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**Georgia Council for the Arts Releases Data from Education Research Report**

*Multi-year project studies Quality of Arts Education in the South*

**ATLANTA, May 20, 2014** — The Georgia Department of Economic Development’s Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) announced the release of research reports that investigate arts education in Georgia, as well as the entire southeast. The reports, *Arts Education in the South Phase I: Public School Data and Principals’ Perspectives* and *Arts Education in the South Phase II: Profiles of Quality*, study the quality of and access to arts education in K-12 public schools in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee through quantitative and qualitative research. The reports are produced by South Arts and Southeast Center for Education in the Arts.

“Arts Education is vital to preparing our students to be entrepreneurial, critical thinkers” said Karen Paty, Director of Georgia Council for the Arts. “With the data presented in the Phase I study we have established a base-line understanding of access to, and quality of arts education in Georgia’s K-12 public schools. The Phase II research allowed us to highlight some of the best arts education work being done in the state and share the learnings, challenges and successes that the S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) curriculum have born at Drew Charter School. Together the data and qualitative research lay a foundation for further analysis of, and advancement of arts education in Georgia.”

The reports were commissioned by South Arts with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and nine participating state arts agencies, including Georgia Council for the Arts. The first phase of the research was compiled with data collected from 4,400 principals, representing 29% of all schools in the region, including 413 principals from Georgia, representing 18% of all schools in the state. The second phase of the research includes nine case studies of model programs, including one in Georgia, conducted by the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga.

“We undertook this research to propel an informed, data-driven discussion of how arts education impacts our students,” explained Mollie Quinlan-Hayes, Deputy Director of South Arts. “There are many recent studies exploring the correlation between access to quality arts education and success throughout schooling and careers. What we lacked, however, was a true view of the scope of arts education we offer students in our public schools. With results from 4,400 schools, we hope that our research can help illuminate that view.”

The quantitative survey encompassed six major areas of inquiry: access to arts education, adherence of arts education to standards, arts instructor qualifications, resources and partners for arts education, principals’ perspectives on arts education, and general school data.

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The data from responding schools is broken down to show results as an overview of the entire region, as well as by state and by school level. Based on a preliminary analysis of the available data, the report's key findings are that, in general, schools in Georgia offer access to arts classes at a rate higher than the region, but lower than the national average. Among survey respondents, 87% of Georgia schools offer classes in music, as well as 81% in visual art, 24% in theatre, 19% in creative writing, and 11% in dance.

Among other arts education programs, 46% of Georgia schools responding to the survey participate in arts field trips, 31% offer after school arts programs, 30% have arts integration programs, and 19% have visiting artist programs.

The survey also asked participants to identify funding sources for their arts education programs. The most common sources among Georgia schools include the district (52%), the PTA/PTO (35%), arts fund raisers (36%), and the school budget (32%).

Georgia public school principals also identified major obstacles to providing arts education and major factors that could be helpful to arts education.

The qualitative research, conducted by the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, examined the traits of quality arts education in nine strong school arts programs, including Drew Charter School in Atlanta.

Both reports are available to download for free from [southarts.org](http://southarts.org). The quantitative study *Arts Education in the South Phase I: Public School Data and Principals' Perspectives* contains data representing the South as a region, as well as each individual state and school level. The qualitative *Arts Education in the South Phase II: Profiles of Quality* involves in-depth reviews of nine model school programs in seven states through multiple-site case study design.

Georgia Council for the Arts anticipates releasing a report with expanded analysis of the available arts education data for Georgia later this summer.

### **About Georgia Council of Arts**

Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) is a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development whose mission is to cultivate the growth of vibrant, thriving Georgia communities through the arts. GCA provides grant funding, programs and services statewide that support the vital arts industry, preserve the state's cultural heritage, increase tourism and nurture strong communities. Funding for Georgia Council for the Arts is provided by appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts.

### **About South Arts**

South Arts, a nonprofit regional arts organization was founded in 1975 to build on the South's unique heritage and enhance the public value of the arts. South Arts' work responds to the arts environment and cultural trends with a regional perspective. South Arts offers an annual portfolio of activities designed to address the role of the arts in impacting the issues important to our region, and to link the South with the nation and the world through the arts. For more information, visit [www.southarts.org](http://www.southarts.org).

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