

2014–15 Plan for Arts and Cultural Heritage Funds

Overview of Initiatives



1. Arts Integration Networks: Increasing Student Achievement and Teacher Capacity

A growing body of compelling research connects academic success, college readiness and mastery of skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century to arts learning. Building on this research, the Perpich Arts Integration Network is an innovative initiative that aims to increase student achievement and teacher capacity by fostering collaborative arts integration in Minnesota schools. In its first three years, with the ultimate goal of positively impacting the learning of more than 4,000 students in the Lakes Country and Southeast regions, nearly 200 teachers in the arts and in other content areas have engaged in professional development leading to the creation and implementation of arts-integrated curriculum based on the Minnesota Academic Standards.

Building on this experience, pending Legislative approval, the project will continue into its second and third years in the Southeast region and expand to an additional region of the state. It will also create a new initiative for secondary schools to develop dedicated arts-integrated courses, and extend and deepen learning experiences with current Lakes Country teachers and students.

Goals

1. Increase teacher capacity to design, implement and assess collaborative arts integration in Minnesota schools, and the capacity of administrators to support this instructional strategy.

2. Improve student learning through standards-based collaborative arts integration, a strategy used by teachers and supported by administrators.

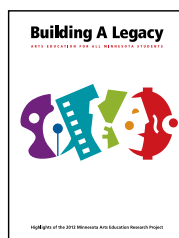
Measures

- External evaluator analysis
- Arts integration lesson and unit plan analysis
- Student achievement of standards and key success factors including engagement & motivation
- Project results documented by teachers online

- External evaluator analysis
- Student achievement of standards and key success factors including engagement & motivation

Strategies

- Professional development for teachers and administrators on standards-based collaborative arts integration; aligned curriculum, instruction and evaluation; and technology tools
- Leveraging technology as a space for professional development and dissemination of learning and examples



2. Statewide Study on the Status of Arts Education: Five-Year Follow-up Study

In 2012, the first Building a Legacy report was released, based on a study that Perpich Center conducted on the status of K-12 arts education in Minnesota, which met the Legislature's request for clearly documented and reliable measures of project effectiveness. The resulting report provides a never-before-available picture of arts education in the state and establishes a baseline for tracking and measuring future progress.

This baseline study was a first step toward answering the need to provide data to decision makers, schools and the public about this critical area of K-12 education. In order to keep our understanding and analysis current and usable, and to be able to compare with the baseline data, the Perpich Center proposes conducting a five-year follow-up study with Legacy Funds.

**Project
Timeline**

Activity	Dates	Location
Arts Integration Networks, Continued	7/13 – 6/15	Southeast and Lakes Country regions
New Regional Arts Integration Network	7/14 – 6/15	New region
Development of Arts-Integrated High School Courses	7/14 – 1/15	Statewide
Research and Development Initiatives	7/13 – 6/15	Statewide & eventual national reach
Statewide Study on Status of Arts Education	7/13 – 6/15	Statewide

**Requested
Funding**

Perpich Center
Legacy Fund
Initiatives Budget

Arts Integration Networks, Continued

FY14: \$673,500 FY15: \$663,500 SUBTOTAL: \$1,337,000

With the goal of supporting increasing independence leading to sustainability, the teacher networks in the Southeast and Lakes Country regions will continue and expand their work with an increasing shift to online community and support.

New Regional Arts Integration Network

FY14: \$135,000 FY15: \$422,500 SUBTOTAL: \$557,500

The Perpich Center will expand the reach and impact of the arts integration project with a new network of approximately 50 teachers at 10 school sites. The budget for this expansion is based on a 2013-14 school application and selection process followed by network programming commencing in the 2014-2015 school year.

Development of Arts-Integrated High School Courses

FY14: \$20,000 FY15: \$152,000 SUBTOTAL: \$172,000

To increase sustainability, the Perpich Center will work with teacher and administrator teams at 10 secondary schools from around the state to develop rigorous and engaging arts-integrated courses. These courses would be ready for implementation in the 2015-2016 school year.

Statewide Study on Status of Arts Education

FY14: \$100,000 FY15: \$100,000 SUBTOTAL: \$200,000

Building on baseline data on the status of arts education in Minnesota released in 2012, the Perpich Center will conduct a follow-up study in the 2014-2015 school year, with the report released the following year.

Administrative Cost @ 2.5%: \$56,662.50

TOTAL REQUEST: \$2,323,162.50

Perpich Arts Integration

Project Goals:

1

Increase the capacity of teachers to design, implement and assess collaborative arts integration in Minnesota schools and the capacity of administrators to support this instructional strategy.

2

Improve standards-based student learning through collaborative arts integration, a strategy used by teachers and supported by administrators.

The strategies for reaching these goals include: professional development for teachers and administrators on standards-based collaborative arts integration; aligned curriculum, instruction and evaluation; and leveraging technology as a space for professional development and dissemination of learning and examples.

"Aligning the standards, benchmarks, learning goals, instruction, assessments and evaluative criteria increase the likelihood of student proficiency."

— Teacher

Project at a Glance— Year Two:

- 806 students in elementary and secondary schools engaged in arts-integrated learning
- 41 K-12 teachers involved, 15 returning from the first year of the project with 26 new teachers
- Participating districts included Breckenridge, Hawley, Lake Park Audubon, Morris, New York Mills, Osakis, Perham and Rothsay

Perpich Arts

Integration Project

This project fosters collaborative arts integration in Minnesota through K-12 teacher professional development and funding to schools. Supported by Perpich facilitators, teacher teams develop and implement arts-integrated lessons that are student-centered and standards-based.

During the second year of the project, 96% of the teachers improved their ability to design arts integrated lessons and aligned student assessments.

Aligning standards, learning goals and assessments guided professional development activities such as teacher network meetings and onsite and virtual meetings with Perpich facilitators.

92% of the teachers improved their understanding of arts integration.

Integrating the arts in meaningful and engaging ways for students inspired teacher involvement and fueled their collaboration.

"I would sometimes forget to make sure my lessons are connecting with the standards. ... I now pay more attention to that which has only improved students' learning."

— Teacher

75% improved their skills for collaborating with colleagues.

Implementing co-teaching approaches moved teachers toward sharing more responsibilities for planning, teaching and assessing student progress.

83% of the teachers improved their ability to understand what students are learning.

Using a structured process for examining student work, teachers across different schools, grades and subjects served as peer reviewers for each other. Teachers began this process by recording individual observations about student work.

"The time to work together as a team is undervalued at our school. This project has given us the opportunity to see and experience the positive effects of working together."

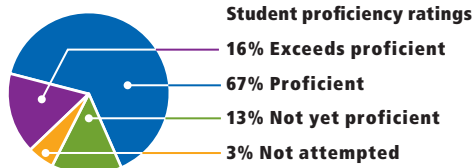
— Teacher

Then they shared their observations with others and responded to the question, "What student learning do we see in this sample of student work?" Next, teachers examined the alignment of benchmarks, classroom learning goals, assessment activities and evaluative criteria. The group then used the criteria to collectively score the student work. The presenting teacher shared his or her experience with the review process. Finally, teachers discussed the quality of the arts integrated lesson in terms of balance of content, rigor of learning, authenticity of instruction and richness of connections.



Perpich Arts Integration — Continued

Over 83%
of the 806
students
submitted work
that was rated
as “proficient”
or “exceeds
proficient” by
their classroom
teachers.



Student Learning

Teachers created arts integrated lessons and units that aligned the Minnesota Academic Standards, learning goals and curriculum with assessments of student learning. During professional development workshops, teachers practiced reviewing the quality of student work with their colleagues who taught at elementary and secondary levels, taught in different content areas and who represented multiple school districts involved in the project.

After delivering arts integrated lessons in their classrooms, teachers graded their students’ work and rated achievement of learning evident in student products based on three different levels of proficiency.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is a complex phenomenon. Educators often look to engage students as a means of strengthening student academic performance in addition

to improving the teaching and learning environment of the school. Yasse-Mintz (2010) describes student engagement as the “relationship between the student and school community, the student and school adults, the student and peers, the student and instruction and the student and the curriculum.”

“It was a very fun experience and is much easier to learn hands on about other cultures.”

— High school student

Engaging students while providing an arts-integrated learning experience is an important focus of the project. In order to measure engagement, 419 students in grades 5 through 12 completed a survey about their learning experiences. Questions focused on classroom environment (teachers and peers), various teaching strategies and student reactions toward the curriculum content and the arts-integrated experience. Results indicated that students across grade levels were engaged and motivated while learning in an arts-integrated

“Creating an artistic expression requires a high level of intellectual and emotional rigor....our students reached much higher levels of learning through this project.”

