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**WORKING DRAFT**

## **Taking Action for Arts Education**

**The Call for an Arts Education Plan for Cleveland Metropolitan School District**

Prepared by Putnam Consulting Group  
For the CMSD Arts Education Committee

June 29, 2017

## INTRODUCTION

### Building on The Cleveland Plan

The goal of *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools*, our city's plan to fundamentally reinvent public education in Cleveland, is to ensure every child in Cleveland attends a high-quality school and every neighborhood has a multitude of great schools from which families can choose. The Cleveland Metropolitan Schools District (CMSD) has been delivering on that plan since its development in 2012. CMSD has expanded high-quality preschool, increased high school graduation rates, prepared more students for college, and produced more college graduates. But great schools are measured by more than academic performance: in a city as rich in cultural assets as Cleveland, CMSD schools should be known for its excellent arts instruction, experiences and opportunities for young people.

### It's Time to Elevate the Arts

CMSD has had a long-standing interest in arts education. Over the past decades, that interest has been demonstrated to varying degrees and accompanied by varying levels of commitment to and investment in arts education. Likewise, community engagement and investment in arts education through CMSD schools also has ebbed and flowed.

There is no denying that arts education is a critical component of a meaningful and productive preK-12 education. With the support of several Cleveland-area funders, CMSD is now poised to elevate and invest in arts education for all students.

In 2016, leaders from CMSD, The Cleveland Foundation, and The George Gund Foundation formed the CMSD Arts Education Committee (see Appendix 1), which began to explore the potential for expanding and improving arts education in Cleveland. The Committee researched national best practices, explored the approaches of other school districts around the country that are recognized leaders in arts education (see Appendix 2), examined the current assets and challenges that exist in CMSD with regard to arts education access and delivery. The Committee also had loaned staff visit 47 CMSD schools and conduct an "arts inventory," which revealed high interest in the arts from principals and arts instructors, but low realization of that interest in terms of school offerings. From this work, the Committee determined that expanding and improving arts education in CMSD is not only feasible, but also imperative. *In the process of drafting this framework, the Committee circulated the document to a number of representatives from Cleveland's arts community to include their thoughts and feedback.*

Based on its findings, The CMSD Arts Education Committee agreed to lead the development of a formal arts education plan, using on the framework provided in this document. *The Committee anticipates that the arts education plan will be finalized in 2017-18 and that CMSD will begin to implement it in the spring of this school year.*

This document presents a summary of the reasoning behind the Committee's enhanced focus on the arts, its thinking to date about what a robust arts education might look like in CMSD, and the framework it is building to guide CMSD to its ultimate goal: the creation and implementation of a robust Arts Education Plan.

## SECTION 1. Why Arts Education?

***Simply put, our students need and deserve a rich arts education, and providing robust arts experiences is the right thing to do.***

CMSD and the Arts Education Committee believe that education should develop the whole child, and nothing does that as powerfully as the arts. Arts make the difference between a life that is routine and one that is vibrant and robust. Children seem to know this instinctively — they love art and they thrive when immersed in it.

Studying the arts allows students to develop multiple intelligences beyond standard academics. They open lines of connection and communication that transcend differences. The arts give students the tools to question, explore, understand and express what it means to be human, and to exist in relationship to others. Studying the arts increases our students' abilities to be perceptive, introspective, sensitive, and caring individuals — as well as creative thinkers and doers. For all of these reasons, arts education is critically important, and it is our responsibility to provide it in rich and meaningful ways.

Just like reading, math, science and social studies, the arts should be a core part of every student's education. In addition to studying the arts purely for art's sake, research upon research shows the importance of the arts in the supporting the academic and social/emotional development of students.

- Those who participate in rich arts experiences are more likely to improve literacy and numeracy skills; perform better on standardized tests; report higher levels of self-esteem, self-awareness and self-confidence; and develop a deeper understanding of the world around them.<sup>1</sup>
- Students who participate in the arts at school are more likely to feel that school is a safe and supportive place, and therefore more likely to maintain good attendance and graduate on time.<sup>2</sup>
- Including the arts in preK-12 education also helps students better develop the “soft” skills — such as interpersonal relationships, creativity, flexibility, and leadership — that employers value.<sup>3</sup>

No matter how you look at it, arts are a cornerstone of the complete, well-rounded education that all CMSD students deserve. As a society, we know this. In fact, 9 of every 10 adults believes that arts should be taught in grades K-12.<sup>4</sup>

