper labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I. Put a line across the top for the Box Title. The paper is sprayed with a repositionable spray adhesive so that as the half-sheets are mounted on them they stick like a sticky note. If spray isn't available, the facilitator can use bits of tape on the half-sheets. The boxes are lined up 3 across and 3 down (see example below).

A _____	B _____	C _____
D _____	E _____	F _____
G _____	H _____	I _____

IN PERSON

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR BRAINSTORMING

Have members of the group read the main elements of the Practical Vision they created and then read the key Strengths and Challenges from the previous section.

TIP: You may wish to pick specific challenges to focus on and also pick a few vision elements to focus on. After individually brainstorming, you will share these ideas with your partner or small group so that you have a breadth of ideas that address not only the challenges but also activate the vision.

PRIMING THE PUMP FOR IDEAS

Facilitator should point to one of the challenges and ask for one innovative or bold action that could be taken to deal with that block. Provide one or two ideas as examples, just to give people an idea of what they are being asked to do.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

Facilitator should instruct participants to Individually list 10-12 actions on a piece of paper, that we can take to overcome one or more of our challenges and activate the vision.

Each person needs to come up with at least 10-12 ideas or answers to the Focus Question example:

"What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move towards our vision?"

Make sure to provide participants with plenty of quiet time to think on their own. A total of 10-15 minutes may be needed.

Facilitator should give a set of instructions similar to this:

- Working in pairs (or threes or fours if the group is large), participants share all of their brainstorm ideas.
- Write the ideas on half-sheets of paper.
- Instructions for writing the ideas: WRITE BIG, 5-7 words, 1 IDEA per CARD.

PUTTING LIKE IDEAS TOGETHER

- The facilitator collects 2-3 half-sheets from each pair. Ask for the clearest and most compelling ideas.
- The Facilitator collects a first round of actions (aiming to get up 14-18 total) and reads each one as they place them first randomly in the boxes and the rest on the wall next to the boxes.
- The participants are asked to find two ideas that describe actions that are similar in intent or outcome. When two are identified, they go into one of the boxes.

- Typically the facilitator will need to ask for three rounds of ideas. All ideas get mounted on the wall eventually. Place all of the action ideas together within the boxes as successive rounds of half sheets are shared.

NAMING THE BOXES

- Guide the group to give a meaningful title to each box that captures the intent held in that group of ideas. Take time to name these boxes, because they will serve as the key GOALS for the phased plan.

Prompt question: If we complete the actions outlined within this box, what are we DOING? What is the big idea that encompasses all of the actions in this box? Begin with an action verb – consider using the *-ing* convention to show forward movement.

EXAMPLES OF BOX TITLES:

We are...

- Expanding professional learning opportunities
- Expanding access to facilities, supplies and equipment for all students
- Building sustainable funding for the arts

REVIEWING THE KEY COMPONENTS TRIANGLE

In developing an Arts Education Plan, we have identified three main sectors that will ensure a comprehensive plan: Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability

IN PERSON

As the boxes are filled with creative, innovative actions, they may fall naturally into one of these focus areas and as demonstrated in the triangle.

Content Includes:
Curriculum and Instruction, Student Centered Assessment, and Professional Learning.

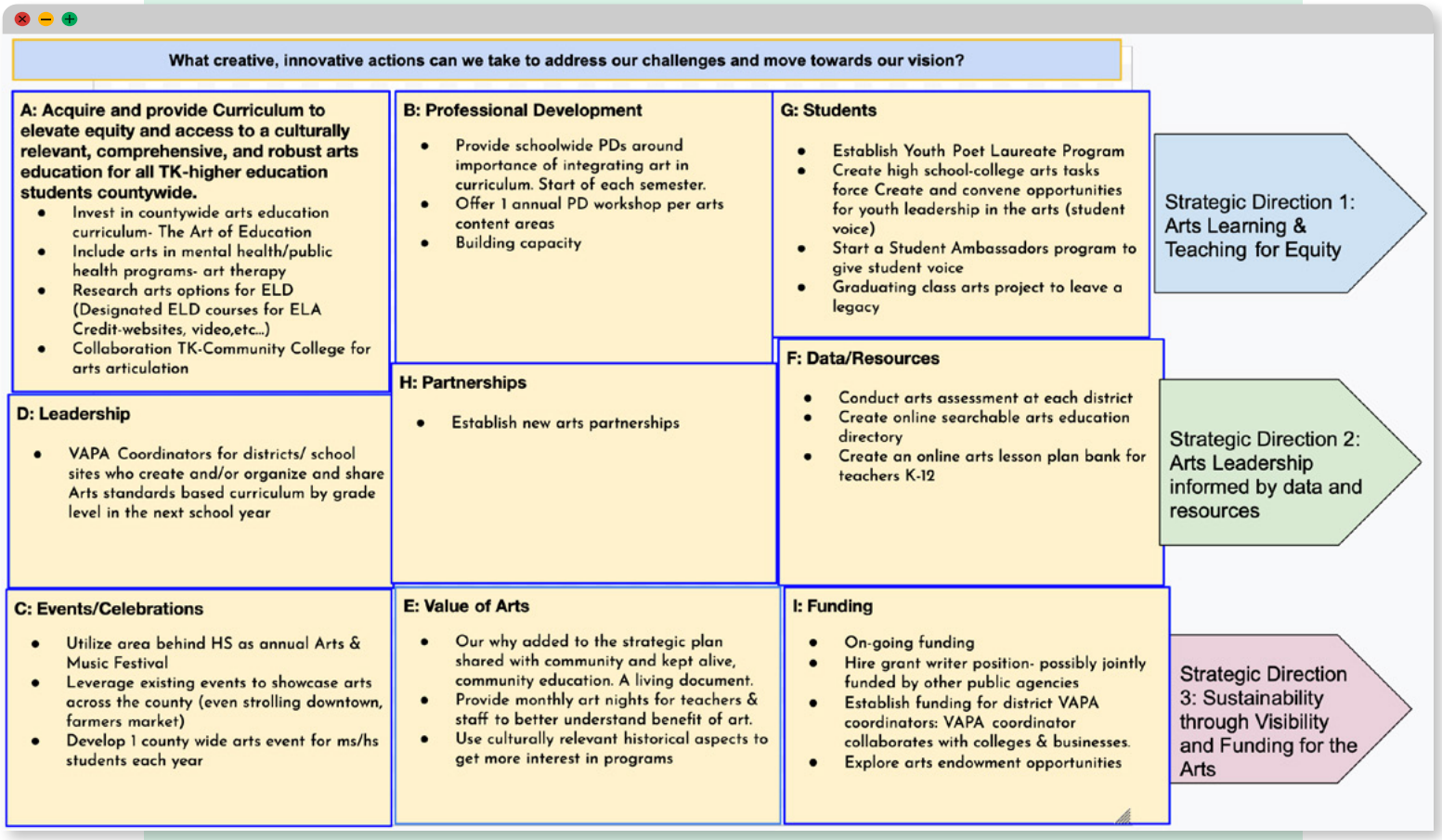
Infrastructure Includes:
Administration/Coordination, Teaching Personnel, Spaces, Equipment and Supplies, and Community Partnerships and Collaborations.

Sustainability Includes:
Values and Policy, Funding, Ongoing Evaluation, Communications and Advocacy

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OR BROAD AREAS OF FOCUS

After all of the boxes have a meaningful title, take the larger view of what is on the wall, and ask which 2 or 3 boxes are strongly related or have a similar intent. Connect these boxes by physically placing them beside one another. Continue this until you have the boxes arranged side by side in 3 horizontal lines. These form the basis for your strategic directions.

This is an example of Strategic Directions Workshop documentation.



IN PERSON

Select 1 row of boxes. Ask the group to identify the direction that is shared by all of the boxes. Suggest strong words that end in "ing" such as: engaging, empowering, catalyzing, positioning, venturing, enhancing, supporting, expanding, developing, updating. Using gerunds such as these gives the strategic directions in an active, ongoing tone that drives your planning over the long term.

Examples:

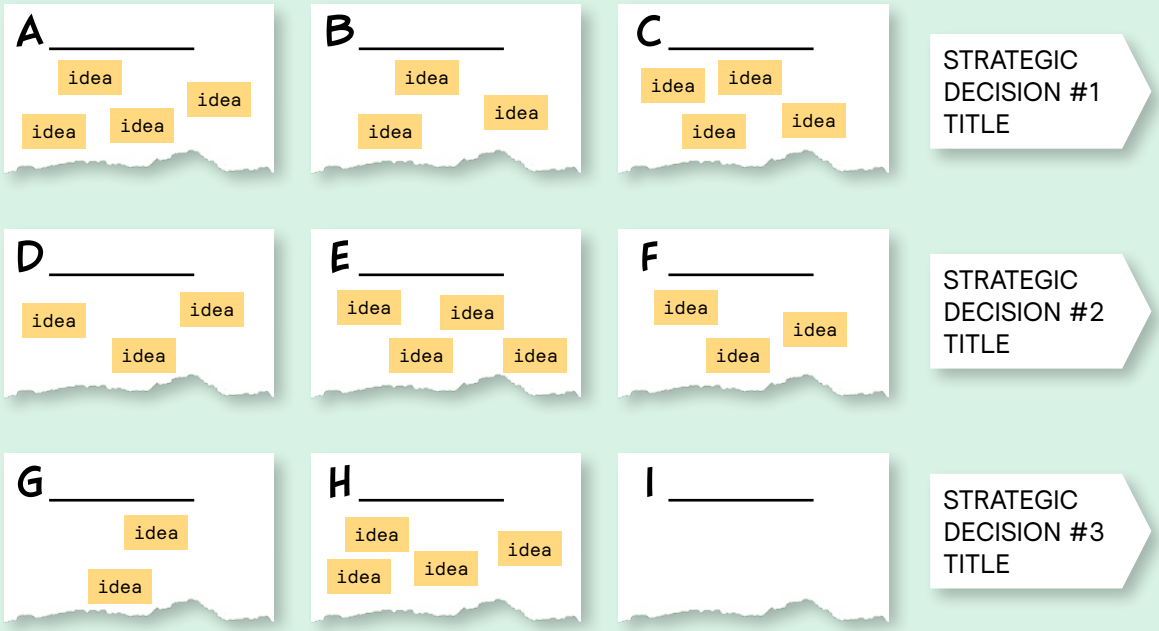
- Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning
- Strategic Direction 2: Expanding Partnerships and Collaborations
- Strategic Direction 3: Building Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding

By identifying key priorities in this way, the group feels empowered to take action on areas of challenge.These become the overall "goals" of the plan.

Modification: Some teams have found it helpful to simply label each of the Strategic Direction Arrows as **Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability.**

Once the name for the overall strategic direction has been developed, it should be written in the arrow to the right of the line-up. There will generally be 3 strategic directions in all, with 1-4 boxes of ideas in each (see example below).

This is an example of a physical sticky wall for the Strategic Directions Workshop.



Please be aware that, although all the ideas offered have been documented, not all actions will be included in the plan. At this point, the group is committing to the titles in each box and the overall strategic directions.

FINAL CHECK

Don't become too fixed on the number of boxes in each row. If there are a lot of actions needed in one of the sectors, that is absolutely fine. Each plan will have a slightly different focus, based on the culture of the district/county/community and the resources available.

Check back with the group and review the titles of Practical Vision and the key challenges. Will the Strategic Directions resolve the underlying challenges and move us toward our Vision? Do they capture all the elements and opportunities contained in the Vision? **Ask if there is anything missing to cover a comprehensive approach to arts education in the district. Refer to the Key Components Triangle. It is not too late to add a "box" or area of interest that may be fleshed out by a smaller group.**

We have been working within the context of 5 years. If ideas are not coming to the surface in some of the key focus areas, it is a good indication that those areas need to be reserved for a later point in time. Keeping the focus on first things first, and creating key priorities will ensure that the plan can be activated and gain momentum over time. It is wise to build in both highly visible successes and "behind the scenes" infrastructure capacity-building to ensure that the effort is robust.

When the team moves into Implementation:

1. The strategic directions are the overall priorities providing the broad sections of the plan.
2. The box titles become the strategy/goal within that strategic direction.
3. The ideas within the boxes become the beginning of the action steps that are sequenced and measured.

The Strategic Directions workshop should be documented in the form of a table.

When you write the plan, you will drop the "ing." Here's an example:

Strategic Direction 3: **Build Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding**	`box title = strategy/goal`
Goal 3.1: Build Sustainable Funding for the Arts	
Actions: • Identify funding sources for continued Artist in Residence programming • Have a team review and make recommendations for an annual arts budget • Collaborate with Ed Foundation to research solicit funds from private donors and foundations	`actions/ideas from within the boxes`

CLOSING REFLECTION

Ending with these questions signals affirmation of the group's effort and allows them to take a minute to reflect on the importance of what they have done.