— Teacher

setting. For example, the majority of students agreed with the following statements:

- 94%** I put effort into the class
- 86%** I felt proud of what I did
- 83%** I kept working even when stuck
- 80%** I was motivated to try new things
- 76%** The way I was taught helped me to learn

“Regardless of the definition, research links higher levels of engagement in school with improved performance” (Klem and Connell, 2004).

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health*, Vol. 74(7), 262-273.

Yazzie-Mintz, E. (2010). Charting the path from engagement to achievement: A report on the 2009 High School Survey of Student Engagement. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation & Education Policy. Retrieved October 4, 2012, from www.indiana.edu/~ceep/hssse/images/HSSSE_2010_Report.pdf

Project made possible by the Minnesota State Legislature through its Art and Cultural Heritage Fund.



Cooperative Ventures
Improving Services for Children, Youth and Families



Building a Legacy: Key Findings

2012 MINNESOTA ARTS EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT

This statewide study, released October 2012 by Perpich Center for Arts Education, provides a never-before-available picture of K-12 arts education in the state and establishes a baseline for tracking and measuring future progress. The Minnesota State Legislature funded the study through its Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

While access to arts programs is nearly universal (99% of schools) less than half of all middle and high schools and only 28% of elementary schools provide the required number of arts areas.

87% of schools have aligned their curriculum with the state arts standards.

Assessment of student skills and knowledge is mostly driven by teacher-developed assessments with fewer than 3 in 10 schools reporting district developed assessments in the arts.

Nearly half of all high schools include the arts in School Improvement Plans.

92% of elementary, 77% of middle and 49% of high school students participate in at least one arts area in one year, with music and visual arts having the highest enrollments.

Nearly all schools (92%) use licensed arts teachers (full time or part-time) as the primary provider of music and visual arts instruction.

75% of schools report having no arts coordinator in their school or district.

Nearly 2/3 of schools spend less than \$10 per pupil per year for arts instructional materials. At the elementary level, the per-pupil arts spending is only 2 cents per day.

To support direct arts instruction, 23% of all schools reported using outside funding to offset budget decreases and nearly half of all schools charge fees for extracurricular arts activities.

While 46% of all schools report using arts integration as a teaching strategy, only 15% reported using this strategy on a regular basis. 67% of schools indicate a desire to introduce or increase arts integration.

93% of all schools reported providing students field trips to museums, theaters, musical performances and exhibitions to engage in artistic experiences.

The full report is available from Perpich at: www.pcae.k12.mn.us/survey/legacy.html



Perpich Arts High School
Perpich Arts Outreach
Perpich Arts Library

6125 Olson Memorial Highway
Golden Valley, Minnesota 55422
www.pcae.k12.mn.us

Telephone: 763-279-4200
Toll Free: 800-657-3515
MN RELAY SERVICE: 711

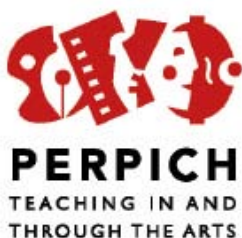
Perpich Center Facts

"I have learned many ways to incorporate literacy into the music learning and ways to use cross-curricular things between math and music (from Perpich.) I have brought this knowledge back to the students of Farmington Elementary and we have all benefited."

Doris McNamara
K-5 Music Teacher
Farmington Public Schools

"Analysis and Criticism (at Perpich) is how writing should be taught. Specialized classes at Perpich in the core academics are far more effective at teaching the principles of Math, Science, English and Social Studies."

Jess Nite, Class of 2002
Minneapolis
MFA, Creative Writing
MA in Education
English Teacher



Perpich is a state agency that serves all public schools and teachers in Minnesota. Created in 1985 by the legislature, the agency seeks to improve K-12 education for all 850,000 students throughout Minnesota by teaching in and through the arts.

For Teachers, Administrators and Schools

Perpich sponsors workshops, professional development and collaborative programs to improve curriculum, student assessment and teaching methods, and provides research, resources, standards development, arts/science integration development and an arts library collection of some 15,000 items for teachers, administrators and schools to improve teaching and learning for K-12 education in Minnesota.

For Students

Each year, Perpich accepts about 150 upcoming 11th graders who spend two years at the Perpich Arts High School in a living laboratory of creativity with a diverse group of peers from around the state. The school offers rigorous arts and academic curricula that stress creative and analytical thinking, problem solving and decision making. This philosophy of teaching helps students become better thinkers and more successful in future academic endeavors, according to college admissions counselors. The College Board presented the Perpich Center with the 2011 Award for Excellence and Innovation for exemplary programming in arts education.

Students at Perpich receive the appropriate academic courses along with a concentration in music, visual arts, dance, media arts, theater, literary arts or arts/science. Whether they decide to go on to college, work, travel or other adventures, Perpich prepares graduates to take with them the ability to learn, collaborate, create and contribute to solving society's most pressing issues.

For Communities

Partner Centers expand the Perpich Center's ability to partner with local school districts to serve communities statewide, operate efficiently, strengthen local programs, tailor professional development to targeted area needs and share methods and innovative practices. Centers allow for better statewide distribution of funds and professionals as well as the ability to respond to emerging or changing needs. Current efforts focus in geographical areas of the state where need is greatest for improving student achievement, but will expand to all Congressional districts.

"I still rely on my music and literary training (from Perpich) when designing auditory stimuli. . . As a neurobiologist I think there is a strong case to be made that arts education advances the kind of emotional and social activities that make life meaningful for humans across cultures."

Taffeta Elliott
Class of 1992
Ellsworth
Ph.D. in Neurobiology &
Behavior from Columbia

"With exchanges like (the China program), Perpich can play a part in not only giving enriching, invaluable experience and cultural literacy to its students in our ever-globalizing world, but also help in spreading the idea that arts and arts in education need not be feared, but embraced and exchanged."

Tony Carlson
Class of 2011
Rochester

For Global Relationships

Initiatives to keep Minnesota students and schools competitive and connected globally at Perpich include increasingly more global educational opportunities and partnerships. Many academic and art courses at Perpich incorporate cultural awareness components; however, specific global language and cultural initiatives include:

Artscience international cultural initiatives with peer program participants and governmental sponsors in Saudi Arabia, Oklahoma City, Boston, Paris, Singapore, Dublin, Vancouver and South Korea - Artscience is a program that engages students and teachers in in-depth learning in the arts, sciences and idea development to cultivate creativity and the ability to realize innovative project ideas generated in the classroom.

China Partner School – Perpich students and teachers participate in an exchange program each year with Luoyang #1 High School in Luoyang China. The purpose is to learn about Chinese culture and make personal contacts that foster cultural understanding beyond the travel experience. In addition, beginning Chinese is now offered at the arts high school.

Contemporary World Issues – The course focuses on cultural, political and economic globalization in the world since 1945.

Ghana, West Africa – Perpich has developed an exchange program with the Dagara Music and Arts Center of Medie in Ghana, West Africa. Students will learn traditional drumming, dancing, xylophone, music and visual arts of the Ghanaian culture from teachers in the surrounding communities. A Perpich Arts High School music teacher traveled to Ghana in summer 2012 to study at the Dagara Music and Arts Center. The first student group will travel to Ghana in 2013.

French Cultural Initiatives – French language and culture courses through level 5, College in the Schools, are taught at Perpich. A French student exchange program allows students to travel to France over spring break and stay with a French family for a travel/study experience. French students also come to Perpich.

German Language and Culture – The German language and literature courses help students learn the language and cultural aspects informing the literary choices the writers make.

Spanish Language and Culture – Students are offered courses from level 2 up through a College in the Schools-level Spanish course.

Art History – Rigorous courses in art history, including advanced college placement, cover art from around the world— the prehistoric period to today.

Perpich Bridges Gap

"I was failing before coming to Perpich, but graduated with honors. It was the foundation of my artistic and professional career and continues to be an important part of my life."

Robin Cotton

Class of 2001

Cold Spring

BA degree

Fine Art Packer, Minneapolis

Institute of Arts and

Sculpture Teacher

"Students of the arts continue to outperform their non-art peers on the SAT, according to reports by the College Entrance Examination Board."

The College Board

The Perpich Center approach offers Minnesota educators a new paradigm to close achievement gaps and prepare our students to compete globally.

Perpich Center has always focused on teaching in and through the arts, which exercises both sides of the brain leading to whole brain thinking and creativity. Research shows that people trained in this kind of thinking are better able to connect the dots between knowledge and innovation.

