

VSA arts of Minnesota **TEACHING ARTIST ROSTER**  
**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY**  
August 6, 2009 11:00am – 12:30pm

## NOTES

### ***Program Updates***

*Presented by Jenea Rewertz-Targui, Arts in Education Coordinator, VSA arts of Minnesota*

Click [here](http://www.vsaartsmn.org/recent.html#recent04) (http://www.vsaartsmn.org/recent.html#recent04) to download the **Artists-in-Residence Grant Program** and **Teaching Artist Roster** overview, including updates and expectations for the 2009-2010 school year. Alternative formats are available.

### ***Panel Discussion: What should be happening during our artist residencies in schools?***

*Presented by Craig Dunn, VSA arts; Amy Frimpong, Minnesota State Arts Board, Senior Program Officer; and Erin Phelps-Stark, Work Experience Life Skills: WELS South Program, Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District.*

### **Q: What is the reason for updates in the Artists-in-Residence Grant Program and Teaching Artist Roster?**

A: These recent changes we need initiate and implement in our grant program are due to the demands of our funders. The majority of our program funds are granted through VSA arts (in Washington D.C.) which we have to apply for every year. They get an annual grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Within the annual federal appropriation every year, in the elementary and secondary education act, which for the past eight years has been known at the “No Child Left Behind” act, there is a line item called Arts in Education, this year it is set to receive about \$52 million, of that line, VSA arts gets about \$7.5 million, those dollars go to the national office then out to state affiliates. The most any affiliate can apply for is \$80,000 to be used for all program areas, not just limited to the Artists-in-Residence Grant Program. These funds include many restrictions and reporting requirements (35 pages) including evaluation of the program, which we are accountable and ultimately are the reason for the new requirements for contracted teaching artists.

We also received funds from Travelers, which may now only be used for our grant program specifically for a minimum of five artist residencies to occur in Saint Paul Public Schools. In years past we received funds for general operation which can be used for whatever purpose not only that, but we were granted less money this year.

There are slightly different reporting requirements for the Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota State Arts Board funds we receive. These are also annual applications; we anticipate \$20,000 from both these funders this year.

**Q: What is the new focus for each VSA arts of Minnesota residency?**

A: In the past, the primary objective for our residencies was a social outcome: *increase social skills of participants, primarily people with disabilities*. This year, as part of our affiliation agreement, all of the programs of VSA arts of Minnesota must address the following objectives as stated by the U.S. Department of Education: *increase academic content knowledge of the participants, primarily people with disabilities*.

We are being encouraged by the Minnesota Department of Education to address the Minnesota Academic Standards in the *Arts* (which focus on student achievement in six distinct arts areas: dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts) in special education settings. Goals of residency should include building a supportive, creative environment, in which teachers/staff and artists work together to offer learners new knowledge and experience in the arts. Residencies can aim to teach the skills, techniques and concepts of the art form while building learners' self-confidence and self-expression, all the while assisting schools in meeting the Standards in the *Arts*.

**Q: My experience has been that social development triggers cognitive development and that they two are really linked. It is often stated on an IEP that it's a goal for that student. So who is going to provide the concrete data, in other words, how you are going to measure these kinds of things? Is that the teaching artist's role?**

A: Partly, that is why when planning the residency we are encouraging you to identify the primary objectives as using the art form to address a standard. If there are secondary benefits defined in their IEP such as social, great! We know there are going to be; just working in the arts in most instances is a collaborative effort, acknowledging other people's input into a project, etc. We also know that in eight hours, what can outcomes we identify based on that experience. It might be best to identify one or two outcomes. Through the process of what you are going through and/or a final product you can point to if there has been success or not success.