- Which direction is key in your mind?
- Which direction builds on our strength?
- Which ones venture into new territory?
- Where are the breakthroughs?
- *It is exciting to see our overall directions emerging. Thanks for your insights and participation.*

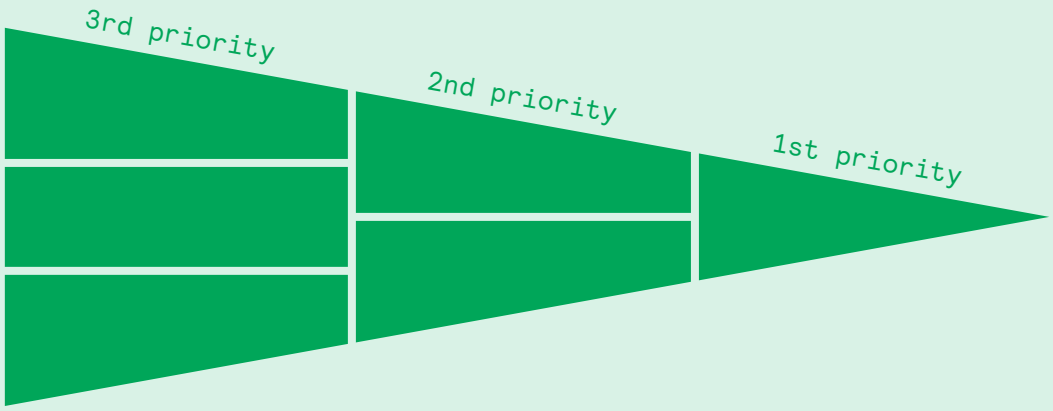
OPTIONAL EXERCISES: PRIORITY WEDGE AND PRICE TAGS

CREATING PRIORITIES | Priority Wedge Optional Exercise 1

The following activities can be used with the group at any point during the planning process to articulate the groups' desires and build awareness of possibilities they may wish to consider.

Priority Wedge: Prioritizing Events or Initiatives

- Create a priority wedge on chart paper in person or on a slide/frame virtually (see sample below).



- Look at the box titles or "goals."
- Have the group identify which one seems to be the key to unlocking everything else. How does it catalyze action for other events or projects? The action is like opening up an umbrella – the tip of the umbrella is forward, and there is space and opening behind the tip. It can also be likened to tipping the first domino, and watching all the others fall.

- Next ask, which two actions are next in importance? These are the next two areas of action that have energy and momentum.
- Continue, filling in each of the boxes in terms of priority.
- This gives the team a sense of purpose, power, and direction, and reduces a sense of being overwhelmed. The key is to stick to the priority that will unleash energy for the other things to take place.
- You can physically write on the priority wedge, use half sheets in person, or use sticky notes in the virtual environment.

CREATING PRIORITIES | Price Tags Optional Exercise 2

There will be times in the planning process where team members realize that there will never be enough money to provide everything. There will be hard choices to make in establishing priorities. Compromises need to be made – additional funding partners may need to be cultivated.

Ultimately, the team needs to decide – first things first. But what are those first things? For one community, it may be restoring music where there are gaps, for another it may be providing professional learning that includes social emotional learning. For another, it may be offering more artist-in-residence programs.

Price Tags

A fun exercise to reflect on priorities is "Price Tags." Using real (or approximate costs), the exercise encourages the group to reflect on the initial implementation steps in an arts plan.

The price tags can be enlarged or written on half-sheets and affixed to walls, desks, or chairs positioned around the room. You can give the team members a "budget" to work within or simply allow them to pick their top priorities (See example Price Tags below).

Instructions to the Group

- Today we are going to have fun with an exercise that allows us to pick some top priorities for our arts program.
- You have $100,000. Go ahead and stand in front of the price tag/card that you consider to be your top priority to improve / strengthen our arts education programs. If you see something missing, go ahead and write up a price tag of your own.
- OK, I am going to give you another $100,000. Go to your second choice. Now go to your third choice.
- At this point you may see some patterns emerging with the team. There may be a lot of people clustered around one price tag – and no one around others.
- You may find it useful to have a focused conversation about the exercise. Engage the team members and invite them to share their process for determining top priorities.

IN PERSON

PRICE TAG EXAMPLE

Use half sheets for the following price tags and scatter around the room/ taped to desks.

Clay, Paper, Paint
(one class – average of 30 students)

$700

Adapt Classroom for Use as a Dance Studio

$7650

Kiln for Visual Arts Program

$2500

Recorders for 1 Classroom
(average of 30 students)

$75

Adapt Classroom for Use as a Digital /Media Arts Studio

$16,000

Musical Instruments for 1 Elementary School:

$10,000

Theater Lighting

$5,000-$10,000

3-D Supplies for Visual Arts Program
(sculpture / ceramics – one class)

$1500

Maintenance of Musical Instruments for 1 High School

$10,000

VAPA Coordinator
(salary and benefits)

$70,000-$80,000

Credentialed Arts Teacher
(salary and benefits)

$90,000-$120.000

5-day professional learning Workshop
(80 teachers, no follow up)

$40,000

IN PERSON

FOCUSED CONVERSATION | REFLECTING ON THE PRICE TAG EXERCISE

Topic:	Reflecting on the Price Tag Exercise
Purpose:	To understand the difficulty that arises in prioritizing decisions regarding funding for arts education To create a sense of ease around the task of budgeting for arts education
Context	At the end of the planning process, we will thoughtfully consider a funding strategy and the budget implications of various aspects of our plan. We may need to place dollar amounts on components of the plan and identify funding priorities. This exercise was intended to make that process come alive in a simplified manner. Think back over the Price Tag Exercise that we just completed. Think about what happened each step of the way, notice your reactions to it, and what conclusions we may draw from it. We will take just a few minutes to reflect back on it.
Questions	
Objective:	Which tag caught your attention first? Where did most people cluster? What items were not chosen? How would you describe the process of physically moving to a priority area?
Reflective:	What surprised you about this exercise? What was an easy choice? What was a difficult choice? Where are we disagreeing? Was there a point at which you felt confused or indecisive? Was there a moment where you felt exhilarated or elated?
Interpretive:	On what basis did you make your choices? Could you defend those choices to others? What questions did this raise for you? Where did you feel that you needed more information? What insights are beginning to emerge about budgeting and leveraging funding?
Decisional:	What appear to be our key priorities as a group? What is the overall cost to provide our priorities and how does this match with our budget? Are there priorities that will need to drop off the list at least this year?
Closing	This exercise has given us an interesting way to approach the difficult task of looking at budget implications and competing priorities in our district. A group consensus begins to emerge when people “vote with their feet.” Thank you for expressing your priorities.

STEP 4: ESTABLISH AN ACTION PLAN

The next step in the process is to develop prioritized actions that need to be taken in the coming year, resulting in an implementation timeline. In doing this you will need to consider:

- What can realistically be accomplished in one year?
- What needs to happen first in order for other things to be accomplished?
- What resources of people and money will be necessary?
- What shifts need to occur in the ways we work and what we communicate?
- What do we need to continue doing that is already established?

Strategic Direction or Focus Area: Strengthen Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning					
Goal 1: Expand Artist-in-Residence program to support Professional Learning					
Phase/Year	Strategies/Actions	Steps/Tasks	Budget Implications	Persons/group Responsible	Measurable Outcome (Evidence of Success)
	Through Artist Residencies, create partnerships with pairs of artists/teachers that support arts integration implementation in a meaningful way	Apply for grant Set up planning between teachers and teaching artists	$25,000	Arts Coordinator to convene: Arts Partners, partnering teachers	Six residencies occur. Pre and Post surveys administered and analyzed. Teacher evaluations indicate that goals were met.
	Include professional learning component in Artist Residencies to increase teacher skills in arts integration	Meet with teachers and arts partners to plan and make goals of professional Learning clear	Included	Arts Coordinator	Evaluations indicate that teachers understand and will begin to implement arts integration in the classroom.

IN PERSON

Your planning team can be divided into smaller groups, one for each strategic direction. Let people choose which one they will work on. Guide the group to take their boxes of action ideas and decide what major items can be accomplished in one year. ***It is helpful to use a template either on paper or on the sticky wall to guide the process.***

Suggested for Timelines: The team may decide to use a timeline that includes: Year; Actual Dates; or Phases. Phases may be 1 year, 2 years or even 3 years. When you phase a plan, it sends a signal that you will move on to the next set of strategies, when the previous phase is complete. This creates some accountability, but without rigidity, honoring changing circumstances.

TIP: Timely documentation shared with all members of the planning team is supportive and a way of honoring inclusivity.

SMALL GROUPS DEVELOP ACTION STEPS FOR THE FIRST YEAR

Ask each small group to look at the action ideas in their strategic direction boxes and decide what actions are most feasible to accomplish and will create the most leverage in the coming year.

Each team selects a group of distinct actions for the coming 12 months and writes those up on ½ sheets, on chart paper or on a template. If you are doing this as a sticky wall exercise, they can use the existing action idea sheets from the strategic directions boxes, add new action/ideas, and then sequence them in a logical order.

Encourage the groups to spread the work out over the year for maximum effectiveness.

Focus on being realistic. You may find that some actions, events, or programs need to be planned for the next year.

Below is an example of using chart paper as a map, where each group uses ½ sheets to outline the actions, tasks and measurable outcomes for each strategic direction goal area. The same process can be easily done in a virtual environment using Google Docs.

Strategy/Action	Steps/Tasks	Measurable Outcome
Offer arts integration PD for K-2 teachers	• Calendar PD time • Invite members • Provide a series of sessions	Arts integrated instruction in at least one art form is offered weekly in all K-2 classrooms

IN PERSON

SMALL GROUPS PROPOSE STRATEGY/ACTIONS FOR YEAR/PHASE 1

Have each group report out by placing their cards on the wall, by using chart paper or by speaking to the group from a written digital template.

After each Strategic Direction group reports out ask:

- Are there any clarifying questions?
- Will these strategies/actions move us forward?
- Is this doable in the Year 1 time frame?
- Is there anything missing?

The same process may be followed for Phase 2 and Phase 3 as time allows.

REFINING AND WRITING UP THE PLAN

After the group has developed the broad approach, a smaller team should be convened to refine the written plan – the coach, the team members and staff.

Identify the additional elements of the plan which may include:

- Person(s) responsible
- Budget Implications
- Measurable Outcomes

PREPARING TO FACILITATE A VIRTUAL PLANNING SESSION

This section applies, if you are planning to proceed with a virtual/online platform. Most educators across the state are familiar with virtual meetings and the tools used to conduct these meetings.

If you choose to facilitate strategic planning in a virtual environment, you may use Zoom, Webex or Microsoft Teams. In addition, select a platform such as the Google Workspace or a dedicated whiteboard platform like Miro or Mural.

The procedures defined below are designed for Virtual Planning Team Facilitation.

Possible online platforms

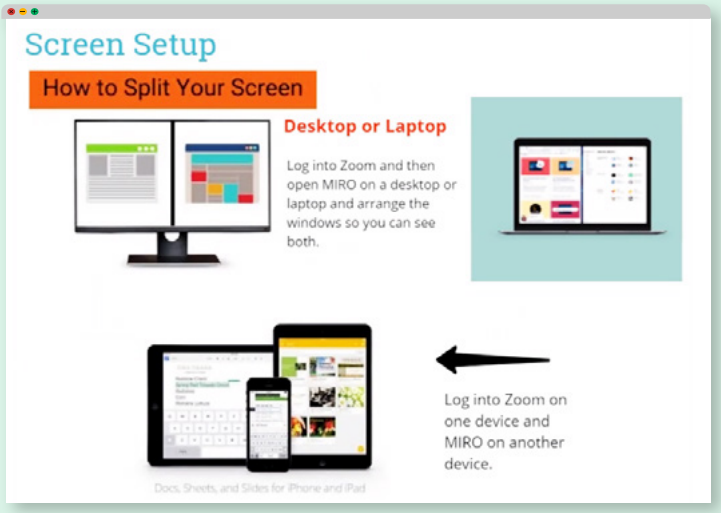
- **Miro** is a platform that can be used free or for a cost depending on the level of use. Up to 3 Editable Boards are included in the free account.
- **Mural** is a platform that can be purchased at a cost. It connects teams with a digital whiteboard and collaboration features designed to inspire innovation.
- **Google Slides, Google Docs, JamBoard and Google Drawing** are widely available and free of charge through the Google Workspace.

Suggested recommendations to follow when using Zoom:

- Find a quiet space where you can think, write, and engage in conversation.
- Consider using headphones to reduce background noises and distractions.
- Log-in to Zoom 5 minutes before the meeting so that everyone is ready to go on time.
- "Rename" your display name to include: First Name, Affiliation, Pronouns
- Please use the mute button when you are not speaking or in the conversation
- Please use the "Chat" feature to submit any questions or comments.
- Put your phone and other devices on silent.
- You're invited to share your recognition in the chat as part of the First Peoples Land Acknowledgement at the start of the meeting. Native-Land.ca .

TIP: You will be splitting your attention between two digital platforms. Maximize collaboration by guiding your planning team members to set up their screen to split between the Miro/Mural/Google and Zoom.

VIRTUAL



1. When creating a plan virtually, it is important to provide an orientation opportunity to allow your team members time to practice participating in Zoom while concurrently navigating the Google Slides or Miro Frames.
2. The example above shows an agenda with a virtual “check in” where members select a sticky note to sign in with their names. Another idea is to make sure all can access the Google Slide Deck in order to use a Google slide as a sign in sheet with name, title and affiliation.
3. Create a Title Slide to welcome the group and ground them with a community building activity.
4. It is important for team members to be visible on screen, with cameras on, if possible. The following team building examples can help to engage all members.

