
The Arts & Education Reform in Maryland 1989-2006

The state of Maryland is gaining increased recognition nationally for its education reform initiatives and its commitment to high standards of accountability in education. It further supports the need for high quality arts education as an essential part of our children's education. The following major accomplishments are listed for the years 1989 - 2006:

- **In 1989**, after a decade of requiring experiences in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts for all students in grades K-8, Maryland became one of the first states to require that students earn a credit in the fine arts to receive a high school diploma.
- **In 1992**, the first meeting of Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) was convened by the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). AEMS was initiated in response to growing concerns across the state about diminishing opportunities for K-12 students to access quality educational opportunities in the arts.
- **In 1994**, the Maryland Artist/Teacher Institute, a professional development program for elementary and middle school teachers and administrators was established. The Institute's annual program is a collaborative project of MSDE and the Maryland State Arts Council. The Institute is co-funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.
- **In 1995**, the Maryland State Board of Education adopted the following Schools for Success goal: *By the year 2000, 100 percent of Maryland's students will participate in fine arts programs that enable them to meet the content and achievement standards established by state standards for the arts.*
- **In 1995**, the State Superintendent of Schools appointed a 32-member Fine Arts Standards Task Force and charged it to align Maryland's fine arts goals and expectations with the voluntary National Standards for Arts Education, published in 1994, and to develop standards for program evaluation to be used in implementing the aligned goals document.
- **In 1995**, the Fine Arts Standards Task Force, in collaboration with AEMS partners, produced a philosophical statement about the role of arts education, aligned Maryland's fine arts frameworks with the National Standards for Arts Education, conducted a statewide assessment of fine arts programs, and developed recommendations to improve arts education in the state.

- **In 1996**, the State Board of Education approved appointment by the State Superintendent of a 38-member Fine Arts Education Advisory Panel to develop a plan for implementing the recommendations of the Fine Arts Standards Task Force.
- **In 1997**, the State Board of Education approved content and achievement standards for dance, music, theatre, and visual arts programs in the public schools. The approved publication, entitled [Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes for the Fine Arts](#), encompasses the outcomes, expectations, and indicators of student success in the four disciplines.
- **In 1998**, arts education program improvement was added as a priority in the state request for proposal guidelines for use of Federal dollars allocated to Maryland through the Goals 2000, Educate America Act.
- **In 1998**, AEMS, along with The Johns Hopkins University and Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, sponsored a Summit/Symposium on the role of arts education in comprehensive school reform. The Summit brought together school superintendents from around the state to hear nationally recognized researchers present findings that demonstrated the impact of learning in the arts on student achievement and development
- **In FY 1998**, the Fine Arts Initiatives program was established by MSDE to encourage program improvement efforts. This initial competitive grants program produced revised curricula in each of the arts content areas, established collaborative program and professional development efforts across jurisdictions, and addressed identified priorities in dance and theatre education programs. A total of 7 of 24 school systems competed successfully.
- **In FY 1998**, the fine arts were designated as a special program category for enhancing student achievement through Goals 2000 subgrants to local school systems. A collaboration between three local school systems and an institution of higher education was funded to pilot a 3-year project that focused on developing reading and writing readiness through the visual arts.
- **In FY 1999**, the Fine Arts Initiatives program was enhanced by the Maryland General Assembly, and 10 school systems competed successfully for fine arts improvement grant awards.
- **In 1999**, responding to the State Board of Education's request that available options for assessing the success of fine arts programs in meeting or exceeding state standards in the arts be explored, MSDE issued its first request for proposals to select a contractor to identify and elucidate options for measuring student achievement, based on Maryland standards for the fine arts.

- **In 1999**, AEMS, in collaboration with Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, and Dr. William Brody, President of The Johns Hopkins University, initiated and conducted the first of the Deans' Roundtable programs, focusing on the pre- and in-service training needs of teachers to address appropriately the state's standards for the fine arts. Dr. Grasmick and Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, hosted the second Roundtable.
- **In 1999**, MSDE conducted a comprehensive review of arts education programs in the 24 school systems. The program review included a self-evaluation by each school system with an on-site review by an external review panel. Products resulting from this process include individual system profiles and a cross-site analysis and summary.
- **In FY 1999**, the fine arts were again included as a general priority and as a special funding category for enhancing student achievement through Goals 2000 subgrants to local school systems. Funding for a 3-year period was awarded to support a collaborative effort between a local school system, a state university, and regional arts and cultural organizations to integrate instruction in the arts with general instruction at the elementary and middle school levels.
- **In FY 2000**, enhanced funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems, using a formula that included a basic grant of \$20,000 plus \$.75 per enrolled student. The awarding of grants was contingent upon each school system's development of a strategic, long-range plan for enabling all students to achieve or exceed state standards in the arts.
- **In 2000**, a Multidisciplinary Summer Institute for Arts Educators was established to support performance, scholarship, and education in the fine arts. Developed especially for Maryland secondary school educators in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, the Institute was sponsored by the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, the Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies at the University of Maryland, and the Maryland State Department of Education.
- **In 2000**, MSDE provided a series of technical assistance workshops for school system teams in effective ways for developing long-range, strategic planning documents that would support local initiatives to improve fine arts education programs.
- **In 2000**, the Cultural Arts for Education program was initiated by AEMS. Hosted by the State Superintendent of Schools, the first meeting focused on implementation of Maryland's fine arts standards and implications

for cultural arts groups in the complex and challenging task of enabling all students to achieve or exceed state standards.

