

A GUIDE TO K-12 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARTS

Photos on the cover of this guide feature students at ACES Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven, the Silvermine Guild Arts Center in New Canaan and the Rectory School in Pomfret.

Inside photos feature students at the Betsy Ross Arts Middle Magnet School and ACES Educational Center for the Arts, both in New Haven.

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Local districts and teachers can use this guide in a variety of ways:

Some districts will use this guide throughout their entire arts program development process. Curriculum committee members might begin by reading Chapter 1 to establish a philosophical context. They might then move on to Chapter 4 for guidance in conducting a self-study, writing a philosophy and goals, and building objectives based on the standards and recommendations outlined in Chapters 2 and 3. They might also consult the appropriate section in Chapter 5 as they design assessment.

Other districts may wish to use the guide as a reference document, consulting individual sections when they encounter difficulty with a particular step in their curriculum development sequence. For example:

- If members of a district's arts curriculum team have generated a variety of individual ideas for their local philosophy and want to review current thinking in the field before finalizing their draft, they might read Section 2 of Chapter 1, entitled "Toward a Philosophy of Arts Education." They also may want to examine the model local philosophies presented in Appendix C.
- If the group has already developed a philosophy but finds itself struggling with the development of arts goals, the members may wish to read Chapters 2 and 4. They could then either adapt the goals presented therein; consider building their own goals on the recommended content standards for their discipline; adapt model goals from other districts that are presented in Appendix D; or use the worksheets in the back of Chapter 4 to generate their own goals.
- If the district has developed a curriculum but is evaluating whether it has provided appropriate resources, or if it is planning a new facility, its leaders might wish to refer to the components of effective programs provided in Chapter 3 and consult the outside references cited therein.

Still other districts may decide to complete a draft version of each component of their curriculum, then refer to the ideas presented in the relevant section of each chapter of this guide to check the thoroughness or quality of their work. For example, after writing a set of music objectives for Grade 8, a curriculum team might check its work against the music standards for Grade 8 outlined in Chapter 2 to see whether their draft objectives cover an appropriate range of content. The team might compare its draft content scope-and-sequence to models provided in Appendix E, or use the checklists provided in Chapter 4 to evaluate the quality of its draft philosophy, goals and objectives.

Districts that make thoughtful use of the contents and processes of this guide to develop and refine their arts education programs, and support those programs with the essential resources outlined in Chapter 3, will provide their students with the opportunity all children deserve: to make the arts an enriching and satisfying part of their lives.

PREFACE

The Connecticut State Board of Education believes that every student needs and deserves a high quality, comprehensive education in all of the arts, including dance, music, theatre and the visual arts. The arts play an essential role in the daily lives of citizens in our society, and are essential to the expression of human experience. An understanding of the arts, as well as the ability to participate in creating and performing the arts, are essential attributes of an educated person. State Board of Education Position Statement on Arts Education (full text in Appendix A)

Purposes And Vision Of this Guide

The primary purpose of this guide is to assist local school districts in developing quality programs in the visual and performing arts: dance, music, theatre and the visual arts. Because the guide presents goals and standards for student learning in the arts, as well as models of quality curriculum, the document is also a useful resource for pre-service teacher preparation and in-service professional development programs.

The vision of arts education outlined in this guide is both active and thoughtful, rooted in hands-on work with the materials of the arts but always moving students toward understanding, reflecting on and making critical judgments about their own and others' art work. Students who achieve these goals will be prepared for a lifetime of involvement in and enjoyment of the arts.

The cornerstone of Connecticut's arts program goals is the expectation that, in each art form, students learn to carry out the three artistic processes: *creating* new art works, *performing* existing art works, and *responding* to the art works and performances of others. Independently carrying out these processes requires students to understand and apply the principles outlined in the standards; conversely, each standard outlines one or more steps or aspects of the artistic process. The processes, therefore, provide unifying threads that help teachers organize a sequential, standards-based program of arts instruction and assessment.

The K-12 arts program envisioned in the standards is one designed to help each child find a personal path to lifelong involvement in the arts. Students in such a program will receive a comprehensive education in all four visual and performing arts during Grades K-8, then select at least one art form to pursue in sufficient depth at the high school level so that they are empowered to maintain active involvement as an adult. Providing children with such a quality arts education will require many districts to develop a deeper and more comprehensive program of instruction in the arts than has been offered in the past, including expert instruction in the underrepresented but important areas of dance and theatre.

Overview Of This Guide

This guide recommends goals, standards and proven procedures for developing, implementing and assessing local programs. The document also provides illustrative examples to help those who use the guide understand and apply the principles outlined herein.

The overall content of the chapters and appendices are as follows:

Chapter 1: Vision and Philosophy. Chapter 1 presents Connecticut's vision for education in the visual and performing arts, and describes the general role of the arts in society and in education. The contents of this chapter provide a foundation for building a local program philosophy and for communicating the value of the arts in education to others outside the arts education community.

Chapter 2: Connecticut's Arts Goals and Standards. Chapter 2 presents Connecticut's recommended program goals and standards for student learning in the arts. The chapter is divided into five parts: a common introduction for all of the visual and performing arts, followed by a section devoted to goals and standards in each of the four arts disciplines. The goals and standards presented in this chapter also appear in *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning* (1998) and *Connecticut K-12 Curriculum Framework* (1998), documents outlining Connecticut's core curriculum that may be viewed or downloaded by accessing the curriculum area of the State Department of Education website, <http://www.state.ct.us/sde>

The Connecticut content and performance standards presented in this guide are adapted from the National Standards in the Arts. There are several reasons why the statewide committees of educators, artists and other citizens who developed this guide chose to use and improve upon the national standards. First and foremost, Connecticut's committee members had a great deal of direct input into the writing and refinement of the national standards, and ultimately concluded that those standards reflected the best thinking of their professions. Another compelling reason that the committee built their vision on the national standards is that doing so enables Connecticut's educators to draw on the great wealth of ideas and materials keyed to the standards – such as published collections of instructional strategies, assessment tasks and instructional materials – that have been developed by expert arts educators from across our nation. Connecticut's students deserve a quality education in the arts, and these standards provide the foundation for just such an education.