Team Building Examples for Virtual Planning Sessions

Listed below are some community building activities that work well in a virtual environment:

- "Alliteration Sketch" is an activity to energize the group to think creatively and give participants the opportunity to move from left brain to right brain thinking. Give participants 20 seconds to sketch based on an alliteration prompt. Once the 20 seconds are up, have everyone place their sketch up to their computer camera for all to see:
  - A bunny with a banana on a boat
  - A racoon with a radish under a rainbow
  - A cat with a carrot on a crane
  - Creepy Cats Crawling
- Another idea is to use images to represent objects. Have the participants "select" an object that speaks to their relationship with the arts and then build a shared collage of the objects. Participants can upload their own images onto a slide or Miro board as a themed treasure hunt.
- Use quotes for inspiration and send participants into small group breakouts to discuss the quote.
- Use question prompts to build common ground and connection
  - If you were a type of music what would you be?
  - If you were a landscape setting, what would you be? Desert/Ocean, etc.
  - What is something you came across recently that gave you hope or inspiration?
  - If you were the weather, what kind of emotional weather are you having today?
  - What are your superpowers? What do you bring to this team?
  - What book, movie or artwork would you like to live in?
- Find something around you that can serve as a drum to share what your emotional weather is today.
  - Sunny – bang the drum once
  - Windy – circle your hand around the drum making a swishing sound
  - Rainy – beat the drum with your fingertips like this..
  - Snowy – allow you hand to float to the drum gently
  - Stormy – pat the drum non-stop
  - Either share out visually or verbally
- Share an image or object that is around you that brings you joy.
- Build a word cloud in Slido or Mentimeter based on a guiding question or prompt. The words that the group share in common will appear larger in the shared word cloud.

Note: All of these prompts can be answered aloud or typed into the chat by the team members.

Establish Agenda for the Day

After going over the agenda on a slide or frame, you can move on to facilitating the core components of the strategic planning meeting.

VIRTUAL

STEP 1: DEFINE A PRACTICAL VISION

The procedures defined below are designed for Virtual Planning Team Facilitation.

The first step in strategic planning is to establish a shared practical vision. The focus question: "In 5 years, what will be in place in the arts as a result of our actions?" creates a powerful position from which to plan.

We have explored the key components of an equitable arts education program, we may have developed an Arts Education Policy, and we have familiarized ourselves with the current status of arts education. Now we need to get practical and specific about what we can implement in the next 3-5 years.

Below, you will find a workshop script to guide your team through the process of identifying the key elements of your vision.

STEP 1 WORKSHOP | Define a Practical Vision

FOCUS QUESTION

Write the focus question out and post on the virtual wall by creating a **Google Slide or Frame on the Miro/Mural Board, to highlight the Focus Question for the vision process.**

In 5 years, what do we want to see in place for the arts as a result of our actions?

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The group should first confirm the intended timeframe for the strategic planning process (e.g., 5 years). It is important that it is far enough into the future that people can imagine change happening over the course of that time. This workshop is the next step in the strategic planning process.

The facilitator should mention to the team that we will be identifying strengths that provide momentum towards our vision, the challenges or obstacles that stand in our way, and the strategies we can use to overcome our challenges and move us toward our shared vision as the process unfolds.

VISUALIZATION

In order to have each person in the room open up to creative possibilities, it is exciting to take a little trip into the future. Here is a suggested guided visualization – invite team members to silently answer these questions in their own minds. Facilitator may choose to invite team members to turn off their cameras, or close their eyes to focus on visualizing. Facilitator starts speaking with the "opening."

STEP 1: FOCUSED CONVERSATION: PRACTICAL VISION

Topic:	**Visualization: Moving into the Future**
Purpose:	To identify a shared vision – get everyone on the same page.
Context:	To feel a sense of shared identity and that we each bring something unique to this team/this planning and can create something bigger together.
Opening:	Visions, hopes and dreams are what we want to see become reality. They arise from experiences in our own lives yet are currently beyond our grasp. We need to step beyond what is, into a future we can imagine. Each of us carries with us some level of anticipation and hope for the future of a situation. We come to a planning session expecting to make a positive contribution. Each individual's insight is needed to create the shared vision of the group.

I am now going to take you 5 years into the future. It is 2027-2028. We have a news reporter and camera crew who are coming to the schools in our district/community. They want to report on, and celebrate the progress we have made over the last 5 years, since we came together to create a new Strategic Plan. I want you to go along on a walking tour of some of our campuses where arts education is taking place.

Objective Level: What do you see?
What is on the walls of our schools/classrooms?
What sounds do you hear?
What sort of music do you hear? What sort of dance do you see?
Are the students drawing, dancing, filming? Are they practicing, rehearsing, performing?

Reflective Level: What draws you in as you witness the arts that are being offered?
What feelings are you experiencing?

Interpretive Level: What are the district teachers saying about the arts instruction?
About the professional learning they have received?
What are the parents saying? What are the students saying?
What kind of changes have we seen in terms of arts integration? What changes have occurred with discrete arts instruction?
What changes have we seen with connections to creative careers?
What changes in student, teacher and community wellbeing?
How are the cultures of this community included?
What is now in place that we could have only dreamed of a few years ago?
What opportunities now exist for our students? How are all students, including those who have been historically excluded participating in the arts?
What new partnerships and collaborations have developed?
Who is helping us to fund our programs?
Who is helping us to teach and deliver our programs?

Decisional Level: What are the first steps we can take to make this dream a reality?
Let's take a look at our focus question.

VARIATIONS ON THE FOCUS QUESTION:

Based on whether you are working with a County Department, County Office of Education, Government Agency or Nonprofit Organization, your question might be something like this:

What Services and Supports will the County Office of Education provide to the districts to provide access and equity in arts learning for all students?

In addition, you may consider customizing the question according to the needs of the planning team in pre-meetings with leadership.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

After the visualization, invite the team members to spend some time brainstorming, quietly by themselves. Instruct each person to take out the sheet of paper and list 10-12 things that

they would like to see in place in the arts education program in 5 years. It is important that this process be done in silence with each person bringing forth their best thinking without discussion or conversation.

As a facilitator, it is important to give people enough time to complete the list without feeling rushed. Suggest to the group that the ideas should be quite specific. For example, *instead of all of the arts for all of the students, every elementary school has offerings in music PK-5. At the end of the brainstorming, ask participants to asterisk their top 4-5 ideas.*

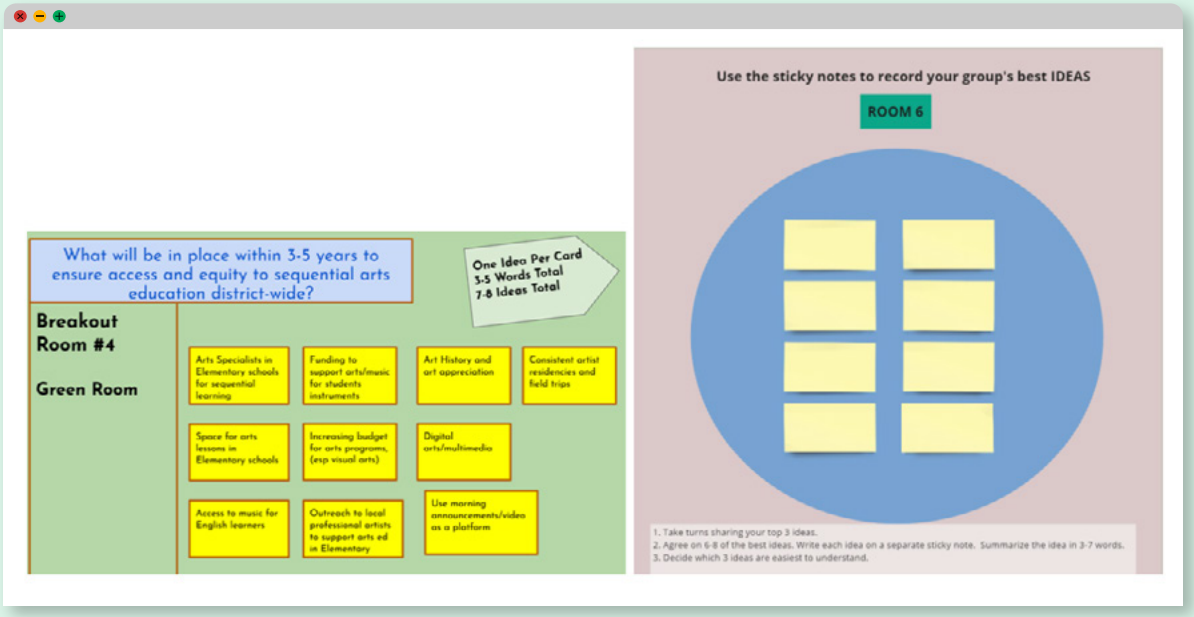
PAIR SHARING AND CLARIFYING IDEAS

Invite the team members to work in partners and discuss their ideas in breakout rooms. The aim is to generate 35-45 ideas among the group. Facilitator should use the following guide to determine the number of ideas each pair should generate:

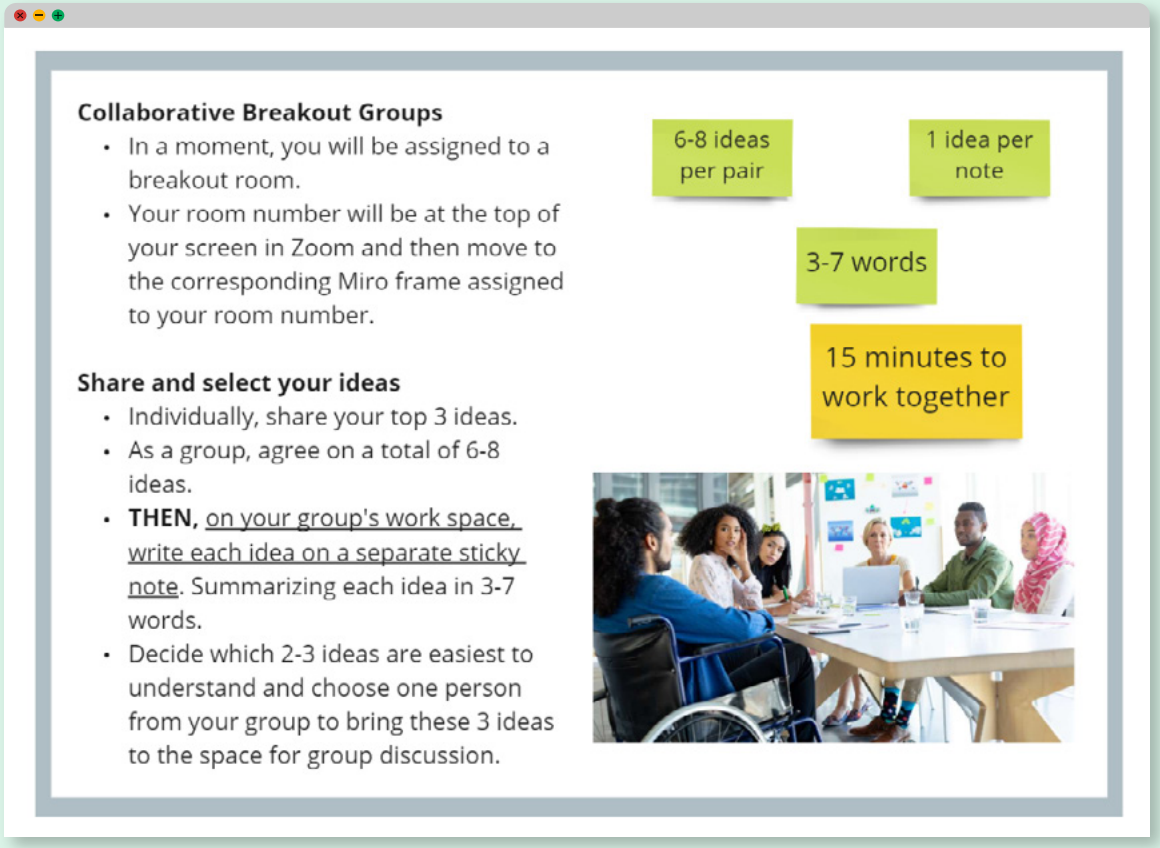
10 participants	5 pairs	6-8 ideas per pair	30-40 ideas
16 participants	8 pairs	4-5 ideas per pair	32-40 ideas
20 participants	10 pairs	4-5 ideas per pair	40-50 ideas

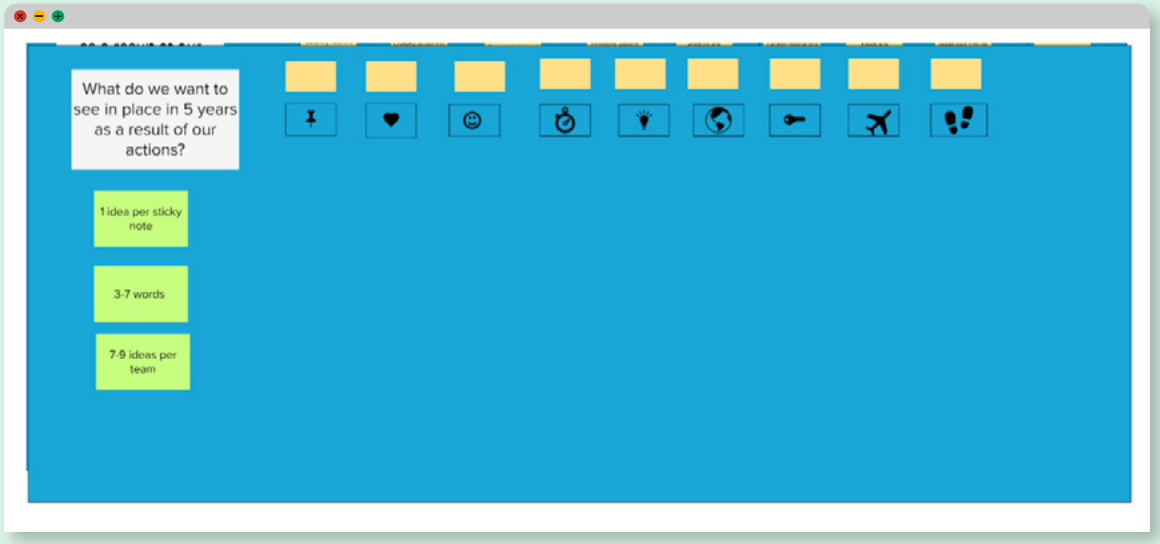
Below you will find some visual examples of how you might set up your Google breakout room slides, or your Miro board workspace for breakout rooms. **The slide below shows instructions to guide the team.**

These slides represent the breakout room workspaces that can be created on a Google Slide or Miro Board.