Results from this kind of approach are apparent in student outcomes from the Perpich Arts High School, where a diverse group of students—geographically, racially, economically, emotionally, academically, physically—attends each year. Our goal of 100% graduation rate was met last year and our student successes upon graduation are remarkable. Last year our students:

- had a graduation rate of 100% by July 2012
- were awarded \$3.5 million in scholarships
- attended higher educational institutions directly after high school at a rate of 85 – 90%

In addition, the Perpich Center outreach and professional development programs:

- strengthened achievement in Minnesota schools by providing teachers with ongoing professional development and updated teacher practices
- created sustainable value in local districts by enhancing teacher performance, standards-based learning and providing curriculum resources
- provided ongoing classes, workshops, consulting services, grants and connections to resources in arts education and core academic subjects

Perpich Arts High School
Perpich Arts Outreach
Perpich Arts Library

6125 Olson Memorial Highway
Golden Valley, Minnesota 55422
www.pcae.k12.mn.us

Telephone: 763-279-4200
Toll Free: 800-657-3515
TTY/TDD (MN RELAY SERVICE): 711

Legacy
in the
News
2012



Austin Daily Herald.com Austin, Minnesota

AHS project provides life lesson in consumption

By Trey Mewes

Wednesday, November 21, 2012

Austin High School students will get creative about the effects of consumption this spring, thanks to a grant from the Perpich Center for Arts Education.

Art teacher Lisa Beschnett, science teacher Kate Schoonover and economics teacher Rayce Hardy are partnering to integrate art and creativity into traditionally uncreative material, namely the effect human consumption of materials — like energy sources and minerals — has on society, and what role art has in making a statement on consumption.

"I teach mainly photography, but I've always wanted to find ways for students in their art to say more about the world around them," Beschnett said. "The arts are such an amazing way for kids to express what they learn and what they know at a higher level of understanding."

Beschnett got the idea after attending a Perpich seminar, where she heard about a project the biggest arts-dedicated school in the state started in northwest Minnesota three years ago.

Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers (PAINT) projects involve creating new lessons which combines arts and other subjects which, according to Beschnett, will help students better understand the material.

That's where Hardy and Schoonover come in. Each teacher will assign a photo series of four photographs to their students based on the class. Hardy's economics students will focus on showing how consumption choices are made on personal, community, and government levels, while Schoonover's environmental sciences students will deal with the effects of consumption in levels of the Earth's atmosphere. Beschnett's students will design a photo series based on an economic or environmental issue of their choice.

According to Beschnett, students will complete these assignments in March, wrapping up the unit by mid-April.

The lesson will hopefully spark creativity in students, as Beschnett pointed out several studies and surveys which show creativity levels in students have dropped over the past 10 to 15 years as industrial technology has made incredible advances.

"The studies are showing students are losing their ability to create," she said.

AHS students will benefit from these lessons for the next three years, as Beschnett said Austin Public Schools is receiving a \$4,500 grant in state Legacy funding each year until 2015. While some of that money will go to traveling and training expenses, much of the funding will help bring in visiting artists and allow for substitute teachers on days where Beschnett, Hardy and Schoonover need to teach one class together.

"If we don't have the ability to travel to one another's classes, it's really hard to do a deep, integrated unit like this," Beschnett said. "Teachers don't have the time to give."

Read the full article [here](#)

<http://www.austindailyherald.com/2012/11/21/ahs-project-provides-life-lesson-in-consumption/>



ASCD EXPRESS

Arts Integration Program Uses Collaborative Culture to Improve Student Learning

Christa Treichel

September 27, 2012 | Volume 7 | Issue 26

A common lament about our schools today is that teachers rarely have a chance to collaborate and think outside their own “silos,” whether they be content areas, classrooms, or traditional ways of teaching.

In fact, collaboration can be a powerful tool to transform instructional practices by providing “opportunities for adults across a school system to learn and think together about how to improve their practice in ways that lead to improved student achievement” (Annenberg Institute for School Reform, 2004, p. 2).

The Perpich Arts Integration Project is finding out what happens when teachers join forces with resourceful licensed arts educators to collaboratively deliver arts-integrated lessons based on best practices.

With support from the Minnesota legislature and the state’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, the Perpich Center for Arts Education is working with 40 K–12 teachers in west-central Minnesota to increase student learning through arts integration. Now in its second year, the project employs several effective collaborative strategies.

Planning and Delivering Arts-integrated Lessons Together

Teachers often do not have the opportunity to study standards in content areas outside their own disciplines, but moving beyond one’s own discipline is central to this project. Teachers create lesson plans that align state standards, learning goals, and assessments for K–12 classrooms. Science teacher Shana Pazdernik-Hensch and visual arts teacher Tammy Olson at New York Mills High School collaborated on a lesson in which biology students photographed ecosystems, described and analyzed the human effect on them, and communicated their understanding of various visual arts elements and principles within their photos (e.g., value, form, texture and repetition, pattern, balance).

“It takes time to create a really good lesson when collaborating, implementing standards, and making sure to assess the standards, not just content learned. I have a greater appreciation for the arts by applying them to my classroom. We learned that art and science have terms that cross over, such as symmetrical, asymmetrical, and radial, so using similar terms will help students understand in different classrooms and life settings,” says Pazdernik-Hensch.

Collaboratively Reviewing Student Work

Using a protocol process, teachers across different schools, grades, and subjects serve as peer reviewers. Teachers begin by recording individual observations about student work. Then they share their observations with others and respond to the question, “What student learning do we see in this sample?” Next, the teachers examine the alignment of benchmarks, classroom learning goals, assessment activities, and evaluative criteria. The group then uses the evaluative criteria to collectively score the student work. The presenting teacher shares his or her experience with the review process. Finally, teachers discuss the quality of the arts integrated lesson in terms of balance of content, rigor of learning, authenticity of instruction, and richness of connections.

Partnering To Assess Student Learning

In the first year, teachers represented four different arts subject areas (media arts, music, theater, and visual arts) and eight subject areas outside the arts (Advanced Placement psychology, English language arts, family and consumer science, history, math, science, social studies, and technology). They provided evidence about the effect of the project on student learning by rating the proficiency of student work produced during the arts-integrated lessons. Over 86 percent of the 1,268 students submitted work that teachers considered to meet a level of proficiency or even better—exceeding their proficiency expectations.

Students demonstrated proficiency in many ways, such as creating artwork to express ideas related to the Civil Rights movement or by describing how technology has historically created demands for new scientific knowledge or mathematics. Students also used literary and narrative techniques to create mythological heroes who would solve problems in their community, such as animal control, use of fertilizers, and bringing back railroads to transport agricultural products.

When teachers have opportunities to plan and deliver arts-integrated learning and reflect on student performance, the process comes full circle. Gina Hoffarth, a 1st grade teacher at Osakis Elementary School, called the collaboration between school professionals and those of the Perpich Center for Arts Education “a positive experience” that produced effective, standards-based lessons.

“Our planning sessions were always centered around what was best for our students based on what was developmentally appropriate and what would provide a rich learning experience,” said Hoffarth.

Reference

Annenberg Institute for School Reform. (2004). Professional learning communities: professional development strategies that improve instruction (PDF). Providence, RI: Brown University.

Christa Treichel, president of Cooperative Ventures, is an independent consultant who evaluated the Perpich Arts Integration Project.

Read the full article [here](#)

<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol7/726-treichel.aspx>

Kenyon Wanamingo Elementary begins project with Perpich Center

Kenyon Leader

Thursday, November 8, 2012

Teachers and students at Kenyon-Wanamingo Elementary are embarking on a long-term adventure with Perpich Center for Arts Education, using state Legacy funds to create new curriculum that fuses academics and the arts in ways that the participants believe will help to increase learning, heighten student interest and build community in their schools.

Matt Addington, Tracy Erlandson, Renee Hildebrandt, Cathy Stark, Jan Strand, Rhonda Thesing and Jake Wieme make up the team of teachers at Kenyon Wanamingo who are a part of the Perpich Arts Integration project this year, and were selected to participate by a Perpich Center review panel as part of an application process.

"The teams of teachers who are participating in this project are clearly dedicated to their students and energized to develop arts-integrated curriculum that can deepen learning and bring the classroom alive in new ways," said Alina Campana, project coordinator.

To develop and teach arts-integrated curriculum, these teachers are receiving professional development and funding to create rich learning opportunities in their classrooms. They are working as a team and with a total of 51 teachers in a network across Southeast Minnesota; their first workshop was in August.

Thirteen schools in 11 school districts in southeast Minnesota are part of the project: Austin High School, John Adams Middle School in Rochester, Kenyon-Wanamingo Elementary School, LeRoy-Ostrander Schools, Mabel-Canton School, McKinley Elementary School in Owatonna, Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools, Sibley Elementary School in Albert Lea, Southland Middle and High School in Adams, and Triton High School in Dodge Center.