### **What “Arts Education” Means at CMSD**

*Arts Education refers to the broad range of coursework and experiences that allow students to create, perform, respond, and connect in and through the arts. These include direct experiences with a full spectrum of visual arts, music, dance, theater, media arts, and creative writing, as well as the interweaving of arts in multiple avenues of study, that enhance students' cultural awareness and competencies [working definition].*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Publications/critical-evidence.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2013/01/22/top-10-skills-children-learn-from-the-arts/?utm\\_term=.f6dbddf7e5e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2013/01/22/top-10-skills-children-learn-from-the-arts/?utm_term=.f6dbddf7e5e)

<sup>4</sup>

[http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/images/2016/research/public\\_op\\_poll/What\\_Americans\\_Believe\\_About\\_the\\_Arts\\_July7.pdf](http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/images/2016/research/public_op_poll/What_Americans_Believe_About_the_Arts_July7.pdf)

## **SECTION 2. Where We Are Now**

When the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed in 2015, it made clear that providing students with a “well-rounded education” was a priority. Further, ESSA specifically included the arts as a core component of a well-rounded education. In addition, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions released an additional report that stated their intention that the arts “may include the subjects of dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts, and other arts disciplines as determined by the State or local education agency.”

In other words, lawmakers embraced the arts as a critical element for education, and encouraged school systems like CMSD to think both broadly and deeply about their offerings.

Considering its importance in providing a well-rounded education, arts education in CMSD isn’t what it should be. This is not a criticism of CMSD’s existing arts faculty: CMSD’s arts teachers are hard-working and dedicated. Rather, years of declining enrollment and federal and state cuts contributed to ongoing budget challenges for CMSD, which led to cuts across the organization that included deep cuts in the arts. This, coupled with a hyper-focus on reading and math as part of No Child Left Behind, and the lack of resources to invest in leadership for arts education at the district level have meant that our attention to and investment in arts education has fallen short of what our students deserve. The availability and quality of instruction in the arts varies widely from school to school within our district, and while some students enjoy a fairly robust experience, many others experience little in terms of the arts.

The Committee believes this is not equitable and not acceptable. *Every* child’s education should include deep and meaningful experiences in the arts.

Fortunately, CMSD is located in one of the nation’s most vibrant arts communities. The City of Cleveland is home to numerous art and cultural institutions and projects that have provided a rich context for arts learning in and outside of area classrooms for many years. These resources are vibrant and natural assets for arts education in CMSD, and the Committee envisions created an Arts Education Plan that enfold these institutions as partners in providing a robust arts experience for CMSD students.

Arts education is emerging as a critical focus point for CMSD. Building on our shared understanding of the critical roles arts play in helping young minds to flourish, the Committee is eager to create an arts education program within our district that offers every student a chance to explore and embrace all that the arts has to offer, and in doing so, emerge as more capable and confident individuals.

## **SECTION 3. Where We’d Like to Go**

The work for expanding and improving arts education in CMSD is driven by a common vision:

### ***CMSD Arts Education Vision Statement***

It is the Cleveland Metropolitan School District’s vision to develop each student’s full creative and intellectual potential through rich experiences in the arts. The arts offer powerful tools for expression, and forge connections between intellect and emotion, problem-solving, communicating ideas and bringing meaning and beauty into our lives. The Committee envisions an arts education strategy created and implemented by the CMSD that:

- Commits to arts instruction as a critical element of the core curriculum.
- Generates inspired, standards-based instruction in the arts.

- Provides high quality arts instruction by arts specialists and classroom teachers, supported by purposeful partnerships with professional organizations and community arts-based programs.
- Ensures that every school is resource-ready to offer excellent arts programming.
- Creates opportunities for students who self-identify an interest in the arts to have multiple chances to explore that interest in depth.
- Establishes a workplan for successful arts integration into other subjects.

This vision will guide the creation of a new Arts Education Plan for CMSD, and is intended to serve as a rallying point for its partners in the arts, business, government and funding communities. As these partners engage with CMSD and share their wisdom and perspectives, this common vision will only grow stronger.

#### **SECTION 4. The Path We'll Take**

The journey toward the vision will require the development of a clear, actionable plan that engages CMSD faculty and staff at all levels and leverages community assets and partnerships beyond CMSD.