VIRTUAL





Sticky notes:

On Google slides, you can create small text boxes that team members can type into. On Miro/ Mural there are specific ways to create notes. Facilitator should invite the participants to: Write no more than 5-7 WORDS per sticky note and 1 IDEA per sticky note..

SYNTHESIZING THE IDEAS

Set Up the Slides/Frames in Advance

- Spread out tags as placeholders across the top of your wall with symbols such as heart, star, sun, flower, spiral, etc.

Collect and Organize the First Round of Ideas

- Participants will be guided to either drag or copy their ideas, which are on sticky notes, over to the group discussion area.
- The facilitator collects 2-3 sticky notes from each pair. Ask for the clearest and most compelling ideas.
- It is very important to read each idea aloud as you place it on the wall or group discussion area. It is suggested that you put them at the bottom or to the side of the virtual wall as you organize.
- Ask the group: Are there two ideas that show a similar accomplishment or have a similar intention? Begin to make vertical columns with pairs of ideas below the tags with symbols.

Collect and Organize the Second Round of Ideas

- The facilitator collects another round from the team members, or the group moves their ideas to the discussion area. Continue to read the ideas as you place them on the wall/ workspace.
- After the second round, it is helpful to put a quick tag name at the top of the column on the symbol note.
- Continue to categorize all the ideas into columns that describe a similar idea or outcome. It is important to collect all of the ideas, even if they are duplicative. This shows the group where there is particular energy around an idea. Before you move on, be sure to ask each team member to look at their brainstorming sheet to make sure that there isn't anything missing from the wall.

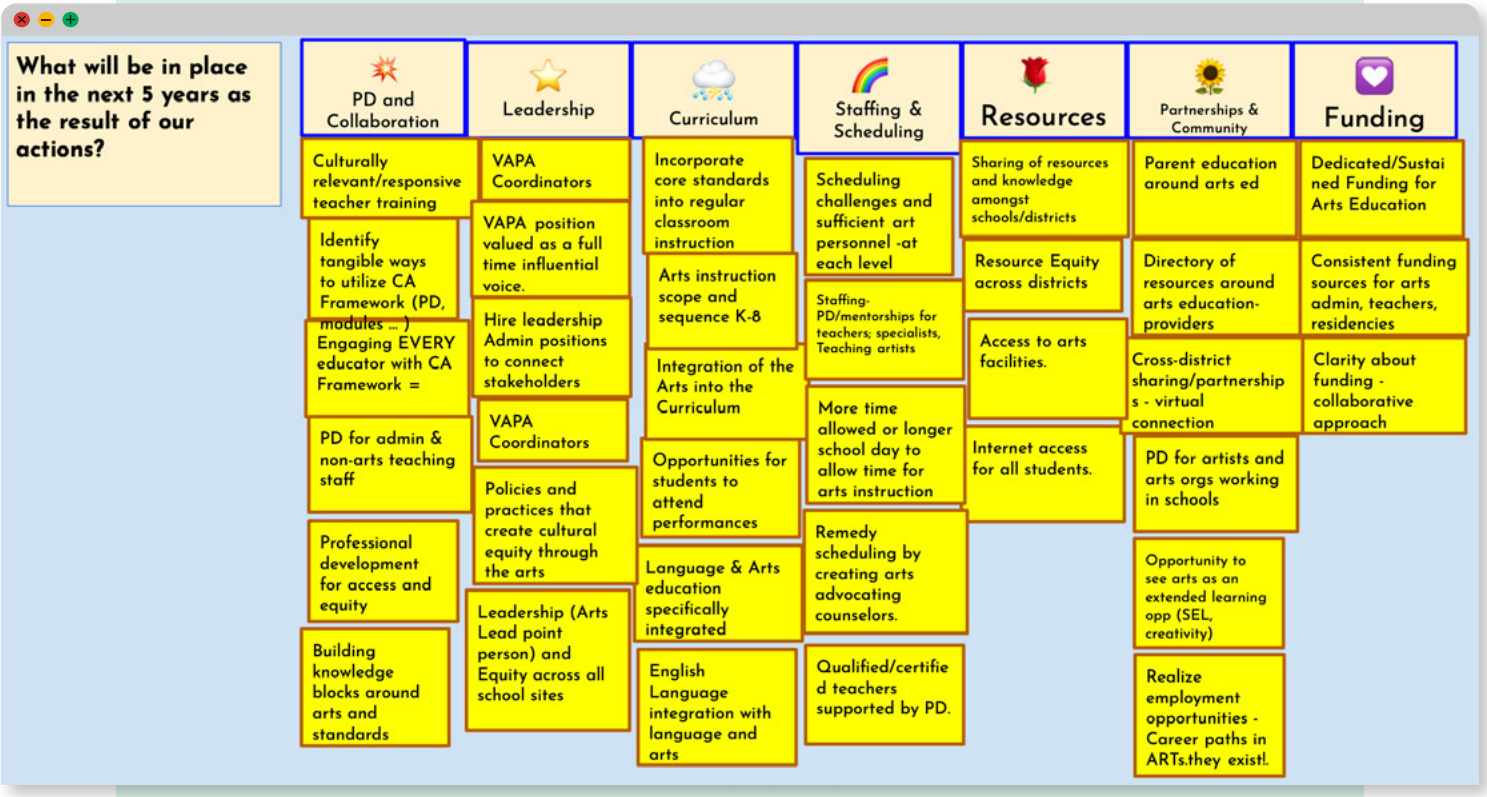
Create a Title for Each Column

- The facilitator then guides the group in coming up with a richly descriptive title for the column, possibly using the convention of "adjective, adjective, noun." Once the title is determined, cover the symbol card at the top of each column with a blank sticky note with the name that describes the contents of that column.
- The title should be 5-7 words and highly descriptive.
- Consider the following prompts to help the group name each column:
  - What words in this column stand out to you? (Underline the words.)
  - What's your gut reaction/emotional response to the words in this column?
  - What are some themes, ideas, insights that this column holds?
  - What name best describes what this column is about?
- Go to a deeper level of consensus rather than just labeling the column; continue until all of the columns are titled. Example: Engaged and Active Community Members as Partners in the Arts.

VIRTUAL

TIP: The Titles are considered to be Vision Elements (ultimate outcomes) that will guide the plan. Some teams may want to see the Title Cards as Goals. Others may choose to see them as Focus Areas of the plan. However your team decides to move through this consensus workshop, you are developing an overall framework to guide the plan. Don't become too concerned about the naming conventions, but rather focus on creating a sense of shared ownership around the team's Vision.

This is an example of a completed Practical Vision Workshop frame with Tags on Google Drawing:



FOCUSED CONVERSATION: REVIEWING THE PRACTICAL VISION

Topic:	Reviewing the Practical Vision
Purpose:	To understand what the group has created and to feel a sense of collaboration, consensus and community through the planning process
Context:	You have all contributed to our Practical Vision. You have offered your brainstorming, worked together to refine your ideas, and develop

meaningful titles for our Vision Elements. Let's take a moment to say those Titles/Vision Elements out loud. Why don't we begin with you...Each person reads one of the Title cards at the top of the column aloud.

As you hear those vision elements out loud, I want you to reflect back to the exercise we began with. I asked you to imagine yourself 5 years out in time, walking a person around the district. As you see our Vision, think about how we can bring this to reality. We call it a Vision because it's where we want to go. We call it "practical" so that we can ensure that our actions are realistic and doable.

Questions

Objective:	As you look at the wall what are you seeing? Where are the columns particularly long?
Reflective:	Which of these ideas speaks personally to you? Are there ideas on the wall that make you uneasy? Are there ideas that are exciting, energizing?
Interpretive:	What new ideas are coming to you as you see what's up there? Which do you think would be hardest to implement? Which seems easiest?
Decisional:	If you were to choose, which area would you like to start on right away? Which area would have the greatest impact right away?
Closing:	This has been important work describing specifically and clearly what we want our arts education program to include. Creating a vision that is tangible and vivid will frame the next steps in our planning process, and will motivate our work during the next 5 years. Thanks for your insights and participation.

On the next page is an example of documentation of the Practical Vision Workshop with Completed Titles.

VIRTUAL

In 5 Years, What Will Be In Place In The Arts As A Result of our Actions?

CONTENT				INFRASTRUCTURE			SUSTAINABILITY		
ARTS CURRICULUM	***ARTS INTEGRATION***	***COLLEGE & CAREER PATHWAYS***	***PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT***	***STAFFING & SCHEDULING***	***STUDENT ACCESS***	***AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING***	***STUDENT VOICE***	***COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS***	***SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT***
Arts-Standards Based Vertical Articulation	Integration of STEM and culture into arts to give students a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them	Early preparation for CTE, College and Career Readiness	Intentional Professional Development & Recognition Opportunities for All	Staffing & Scheduling for all PK-12th grade scholars during the instructional day	Equitable access to all Art Forms Pre-K to 12th Grade	Increased after-school participation in arts programs due to elimination of barriers	Arts are Used to Empower Student Voices	Ongoing Community Partnerships and Engagement to Celebrate VAPA-Centered Initiatives	Reliable Data and Supportive Funding Cycle
Top down expectations per Arts Standards Vertical art lessons between elementary/ middle/ HS –go to each other's campuses Age appropriate elementary arts experiences Music in K-2 MS instructional day dance and theatre Levelled visual arts courses at HS level More dance and theatre Multi-cultural music and arts in all schools Varsity Art, Dance, Acting, Singing Groups (ex. Letter Jacket/Next Level Goal)	SEL & Arts Integrated Curriculum Integration of culture into arts curriculum Lots of STEAM Branding gaps between arts & STEM and between arts Integrated emphasis on Creativity Art history education=deeper knowledge of self VAPA as a leverage for language learning & expression	Practical application Artist Workshops (work in field) Defined Arts Career Pathways (connect to people in the field) Students creating music electronically like pop stars HS Students teaching elementary students CTE as a form of training	Sustainable Arts PD for all Teachers/Admin and Counselors Cognitive Development in each art form taught and understood Encourage/recognize teachers for creating new art projects	Arts (Visual and Performing) in the school day with use of itinerant arts teachers ES certificated instructors (vis arts, theatre, dance) Permanent (or itinerant) elementary visual arts teachers Equity and Access in HS via block schedules	Increased VAPA access for EL students (A-G) Access to arts classes district-wide Common access to Music, Dance, Art, Theatre at all sites. Equity – can look different Equitable access to VAPA for all students	Transportation for students who participate in after school arts programs Afterschool Club Opportunities (transport, outside school schedule) Improved District to Student Communication Transportation to events and more events Transportation for students who participate in VAPA afterschool events	Student Arts Council to Empower Youth Student podcast highlighting VVUSD experiences SEL Relations in communications between students and teachers Student Advisory Council with real power & input Frequent student voice opportunities Service based projects where VAPA students can help on campus (community service)	Celebration of Arts Festival Collaborative partnerships to showcase arts in the community Full parental and community understanding and support of the integral role of the arts in academics & student life Frequent family voice opportunities Parent involvement opportunities in and out of school Increased Community VAPA opportunities. Bridge across sites/community events Design platforms for students to showcase their talents A Performing Arts Facility – State of the Arts Theatre for district-wide performances.	Meaningful, relevant data systems Sustainable funding in place Performance art practice facilities and storage on site

VIRTUAL

STEP 2: DESCRIBE THE CURRENT REALITY: STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The next step in strategic planning is to identify the strengths – the momentum propelling us toward our vision – as well as the challenges or blocks that may stand in the way of reaching our shared vision. The script below will guide your team through this important next phase of conversation, consensus-building, and decision-making.

STEP 2 – WORKSHOP | Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Topic: **Identifying Strengths and Challenges**

Purpose: To analyze our current reality and use it as a springboard for moving into action by articulating both our strengths and our perceived challenges. To stimulate breakthrough thinking that ignites action.

Context

Strengths are assets that have the potential to work in your favor.

Example Strengths may include:

- Dedicated teachers
- All elementary school students receive music
- Administrators at sites are very supportive
- Parents see value in the arts
- VAPA Coordinator in place

Challenges are:

- Roadblocks between what exists and our vision of the future (e.g., the scheduling demands on schools that may lead to less time allotted to the arts);
- Patterns of behavior or belief systems that needs to change;
- Causes of a frustration, not just a symptom;
- Clues to what is not happening, not a lack of something.