We are looking for limited outcomes but specific learning outcomes and aligned with something important with the child, whether it is on their IEP or that what they need to know or be able to do according to the identified standard. For example in dance, did they enhance vocabulary and literary skills through movement and repetition? Did they build and reinforce social skills through dance and rehearsal routines? As an instructor did you encourage creativity by having students create original dances using traditional dance vocabulary? Did you inspire confidence and pride in student work? Did students develop appreciation for different cultures and people? Did the project strengthen collaborative and team building skills through class-created work? Did it provide a positive outlet for self-expression and empowerment or did the residency promote active interest in class and school culture.

**Q: Is this something you are encouraging schools also from their perspective? Because often they come with the social emotional goal as the one that they want targeted. Now are you going to say we are focusing on the art standards and that will be a ripple effect?**

A: Yes, we will be saying that this year, we are making a little bit of a shift. Yes, there are probably going to be benefits on all levels- artistic, cognitive, and/or social. In this case, as a teaching artist, you would collaborate with the coordinating staff to design a project that supplement the arts programming that these students may or may not be getting. Projects primary objectives should provide direct learning about art, art forms, and the processes of creating and expressing art (not the learning of other subjects through arts).

Although, as a secondary objective, residencies could also be designed to address the Academic Standards in the other content areas such as language arts, mathematics, science, social studies through arts.

### **Q. What are the Academic Standards?**

A. Academic Standards are public statements (a common language) about what students should know and be able to do. There are a set of national and state standards and even some cities have their own. What are these statements? What do they mean? Standards describe the goals of education, the destinations at which students should arrive at the end of the unit or term. For example, most standards expect students graduating from high school to be able to write for different audiences in different formats -- things such as reports, instructions, literary criticism, and persuasive and reflective essays -- and to demonstrate a command of standard written English.

Note that the standard doesn't recommend how to get the students to this destination -- that is determined by the curriculum. Teachers can choose whatever curriculum, teaching materials and methods he or she finds appropriate to help the students meet the standards. Standards are the WHAT of education while curriculum and instruction are the HOW.

When you go into a residency ask yourself this question: What do I want them to learn, not what do I want them to make. Stay focused on the artistic process so the residency does not become product-driven. For example, if you are going to teach pottery, look at the Visual Arts standards to see what are the most important things students need to know. It doesn't mean that you can't make a pot in the way that you want to, and help create that pot the way that you have learned how, but it does mean there are certain objectives and things that you talk about while you make that pot that everybody else in America is talking about too.

To review Minnesota State Academic Standards, [click here](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Academic_Excellence/Academic_Standards/index.html).  
([http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Academic\\_Excellence/Academic\\_Standards/index.html](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Academic_Excellence/Academic_Standards/index.html))

### **Q. What are the benefits of academic standards?**

A. Standards provide a focus -- all students must reach them. I am looking at the standards more and more because my boss tells me I have to, I take classes that tell me I have to, I have administrators and politicians are encouraging us to address them. They are not a scary thing any more; I don't need to question what I am teaching. I now focus on the simple sentence – what do I want them to learn. I am not as concerned about the activity as much anymore; I don't think about the end product but rather what did they learn when they made it.

Done well, standards can be an important tool for equity: if all kids are required to meet the standards, all schools must work to make children reach them, not just schools which have a majority of middle class, college-bound students.

### **Q. Does everyone know what an IEP is?**

A. Yes. *This was not addressed; however for those who are not familiar there is an explanation below from the US Department of Education.* The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) is the new version of an earlier law, The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-142). This law requires state education agencies to provide appropriate services for disabled children from birth to 21 years of age.

In order to be eligible for special education and related services under IDEA, the child has to meet the criteria for eligibility in one of the eligibility categories in the law. Once the child is classified, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is generated that lists goals and objectives for that child as well as a way of tracking progress within the designated program. To create an effective IEP, a team including parents, teachers, other school staff—and often the student—meet to develop, review, and revise the IEP. Each child's IEP describes the educational program that has been designed to meet that child's unique needs.