Chapter 3: Components of Effective Arts Programs. Chapter 3 describes the essential arts program resources and conditions that districts should provide to enable their students to master the standards presented in Chapter 2. Collectively, these resources are often referred to as the “opportunity to learn.”

Chapter 4: Creating Local K-12 Curriculum Guides in the Arts. Chapter 4 recommends proven, step-by-step processes that local school districts can use when reviewing and revising their existing arts programs or developing new arts curriculum guides. The chapter illustrates those processes by referring to examples of quality local curriculum work located in the appendices.

Chapter 5: Issues in Arts Education. Chapter 5 explores some of the key issues districts face as they develop and implement quality arts programs, and provides suggestions and recommended references that may help resolve those issues.

Appendices. The appendices consist primarily of excerpts from exemplary standards-based arts curriculums developed by local arts curriculum teams. This section also presents Connecticut policy and legislation clarifying the central importance of arts education, Connecticut's teacher standards in art and music, and a list of the state's arts-centered and arts magnet schools.

The curriculum section of the Connecticut State Department of Education website (www.state.ct.us/sde) provides additional useful resources that users can read and download, and provides links to others. Among those resources are “trace maps” in each arts discipline, which are examples of assessable activities in Grades 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 that might help students master the standards in that discipline; and links and references to model local arts guides. Teachers and program developers also can refer to www.CTcurriculum.org for examples of model units with assessment and student work based on Connecticut's arts standards.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This guide, like most important creations in the performing arts, is the result of countless hours of collaborative work by many dedicated individuals, only a small percentage of whom are recognized publicly in the program. The development of Connecticut's *Guide to K-12 Program Development in the Arts* took several years of sustained effort, from developing standards to professional development to early drafts to local piloting to model practices and curriculum. Most of the teachers, supervisors, professors, artists and others acknowledged below and on page x served on writing committees. Many other educators reviewed and piloted drafts, developed and piloted exemplary curriculum materials, and otherwise contributed their ideas and expertise.

Special thanks are extended to Jill Henderson, who coordinated the development of several components of this guide, and to several talented K-12 arts program supervisors, who guided their faculties in the development of the exceptional standards-based curriculum materials that provided the foundation for this guide, including: Richard Wells and Cynthia Rehm of Simsbury, Gail Edmonds of Middletown, Joe Juliano of Hamden, Ann Cappetta of North Haven, Annette Rhoads and Jack Zamarly of Regional School District No. 15, Neil Rinaldi of South Windsor and Emil Kopcha of East Hartford. There is no more important mission than sharing the arts with children, and no greater joy than collaborating with master educators toward that goal.

Scott C. Shuler
Arts Education Specialist
Connecticut State Department of Education

Additional guide project staff members included Jill Henderson and Robert Pauker. Outside expert reviewers included Lynn Galbraith and Barbara Wills of Arizona, Pam Paulson of Minnesota and Joan Peterson of California. Contributing Connecticut educators, artists and other citizens included the following:

Adamson, Karen	Gersten, Kathy Borteck
Adinolfi, Tahme	Goldbas, Amy
Barnicle, Stephan	Goodman, June
Borelli, Judith	Grasso, Barbara
Cantor, Dorothy	Griffith, Annette
Cappetta, Ann	Hamden Arts Faculty
Castano, Marie	Hannah, Joyce
D'Annolfo, Suzanne	Hoffman-Solomon, Mary Lou
Dart, Diana	Hugh, Robert
DeGuzman, Donna Sue	Jensen, Sig
DeLuca, Angelina	Jones, Allen
Denmead, Sandra	Juliano, Jr., Joseph
Derry, William	Junda, Mary Ellen
Drzwecki, Dale	Karefelis, Plato
Edmonds, Gail	Keegan, Patricia
Farmington Art Faculty	Kelly, Colleen
Farrell, Jeff	Koch, Judy
Feierbend, John	Krause, Claire
Fiftal, Donald	Kukiel, Michael
Fiftal, Lois	Kumme, Karl
Fiotakis, Doris	Kutner, Selma
Fitzgerald, Donna	Lauretano, Diane
Garcia, Cassandra Broadus	Lavieri, Sabrina
Gerber, Linda	Lynn, Enid

(continued)

Marshall, David
Martin, Ionis
Matheke, Susan
McCoid, Charlotte
McCormick, Jean
McKensie, Donna
Michael, Jr., Don
Middletown Arts Faculty
Nannoun, Donna
Niemasik, Kay
North Haven Art Faculty
O'Connor, Edward
Odoms, Genie
Palmer, Charles
Parker, Robert
Parsons, Cindy
Perry, Pamela
Rehm, Cindy
Reik, Cynthia
Rhoads, Annette
Rinaldi, Neil

Riposo, Gil
Roberts, Maggie
Salinger, Barbara
Sanko, Anna
Saunders, Jeannette
Saunders, Robert
Sheathelm, Shirlee
Simsbury Arts Faculty
Singer, Deborah
Smith, Kathleen
Smith, Paul
South Windsor Music Faculty
Squire, Rebecca
Stellwagen, Anne
Test, Merle
Thomas, Joanne
Thompson, Jack
Topaz, Muriel
Wade, Catherine
Wells, Richard
Weston, JanMarie
Wolf, Mary Hunter
Wright, William
Yates-Waterhouse, Mitzi