Example Challenges may include:

- Fragmented coordination
- Unmotivated staff
- Conflicting access to multiple disciplines

Challenges are not “problems.” Problems are things you fix, and you cannot fix an obstacle. You can respond to it, impact it, or go around it. It is part of your community and institutional environment. The group will determine, “What will need to change for us to reach our vision? Why is it still going on?”

LACK OF

Challenges are also not a "lack of" something, for example a lack of money, time, or space. They are real blocks

Problem	Underlying Challenge
Lack of time	• Too many competing priorities • Focus unclear * Responsibilities unclear
Lack of money	• Don't know the real cost of things • Budgeting process unclear • Financial priorities elsewhere • Budget has not been addressed
Lack of people/staff	• Limited buy-in from staff for what is expected • Ineffective recruiting and retention process • Unrealistic job descriptions

Frequently these challenges and obstacles are not obvious. They are like cataracts. You do not see them directly, yet they cloud your vision and blind you to what is in front of you. Institutions that do not deal with their self-images, attitudes, procedures, policies and structures, can become entrenched in their convictions and may even fall short in delivering on their mission. Upload the handout onto your virtual workspace or make it available through the chat for users to download. This may help participants avoid "lack of" thinking and get to the real challenge.

LACK OF

ORGANIZATION	RELEVANCE	PRODUCTIVITY
disorganized	inappropriate	debilitating
fragmented	irrelevant	misused
inaccessible	narrow	ineffective
incoherent	obsolete	inefficient
overlapping	outdated	neglected
unbalanced	outmoded	obstructed
uncoordinated	unsuitable	unproductive
unsystematic	vague	stalled

EXPECTATIONS	STABILITY	MOTIVATION
competing	inadequate	apprehensive
conflicting	insecure	confusing
contradictory	insufficient	devalued
illogical	sporadic	discouraging
impractical	unstable	incompetent
inflexible	unsustainable	unclear
restricted	volatile	uninspiring
unrealistic	weakened	unmotivated

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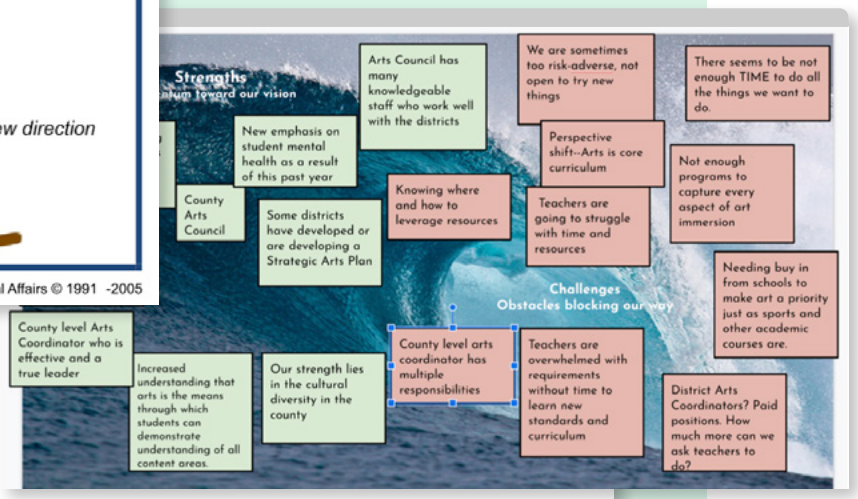
VIRTUAL

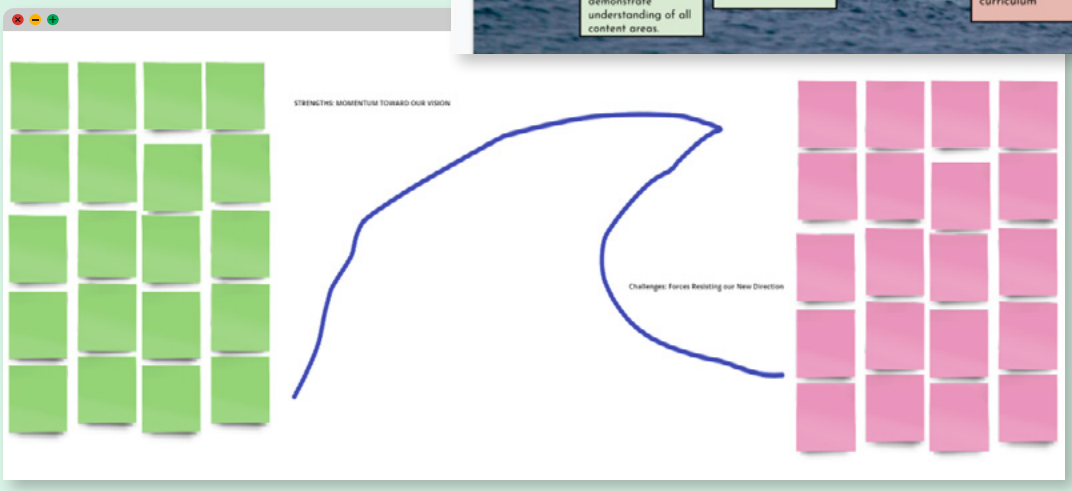
ROOT CAUSES

As a facilitator you may need to guide your group to dig deeper to the real root causes of the challenge. Showing an image of the dandelion on a slide may help guide the conversation about underlying causes. The quality of the truth-telling in this section leads directly to innovative actions in the next section of the planning. Just like dandelions in your lawn; they will persist until you dig out the whole root.

THE STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES WAVE

Draw a large wave similar to the example below. Draw the wave on a google slide or frame and have participants write the strengths and challenges on sticky notes. Use one color for strengths (such as green) and one color for challenges (such as rose/red) for sticky notes.





REVIEW THE VISION

Ask members of the group to read the Vision Elements/Goals (Titles) from the previous workshop. Ask the group to silently consider each of the elements.

Identify Strengths

- **Ask the participants:** What are the strengths that will help us achieve our vision?
- What opportunities and assets exist in our community that can support/enhance our efforts to achieve our vision?
- Have participants write the strengths onto the colored sticky notes on the left side of the wave.

Identify Challenges

For this part of the exercise, the group may find it helpful to refer to the "No Lack Of" chart for ideas about how to articulate the challenges more clearly.

- **Ask the participants:** What are the challenges or obstacles within our district that will get in our way?
- What challenges exist in our community that may hinder progress toward our vision?
- Have participants write the challenges onto the colored sticky notes on the right side of the wave.

Closing

- Read through all the strengths aloud. What stands out for you? (Highlight 5-7 items)
- Now, let's repeat this for the challenges. Which challenges are most pressing? (Star 5-7 items)
- As you look at the challenges, are there some that are similar and come together to indicate a bigger challenge?
- What are possible actions we could take to impact these challenges and release our vision? Ask the group for a few ideas. These ideas do not need to be charted; they serve as the transition into the next planning step.
- Facilitators may choose to open the floor for ideas around new opportunities or possibilities as they are arising in the group.
- *We will now move on to the process of creating actions to move forward.*

STEP 3: IDENTIFY YOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide your plan. In this method we develop key actions to impact our most pressing challenges. In this way, we can create actions that impact underlying causes and challenges, and inspire real, sustainable changes. These actions will also give us ways to measure change as we move into implementation.

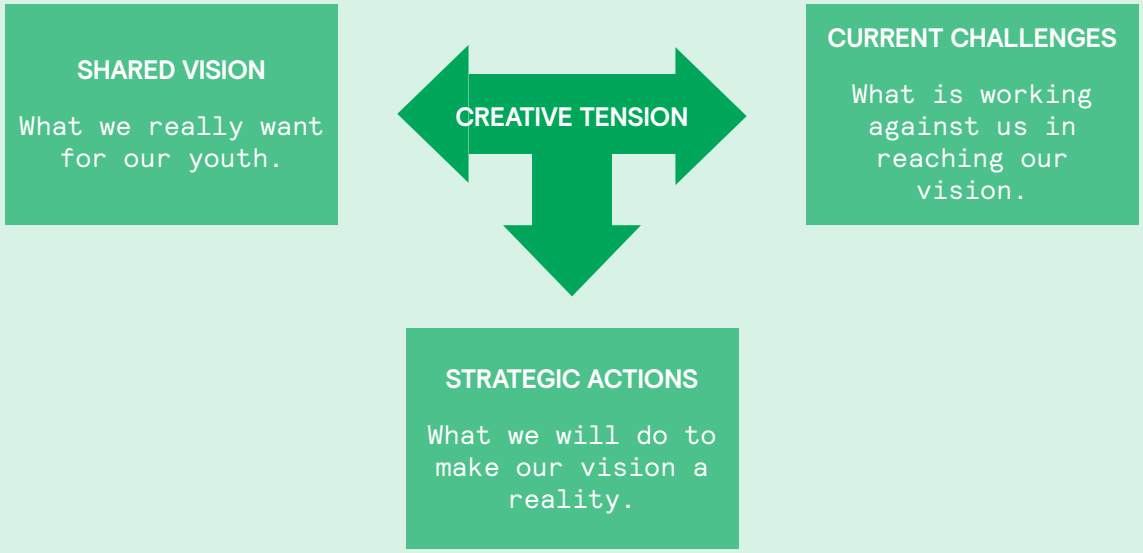
The following workshop outlines the way the team can develop creative, innovative actions that will deal directly with the challenges and move the group toward the desired vision.

STEP 3 – WORKSHOP | Identifying Strategic Directions

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide the plan and focus our actions. Instead of looking at our Practical Vision alone, we develop creative, innovative actions that will deal with the challenges directly.

Next, the group is guided to focus on creative action ideas that will address the challenges and support movement towards the vision. Once these ideas are generated, they will be organized around a similar intent or outcome.

Holding the Vision Alongside the Challenges. The image below demonstrates how we simultaneously hold both the vision and the challenges in mind in order to determine the most strategic, high leverage actions. You may want to share a diagram/slide with the group such as the following:



Anchoring Strategic Thinking

Purpose: To support the group with creating concrete action ideas that will address the underlying challenges and activate the vision.

Facilitator may ask individuals to bring the object toward the zoom camera that will be endowed with a new meaning. One idea that works well on Zoom is to use a balled-up piece of paper. Ask each person to "take" a piece of paper and ball it up. Using crumpled paper as an imaginary ball, individuals toss the ball, one by one, to someone else by moving the crumpled paper towards the camera. The person selected, imagines catching the ball and then transforms their crumpled ball into something new. This continues as each person suggests an "uncommon" use for the object. The concept that is being demonstrated is the wealth of imagination that exists in a group with diverse perspectives.

VIRTUAL

To get people to think strategically, you can make reference or show an image such as one below to open up thinking around down board thinking that takes place in chess—anticipating the chain of potential results from a single move.

There is also the example of leveraged action, or how hitting the right pin in bowling, brings all the pins down for a strike. Where in our district/county/community might one small action cause several things to change?

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WORKSHOP FOCUS QUESTION

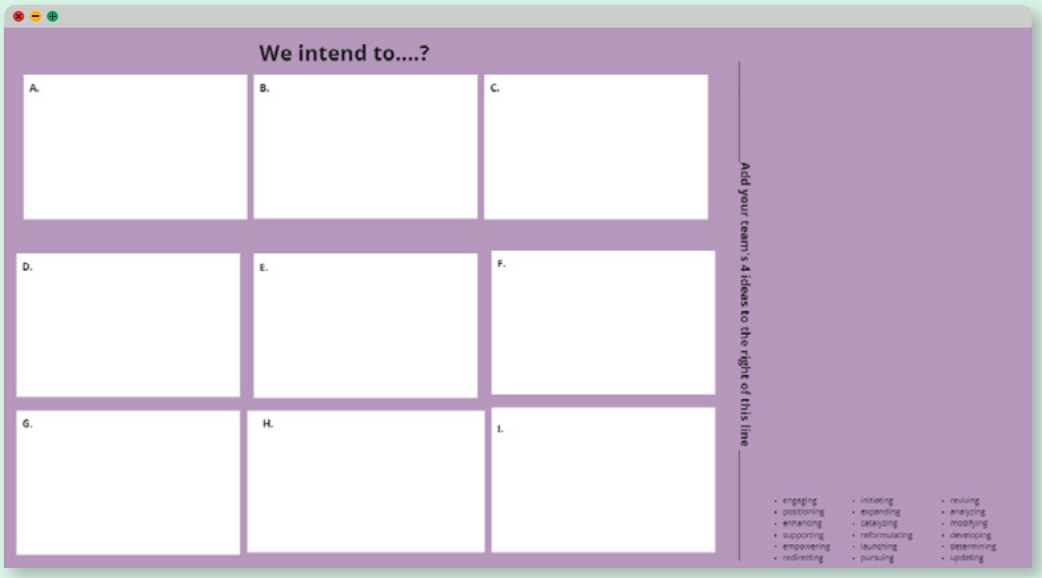
Create a Google Slide or Frame on the Miro Board to highlight the Focus Question for the Strategic Directions Workshop.

What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move toward our vision?

ADVANCE PREPARATION OF THE VIRTUAL WORKSPACE FOR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Facilitator puts up 9 boxes—labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I as a Google Drawing or frame on the Miro/Mural board. Put a line across the top for the Box Title. The boxes are lined up 3 across and 3 down (see example below).

VIRTUAL



SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR BRAINSTORMING

TIP: You may wish to pick specific challenges to focus on and also pick a few vision elements to focus on. After individually brainstorming, you will share these ideas with your partner or small group so that you have a breadth of ideas that address not only the challenges but also activate the vision.