##### ***Overarching Goals***

Achieving the vision articulated by the CMSD Arts Education Committee means shifting the district's and community's understanding of the importance of arts education to bring arts instruction front-and-center within our schools. Ultimately, the Committee would like to see CMSD become a national model, recognized by others for the breadth, depth and quality of its instruction. To do this, CMSD, along with a variety of cultural partners, will need to accomplish the following overarching goals:

1. **Ensure that every student enjoys a *rigorous and sequential arts experience* as part of K-12 education.** Student learning in CMSD should be both *in* and *through* the arts. CMSD will define "rigorous" in a meaningful way that incorporates both direct arts studies and the use of art as an integrated component of learning in other subjects. CMSD will pursue the equitable distribution of arts education resources to all schools in order to meet this goal.
2. **Ensure that every student with a passion for the arts has *opportunities for deep exploration*.** For many students, the arts will become a driving force that leads to lifelong interest and careers in arts-related fields. CMSD will ensure that pathways exist that allow those students to develop their skills and talents and emerge ready for post-secondary study and/or careers in the arts. Further, CMSD and its cultural partners will build students' cultural capital and understanding through deeper relationships with Cleveland's local cultural institutions, so that they will learn how to navigate and interact with arts beyond the classroom and throughout the community.
3. **Develop *leadership and capacity for arts education* at the district and building levels.** The passion for and commitment to arts education is driven by adult decision-makers and educators. CMSD will ensure that they have the knowledge, tools and resources they need to become leaders for arts education, and that arts teachers—in particular—are more fully integrated into the culture, instruction, professional development and activities of the schools in which they teach. *In addition, CMSD will invest in its own organizational capacity, and that of its schools, to design, deliver and administer a robust arts education experience to students.*

## **SECTION 5. How We Know We're Headed in the Right Direction**

The following dashboard indicators serve as a starting place for creating a mutually endorsed set of metrics that will help indicate success in meeting the overarching goals. As the Arts Education Plan is developed and implemented with the help of community partners, CMSD will quantify these indicators appropriately. The Committee also realizes that the indicators may change to reflect new knowledge and understanding of what signals success in arts education. (Please note: some indicators below can apply to more than one goal.)

### **Target Benchmarks (to be determined by working groups)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### **Potential Metrics to Measure Movement Toward Benchmarks**

#### ***Rigorous and Sequential Arts Experience***

- Number of qualified FTE arts instructors per student in each school building
- Number of instructional minutes in the arts in each school building
- Percent of in-school time dedicated to specific arts instruction K-8 (music, dance, visual art, drama, creative writing)
- Percent of teachers reporting use of arts-based instruction in non-art classrooms
- Percent of time non-arts teachers engaged students in arts-based learning
- Increased arts teacher/classroom teacher collaborations
- Number/percent of students achieving desired levels of proficiency on NAEP Arts Education Assessment or another common assessment tool
- Range/number of cultures represented in arts education and percent of time spent engaged in each
- Metrics for measuring "quality" as defined by the Arts Education Plan

#### ***Opportunities for Deep Exploration***

- Number/percent of students engaged in short-term education experiences with community arts partners
- Number/percent of students engaged in long-term education experiences with community arts partners
- Opportunities for student interaction at local cultural institutions
- Number of interactions per student at local cultural institutions
- Number of higher-level arts courses offered at MS/HS level, including AP
- Number/percent of students enrolled in higher-level arts courses in MS/HS, including AP
- Number/percent of HS students who have completed in 3 or more courses in a specific discipline
- Number/percent of students participating in juried exhibitions, performances, competitions, etc. (demonstrate deep proficiency)
- Number/percent of students engaging in arts internships or off-campus study
- Number/percent of students pursuing arts-related study or careers after HS graduation