The professional development arm of Perpich Center for Arts Education, a state agency located in Golden Valley, received its second appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund of the Minnesota Legislature in order to work with this group. Perpich began this work three years ago with a group of Lakes Country schools in northwest Minnesota, made possible by Perpich's first Legacy Fund appropriation.

During those three years, the Perpich team led workshops and provided coaching to schools and individual teachers as they integrated arts and academic subjects and worked together in cross-disciplinary teams, using their own curriculum designs. The schools in southeast Minnesota will pursue the same goals, creating new curriculum, collaborating and team teaching in the classrooms.

A key element of the Perpich Arts Integration project is to share what the teachers have learned, along with their lesson and unit plans, on the web where other educators from around the state can access the curriculum and related materials and learn about the process these teachers have used to work together, develop curriculum, and learn from results. The project's website is at sites.pcae.k12.mn.us/legacy/home.

Perpich is a state agency that serves all school districts in Minnesota. Created in 1985 by the legislature, the agency seeks to advance K-12 education throughout Minnesota by teaching in and through the arts. Perpich staff and faculty provide outreach, professional development, research, curriculum and standards development. The agency includes a statewide arts education library and a two-year public arts high school open to students from throughout the state.

© 2012 Southernminn.com

Read the full article [here](#)

http://www.southernminn.com/the_kenyon_leader/news/local/article_75f9e882-6e28-5af8-ba0b-57d4062ae4ee.html

Albert Lea **Tribune** Learning perceptions



Kanin Hable, left, and Caden Jensen work on their projects during an art class at Sibley Elementary School on Thursday.
-- Kelli Lageson/Albert Lea Tribune

By Kelli Lageson

Friday, November 30, 2012

Fourth-graders at Sibley Elementary School have started to benefit from a grant that will allow teachers to integrate lessons with arts, music and more to hopefully increase learning and student interest.

One example of the integrated curriculum is the way in which fourth-graders are learning about Minnesota's American Indian population and its history. Fourth-grade teacher Kristen Seeger said the overarching theme of the work will teach the children about how people have different perceptions and opinions, and it will also teach them how to respect these perceptions.

The lesson plan integrates music and art into social studies classes. First the students were able to take photographs at the Big Island Rendezvous for an art class. But back in social studies class, Seeger asked the students to identify what in the photo they saw, thought and wanted to know more about.

Students will also learn more about traditional music and American Indian culture. This will all culminate later in the year when the fourth-graders make presentations about what they've learned. By doing all this learning and work the students will fulfill standards for art, music, social studies and media. Teachers also hope that they can help students learn about a subject even if the student says they don't like history. If they like music or art, they can still learn about the subject because those teachers are collaborating.

The fourth-graders at Sibley will also study the Dakota War conflict. They will read journal entries from both American Indians and early settlers of Minnesota to learn more about how there are two sides to each issue.

"That's something kids need is to respect other people's opinions and perceptions," Seeger said.

Teachers Teresa Bergene, Mark Blong, Jane Hanson, Jacque Sorensen and Seeger were the team who applied for the grant funding through the Perpich Center for Arts Education last spring. That center

launched the Minnesota Arts Education Research Project 2010 with funding through the state's Arts and Culture Fund of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. After completing grant paperwork, the teachers at Sibley found out they would receive funding to integrate the arts into classrooms.

"It's been a lot of hard work, but it's beneficial for the kids," Bergene said.

Sibley Elementary School received about \$16,000 this year, and is expected to receive the same amount for the school years 2013-14 and 2014-15 if the funding is not affected by the Legislature this session. Principal Ross Williams said he's excited to see direct results from the programming. Other school districts have seen better focus ratings, which is a part of the state's Multiple Measurement Rating system for evaluating schools, according to Perpich.

"The whole idea of teachers collaborating makes students more well-rounded," Williams said.

The funding will go to direct programming for students, but it also allows teachers to learn more. Because of the grant, teachers at Sibley will host a presenter about American Indian history who can help them better teach their students about the culture. Bergene said there are a number of benefits the school will take advantage of with this funding.

"It's such a good thing for our kids," Bergene said.

One of the elements of the statewide arts integration project by Perpich is that teachers share what they learned, as well as specific lesson plans, online so other schools can see that as well. Perpich, a state agency that serves all school districts in the state, says strong arts programs mean more academic achievement by students. But it can also have other effects on students as well.

"And research is also suggesting that arts education has a positive effect on young people's interpersonal skills, confidence, motivation to succeed and preparation for work," Perpich Executive Director Sue Mackert said in a press release.

Read the full article [here](http://www.albertleatribune.com/2012/11/30/learning-perceptions/)
<http://www.albertleatribune.com/2012/11/30/learning-perceptions/>

OWATONNA Peoples Press

Owatonna's McKinley Elementary School begins arts integration project with Perpich Center for Arts Education

By AMANDA GISLASON

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Teachers and students at McKinley Elementary School are embarking on a long-term adventure with Perpich Center for Arts Education, using state Legacy funds to create new curriculum that fuses academics and the arts in ways that the participants believe will help to increase learning, heighten student interest and build community in their schools.

Amanda Gislason, Art teacher; Katie Demmer, fourth grade teacher; Lori Huisenga, second grade teacher; Amanda Reed, Special Education teacher; and Jayne Jacobson make up the team of teachers who are a part of the Perpich Arts Integration project this year, and were selected to participate by a Perpich Center review panel as part of an application process.

The team has been exploring ways to use art as a way to tie Science, Technology, Engineering and Math together as the school embarks on the beginning stages of transforming into a STEM school. The K-8 Explorations team wanted to keep the design process in the forefront as McKinley started to implement STEM and the team of teachers working with the Perpich Center believe that the work they are doing with the grant will help make this possible.

The team has been collaborating on two separate projects that will infuse multiple state standards among multiple academic areas into one focused learning experience for students. One project will be with a second grade classroom using Science, Visual Art and Media Art standards. The focus will be on the life-cycle of plants. Students will be learning about different types of plants and how to categorize them. This will include a photography lesson where students will have a chance to take their own photos of various plants to categorize. The project will culminate with a Claymation project where groups of students will use Claymation — ever seen Gumby or Wallace and Gromit? — to show their knowledge and learning of the life-cycle of a plant. Each group will create a video, using modeling clay, to show a plant from seed to death. The second project will be with a fourth grade classroom using Social Studies, Language Arts and Visual Art standards to create a "Personal Geography" map of how their learning has changed. They will be studying various maps and how they work, journaling about their learning across multiple subject areas and in the end creating visual map to represent how they have changed as a learner using all the appropriate pieces of a map and incorporating watercolor, relief sculpture and writing to make their Personal Geography a visual representation of their growth.

The group has found that art is a great way to get kids talking about just about any topic and they have been sharing their learning with the rest of the staff at McKinley. The staff at McKinley have found this to be true as well, from Erosion to the Revolutionary War, McKinley teachers are exploring ways to tap into the creative side of each of their students. Creative minds are the future of our nation.

Thirteen schools in 11 school districts in southeast Minnesota are part of the project: Austin High School, John Adams Middle School in Rochester, Kenyon-Wanamingo Elementary School, LeRoy-Ostrander Schools, Mabel-Canton School, McKinley Elementary School in Owatonna, Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools, Sibley Elementary School in Albert Lea, Southland Middle and High School in Adams, and Triton High School in Dodge Center.

Recent academic studies cited by the National Endowment for the Arts, "increasingly point to connections between strong arts programs in schools and academic achievement by students," says Sue Mackert, executive director for Perpich. "And research is also suggesting that arts education has a positive effect

on young people's interpersonal skills, confidence, motivation to succeed and preparation for work.”

A key element of the Perpich Arts Integration project is to share what the teachers have learned, along with their lesson and unit plans, on the web where other educators from around the state can access the curriculum and related materials and learn about the process these teachers have used to work together, develop curriculum, and learn from results. The project's website is at sites.pcae.k12.mn.us/legacy/home.

Perpich is a state agency that serves all school districts in Minnesota. Created in 1985 by the legislature, the agency seeks to advance K-12 education throughout Minnesota by teaching in and through the arts. Perpich staff and faculty provide outreach, professional development, research, curriculum and standards development. The agency includes a statewide arts education library and a two-year public arts high school open to students from throughout the state.

Amanda Gislason is an art teacher with McKinley Elementary School in Owatonna.

© 2012 Southernminn.com.