Have members of the group read the main elements of the Practical Vision they created and then read the key Strengths and Challenges from the previous section.

PRIMING THE PUMP FOR IDEAS

Facilitator should point to one of the challenges and ask for one innovative or bold action that could be taken to deal with that block. Provide one or two ideas as examples, just to give people an idea of what they are being asked to do.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

Facilitator should instruct participants to Individually list 10-12 actions on a piece of paper that we can take to overcome one or more of our challenges and activate the vision.

Each person needs to come up with at least 10-12 ideas or answers to the Focus Question example:

"What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move us toward our vision?"

Make sure to provide participants with plenty of quiet time to think on their own. A total of 10-15 minutes may be needed.

Facilitator should give a set of instructions similar to this:

- Working in pairs (or threes or fours if the group is large), participants share all of their brainstorm ideas in breakout rooms.
- Together they will decide on their top 4-6 ideas.
- The group will write their ideas on sticky notes on a Google slide or Miro frame.
- Instructions for writing the ideas: 5-7 words, 1 IDEA per CARD.

PUTTING LIKE IDEAS TOGETHER

- Participants will be guided to either drag or copy their ideas, which are on sticky notes, over to the group discussion area.
- The Facilitator collects a first round of actions (aiming to get up 14-18 total) and reads each one as they place them first randomly in the boxes and the rest on the wall next to the boxes.
- The participants are asked to find two ideas that describe actions that are similar in intent or outcome. When two are identified, they go into one of the boxes.
- Typically the facilitator will need to ask for three rounds of ideas. All ideas get posted in the virtual workspace eventually. Place all of the action ideas together within the boxes as successive rounds of sticky notes are shared.

NAMING THE BOXES

- Guide the group to give a meaningful title to each box that captures the intent held in that group of ideas. Take time to name these boxes, because they will serve as the key GOALS for the phased plan.

Prompt question: If we complete the actions outlined within this box, what are we DOING? What is the big idea that encompasses all of the actions in this box? Begin with an action verb - consider using the -ing convention to show forward movement.

EXAMPLES OF BOX TITLES:

We are...

- Expanding professional learning opportunities
- Expanding access to facilities, supplies and equipment for all students
- Building sustainable funding for the arts

REVIEWING THE KEY COMPONENTS TRIANGLE

In developing an Arts Education Plan, we have identified three main sectors that will ensure a comprehensive plan: Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability

As the boxes are filled with creative, innovative actions, they may fall naturally into one of these focus areas and as demonstrated in the triangle.

Content Includes:

Curriculum and Instruction, Student Centered Assessment, and Professional Learning.

Infrastructure Includes:

Administration/Coordination, Teaching Personnel, Spaces, Equipment and Supplies, and Community Partnerships and Collaborations.

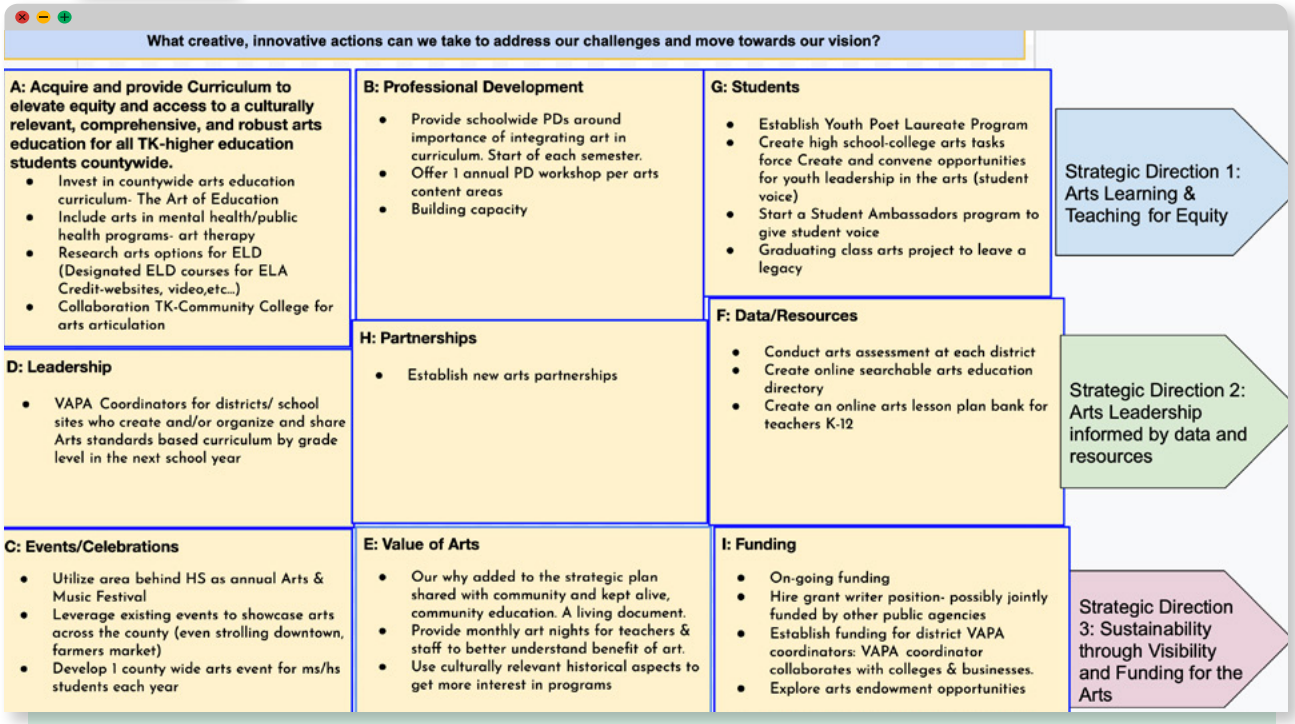
Sustainability Includes:

Values and Policy, Funding, Ongoing Evaluation, Communications and Advocacy

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OR BROAD AREAS OF FOCUS

After all of the boxes have a meaningful title, take the larger view of what is on the wall, and ask which 2 or 3 boxes are strongly related or have a similar intent. Connect these boxes by physically placing them beside one another. Continue this until you have the boxes arranged side by side in 3 horizontal lines. These form the basis for your strategic directions.

VIRTUAL



This is an example of a virtual sticky wall for the Strategic Directions Workshop using Google Drawing from the Google Workspace.

Select 1 row of boxes. Ask the group to identify the direction that is shared by all of the boxes. Suggest strong words that end in “ing” such as: engaging, empowering, catalyzing, positioning, venturing, enhancing, supporting, expanding, developing, updating. Using gerunds such as these gives the strategic directions in an active, ongoing tone that drives your planning over the long term.

Examples:

- Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning
- Strategic Direction 2: Expanding Partnerships and Collaborations
- Strategic Direction 3: Building Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding

By identifying key priorities in this way, the group feels empowered to take action on areas of challenge.These become the overall “goals” of the plan.

Modification: Some teams have found it helpful to simply label each of the Strategic Direction Arrows as **Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability.**

Once the name for the overall strategic direction has been developed, it should be written in the arrow to the right of the line-up. There will generally be 3 strategic directions in all, with 1-4 boxes of ideas in each.

Please be aware that, although all the ideas offered have been documented, not all actions will be included in the plan. At this point, the group is committing to the titles in each box and the overall strategic directions.

FINAL CHECK

Don't become too fixed on the number of boxes in each row. If there are a lot of actions needed in one of the sectors, that is absolutely fine. Each plan will have a slightly different focus, based on the culture of the district/county/community and the resources available.

Check back with the group and review the titles of Practical Vision and the key challenges. Will the Strategic Directions resolve the underlying challenges and move us toward our Vision? Do they capture all the elements and opportunities contained in the Vision? **Ask if there is anything missing to cover a comprehensive approach to arts education in the district. Refer to the Key Components Triangle. It is not too late to add a "box" or area of interest that may be fleshed out by a smaller group.**

We have been working within the context of 5 years. If ideas are not coming to the surface in some of the key focus areas, it is a good indication that those areas need to be reserved for a later point in time. Keeping the focus on first things first, and creating key priorities will ensure that the plan can be activated and gain momentum over time. It is wise to build in both highly visible successes and "behind the scenes" infrastructure capacity-building to ensure that the effort is robust.

When the team moves into Implementation:

1. The strategic directions are the overall priorities providing the broad sections of the plan.
2. The box titles become the strategy/goal within that strategic direction.
3. The ideas within the boxes become the beginning of the action steps that are sequenced and measured.

The Strategic Directions workshop should be documented in the form of a table.

When you write the plan, you will drop the "ing." Here's an example:

Strategic Direction 3: **Build Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding**	`box title = strategy/goal`
Goal 3.1: Build Sustainable Funding for the Arts	
Actions: • Identify funding sources for continued Artist in Residence programming • Have a team review and make recommendations for an annual arts budget • Collaborate with Ed Foundation to research solicit funds from private donors and foundations	`actions/ideas from within the boxes`

CLOSING REFLECTION

Ending with these questions signals affirmation of the group's effort and allows them to take a minute to reflect on the importance of what they have done.

- Which direction is key in your mind?
- Which direction builds on our strength?
- Which ones venture into new territory?
- Where are the breakthroughs?
- *It is exciting to see our overall directions emerging. Thanks for your insights and participation.*

OPTIONAL EXERCISES: PRIORITY WEDGE AND PRICE TAGS

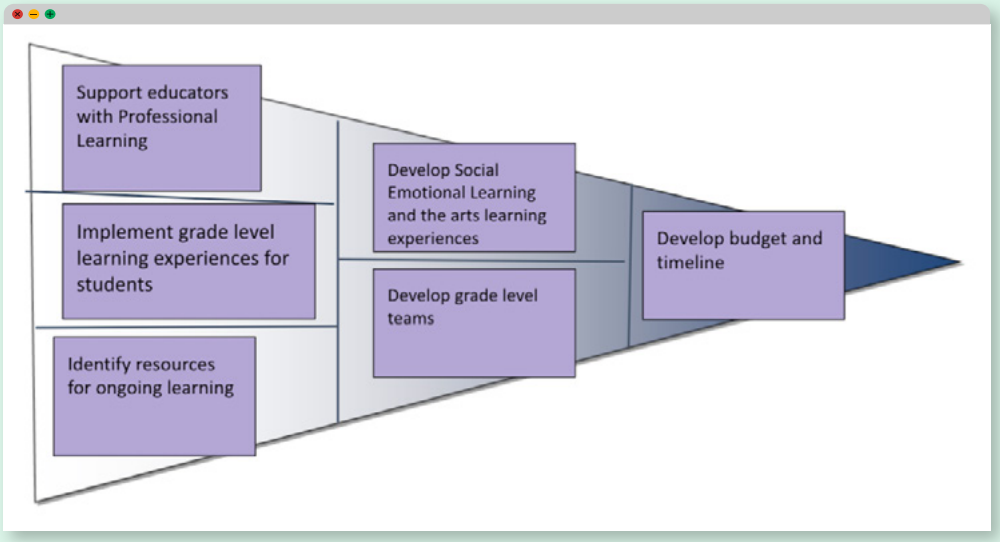
CREATING PRIORITIES | Priority Wedge Optional Exercise 1

The following activities can be used with the group at any point during the planning process to articulate the groups' desires and build awareness of possibilities they may wish to consider.

Priority Wedge: Prioritizing Events or Initiatives

- Create a priority wedge on a slide/frame virtually (see sample below).
- Look at the box titles or "goals."
- Have the group identify which one seems to be the key to unlocking everything else. How does it catalyze action for other events or projects? The action is like opening up an umbrella – the tip of the umbrella is forward, and there is space and opening behind the tip. It can also be likened to tipping the first domino, and watching all the others fall.
- Next ask, which two actions are next in importance? These are the next two areas of action that have energy and momentum.
- Continue, filling in each of the boxes in terms of priority.
- This gives the team a sense of purpose, power, and direction, and reduces a sense of being overwhelmed. The key is to stick to the priority that will unleash energy for the other things to take place.
- You can physically write on the priority wedge, use half sheets in person, or use sticky notes in the virtual environment.

This is an example of a Priority Wedge with a Google slide and sticky notes



CREATING PRIORITIES | Price Tags Optional Exercise 2

Note for Virtual Price Tags: If you want to do this exercise in a virtual environment, you might scatter sticky note price tags around on a slide or frame and let people name their priorities, or use a Google Jamboard with three frames for 1st, 2nd and 3rd priority price tag choices.

There will be times in the planning process where team members realize that there will never be enough money to provide *everything*. There will be hard choices to make in establishing priorities. Compromises need to be made – additional funding partners may need to be cultivated.

Ultimately, the team needs to decide – *first things first*. But what are those first things? For one community, it may be restoring music where there are gaps, for another it may be providing professional learning that includes social emotional learning. For another, it may be offering more artist-in-residence programs.

Price Tags

A fun exercise to reflect on priorities is "Price Tags." Using real (or approximate costs), the exercise encourages the group to reflect on the initial implementation steps in an arts plan.

The price tags can be enlarged or written on half-sheets and affixed to walls, desks, or chairs positioned around the room. You can give the team members a "budget" to work within or simply allow them to pick their top priorities (See example Price Tags below).