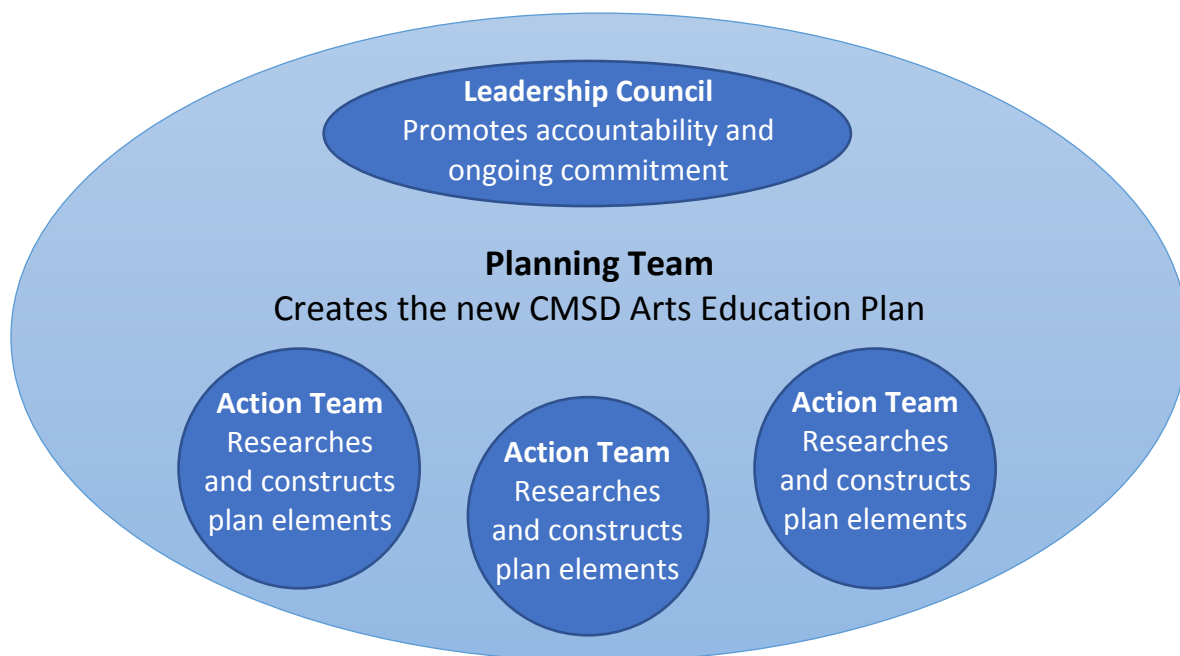
### ***Leadership for Arts Education***

- Number of dedicated arts education staff at the district level
- Number of dedicated arts educators at building level
- Percent of building-level budgets dedicated to arts instruction
- Number of building-level arts instructors who report feeling they are a core part of school staff and school culture
- Number of building-level arts instructors who report that their work is fully integrated with that of other faculty
- Number of community partners supporting arts education at district and building levels
- Number of arts-related professional development hours for arts instructors at each school
- Number of arts-related professional development hours for non-arts instructors at each school

## SECTION 6. Who Will Travel With Us?

Although CMSD will take the lead on administering and implementing the Arts Education Plan, the success of this effort also rests on the willingness of community arts partners and other community organizations to help by providing advice and guidance on plan development and by shouldering a portion of the plan implementation.

CMSD and the Committee will depend on community partners to share the vision and goals, and to help measure students' and schools' progress toward those goals. To this end, the Committee proposes the following structure for developing the CMSD Arts Education Plan:



**Planning Team** members should include a broad and diverse range of leaders from CMSD and area arts organizations, as well as principals, teachers, teaching artists, arts intermediaries and arts partner organizations, students and alumni (including Cleveland School of the Arts), parents and other community members. The Planning Team's role is to:

- Develop the Arts Education Plan
- Make recommendations for plan rollout and implementation
- Make recommendations for staffing and other resource needs to ensure ongoing implementation
- Make recommendations for collecting baseline data and ongoing data collection and analysis

**Action Team** members will be drawn from the Planning Team, but may also include others with deep knowledge or interest relative to particular aspects of the plan. The Action Teams will explore particular aspects of the plan and make recommendations as to how to address them. Action Teams may be created according to arts discipline, or by other focus areas, such as quality standards, professional



development, arts partnerships, or community engagement. The number of Action Teams needed and their focus areas will be determined by the Planning Team.

**Leadership Council** members should include top leadership from CMSD, arts intermediary organizations, and public and private funders. The Leadership Council will assume responsibility for:

- Ensuring that the planning work and implementation are properly resourced
- Ensuring accountability throughout the process
- Reporting on the process and successes to the community

*Note: The CMSD Arts Education Committee defines “arts intermediary” as an organization that supports multiple arts organizations (through funding, convening, technical assistance or other means) but does not provide programming or performances itself. An “arts partner” is any arts organization that provides arts programming or performances to CMSD students.*

## **SECTION 7. Beginning the Journey**

The journey to a robust arts education for every CMSD student will be one that lasts for several years. Indeed, it will and should be an ongoing and ever-evolving endeavor. That said, there are a few beginning steps that the CMSD Arts Education Committee can take now to set the process in motion.