It includes, among other things, annual goals broken down into short-term objectives or benchmarks. They may be academic, address social or behavioral needs, relate to physical needs, or address other educational needs. The goals must be measurable—meaning that it must be possible to measure whether the student has achieved the goals. Examples may include:

- Social Skills
- Communication
- Leisure/Recreations Skills

- Vocational Skills
- Personal Management
- Academics
- Perceptual Skills
- Behavioral Skills
- Physical Skills

For more information, [click here](http://www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/IEPguide/index.html). (<http://www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/IEPguide/index.html>)

### **Q. What is the difference between an IEP and a 504 Plan?**

A. Children who have disabilities, but whose disabilities do not interfere with their ability to progress in general education are not eligible for special education services, may be entitled to a 504 Plan.

Section 504 uses broad terms to define disability. This can include physical impairments; illnesses or injuries; communicable diseases; chronic conditions like asthma, allergies and diabetes; and learning problems. It protects students whose disability limits their ability to attend, participate in, or receive benefit from, their education.

In contrast, IDEA regulations define disability as one of thirteen specific diagnoses. It protects students whose disability affects their ability to learn and requires special education or related services to benefit from their education. This could include mental retardation, hearing impairment, speech/language disability, serious emotional disturbance, autism, traumatic brain injury, multiple disabilities, deaf, blind, and deaf-blind.

A 504 Plan spells out the modifications and accommodations that will be needed for these students to have an opportunity perform at the same level as their peers, and might include such things as wheelchair ramps, blood sugar monitoring, extending time permitted for completion of assignments, classroom environment, such as preferential seating, a peanut-free lunch environment, or a tape recorder or keyboard for taking notes.

*For example, my daughter who is now 22 had a 504 all through high school. This was a document, when she was in class and the teacher was teaching in way that she couldn't grasp the information and she knew that her learning style was not coinciding with that instructor, she would take the 504 up to that person and say, 'these are my learning styles and this is the way I learn the best, the way I will be successful in your class. Will you please work with me on these, in these areas, in this way?' The teacher cannot say 'no, that is not how I operate' because it's a legal document. It's a way that protects a student and gives the student the ability to succeed in each classroom environment.*

**Q. What is the history of the 504 Plan, when did it start? Is this something only in Minnesota?**

A. The "504" in "504 plan" refers to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which specifies that no one with a disability in the United States can be excluded from participating in federally funded programs or activities, including elementary, secondary or postsecondary schooling.

**Q. Do you have advice for collaborating with coordinating staff/classroom teacher?**

A. Each residency should be a collaborative effort with the teaching artist and classroom teacher(s) working together to plan and deliver content. The active involvement of the classroom teacher is vital to the residency's success. For VSA arts of Minnesota residencies, each school or educational setting is advised to designate a Coordinator, a point person who is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the project, including the grant proposal. In many cases, this may be the hosting classroom teacher. If working with several classes or grade levels, it may be a designee working on behalf of the group, an arts specialist, a social worker or even the principal.

Be wary of the classroom teacher who expects the teaching artist to do all of the work. In some cases, the residency sponsor may have devised a planning committee that identified the arts education needs and interests of the school or educational setting. During the initial meeting, it is best to engage the classroom teacher by asking questions related to these needs, and then provide examples of how your art form could address them. Using the narrative questions in the 'AIR Grant Proposal Guidelines' or more suggestions in the 'Planning a Residency Guide' might help to structure your discussions. *These will be posted on the VSA arts of Minnesota website soon.*

However, sometimes classroom teachers may not be open to that conversation. Therefore teaching artists need to come prepared. We know the arts matter. The work that teaching artists do in the classroom are already helping to address the standards, its just that the artist are not thinking about how to talk about what he or she teaches. Classroom teachers are worried about their students meeting the standards and may feel that arts activities are just an add-on or 'feel good' projects. But if a teaching artist is well prepared to talk about the benefits of what you are bringing to their classroom and how it connects to the standards, you will be amazed at how many residencies you can develop. Think beyond the art form, think beyond connecting to math, think more about all the things that could happen to a student in the classroom as they are engaged in the residency.