- **In FY 2001**, enhanced funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems, using a formula that included a basic grant of \$20,000 plus \$1.50 per enrolled student. The awarding of grants was contingent upon each school system's development of a comprehensive strategic, long-range plan for enabling all students to achieve or exceed state standards in the arts.
- **In FY 2001**, enhanced funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled implementation of dance education programs in selected schools as part of the *Celebration of the Arts in Maryland* program, an initiative of First Lady Frances Hughes Glendening. The initiative was linked with the National Endowment for the Arts-sponsored dance project *Moving America*, being developed as a national model by Towson University.
- **In FY 2001**, The Interagency Committee on Public School Construction and the MSDE Division of Instruction published a new set of guidelines for the construction of fine arts classrooms, studios, and performing spaces.
- **In 2001**, *Common Threads*, a multidisciplinary summer institute for middle level and high school arts educators was established by the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center in collaboration with MSDE to explore a series of common concepts running through all art forms, show deep structural relationships, and enrich learning and teaching the arts in Maryland schools. Approaches focused on production, contextual knowledge, creativity, and aesthetic criticism, explored within a dynamic environment for teachers' professional and personal enrichment.
- **In FY 2002**, continued funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems, using a formula that included a basic grant of \$20,000 plus \$1.50 per enrolled student.
- **In FY 2002**, funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled Year Two implementation of dance education programs in selected schools as part of the *Celebration of the Arts in Maryland* program.
- **In FY 2002**, the Board of Public Works approved the award of a contract to Westat, a Maryland-based research corporation, to develop an assessment system for the four areas of fine arts education, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- **In 2002**, the Maryland Artist/Teacher Institute was expanded to differentiate opportunities for novice and experienced teachers.

- **In 2002**, a partnership between MSDE and the Kennedy Krieger Institute was established to enhance opportunities for students who face unusual challenges. The new Center for VSA arts Maryland will develop programs to guarantee that appropriate access and opportunities for participation in the arts is extended to populations that have disabilities.
- **In FY 2003**, AEMS was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant, through the NEA's Arts Learning Program, to review the status of the fine arts strategic planning process across Maryland. The first year of a 2-year study was completed. The purpose of the study was to link student achievement in the arts with the success of strategic planning efforts supported by the Fine Arts Initiatives grants program.
- **In FY 2003**, continued funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems, using a formula that included a basic grant of \$20,000 plus \$1.50 per enrolled student.
- **In FY 2003**, funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled the third and final year of the implementation of dance education programs in selected schools as part of the *Celebration of the Arts in Maryland* program.
- **In FY 2004**, the Maryland Fine Arts Education Advisory Panel and the MSDE Assessment Policy Committee recommended a three-phase developmental program for fine arts education: 1) development of a pre-K–12 Voluntary State Curricula (VSC) for dance, music, theatre, and visual arts; 2) development of a Tool Kit to inform instructional practice and the practitioner's understanding of assessment processes and tools; and 3) development of a middle level exit assessment for students.
- **In FY 2004**, the fine arts strategic planning process initiated in 2000 was incorporated into each local school system's Bridge to Excellence Master Plan required by the State Board of Education.
- **In FY 2004**, AEMS completed the second and final year of a review of the results of fine arts strategic planning implementation in the state's 24 school systems from 2000–2004.
- **In FY 2004**, AEMS hosted, with the State Superintendent of Schools, a second symposium for Maryland's superintendents of local school systems on the role of arts education in comprehensive school reform. Current research was presented, documenting the effects of fine arts programs on student engagement in learning, particularly in reading and mathematics.

- **In FY 2004**, continued funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems, using a formula that included a basic grant of \$20,000 plus \$1.50 per enrolled student.
- **In FY 2005**, PreK-8 [Voluntary State Curricula](#) (VSC) in the fine arts content areas of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts were developed and made available for public review on MSDE's web site: mdk12.org.
- **In FY 2005**, the Maryland Fine Arts Instructional Tool Kit was developed and field tested. This online resource was designed to inform instructional practice and practitioner understanding of assessment processes and tools. The Tool Kit also provides other significant resources to support instruction.
- **In FY 2005**, AEMS published and disseminated a final report documenting the results of a 2-year review of the fine arts strategic planning implementation in the state's 24 school systems. The report documents significant program improvements made by each school system in areas such as classroom and system-level assessment processes, curriculum alignment, staffing, and professional development.
- **In FY 2005**, continued funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems. Grants were awarded at 75 percent of the FY 2004 basic grant formula of \$20,000 plus \$1.50 per enrolled student.
- **In FY 2006**, continued funding from the Maryland General Assembly enabled MSDE to fund Fine Arts Initiatives in all 24 school systems. Grants originally awarded at 60 percent of the basic grant formula, \$20,000 plus \$1.50 per enrolled student, were later enhanced by approximately 25 percent, using funds provided by the Office of the Governor.
- **In 2006**, the Fine Arts Instructional Tool Kit was closed captioned, an online professional development tool to engage the field in professional development focusing on the Tool Kit's content was developed, and protocols for portfolio assessment of the fine arts at the middle level were developed.
- **In 2006**, the first integrated arts International Artist/Teacher Exchange (IATE) was conducted. The exchange was co-sponsored by the Italian Cultural Society, Collegio San Carlo, the Maryland State Department of Education, and George Mason University and supported by the School Office of the Embassy of Italy, Washington, DC. Programs were conducted in Milan and on the campus of University of Maryland's University College.