Instructions to the Group

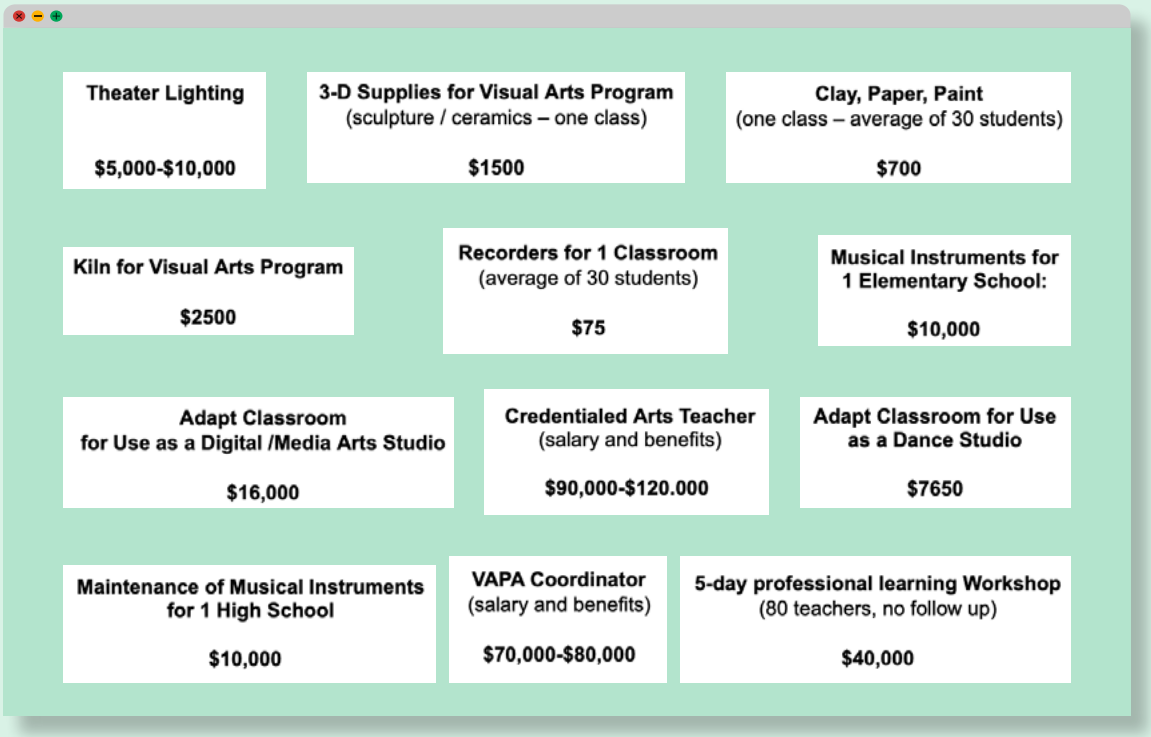
- Today we are going to have fun with an exercise that allows us to pick some top priorities for our arts program.

VIRTUAL

- You have $100,000. Go ahead and stand in front of the price tag/card that you consider to be your top priority to improve / strengthen our arts education programs. If you see something missing, go ahead and write up a price tag of your own.
- OK, I am going to give you another $100,000. Go to your second choice. Now go to your third choice.
- At this point you may see some patterns emerging with the team. There may be a lot of people clustered around one price tag – and no one around others.
- You may find it useful to have a focused conversation about the exercise. Engage the team members and invite them to share their process for determining top priorities.

PRICE TAG EXAMPLE

Make virtual sticky notes or use half sheets for the following price tags:



FOCUSED CONVERSATION | REFLECTING ON THE PRICE TAG EXERCISE

Topic:	Reflecting on the Price Tag Exercise
Purpose:	To understand the difficulty that arises in prioritizing decisions regarding funding for arts education To create a sense of ease around the task of budgeting for arts education
Context	At the end of the planning process, we will thoughtfully consider a funding strategy and the budget implications of various aspects of our plan. We may need to place dollar amounts on components of the plan and identify funding priorities. This exercise was intended to make that process come alive in a simplified manner. Think back over the Price Tag Exercise that we just completed. Think about what happened each step of the way, notice your reactions to it, and what conclusions we may draw from it. We will take just a few minutes to reflect back on it.
Questions	
Objective:	Which tag caught your attention first? Where did most people cluster? What items were not chosen? How would you describe the process of physically moving to a priority area?
Reflective:	What surprised you about this exercise? What was an easy choice? What was a difficult choice? Where are we disagreeing? Was there a point at which you felt confused or indecisive? Was there a moment where you felt exhilarated or elated?
Interpretive:	On what basis did you make your choices? Could you defend those choices to others? What questions did this raise for you? Where did you feel that you needed more information? What insights are beginning to emerge about budgeting and leveraging funding?
Decisional:	What appear to be our key priorities as a group? What is the overall cost to provide our priorities and how does this match with our budget? Are there priorities that will need to drop off the list at least this year?
Closing	This exercise has given us an interesting way to approach the difficult task of looking at budget implications and competing priorities in our district. A group consensus begins to emerge when people “vote with their feet.” Thank you for expressing your priorities.

STEP 4: ESTABLISH AN ACTION PLAN

The next step in the process is to develop prioritized actions that need to be taken in the coming year, resulting in an implementation timeline. In doing this you will need to consider:

- What can realistically be accomplished in one year?
- What needs to happen first in order for other things to be accomplished?
- What resources of people and money will be necessary?
- What shifts need to occur in the ways we work and what we communicate?
- What do we need to continue doing that is already established?

Strategic Direction or Focus Area: Strengthen Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning					
Goal 1: Expand Artist-in-Residence program to support Professional Learning					
Phase/Year	Strategies/Actions	Steps/Tasks	Budget Implications	Persons/group Responsible	Measurable Outcome (Evidence of Success)
	Through Artist Residencies, create partnerships with pairs of artists/teachers that support arts integration implementation in a meaningful way	Apply for grant Set up planning between teachers and teaching artists	$25,000	Arts Coordinator to convene: Arts Partners, partnering teachers	Six residencies occur. Pre and Post surveys administered and analyzed. Teacher evaluations indicate that goals were met.
	Include professional learning component in Artist Residencies to increase teacher skills in arts integration	Meet with teachers and arts partners to plan and make goals of professional Learning clear	Included	Arts Coordinator	Evaluations indicate that teachers understand and will begin to implement arts integration in the classroom.

Your planning team can be divided into smaller groups, one for each strategic direction. Let people choose which one they will work on. Guide the group to take their boxes of action ideas and decide what major items can be accomplished in one year. ***It is helpful to use a template either on paper or on the sticky wall to guide the process.***

Suggested for Timelines: The team may decide to use a timeline that includes: Year; Actual Dates; or Phases. Phases may be 1 year, 2 years or even 3 years. When you phase a plan, it sends a signal that you will move on to the next set of strategies, when the previous phase is complete. This creates some accountability, but without rigidity, honoring changing circumstances.

TIP: Timely documentation shared with all members of the planning team is supportive and a way of honoring inclusivity.

Small Groups Develop Action Steps for the First Year

Ask each small group to look at the action ideas in their strategic direction boxes and decide what actions are most feasible to accomplish and will create the most leverage in the coming year.

Each team selects a group of distinct actions for the coming 12 months and writes those up on ½ sheets, on chart paper or on a template. If you are doing this as a sticky wall exercise, they can use the existing action idea sheets from the strategic directions boxes, add new action/ideas, and then sequence them in a logical order.

Encourage the groups to spread the work out over the year for maximum effectiveness.

Focus on being realistic. You may find that some actions, events, or programs need to be planned for the next year.

Below is an example of using chart paper as a map, where each group uses ½ sheets to outline the actions, tasks and measurable outcomes for each strategic direction goal area. The same process can be easily done in a virtual environment using Google Docs.

Strategy/Action	Steps/Tasks	Measurable Outcome
Offer Arts Integration PD for K-2 Teachers	• Calendar PD time • Invite members • Provide a series of sessions	Arts integrated instruction in at least one art form is offered weekly in all K-2 classrooms

Small Groups Propose Strategy/Actions for Year/Phase 1

Have each group report out by placing their cards on the wall, by using chart paper or by speaking to the group from a written digital template.

VIRTUAL

After each Strategic Direction group reports out ask:

- Are there any clarifying questions?
- Will these strategies/actions move us forward?
- Is this doable in the Year 1 time frame?
- Is there anything missing?

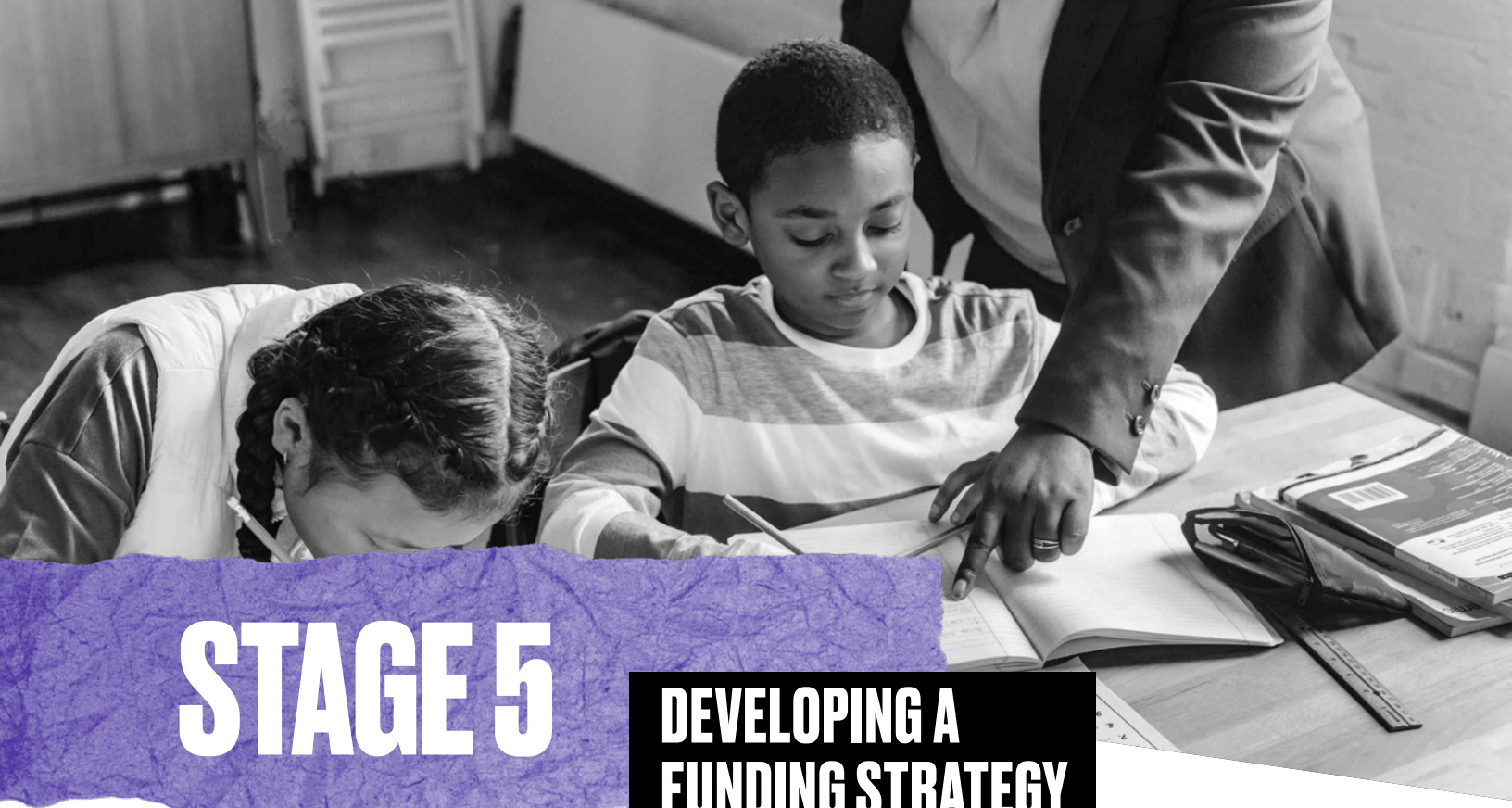
The same process may be followed for Phase 2 and Phase 3 as time allows.

Refining and Writing Up the Plan

After the group has developed the broad approach, a smaller team should be convened to refine the written plan – the coach, the team members and staff.

Identify the additional elements of the plan which may include:

- Person(s) responsible
- Budget Implications
- Measurable Outcomes



STAGE 5

DEVELOPING A FUNDING STRATEGY

The development of a thoughtful, realistic, and feasible funding strategy is an important step in ensuring the success of your arts education plan. This process serves as a valuable opportunity to bring fiscal management/administration more deeply into the planning process, and to confirm that your plan is appropriately structured and paced for the long-term economic conditions in which it will be implemented.

REVIEWING EXISTING ARTS EDUCATION FUNDING

Based on the priorities identified in the Strategic Plan, you can begin to develop an overall funding outline based on diverse revenue streams for strengthening arts education in your county or district. Funding for the arts may be included and articulated in a school district's LCAP, in a County's general fund, grant, foundation or private funds or federal/Title funds. This is an opportunity to be creative, collaborative and look for strategic and sustainable funding sources and partnerships to support the plan.

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

State funding through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) is the primary source for school district funding and therefore the primary source to fund the arts sustainably. The LCAP describes the school district's goals to improve student outcomes, their planned actions and how LCFF funding will be used. School district boards and administrators must consult community members, such as students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to develop the LCAP.