Read the full article [here](#)

http://www.southernminn.com/owatonna_peoples_press/features/article_68c7db5f-c93c-5eb8-936e-b9eaa77a59a5.html



Perpich Center for Arts Education: Constructive assessment of student learning in the arts is possible, and necessary



Perpich Center dance students (photo courtesy of Perpich Center for Arts Education)

BY SUE MACKERT, FREE SPEECH ZONE

December 06, 2012

Assessment in arts education can feel challenging, as Sheila Regan's blog on Nov. 26 makes clear. She poses excellent questions that many art educators struggle with. As the state agency tasked to support K-12 arts education in Minnesota, Perpich Center for Arts Education believes assessment is key to move an art student's thinking, decision making, problem solving and creativity forward. So Regan's comments sparked a lot of thought among our educators here and we wanted to respond in the spirit of continuing this important conversation.

First, two major tests performed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress in music and visual arts have established two important facts: 1) that learning in the arts can be assessed and 2) that when students are instructed in the arts they learn more about the arts. At the time these NAEP tests were done, educators really didn't have a large-scale picture of how to assess the arts, or to see the power of instruction evident in what the assessments showed about how much students were learning. With these results, we have an initial roadmap for assessment and the belief that arts education assessment is worthwhile.

One theme of Regan's blog is that judging student artwork is difficult and subjective. We think it can be helpful for teachers to draw distinctions between judging student artwork versus measuring and supporting student learning in the arts. Our goal at Perpich is for all students in Minnesota to study the arts and to benefit from their study. Judgment of student work in the sense of "Are they good? or Are they good enough to make it as professional artists?" probably aren't the most useful questions to ask in arts assessment. Better questions for educators might be: Are they learning? What are they learning? How can we support further learning?

Through creating, performing and responding in all the arts, students can acquire a wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities to reason about and through the arts. So when we assess the arts, our aim is to measure the quality of the knowledge, skills and ability to reason that students attain. We have many windows into student learning along the way as they do authentic work in the arts. Any single end product—a performance or a portfolio—is only one measure that students have learned something important.

It's true that Minnesota does not have a state test for arts. Minnesota also does not have state tests for social studies, languages, family and consumer science, physical education and health, agriculture or business. Other states do have such pencil and paper forms of statewide arts education assessments, but, from working with arts educators around the state, we find that what teachers want to show is how students are learning substantial and important things in their arts classrooms. They don't believe that that type of assessment is possible through a pencil-and-paper test.

Arts teachers tell us they value classroom assessments that can be constructed and reviewed and improved on. They want to be able to share them across classrooms in a district, or across districts, just as common assessments are used in other content areas. As a non-regulatory state education agency, Perpich can offer school districts guidance and facilitation through professional development so they can develop consistent assessments that meet state policy.

We agree the state is specific about the essential descriptions of learning: the active verbs in each content standard benchmark describe the kind of knowledge, skill or reasoning that students must attain. In fact, we have been directly involved in helping to develop these standards with the goal of providing a bridge between the policy and classroom curriculum and assessment. The learning targets are specific and measurable; the classroom curriculum is multiple and flexible. Each district program designs or adopts its own best way to support student learning of the standards.

Regan's blog mentions her struggle as a theater director to assess her students in performance. This can be a big challenge for teachers working in performance arts. The Perpich Arts High School also has to deal with this issue of balance between teaching on one hand and creating performances for the public on the other hand. We want all of our performances to please and excite the audience, but we believe our first task is for the students to learn and understand their skills and talents more deeply through performance so that's where the assessment happens.

We also have addressed this by adjusting our practices to make incremental experiences available to all students. That helps us to answer the question of how to provide adequate opportunities that are appropriate to the learning needs of all students in the performing arts. At the arts high school, for example, music students are organized into smaller performance ensembles that can have substantial choice about their musical repertoire and instrumentation — distributing important learning opportunities that allow for valid assessment beyond public performance.

Regan's questions such as — Does it move me? Is it technically proficient? Does it have something to say? What is the use of color and shape, rhythm, silence or empty space? — are all vitally important questions. We suggest putting those questions into the hands of the students, along with the tools and experiences they need to be successful. A teacher then can observe how the students answer the questions and what their answers tell us about their grasp and interpretation of their art. Then comes the teacher's most important question: What have they learned?

We truly understand that it's possible an arts teacher might feel that assessment somehow will inhibit learning "outside of boxes." We don't want to inhibit the creative spirit! At Perpich we believe that articulating something clearly doesn't necessarily mean removing its vitality and creativity. In fact, we honestly feel that clear goals and assessments can breath life into learning for all students. It's not a case of: First 1, then 2, then 3. It's more a case of: We have 1, 2 and 3 — how can we approach them in ways that are original, creative and skillful and that will allow us to learn more deeply in our art? We hope that isn't a box — we believe it can be a doorway to an amazing way of knowing.

Sue Mackert is the Executive Director of the Perpich Center for Arts Education.

Perpich is a state agency that serves all school districts in Minnesota. Created in 1985 by the legislature, the agency seeks to advance K-12 education throughout Minnesota by teaching in and through the arts. Perpich staff and faculty provide outreach, professional development, research, curriculum and standards development. The agency includes a statewide arts education library and a two-year public arts high school open to students from throughout the state.

© 2012 Sue Mackert

Read the full article [here](http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/12/06/free-speech-zone-perpich-center-arts-education-assessment-student-learning-arts-poss)

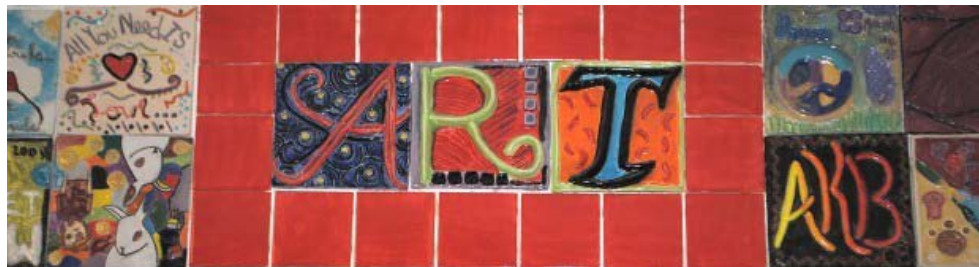
<http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/12/06/free-speech-zone-perpich-center-arts-education-assessment-student-learning-arts-poss>

Perpich Arts High School	6125 Olson Memorial Highway	Telephone: 763-279-4200
Perpich Arts Outreach	Golden Valley, Minnesota 55422	Toll Free: 800-657-3515
Perpich Arts Library	www.pcae.k12.mn.us	TTY/TDD (MN RELAY): 711

Northfield News

 northfieldnews.com

Northfield 'has an edge' in meeting state arts education mandates



This ceramic tile is mounted above the entry way to the Northfield High School art department surrounded by student-made tiles. The collection of tiles surrounds the door and will eventually extend down the hallway. (Ashley Klemmer/Northfield News)

By ASHLEY KLEMER aklemer@northfieldnews.com And **By TIM POST** Minnesota Public Radio News

Tuesday, November 27, 2012

Minnesota has some of the highest standards for arts education in the country.

But while schools don't always meet those lofty expectations, the Northfield Public School District has been able to maintain healthy art programs.

As schools work to increase student test scores in math, science and reading, arts education is often pushed aside, according to a survey released in October by the Perpich Center for Arts Education.

"The increased level of standardized testing requirements puts the pinch on electives in general," said Northfield High School principal Joel Leer. "But in the past six years of getting students registered [for classes at the high school], I would say there has been an increase in students enrolling in arts courses."

According to the survey, fewer than half of all middle and high schools, and only 28 percent of elementary schools offer all of the required arts, drama, music and dance classes.

Even in school districts that are committed to providing arts education on par with math, science and reading, there have been subtle shifts that have affected the arts.

"Like in every school district, the impact of having a focus of determining proficiency when only measuring math, reading and writing with standardized tests makes it is more difficult for a district to maintain a commitment to the arts," said Northfield Public Schools superintendent Chris Richardson. "As a district and a community in Northfield, I think there has been a commitment not only to a strong academic curriculum but a strong arts program."

In the Northfield School District, the course offerings for art, music and theater have been stable, according Richardson.

"The number of classes we offer in the arts, music and theater has been pretty stable in the last few years," said Richardson.

There is also elementary orchestra and an art specialist in each of the three public elementary schools in Northfield, which is not that common anymore, according to Richardson.

The age-old tussle between arts and academics is the focus of the statewide study from the Perpich Center for the Arts. Some schools now fall short of meeting state mandates for arts education, largely because of changing budget priorities, said Sue Mackert, the center's executive director.

As schools shift resources to improve test scores, arts classes are often the first to go.

"When they're trying to balance budgets and programs, it's sometimes easy to make decisions that put the things like arts education at risk," Mackert said.

It's a move that can make the most sense for school administrators. That's in part because the high stakes testing ultimately ranks the performance of the state's schools. Those tests don't consider students knowledge of the arts.

