

# NORTH CAROLINA

## AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS STATE POLICY PILOT PROGRAM – SP<sub>3</sub>

North Carolina has been selected, after applying on a competitive basis, to be one of ten (10) pilot states to participate in Americans for the Arts' comprehensive national campaign to advance arts education, the [State Policy Pilot Program](#) (SP<sub>3</sub>).

The North Carolina SP<sub>3</sub> Team will facilitate an action plan for the development and implementation of an arts education policy strategy for a 3-year period. Americans for the Arts will provide in-depth customized technical assistance and \$10,000 each year to assist North Carolina in successfully creating its plan and achieving its planned goals. To ensure that best practices will be developed, both in the state and nationally, the team will attend an annual symposium to share learning with other state teams, participate annually in a meeting of the State Arts Advocacy Network, and produce a final report, outlining what worked and did not work during participation in the pilot program. These final report/case studies will be turned into policy development tools for the field.



*credit: North Carolina Arts Council*

In 2010, the North Carolina legislature requested the Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the Department of Cultural Resources (NCDRC) to convene a joint task force and submit a Comprehensive Arts Education Plan. As an addendum in 2011, the task force also crafted a detailed Comprehensive Arts Education Implementation Plan. Though these plans were never formally passed or endorsed legislatively, they put on the table an authoritative arts education agenda for basic education, high school graduation requirements, funding of the A+ Schools Program, arts integration and arts exposure. In North Carolina, “comprehensive arts education” includes three components:

- **Arts Education** (arts as core, academic subjects)
- **Arts Integration** (arts as a catalyst for learning across the curriculum)
- **Arts Exposure** (exposure to arts experiences)

Included were recommendations for implementing a requirement of arts education in grades K-5, availability of all four arts disciplines in grades 6-8 with students required to take at least one arts discipline each school year, and availability of electives in the arts at the high school level. Legislative support from State Representative Becky Carney and executive branch support from Secretary of the Department of Cultural Resources Susan Kluttz ensured that collaboration at the necessary leadership level was in place to tackle the goals of the Comprehensive Arts Education (CAE) Plan.



*credit: North Carolina Arts Council*

In 2015, when State Superintendent June Atkinson requested an update on CAE Plan progress, both Carney and Kluttz addressed the state school board to make positive comments, convey their continued support, and endorse reports provided by Vicki Vitiello (Director of Operations and Arts Learning, NC Arts Council) and Christie Lynch

Ebert (Instruction Section Chief, NC Dept. of Public Instruction). Rep. Carney portrayed the development of bipartisan support in the General Assembly for comprehensive arts education and expressed her belief, conveyed to her by teachers when she was a county commissioner in Mecklenburg County, that arts education is directly related to the creativity that students would need to address the challenges of the 21st century. Secretary Kluttz explained that in her 14 years as mayor of Salisbury she learned that involvement in arts activities could help solve most problems in a city such as race relations, gangs, at-risk children, etc.

The North Carolina SP3 Team, led by representatives of Arts NC, the NC Department of Public Instruction, the NC Arts Council, A+ Schools, and the legislature, plans to use the three-year pilot program to focus their efforts on the remaining goals articulated in the state's *2010 Comprehensive Arts Education (CAE) Plan*.



credit: Whirligig by Vollis Simpson, Vollis Simpson State Park & Museum

The SP3 Team members agree that implementing arts education, arts integration and arts exposure components of the *Plan* will require engaging legislators, the state board of education, local school boards, superintendents, principals, leaders in the higher education of teachers and artists, arts organizations and artists, local arts agencies, teachers and parents. Therefore, one priority of the SP3 Team is to increase the frequency and productivity of their own networking. Another is to reach out to, communicate with and enlist networks of stakeholder partners. The design of a website has been initiated to enhance this networking and communication, and to provide

information to the broader public. Potential content includes case studies, materials, and accurate messages about the value of arts education, as well as news about SP3 project activities and how to participate.

The SP3 Team intends to determine priorities with an eye towards “agility management,” by which is meant focusing where the opportunity to make progress is greatest. For the past few years and currently (Winter 2016), the state legislature has been considering a high school arts education graduation requirement. Consequently, the SP3 Team members play a variety of roles as resources to that process. The recent passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), reauthorizing the U.S. Department of Education, provides a variety of opportunities for the SP3 Team to advance arts education in North Carolina as the education and the arts communities seek to learn how they might take advantage or be impacted by it.

In summary, SP3 initial goals include:

- Nurturing and supporting the ongoing partnership between the agencies and stakeholder groups represented on the SP3 Team;
- Determining SP3 priority goals for the three-year period;
- Identifying stakeholder needs, motivations & influences; and
- Developing strategies for engaging and guiding stakeholders in SP3 activities.

In recent years, the large arts education constituency has made progress on some of the Implementation Plan recommendations, some of which are funding goals that require legislation, while others are programmatic, training or communication goals. In 2012, Arts NC was instrumental in passing legislation that requires pre-service teachers to know how to integrate the arts into classroom instruction, a goal in the Plan. Staff at NCDPI and NCDCCR then worked with a committee to research the kind and quality of current instruction for pre-service

teachers and what steps could be taken to improve that instruction and experience. The A+ Schools Program has provided and is expanding training opportunities for A+ and non-A+ educators to support arts integration as part of a balanced and comprehensive education for all children, another recommendation from the task force. In 2015, A+ Schools received legislative support for the first time in more than a decade.



*credit: North Carolina Arts Council*

For more information and to participate in North Carolina SP3 activities, please contact:

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An article with in-depth description of the NC SP3 initiative is located at:

<http://seadae.org/Blog/blog/January-2015.aspx>

### **Americans for the Arts' State Policy Pilot Program (SP3)**

A three-year, 50-state initiative with a 10-state pilot component, the State Policy Pilot Program is meant to influence the implementation of federal mandates and programs around arts education at the state level, expand support for arts education policy and funding, and impact local access to arts programs and instruction for students. Through a set of data collection efforts, state-level capacity building, and the convening of a network for knowledge sharing and collective action, the State Policy Pilot Program will strengthen arts education nationally by improving state policy.

For more information, visit: [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SP3](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SP3).