*Note: Current research indicates numerous benefits for students engaged in artists-in-residence programs. National education research shows that the arts promote*

*cooperation, cultural understanding and tolerance of different viewpoints. They boost communication skills, heighten empathy and lift self-esteem. The arts engage learners through auditory, visual, tactile and kinesthetic activities; students of all abilities can experience success and fulfillment through experiences in the arts. In addition, the arts can strengthen understanding of other core subjects, including reading, writing, math, science, social studies and languages.*

It is also important to enquire about the participating students. Ask the classroom teacher or special education teacher if there are any students you should be aware of. Generally there is an enormous diversity of range and so much needs to be adapted individually. Try to get their input about the ways that each student learns best. Also, ask what things cause them the most trouble or bother them (this is especially important with people with Autism or some other disabilities that may cause them to be sensitive to some sounds.)

Once you know what the disability is, spend a little time researching the strengths and weaknesses associated with the disability. Look for official websites that offer help for teachers or parents with that particular disability. Learn what the strengths are as well as the weaknesses. If you can tailor your teaching to their strengths you will make faster progress. If you know about the weaknesses, you can avoid using methods of teaching that would focus on those things.

**Q. Can you explain more about providing an in-service for participating staff?**

A. In-services provided by the teaching artist may be the best professional development classroom teachers receive. These workshops can enhance classroom teaching by expanding creative capabilities and by modeling techniques and arts integrated lessons. Classroom teachers benefit by learning about, connecting to and appreciating content students learn through the residency and will enhance and sustain the experience by modeling the lessons for them.

This hands-on experience could be open to all teachers, administrators and other staff, not only those working directly with the artist. Workshops may take place after school or during teacher in-services or workdays. This can be scheduled prior to the residency, helping staff to better assist students during the lessons and increase their empathy for student responses. Or this could be scheduled following the residency, in addition to learning and practicing new arts skills and concepts, staff will have a better understanding and knowledge how to use art form in relation to what they are teaching. Classroom teachers can take the idea and go in many different directions. The workshop could also be a forum for exchanging ideas, asking questions, sharing resources, and advocating for future arts education efforts at the site and in the community.

## **Q. How will the Arts and Cultural Heritage Funds impact Artists-in-Residence programming?**

A. In November 2008, Minnesotans overwhelmingly voted for a constitutional amendment that will create a new dedicated sales tax to fund activities related to clean water, land and habitat, parks and trails, and arts and cultural heritage for 25 years. During this legislative session, part of what was looked at was determining who will get the monies and how will it be divided among those three areas. The arts will receive 19.75 % of that additional 3/8 of 1% of sales tax. Many arts organization feel that they are deserving of some of these dollars. Just under 50% of the money will be going to the Minnesota State Arts Board to be distributed in various ways, which are still under consideration, to various components of the arts. By October the Arts Board should know more about where the funds will be allocated. This is a large sum of money; it is three times the amount it used to be. It will need to be spent by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 a report on how the money was spend it due. It is going to make activities in the arts and arts education better funded. During this time, organizations will need to justify how this money is being spent and describe its purpose in relation to the original intent of the amendment. Therefore, arts programming will have a higher accountability and with reports on where outcomes met (did we do what we said we would do with the money) so, it becomes that much more incumbent upon teaching artists to be able to follow through with some of the responsibilities we ask.

If you haven't already, please take a moment to share your thoughts on how this money should be spent by completing an [online survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o0GQK8RiAGx2dPcUxyXoZA_3d_3d) ([http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o0GQK8RiAGx2dPcUxyXoZA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o0GQK8RiAGx2dPcUxyXoZA_3d_3d)).