"Of course it's just natural when schools are judged and primarily held accountable for their scores in math and reading that that is where they're going to really direct their resources and protect those resources maybe above others when they have to make budget cuts," said Scott Croonquist, executive director of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts.

The authors of the Perpich study argue that music, drama and other arts should be elevated to the same academic level as math, science and reading.

That means schools should be held accountable for their arts education offerings, perhaps by requiring them to test students on the arts. They also want the state to better fund arts programs at schools, a goal that resonates with Minnesota teachers.

"I think it's really important that our state and our school districts realize that they need to fund and support the arts just as strongly as they fund math and reading," said Kris Holsen, an elementary art and theater teacher in Brooklyn Park, Minn., and president elect of the Arts Educators of Minnesota.

Research shows students involved in music, art and drama do better in math, science and reading, Holsen said. Richardson agrees and says that the arts continue to enrich students' experiences in Northfield schools.

"Whether students are involved in fine arts, athletics or extracurriculars of other kinds: like speech, debate or chess club; they provide more opportunities for students to be well-rounded or have an activity they enjoy or excel in," he said. "Students respond positively to that. Involvement in the arts has been shown to improve academic performance and provides a creative outlet."

In fact, Richardson says that Northfield Public Schools has an edge for keeping their engagement with the arts strong.

"Having Carleton and St. Olaf art departments and the Northfield Arts Guild to make partnerships and collaborations possible there is an opportunity not all districts have," said Richardson. "Those college and community connections give Northfield students the opportunity to see practicing artists or musicians in their community. I think that is what gives our district an edge."

Reach reporter Ashley Klemer at 645-1115 or follow her on Twitter.com @AshleyKlemer. You can hear MPR news at 91.1 FM or online at MPRNews.org.

Read the full article [here](#)

http://www.southernminn.com/northfield_news/news/article_9ed14e1f-7809-57b3-9386-5ef62110b1f2.html



On arts education and testing

BY SHEILA REGAN, BEHIND THE STORY

November 25, 2012

How do you assess art? That's a question came up for me as I was writing this article (Minnesota arts education: Strong standards, but we're not there yet <http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/11/13/study-finds-strong-infrastructure-lack-variety-minnesota-arts-education>) on a recent study done by Perpich Center for Arts Education about how Minnesota public schools are doing in reaching state arts standards. It turns out that while state statute forbids any statewide testing in the arts, there are ways that school districts can measure how much students are learning- be that through teacher evaluations and professional development, creating requirements that students must obtain, or even creating assessments at the local level.

I talked to a number of teachers- who use rubrics- or scoring tools- in different ways to gauge how the students are performing. They might be informal rubrics given throughout the year, or somewhat standardized so that students and teachers across different classrooms can be compared. There were also some teachers that I talked to that didn't use rubrics at all, believing there's no way to measure the quality of someone's art.

If you look at the state standards themselves, they are fairly specific, and purposefully leave little wiggle room for interpretation. One state standard for theater, for example, is that a student directs by organizing a rehearsal, or designs by developing environments, or acts by portraying characters in improvised or scripted scenes. The standard doesn't say anything about whether the scene or play needs to be a brilliant work of art- but rather that the student must direct, design or act in a play if theater is their chosen arts areas of study. Still, if a student is taking a theater class for credit, they are no doubt getting some sort of grade, unless the credit is taken on a pass/fail basis.

Myself, I've been teaching after-school classes and summer camps in theater since 2007, for various arts organizations. I've never had to grade any of my students- who generally range between kindergarten and sixth grade, which I'm thankful about. It's hard enough to cast a play and deal with the inevitable heartbreak that follows when not every kid gets the part they want. I remember one summer I was directing a production of 101 Dalmations, and there was this little whisp of a girl who so desperately wanted to play Cruella DeVille, she would come to class in a costume of her own making. She was too young, though, and I cast her as a puppy instead. Oh, the tears! It nearly broke me.

At the same time, as a theater practitioner and as an arts writer, I assess art all the time. No, there's no test- no systematic method. And yet, as professionals in the craft, we do look at either a whole work of art, or theater and dance- or elements of it- and break down what is working and what isn't. It's very subjective, although is informed by certain concrete questions- does it move me? Is it technically proficient? Does it have something to say? What is the use of color and shape, rhythm, silence or empty space? One piece might be completely different than another and still be as effective as a work of art.

When it comes to assessing kids, I feel wary about it. It seems too rigid, too scientific, but as all education moves toward an assessment model and kids are tested about nearly everything, I wonder if the lack of assessments make the arts seem- to people that are predisposed to not care about the arts- less important. There's a certain (faux) authenticity that a test gives something. Besides, there are plenty of concrete things in the arts that can be easily tested without judging a student's art work- being tested on art history or music history, for example, or can they write about art in a clear way?

The question becomes- how do we continue to ensure that all students are getting a well rounded arts background in K-12 without succumbing to the test madness? How do we ensure kids are learning to think outside of the box, when everything about school is learning to stay within the lines?

Read the full article [here](#)

<http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/11/25/arts-education-and-testing>

Perpich Arts High School

Perpich Arts Outreach

Perpich Arts Library

6125 Olson Memorial Highway

Golden Valley, Minnesota 55422

www.pcae.k12.mn.us

Telephone: 763-279-4200

Toll Free: 800-657-3515

TTY/TDD (MN RELAY): 711



Minnesota arts education: Strong standards, but we're not there yet

BY SHEILA REGAN, TC DAILY PLANET

November 13, 2012

Minnesota has a strong arts education infrastructure, based on clear standards and graduation requirements, but some schools lack the required theater, dance or media arts focuses. That's the bottom line in Building a Legacy, a study released in October by the Perpich Center for Arts Education (PCAE). The study found that, while 99 percent of the respondents have access to arts programs for students, less than half of all middle and high schools and only 28 percent of elementary schools provide the required number of arts areas.

According to state law (MSA 120B.021), public elementary and middle schools must offer at least three and require at least two of the four designated arts areas: dance, music, theater and visual arts. The law requires high schools to offer at least three and require at least one of five arts areas — the four elementary areas, and also media arts, which includes things like filmmaking. According to the study, 92 percent of elementary, 77 percent of middle and 49 percent of high school students participate in at least one arts area in one year, with music and visual arts having the highest enrollments.

Arts beyond visual art and music

The main problem in meeting the state standards is in offering courses in all of the arts areas. While most schools do offer some kind of music and visual art, many schools still don't offer a third area, such as theater, dance, or media arts.

For example, Christy Cole, an art teacher in her fourth year of teaching at Deer River Public Schools, said her district doesn't have a theater or dance teacher, although they do have band, choir, and visual arts. For the first time this year, they also offer a media arts class, which she co-teaches with an English teacher, and the students receive an art credit and an English credit. In her district, students in 6th-8th grade take one quarter of art each year, and must take two art classes in high school. For theater, the school generally does a play in the fall, she said, with someone from the community or a teacher at the school directing.

Finding licensed teachers who live in rural areas — particularly dance teachers — can be difficult, according to Diane Aldis, the Dance Education Coordinator at PCAE.

About the study

The study, which was conducted by Quadrant Arts Education Research, was funded by a grant from the Minnesota State Legislature through the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund of the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment.

According to Pam Paulson, Senior Policy Director at PCAE, the agency hired Quadrant Arts Education Research to collect data during the 2010-2011 school year. Quadrant has done similar surveys in other states, such as Arizona, Michigan, New Jersey and New Hampshire, and as many of the survey questions were the same in different states, a comparison will be available early next year.

All of the surveys were conducted electronically, Paulson said, and they ended up with a 44 percent response rate, which is a "pretty much a state-wide look." Initially, PCAE did reach out to private schools, but had no response, and they received a low response rate from charter schools as well.

Unfortunately, at this time, there isn't a comparative analysis between rural, suburban and rural schools. However, Paulson said, "We are always pleasantly surprised when we are out in the rural areas about the resources that are made available." Every community, she said, has artists. Small towns often have small galleries, and libraries often prove important partners, as are the regional arts councils.

Funding

According to the Quadrant study, nearly two-thirds of schools spend less than \$10 per pupil per year for

arts instructional materials. At the elementary level, the per-pupil arts spending is only two cents per day. Some schools offset the funding requirements for arts offerings by seeking outside grants, or working with arts organizations in the form of residencies or after school programs. The survey found that 23 percent of all schools reported using outside funding to offset budget decreases and nearly half of all schools charge fees for extracurricular arts activities.

After-school programs generally don't count toward state standards, both because they do not take place during the school day and because there's generally not academic oversight, according to Diane Aldis, the Dance Education Coordinator for PCAE.

