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ARTS LEARNING IN COLORADO

More Than An Elective



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IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION ARE THE KEYS TO COMPETITIVENESS.

Learning in and through the arts stimulates creative and analytical capabilities, and is therefore fundamental to ensuring that today's students are prepared for tomorrow's jobs.

"The arts can help students learn how to think in different ways, to use all parts of their brains, to be analytical and to find connections. It is a really important way to make the human brain reach its full potential."

Lieutenant Governor Barbara O'Brien

ABOUT ARTS LEARNING

What is Arts Learning?

An arts rich curriculum by which students from preschool through college not only acquire knowledge and skills in the basic arts disciplines, but also apply that understanding to learning in other core subject areas, ultimately increasing their engagement in education.

Why Arts Learning?

If Colorado is to be a leader in the knowledge-based economy, our schools must educate creative, analytical problem solvers. Research shows that instruction in and involvement with the arts not only motivates students to stay in school, but also helps them develop advanced cognitive abilities essential for success in math, science, and other academic subjects. Arts Learning is a win-win investment that enhances our quality of life and ensures the economic vitality necessary to enjoy it.

A May 2005 Harris Poll on the attitudes of Americans toward arts education, commissioned by Americans for the Arts, revealed strong public support. Among the findings:

- 93%** agree the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children, a 2% increase over 2001.
- 86%** agree an arts education encourages and assist in the improvement of a child's attitudes toward school.
- 83%** believe that arts education helps teach children to communicate effectively with adults and peers.
- 79%** agree incorporating the arts into education is the first step in adding back what's missing in public education today.
- 54%** rated the importance of arts education a "ten" on a scale of one to ten.
- 79%** believe that it's important enough for them to get personally involved in increasing the amount and quality of arts education.

ARTS LEARNING TASK FORCE

In November 2006, the Colorado Council on the Arts convened an Arts Learning Task Force charged with developing a vision for arts learning and drafting policy recommendations for the agency's role. Task Force members were chosen to represent a broad constituency of influence: educators, school, district and state education administrators, legislators, higher education, the state board of education, business leaders, foundation directors, municipal and youth service agencies, parents, artists, arts advocates, and arts education managers. Over three meetings, task force members, outside observers and experts, with support from CCA leadership, produced a plan to guide Colorado toward a commitment to integrated arts learning.

Our Vision

To increase the number and quality of arts learning opportunities for students pre-school through college as a means to achieve the fullest expression of creativity and innovation for Colorado in the 21st century.

Our Beliefs

- The arts are a uniquely human endeavor, in which every individual participates at some level from appreciation to creation.
- Arts learning must be more than an elective. It should encompass both formal study and provide the means to learn other subjects.
- Arts learning contributes to Colorado's vitality and prosperity as well as to each individual's quality of life.
- Arts learning functions as a catalyst for change, for community and for creativity.
- Arts learning transforms people and communities through the exploration of individual differences as well as collective histories.
- Arts learning promotes problem-solving, analytical thinking and teamwork.
- Arts learning will contribute to the development of a creative, inquiring and motivated citizenry.

Our Action Steps

We invite students, parents, elected officials, educators, businesses, arts producers, foundations, and other community leaders to join us in implementing the following Action Steps for advancing Arts Learning in Colorado:

- 1. Ensure** that every Colorado elementary, middle, high school and higher education student receives a quality education in the arts.
- 2. Require** meaningful ways to measure student and school performance in arts education.
- 3. Provide** general teachers, arts teachers, school administrators and artists access to quality preparation and ongoing professional development in effective incorporation of the arts throughout the curriculum.
- 4. Conduct** and disseminate Colorado-based research concerning the value and impact of arts learning in Colorado schools.
- 5. Create** a statewide advocacy effort to advance arts learning, championed by the Governor's office and diverse leadership at the state and local level.
- 6. Secure** sustainable funding for arts curriculum development, research and evaluation of student outcomes, teacher preparation/professional development and public awareness.



"I always felt that art gave my life a very necessary balance. For, as I devoted much of my time and energy to achieve success as an Olympian on the judo mat, or in the battle of ideas on the floor of the U.S. Senate, my art was always that which restored my soul, which re-energized my depleted reserves, and enabled me to continue to achieve highly in other endeavors.

Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Former U.S. Senator



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TASK FORCE MEMBERS

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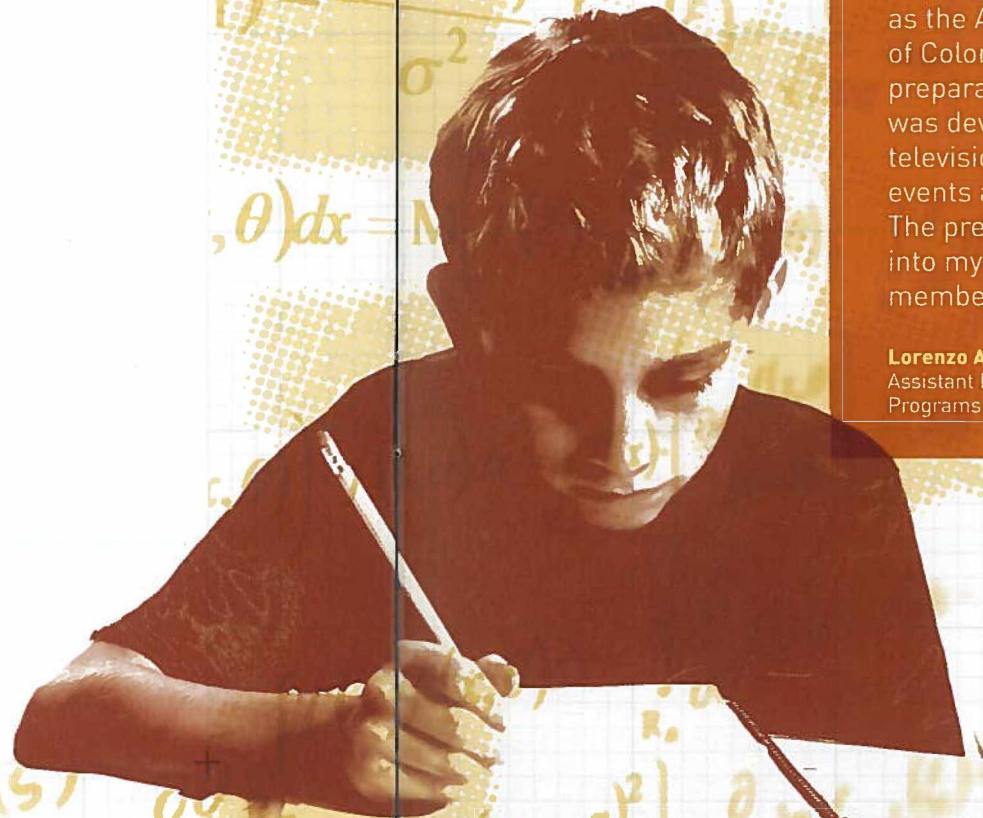
TASK FORCE OBSERVERS

Arts Education Partnership
 Arts for Colorado
 Center for Integrated Arts Education
 Colorado Alliance for Arts Education
 Colorado Art Education Association
 Community Resource Center
 Denver Art Museum
 Denver Center Theatre Company
 Denver Office of Cultural Affairs
 El Centro Su Teatro
 Gay and Lesbian Fund for Colorado
 Imagination Celebration
 Laurel Elementary School
 Scientific and Cultural Collaborative
 Think 360 Arts Complete Education
 University of Colorado at Denver
 University of Northern Colorado

ARTS COURSE-TAKING PATTERNS & SAT SCORES, 2005

	VERBAL	MATH
4+ years arts	534	540
4 years	543	541
3 years	514	516
2 years	508	517
1 years	501	515
1/2 years or less	485	502
Average for All SAT Test Takers	508	520

Sources: 2005 College-Bound Seniors: Total Group Profile Report, The College Board, 2005 Table 3.3; SAT Scores of Students Who Study the Arts: What We Can and Cannot Conclude about the Association, Kathryn Vaughn and Ellen Winner (Fall 200).



"Although today I work as an attorney and as the Assistant Dean at the University of Colorado Law School, much of my preparation as a speaker and presenter was developed in the theatre, on television, in church and in community events as a singer, musician, and dancer. The precious joy that the arts bring into my life and the lives of my family members is invaluable."

Lorenzo A. Trujillo
 Assistant Dean of Students and Professional Programs, University of Colorado - School of Law

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED*

In Your School:

- Offer your help to the principal in finding ways to bring arts to the classroom.
- Find parents at your school who are artists and get them involved.
- Organize a school-wide art exhibit and sale.
- Use PTA/PTCO moneys to bring an artist-in-residence or educational performance into your school.
- Invite community members or business leaders with arts expertise to teach a class or supervise a project.

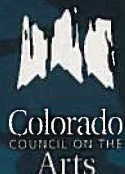
In The Legislature:

- Subscribe to @arts-e, a bi-weekly newsletter with pertinent federal and state legislation information. E-mail caae@artsedcolorado.org.
- E-mail or phone your legislator—they will respond. To find your elected officials, visit www.artsforcolorado.org.
- Invite your elected representatives to every event at your child's school. Experiencing the arts inspires more than any written word.

In Your Workplace:

- Donate to a qualified 501(c)3 non-profit arts organization--and take advantage of your company's matching gifts program.
- Encourage your company to sponsor arts programs in your school.
- Volunteer with an arts organization or at your local school - and bring your colleagues with you.

*Suggestions from Think360 Arts Complete Education (www.artsedcolorado.org), a Colorado nonprofit dedicated to ensuring every child receives a complete education through the arts.



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