*Suggestion by a fellow teaching artist: For ten years there was a week-long annual retreat called the Artist Educator Institute, an incredible networking opportunity to meet other residency artists, teachers, administrators around state was also eliminated because it was too much fun—summer camp for grown up artists! We need to inform the Arts Board to reinstate this; it will only happen if we ask for that specifically.*

## **Q. What is the Minnesota State Arts Board?**

A. The [Minnesota State Arts Board](http://www.arts.state.mn.us) (<http://www.arts.state.mn.us>) is a state agency that stimulates and encourages the creation, performance, and appreciation of the arts in the state. We believe that all Minnesotans have the opportunity to participate in the arts.

The Arts Board offers ongoing grant programs for arts producers, presenters, and service organizations. VSA arts of Minnesota has applied and been granted through two programs [Institutional Support](#)— provides unrestricted operating support to high-quality, established arts organizations that produce or exhibit works of art, or offer a broad range of services to artists — and the [Arts in Education Organizational Support](#) — these are two-year grants to arts organizations that produce school residency programs. Currently, these organizations that have been granted saw cuts to their budgets for this

year. It is possible that that this might be increased later in the year. We anticipate that what the new amendment is going to do is looking at making sure that every citizen in, no matter where they are in state, has access to the arts. We are encouraging the organizations to consider developing more programming in greater Minnesota. This extends to you teaching artists; consider how you can connect to schools that have not had a residency before.

The Arts Board also offers two programs that make grants to individual artists, help promote the work of artists who teach and artists that are interested in public art. [Artist Initiative](#) — supports and assists artists at various stages in their careers. It encourages artistic development, nurtures artistic creativity, and recognizes the contributions individual artists make to the creative environment of the state of Minnesota. The Arts Board alternates disciplines eligible to apply from year to year.; Music, photography, media arts/new media, poetry, and prose applications will be accepted during this grant round (fiscal year 2010). Dance, theater, and two- and three-dimensional visual arts grants were awarded last year (fiscal year 2009). Applications will be due July 30, 2009.

Grants are also available for schools that want to involve a professional artist in their school arts programming including [School Support](#) for all Minnesota schools, [K-12 Arts Challenge Minnesota](#) for schools outside the seven-county metro area who have not had a residency in the last three years through the arts board, and [CAPP School Support](#) for schools in currently designated CAPP districts.

If you have been granted a residency through VSA arts of Minnesota outside the metro area, you can ask the school to apply for more funds through the Arts Board to extend the residency. Consider how you can build on the residency during the school year, how to build your relationship with the teacher, how to get the teacher to recommend you to other teachers, schools or educational settings. The Arts Board is also considering expanding their programming to consider life long learning in the arts which would include programming with adults.

The Arts Board also has its own [roster of teaching artists](#) who are skilled and available to work in schools. This year the deadline for new applications will be in the spring. The application is not available yet. Acceptance to the roster is a great marketing tool. When the Arts Board has received a request for a teaching artist we direct them to free online listing or go into the database to see the skills and abilities of each artist to make recommendations.

Please note that the Arts Board is looking for volunteer [grant advisory panel members](#) and qualified [interns](#) to work in a variety of areas.

### **Q. Can we apply for residencies in Fargo, North Dakota?**

A. Yes, with Arts Board funds, because they do fund the Fargo/Moorhead area. Although, if we plan to use VSA arts dollars, a conversation would need to be had with

the North Dakota affiliate and the national organization. Moorhead might be a better fit and unfortunately we did not get programming in Congressional District 7 this year and might be an opportunity for next year. As statewide organization, we work to distribute residencies throughout the state. We try to grant at least two in each Congressional District which amounts to a goal of 16 residencies. Each year as I attend the annual meeting in Washington DC, we make arrangements to visit our legislators at Capitol Hill. I make it a point to share with them that we have provided arts programming for their constituents even if they have not supported earmarks dedicating tax or other revenues for art programs such as representative Michele Bachmann and John Kline.

**Please note:**

This Artist in Education Annual Conference designed in cooperation with VSA arts of Minnesota, COMPAS/Young Audiences, the Arts Board, and Perpich Center has been postponed until further notice.