Certain exceptions can be made. Students who attend Minnesota Dance Theater can satisfy their art requirement, although the question is resolved on a district by district basis, Aldis said.

In addition to arts residency programs, the Cowles Center also has offered a way for students all over the state to take a master class that helps them meet the standards in dance.

The major museums based in the Twin Cities also play a key role in making art learning resources accessible, by putting their displays online. And 93 percent of schools offer field trips to museums, exhibitions, or theater events. Some 83 percent of schools have some form of assemblies with arts content. In elementary schools, 59 percent have artists in residence. According to the survey, 93 percent of all schools reported providing students field trips to museums, theaters, musical performances and exhibitions to engage in artistic experiences.

Teacher shortages

Besides lack of funding, one barrier to schools providing all of the art areas is a lack of licensed teachers in certain areas such as theater or dance. Diane Aldis, the Dance Education Coordinator at PCAE, said dance educators who are working in schools tend to be highly qualified, many of them spending more than five years in schools. Unfortunately, she says, there have been shortages of licensed dance and theater teachers in recent years.

This year, there was a shortage in dance teachers for the second year in a row. "I've been getting calls from different districts," she said. "They would add a position but nobody with a license had applied. There are only a couple people who are available."

Currently, a number of schools have teachers teaching with waivers. A waiver, she said, puts the teacher in a holding pattern. You can have the waiver for up to three years, with the expectation that you are working toward a license.

Schools can also work with arts organizations, which send teaching artists and artists in residence to schools. Teaching artists are generally not licensed, but they can work with a licensed teacher to help present material that meets the state standards. The licensed teacher must sign off for the material, determining whether it meets state standards.

Teachers in non-arts disciplines such as physical education can sign off for students learning dance in gym class, for example, or for students meeting theater requirements through an English class.

Minnesota has only offered theater and dance licenses for teachers for the past 10 years. "It kind of acknowledged the level of what happens," Aldis said.

Genevieve Bennett, the chair of the theater program at the St. Paul Conservatory for the Performing Arts, a charter school, is newly licensed, after working with a temporary license when she first started working at the conservatory. She said the process of becoming licensed was difficult. "I have a BFA in theater and an MFA in Directing. I could teach at the university level, but because I didn't have education courses, I couldn't teach past the limited license that the department sets up."

The alternative teaching license structure doesn't work well for professional artists, Bennett said, and is not practical for working artists, who are often the best people to teach their craft. Because they spend the majority of their time as working artists, it's cumbersome to go back to school for the necessary coursework for teacher licensure.

Now that she has her license, Bennett gets calls from schools that are desperate for theater teachers. Someone from St. Paul Public Schools called her and said they had three full time theater positions open, and no one qualified for the positions. "If you don't have the people, those positions can ultimately be cut," Bennett said. "It's a sticky wicket."

Jon Ferguson also taught at St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Arts for four years, but when his temporary license expired, stopped teaching at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. "[Teacher licensure is] a really long process, and I chose not to do that," he said.

As a working artist, it was difficult for him to leave his job, where he earned \$27,000 for working half time. "It's unfortunate," he said. "I'm qualified in terms of experience and work that I do. I don't fill in all the boxes."

Strong Infrastructure for the arts in Minnesota

While the study showed that Minnesota public schools could improve on the variety of courses that are offered, they are doing a number of things well. The study found that 87 percent of schools have aligned their curriculum with state arts standards.

"One of the things we discovered," Paulson said, "is that Minnesota public schools have a really strong infrastructure on policy." For example, most schools have some kind of arts graduation requirement, such as needing to earn one credit in the arts for graduation.

In addition, PCAE has begun working in cooperation with the Board of Teaching, seeking an endorsement of media arts as a teacher licensure option, a graduation requirement, and a university entrance requirement.

For Minneapolis Public Schools, arts standards have been integrated into teachers evaluation processes, according to Angela Lackey, a visual arts instructor at Anishinabe Academy. "Minneapolis is really all about the arts standards," she says, "especially when it comes to professional development and the teacher evaluation system." Lackey, who has been teaching in the district for a number of years has been with Anishinabe for the last three, says that teachers have to cite the standards as part of their lesson plans and other required write-ups.

When she meets with her Professional Learning Community (PLC), which is a group of art teachers from other schools, the standards are always part of the conversation. Also, through a Facets grant, Lackey was able to attend training, hosted at PCAE, that focused specifically on American Indian arts, for her work with Native students at Anishinabe. The training culminated in a three-day workshop in January of 2010, with teachers from all over the state, talking about culturally appropriate ways to teach art.

Jo Wells, a Minneapolis Public Schools teacher who retired in June from Armatage, said that she had to put a poster with the standards in her classroom. She used an arrow to show which standard they would be working with on a particular day. Like Lackey, she also incorporated the standards into her lesson plans. The school also placed importance on public displays, like writing a grant for a mosaic that kids helped create with a guest artist. Wells said the standards were stressed a lot in her school — "they looked at us as professionals" — but time was always a factor.

Assessment

In recent years, PCAE has been trying to improve arts assessments, which Paulson predicts will be even more important as teacher evaluations for non-tested subject areas include student achievement. According to the study, most assessments are teacher-developed, with fewer than 3 in 10 schools reporting district developed assessments in the arts.

"We have to be very careful about how to look at achievement," Paulson said. "It requires you to have some measurement. The standards are the most important benchmark."

State law states that there cannot be a standardized test on arts or social studies, so assessment has to be done at a local level, which makes any comparison between different districts difficult. "What we ended up doing is having teachers develop their own assessments, often collaboratively," Paulson said. "So that they are the ones that really carefully match the assessments with the classroom goals they are going to set." The nexus of developing a really good assessment, she said, are verbs used in the standards themselves.

Verbs in the state standards indicate exactly what a student is supposed to learn, Paulson said. "If a verb says analyze, you're talking about analysis," Paulson said. "That could be a written or verbal, whereas if you say a student needs to perform, you're talking about a skill."

Rubrics are also very helpful in developing assessments for students. Rubrics don't have to be just for a high stakes assignment like a portfolio, but can also be used to give student feedback along the way. Jo Wells said she often used informal rubrics and self-assessments to help students measure their progress.

For Alejandra Tobar-Alatríz, who teaches through the Children's Theatre Neighborhood Bridges program, rubrics are a way for teaching artists to "sharpen their tools" in an ongoing basis, especially as teachers visit each others classrooms. At Bridges, teaching artists are "invited into the praxis," Tobar-Alatríz said, and given a voice in curriculum development. They also form strong partnerships with classroom teachers, becoming "strong allies."

Right now, there isn't any kind of statewide accountability system. No one is going to the schools or individual districts and making sure that the standards are aligned and progressive through the K-12 system. "Nobody's checking on that," Paulson said. However, in her work with teachers, Paulson believes that teachers do want to do the right thing. "It's not like people are intentionally trying to shirk that responsibility." The reality is, Paulson said, resources don't go toward assessment.

While the standards are definitely a part her work as a teacher, Angela Lackey said the students are never tested in any way. The best practices, instead, she says, would be things like making sure that art is being hung in the school, and with something written up about the project acknowledging the state standards. "A lot of art teachers that I know do that to show that it is an academic discipline," Lackey said. "It's helpful for teachers of other subjects to know that and see that."

For Jon Ferguson, evaluating art is very difficult. "It's opinion based," he said. While you can have technical criteria — is the student loud enough, for example — there's a lot that's subjective.

When Ferguson was teaching, he never dealt much with the state art standards. In fact, he rarely wrote down his curriculum, preferring to allow room for exploration. "To try to stick to a guide would be tricky," he said. "It would change how I do things."

That's not to say there wasn't an evaluative process. Someone would come in and observe his classroom once a year.

Ferguson graded his students on attendance, focus and professionalism, on "being present in the room." Very rarely would he grade based on a scene or monologue. "My overall approach was what they brought in term of commitment and professionalism, really," he said.

"What's really interesting, is that arts standards are still being overseen at the district level," Aldis said. While there are state standards, each district comes up with ways to meet those standards. There are now statewide tests. "It's both a blessing and a problem," she said.

It's a blessing, because it offers leeway for districts to individualize their methods. It's a hindrance, because the curriculum can be "spotty and uneven," Aldis said.

Read the full article [here](http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/11/13/study-finds-strong-infrastructure-lack-variety-minnesota-arts-education)

<http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/11/13/study-finds-strong-infrastructure-lack-variety-minnesota-arts-education>

MPRnews

Study: Many Minnesota schools struggle to meet arts education mandates



Joel Byer directs the Apple Valley High School select choir during a practice on Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2012. Arts is a big part of student life at Apple Valley High, on par with academics and athletics. (MPR photo/Tim Post)

by **Tim Post, Minnesota Public Radio**

October 11, 2012

APPLE VALLEY, Minn. — Minnesota has some of the highest standards for arts education in the country, but schools don't always meet those lofty expectations.