Education Foundations

Many communities have established their own education foundations at the school, district, city, or county level. These foundations are typically affiliated with a particular local education agency and raise funds for designated programs and purposes. Some education foundations have successfully established endowments that provide ongoing, guaranteed funding for arts programs.

Parent Groups and Booster Clubs

In many districts, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) provides ongoing support for arts programs in the form of materials, supplies, or discretionary funds. Booster clubs have also been developed to raise funds for specific components of school arts programs (marching band, choir, etc.).

Note: Parent group funding should provide supplementary funding and should not supplant funding that is the district's responsibility.

External Funding

Arts Provider Organizations

Regional and local arts organizations often provide standards-aligned outreach programs and professional learning services to schools that may be subsidized by a private foundation, corporation, or government entity. Some programs are offered at reduced or no cost to schools, depending upon how the programs are funded.

Business Partners

Local corporations or local businesses that are part of a national retail chain may have targeted corporate contributions or "give-back" programs that provide supplemental funding to the arts programs in a district. Business partners can also be a valuable source of volunteer help, particularly for 1-day events. Many businesses will provide a matching gift for individual charitable contributions made by their employees, so be sure to follow up on this when parents and others make donations to your arts program.

Community Service Groups

Local community service clubs (Kiwanis, Rotary, Junior League, etc.) often provide supplemental funding for arts programs in the schools, sometimes through a competitive grant application process.

Local Governmental Agencies/Local Taxes

In some areas, city or county agencies may partner with the schools in arts funding. In some communities, parcel taxes or bonds have been passed at the local level that provide an ongoing source of funds for school arts programs.

Private Foundations

Local private and family foundations often support arts and education efforts. These foundations are often focused on program expenses and direct student services, but some will support general operating expenses and professional learning as well.

State and Local Arts Agencies

The California Arts Council and Local Arts Commissions or Arts Councils may dedicate a portion of their grants budget to visual and performing arts organizations that offer school-based programs.

Federal Agencies

The National Endowment for the Arts generously provides funding for Arts Education to nonprofits who work with school districts to provide high quality programming through Art Works grants.

The U.S. Department of Education also provides multi-year grants specifically for Arts Education.

STAGE 6

LAUNCHING AND INTRODUCING THE PLAN WITH LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY

To increase visibility, commitment, and accountability for the plan, it is suggested that the team create a launch event, focus group, or other method to celebrate the plan.

Presenting your arts education plan for formal adoption by the governing board or executive leadership is a vital step between planning and implementation. Formal adoption can potentially validate the work of the Arts Team and help ensure that the plan will be carried out and accounted for at the ground level.

There are many ways to structure the written plan. Here is one suggested format.

ARTS EDUCATION PLAN STRUCTURE

The three main areas of Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability will provide the overall framework for the plan. The specific focus areas within the Key Components Triangle should all be addressed. Each community will have the opportunity to provide a set of priorities that are uniquely tailored to their needs within this broad framework.

Suggested guidelines for presenting your Arts Education Plan

1. Title Page
2. Arts Team List with Affiliations*
3. Project Background (may include)
   a. Mission/Vision/Values
   b. District, Organization or County's Arts Education Background (narrative)
4. Executive Summary Narrative
   - Practical Vision Elements
   - Strengths/Challenges for Achieving Vision
   - Strategic Directions and Goals

5. 5-Year Plan
   a. First Year/First Phase Implementation Plan
   b. Following Years/Phased Plan
6. Optional Appendix Documents:
   a. Practical Vision Documentation
   b. Strategic Directions Documentation
   c. Budget Implications/Funding Considerations – listed out on a separate page or embedded in implementation plan
   d. Declarations of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning or a Board Policy for Arts Education
   e. Summary results of data collections (surveys, tables, etc.)

PRESENTING THE PLAN FOR ADOPTION

The purpose of making a presentation to the governing board or executive leadership is three-fold:

1. A well-organized presentation gives weight and substance to the content of the proposed plan; it demonstrates purpose and intention and articulates a clear rationale for every recommendation.

2. The presentation is an opportunity to highlight the unified voice of diverse team members that have come together in the development of a thoughtful, viable plan.

3. A public presentation provides a useful summary of what is usually a very complex series of planning steps, giving listeners the opportunity to get the "big picture" thinking in a clear, concise manner.

The specific presentation format will of course be dictated in part by the culture and protocols of each particular board. Several approaches that have been successful include presentations highlighting key aspects and priorities of the plan, student demonstrations of arts learning or arts performances (pre-recorded or live), and brief oral reports accompanied by a well-organized written report.

In all cases, the plan should be placed in a context that highlights what currently exists in the school district and what the Arts Team recommends as a plan of action to move forward.

SUGGESTED TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION TO A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Know your governing board or executive leadership's protocol for adopting policies and plans.

Provide copies of the full arts education plan to leadership well in advance of the meeting so that they have an opportunity to review and compose questions.

Represent the community.

Choose speakers who represent the voice of parents, teachers, administrators, community arts partners, and students. If you have a leadership member on the planning team, it can be highly effective for that individual to direct closing remarks to peers on the board about the success of the planning process and its implications for student learning.

Rehearse and time the presentation.

To ensure that everyone is clear on the talking points and flow, hold a timed "dress rehearsal" in advance including all media. If possible, convene your rehearsal in the board meeting space itself. The rehearsal serves as an important reality check on how much content you can fit into the time allotted, and increases the confidence of the presenters.

Anticipate questions.

Share your plan with colleagues outside the planning team. Ask them to help you anticipate questions that might be raised by school board members, administrators, teachers, parents, or community members.

Bring a cheering section.

One way that board members and administrators understand what is important is by the number of people who turn out for an issue at a board meeting. Work to ensure that your entire planning team is present, and encourage them to invite additional advocates and team members representing the community and program partners. The critical mass will send a message to the board that the arts are valued.

Demonstrate the value of the arts.

There is nothing like a student performance to demonstrate the value of arts learning. This can be accomplished through an exhibit of student work, a live performance, or a digital performance of a program in the county, district or community that exemplifies the quality put forth in the plan. If a live performance is not possible, create a brief video that captures both the learning process and the finished product in a particular program. Remember to include quotes from students about their own development in the process (cognitive, emotional, social, physical).

Note: Presentations of the Strategic Arts Plan may use this example or follow a different format, with County Offices of Education, Charter School Organizations, or nonprofit organizations with different governing bodies.

STAGE 7

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This section will help you create a proactive system for launching, monitoring progress, and sustaining the momentum of your strategic arts education plan in the years ahead.

EVALUATING PROGRESS

It is essential to establish a method of program evaluation that will continue for the duration of your 3-5 year plan. Ideally, the evaluation plan is developed in conjunction with the annual action planning process, and can be created by a sub-group of the Arts Team. Below are some participatory approaches to engaging your entire arts team in this important work.

Track Success Indicators Annually

As part of building toward a newly created vision for the future of your arts education, you will want to establish some success indicators, which will be useful in tracking your progress towards your goals. It is suggested that, in small groups organized for each strategic direction, you create success indicators that are SMARTE for each action or accomplishment you envision. You are addressing the question: How will we know we have been successful?

TIP: "SMARTE" is an acronym that helps in defining more focused, effective outcomes. SMARTE Goals are:

Specific • **M**easurable • Action-oriented • **R**ealistic • **T**ime-bound • **E**quitable

Goal	SMARTE Success Indicator
Develop discipline- and grade level-appropriate student assessments in the arts.	By the end of Year 1, music and visual arts assessment rubrics are developed and piloted for upper elementary, middle, and high school in two classrooms per grade level.
Create arts integrated units.	By the end of the year, 5 teachers develop, pilot, and revise integrated units for all students in grades 4 and 5.

As the year progresses, the Arts Team can check progress towards these success indicators and shift course where needed. A major year-end review (2-3 hours suggested) is recommended, through which implementation actions and success indicators are developed annually. This process allows flexibility to accommodate unforeseen circumstances, shifts in the environment, and new priorities that emerge. Suggested approaches to quarterly and year-end reviews are offered later in this chapter.

Maintaining Check-Ins

At the end of the strategic planning session, it is important to determine how the team will keep the momentum moving forward and stay focused on the plan. One way to do this is to conduct quarterly check-in meetings or you can conduct a year-end review each year.

Conducting a Year-End Review

It is suggested that your team conduct an annual year-end review to assess where the plan has taken root and where strategic effort needs to be applied. This is an opportunity to reconnect with your stated Vision, redefine the Current Reality/Strengths and Challenges that are unique to your community. It will also allow the team to gauge progress on the Action Plan and Strategic Directions, and establish a new Action Plan for the year ahead. Typically the year-end review process can be conducted during one, 2-3 hour meeting with the planning team.

It is important to integrate and synchronize the annual review of your arts plan with other major review funding cycles and processes, including the cycle of LCAP funding if that applies. This helps ensure that the arts program directly supports the overall district or organizational goals and is included in budgeting processes. In some cases, you may need to conduct a more extensive third-quarter review in order to align with the overall district or county planning cycle. Do what is necessary each year to understand the changes and needs in your environment and community. Slow down enough to determine if there are other steps that need to be taken in light of new circumstances. Don't rush into action if there is other ground work that needs to be done to ensure inclusion, diversity, equity, and access.

Year End Review

Step 1: Vision	Step 2: Stengths & Challenges	Step 3: Strategic Directions	Step 4: Action Plan
Review your vision. You may decide to add a new element or goal to your vision, or take away one that has been reached, but typically the vision will hold for 3-5 years.	Use the Wave exercises to reassess your strengths and challenges, as conditions may have shifted during the past year.	Review the Strategic Directions and list the major accomplishments under each. Then work in committees to define the major outcomes to pursue in the coming year. Confirm these outcomes with the full team. Use the "priority wedge" to make the key priorities visible.	Create a new Action Plan and calendar for the coming year with detailed responsibilities, budget, etc. *Remember to integrate the arts plan with the overall budgeting process.*

Ongoing communication is key! Share your successes broadly and continue to imagine new opportunities and possibilities with your team, your district/county and your community.

Thank you for your dedication to the community of arts education!

ARTS EDUCATION RESOURCES

Organizations in Arts Education

- Create CA
- Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective Arts Ed Collective
  - LA County New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education
  - LA County School District Directory, including current Strategic Arts Plans School Districts | Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education | Los Angeles County Arts Ed CollectiveArts Ed Collective
  - Los Angeles County Arts Ed Profile : Arts Ed Profile – Los Angeles
  - Technology Enhanced Arts Learning Project (TEAL) – Los Angeles County Office of Education
- CCSESA Statewide Arts Initiative and Creativity at the Core CCSESA Arts Initiative
- The California Arts Project (TCAP) The California Arts Project is a collaborative, statewide network of teachers and university scholars with the singular goal of expanding student access to and improving student artistic literacy development in dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual, and career arts.

California Department of Education Standards and Framework

- CDE Arts Standards California Arts Standards – Content Standards (CA Dept of Education) For more information see the California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve. California Arts Standards – Content Standards (CA Dept of Education) The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Standards) on January 9, 2019.
- CDE Arts Framework California Arts Education Framework – Visual & Performing Arts (CA Dept of Education)
- Framework Resources for Implementation California Arts Education Framework

Reports and Data Sources

- CA Arts Ed Data Project California Arts Ed Data Project – Create CA
- Otis Report on the Creative Economy 2021 Otis College Report on the Creative Economy

Advocacy Resources

- Create CA advocates for high quality arts education for all students by providing policy expertise and by mobilizing a statewide network of advocates and allied partners. Website: Create CA
- Californians for The Arts is the Statewide Advocacy Organization focusing on advancing and building public awareness of the value and impact of arts, culture and creativity. Website: Californians for the Arts
- California State PTA strives to provide a full curriculum that includes the arts in every school. Website: California State PTA
- Arts for LA helps communities throughout Los Angeles County advocate for greater investment in the arts. Website: Arts for LA.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Resources

- Dismantling Racism Works Web Workbook Dismantling Racism
- White Supremacy Culture- Tema Okun White Supremacy Culture
- White Supremacy Culture Resources | NEA
- Responding to Marginalization of Students of Color in K-12 Education - Cognia - The Source
- Anti-Racist Art Teacher Resources Anti-Racist Art Teachers
- Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain Four Tools for Interrupting Implicit Bias – Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain

Social Emotional Learning Resources

- * Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning CASEL
- * New Jersey Arts Education and SEL Learning Framework SELARTS
- * Edutopia.org SEL Is Good Teaching | Edutopia
- * LA County Creative Wellbeing Curriculum Guide Creative Wellbeing Approach Resources
- * The Flourish Agenda Healing Centered Engagement

Culturally Responsive Resources

- CCSESA Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Arts Teaching and Learning in Action
- LA County Department of Arts and Culture Countywide Cultural Policy
- "Culturally Responsive Teaching: A 50-State Survey of Teaching Standards" External link opens in new window or tab. (PDF), Jenny Muñiz, New America
- Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching - Educator Excellence (CA Dept of Education)

Arts Integration and STEAM Resources

- Institute for Arts Integration and STEAM The Institute for Arts Integration and STEAM
- The Adaptive School - by Robert Garmston and Bruce Wellman, SEVEN NORMS OF COLLABORATION
- Harvard Project Zero The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education
- Making Makerspaces Work for All Students | Edutopia
- Kennedy Center: Arts Integrated Lessons and Activities
- Los Angeles County Office of Education TEAL Technology Enhanced Arts Learning Project
- 35 Resources for the STEAM Classroom: Putting the Arts in STEM | Tech & Learning