- Hire district-level staff leadership for arts education.
- Outline planning process and timeline for developing the Arts Education Plan.
- Secure interest and engagement from arts partners.
- Approve and implement a **planning structure**, and recruit people to serve in its various roles.
- Begin to develop communication plan and messaging around the new Arts Education Plan process to lay the groundwork for broad community buy-in and support.
- Consider visits to exemplar cities.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **CMSD Arts Education Committee**

Jennifer Coleman, Senior Program Officer for Arts, The George Gund Foundation  
Tiffany Darby, Director of Strategy & Operations, Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
Christine Fowler-Mack, Chief Portfolio Officer, Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
Eric Gordon, CEO, Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
Kathleen Hallissey, Director of Community-Responsive Grantmaking, The Cleveland Foundation  
Leah Hudnall, 2016-2018 George Gund Foundation Fellow  
Lillian Kuri, Vice President, Strategic Grantmaking, Arts & Urban Design Initiatives, The Cleveland Foundation  
Ann Mullin, Senior Program Officer for Education, The George Gund Foundation  
Michelle Pierre-Farid, Chief Academic Officer, Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
Kris Putnam-Walkerly, Consultant, Putnam Consulting Group  
Betsey Russell, Consultant, Putnam Consulting Group  
Hannah Santisi, Cleveland Foundation Public Service Fellow  
Lori Ward, Chief Talent Officer, Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
Helen Williams, Program Director for Education, Cleveland Foundation  
Marissa Williams, 2015-2017 George Gund Foundation Fellow

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Research Sources**

This framework document was informed by interviews with five national art education experts, six “peer” school districts and their intermediary partners (where present), and five small districts adjacent to Cleveland.

#### ***National Experts***

- Jonathan Hermann, Executive Director and Heather Ikemire, Chief Program Officer, National Guild for Community Arts Education
- Daniel Windham, Arts Director, Wallace Foundation
- Dr. Jerry James, Director of Teaching and Learning, Center for Arts Education
- Anne Rasmussen, Executive Director, Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education
- Dr. Steve Seidel, Faculty Director, Arts in Education, Harvard University

#### ***Peer School Districts and Intermediaries***

- Boston Public Schools
- EdVestors (Boston)
- Chicago Public Schools
- Ingenuity (Chicago)
- Dallas Unified School District
- Big Thought (Dallas)
- Denver Public Schools
- New York City Public Schools
- Seattle Public Schools
- Seattle Office of Arts and Culture

#### ***Local Districts***

- Berea
- Cleveland Heights
- Lakewood
- Parma
- Shaker Heights

Research also included a literature review of dozens of reports, articles and other resources. These included (but are not limited to):

Boston case study - <http://www.edvestors.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/BPS-Arts-Expansion-Case-Study.pdf>

Chicago arts education plan - <http://www.cpsarts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/CPS-Arts-Ed-Plan.pdf>

Ingenuity *State of the Arts* report - [http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/StateoftheArts\\_2015-16\\_FINAL\\_web\\_compressed.pdf](http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/StateoftheArts_2015-16_FINAL_web_compressed.pdf)

Visit Ingenuity *artlook* data map - <http://www.artlookmap.com/index>

Seattle's Creative Advantage *2015 Progress Report* –  
[http://www.creativeadvantageseattle.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/FINAL\\_CA\\_16ProgressRep.pdf](http://www.creativeadvantageseattle.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/FINAL_CA_16ProgressRep.pdf)

Big Thought's *More Than Measuring* report - <https://www.bigthought.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/MoreThanMeasuring.pdf>

Big Thought's online partners catalog (Includes science and art offerings. Click “read more” for any entry to see how it aligns with Texas state standards) -  
<http://www.bigthought.org/LearningPartners/Programs/FeaturedPrograms.aspx>

*Child Development and Arts Education: A review of Current Research and Best Practices*, College Board (2012)  
<https://nccas.wikispaces.com/file/view/NCCAS+Child+Development+Report.pdf>

*Increasing Arts Demand Through Better Arts Learning*, Wallace Foundation Knowledge Brief (2008)  
<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Increasing-Arts-Demand-Through-Better-Arts-Learning.pdf>

*The Practice of Partnership: High-Impact Arts Education Partnerships with K-12 Schools*, Metlife Foundation Partners in Arts Education Program, 2005-2014 Annual Report, National Guild for Community Arts Education  
<http://communityartsed.nationalguild.org/getmedia/fafba441-dbd0-45cd-9b10-808a1ef17df3/Practice-of-Partnership.pdf.aspx>

Siedel, Steven, et.al., *The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education*, Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education,  
<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Understanding-Excellence-in-Arts-Education.pdf>