As schools work to increase student test scores in math, science and reading, arts education is often pushed aside, according to a survey to be released today by the Perpich Center for Arts Education.

According to the survey, fewer than half of all middle and high schools, and only 28 percent of elementary schools offer all of the required arts, drama, music and dance classes.

Even in school districts that are committed to providing arts education on par with math, science and reading, there have been subtle shifts that have affected the arts.

The Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan district, for example, has pushed students into more English, math and science classes.

That's left students with less time for elective options, like band and choir.

"That obviously is going to impact the number of kids who are coming into the high school signing up for arts classes such as choir or art," said Joe Wycoff, Apple Valley High School's director of arts, activities and testing. "So yes, it has had an impact that we're trying to struggle through."

Still, the arts play a big role in student life at Apple Valley High School. That's obvious during a walk through the halls, where 70 voices bounce off the walls outside the school's theater as one of several student choirs practices for an upcoming concert.

Along with choir, students at Apple Valley High School are able to take classes in band, theater, visual arts and dance.

Choir teacher Bill Blatzheim said it's part of the school's philosophy to offer a hearty helping of the three As - academics, arts and athletics.

"It really is something that we do different here that isn't done everywhere and we're pretty proud of it," he said.

But with fewer students enrolling in arts classes, Apple Valley High School has cut staff. The school has

six teaching positions in its arts program, down from 10 five years ago.

The age-old tussle between arts and academics is the focus of the statewide study from the Perpich Center for the Arts. Some schools now fall short of meeting state mandates for arts education, largely because of changing budget priorities, said Sue Mackert, the center's executive director.

As schools shift resources to improve test scores, arts classes are often the first to go.

"When they're trying to balance budgets and programs, it's sometimes easy to make decisions that put the things like arts education at risk," Mackert said.

It's a move that can make the most sense for school administrators. That's in part because the high stakes testing ultimately ranks the performance of the state's schools. Those tests don't consider students knowledge of the arts.

"Of course it's just natural when schools are judged and primarily held accountable for their scores in math and reading that that is where they're going to really direct their resources and protect those resources maybe above others when they have to make budget cuts," said Scott Croonquist, executive director of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts.

The authors of the Perpich study argue that music, drama and other arts should be elevated to the same academic level as math, science and reading.

That means schools should be held accountable for their arts education offerings, perhaps by requiring them to test students on the arts. They also want the state to better fund arts programs at schools, a goal that resonates with Minnesota teachers.

"I think it's really important that our state and our school districts realize that they need to fund and support the arts just as strongly as they fund math and reading," said Kris Holsen, an elementary art and theater teacher in Brooklyn Park and president-elect of the Arts Educators of Minnesota.

Research shows students involved in music, art and drama, do better in math, science and reading, Holsen said.

Read the full article [here](http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/10/11/education/study-minnesota-school-arts-mandates)

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/10/11/education/study-minnesota-school-arts-mandates>



Minnesota schools falling short of art mandates

Associated Press

10/11/2012

A new survey says schools in Minnesota don't always meet state mandates for art education.

The Perpich Center for Arts Education report released Thursday, Oct. 11, shows that fewer than half of all middle and high schools offer all of the required arts, drama, music and dance classes.

Twenty-eight percent of elementary schools in Minnesota offer the art education courses.

Some schools fall short of state mandates for art education because of changing budget priorities, said Perpich Center Executive Director Sue Mackert. As schools work to increase student test scores in math, science and reading, arts education can be left behind.

Research shows students involved in music, art and drama do better in math, science and reading, according to Arts Educators of Minnesota president-elect Kris Holsen.

Read the full article [here](#)

http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_21749054/minnesota-schools-falling-short-art-mandates



Some tuning needed for Minnesota arts education

By Joe Sheeran, Communications Director

October 17, 2012

"I don't want to cut my arts programs but I have to," says the stressed school administrator on the other side of the telephone trying to make budget number balance. It's a call with which Sue Mackert is familiar, as the Perpich Center for Arts Education's executive director.

In its role as the state agency overseeing arts education for Minnesota's K-12 students, the Perpich Center recently released a report examining how well the arts are represented in statewide district curricula.* Building a Legacy, a first-of-its-kind Minnesota arts education assessment, reveals mixed news: Minnesota is ahead of most states in many aspects of arts education. The state can boast nation-leading arts education policy requirements but implementation at the district and classroom level needs work, especially in the areas of dance and theater. Integrating arts into core subject lesson planning must expand to take full advantage of its potential to boost creative thinking.

While 99 percent of students have access to some form of arts education, variety is limited in most schools. Less than a one-third of elementary schools offer the state minimum requirement of three arts courses; secondary schools do only slightly better, with barely half offering the three-course required minimum.

Expanding arts in Minnesota schools faces a few challenges. One is funding. Overall, the state has underfunded schools 13 percent per-pupil, adjusting for inflation over the last decade. In most districts, local property taxpayers have filled some, but not all, of the state's funding gaps. Including local levies, however, districts statewide are still six percent behind 2003 inflation-adjusted funding levels, according to department of education records.

This has put the squeeze on all school programs, leading to calls like the one mentioned above. According to the Perpich report, 58 percent of schools rely on non-district funding for arts programs; 23 percent of those schools say outside funding offsets budget decreases for arts instruction.

Despite anecdotal stories about Minnesota districts in dire financial straits cutting arts programs, there is no statewide study or easily quantifiable data highlighting declining funding's impact on Minnesota arts programs. The Perpich report provides a baseline measurement for future arts education comparisons.

While leaders in Minnesota's arts education community plan to ask the Legislature and the corporate community for additional funding this year, there are many short-term challenges that can and must be addressed absent additional state finances. In fact, examining financial resources was only a small aspect of the Perpich report. "Implementation isn't solely about funding," said Robert Morrison, the report's research director, who runs New Jersey-based Quadrant Arts Education Research.

While some parents, community leaders and even education advocates tend to think of the arts as separate from the core subjects or an extracurricular activity, it's not—both from a good education policy perspective and by Minnesota education statute. As mentioned above, the report reveals a number of schools not meeting state arts requirements, including 13 percent of schools not aligning curriculum with state standards. Furthermore, there is no system of accountability to ensure schools are following state art education guidelines.

The Perpich study examines art standards' implementation in isolation of all other state and federal school requirements, including special education mandates, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) pressures, increasing ELL needs, and a statewide poverty rate nearing 40 percent. You can see where fully implementing state arts requirements might stack up compared to other priorities, especially if a school already offers some kind of art course.

However, minimizing arts in an effort to meet other pressing needs can be short-sighted. The Perpich

report cites a number of studies closely correlating strong arts backgrounds with higher academic performance, with one suggesting arts can help close the achievement gap. In the middle of the last decade, NCLB pressures led to administrators reducing arts to increase standardized test scores. Then-head of the National Governor's association, Arkansas conservative and presidential candidate Mike Huckabee wrote a 2006 New York Times commentary defending arts education.

"Across the nation, schools are trimming back financing for music and the arts in the name of 'efficiency' and 'core subjects.' This is beyond short-sighted. It's stupid.... Numerous studies affirm that a student schooled in music improves his or her SAT and ACT scores in math, foreign language, or creative writing. Creative students are better problem-solvers; that is a trait the business world begs for in its work force."

Even within NCLB and modern academic constraints, there's room for arts education in all schools. Music, theater, and other arts teachers should seek solidarity with core subject educators in designing lessons that incorporate artistic creativity through all subjects. The Perpich report identifies vast need for improvement in this area. While 64 percent of schools say they occasionally use arts integration, only four percent have art and core teachers working regularly on integrated lesson plans. A major obstacle is planning time allowance.

Developing a well-skilled workforce requires innovators who can creatively apply the knowledge they've gained. Arts, not only help develop creativity but provide foundational learning skills, including the ability to concentrate on a specific task, think in the abstract, work in a team and recall information. Instead of reducing arts to meet standardized testing goals, let's increase arts to meet future workforce needs.

*The results were based on a 2010-2011 school year survey sent to 1420 public (non-charter) schools by then-Commissioner of Education Alice Seagren. There was a 44% response rate, representing 376,924 total students, resulting in a +/- 2.95% margin-of-error.

Read the full article [here](http://www.mn2020.org/issues-that-matter/education/some-tuning-needed-for-mn-arts-education%20)

<http://www.mn2020.org/issues-that-matter/education/some-tuning-needed-for-mn-arts-education%20>