



Arts Learning Task Force Meeting Minutes • December 12, 2014 • Gainesville, GA

Attendees: Woody Leonard, Gladys Wyant, Pam Beagle-Daresta, John White, Pam Smith, Charisse Williams, Lisa Love, Atiba Mbiwan, Debi West, Pam Walker, Jean Hendrickson, Catherine Rosa, Barry Schrenk, Karen Paty, Allen Bell

10:00 am – Tour of McEver Arts Academy, Principal Catherine Rosa

The tour of McEver Arts Academy included the following classes:

- Building/Engineering
- Dance/Movement
- Advanced Guitar
- Bilingual 1st grade class
- Foundation - 1st grade class working on visual art (sculptures of trees)
- Gym class (X-Box labs and Karate)
- 4th grade class (color analysis)
- Pottery class (community bowl)
- Chorus and Theatre class (role playing by improv group; ukulele chorus)
- Garden and Greenhouse
- Media Center

11:00 am – Q&A with Principal Catherine Rosa

The Principal answered questions related to the school population, its history, and its focus. Principal Rosa cited the diversity of the school and their rising test scores.

Their model is arts integration. They have worked with ArtsNow, Arts for Learning (formerly Young Audiences), and the Leonard Bernstein Institute to provide teacher support and professional learning.

11:15 am – Travel to The Arts Council

11:30 am – Lunch Break at The Arts Council

12:00 pm – Welcome to The Arts Council by Gladys Wyant, Executive Director

Gladys welcomed the Task Force members and special guests. She discussed The Arts Council, its history, and its programs, including their work in arts education.

12:10 pm – Video

Allen shared a TED Education video about the benefits to brain development as a result of learning to play a music instrument.

12:15 pm – Guest Speakers

Pam Walker, Executive Director, ArtsNow

Pam Walker discussed her professional history working in arts education, including previous stints as Executive Director of ArtsNow and as a consultant with the A+ Schools Network in North Carolina. She also discussed the history and current work of ArtsNow.

A major component of the work of ArtsNow is their partnerships, including the Center for Education Integrating Science, Mathematics, and Computing (CEISMC) at GA Tech, Atlanta Ballet, SCAD, Music in Education National Consortium (MiENC), Emory University, Lesley University, and Synchronicity.

ArtsNow provides professional learning for classroom and arts teachers in arts integration. Professional learning includes local, on-site support and experiences, including local school needs assessment, a customized plan, demonstrations with students, on-site workshops, collaborative planning sessions, teacher observations and reflections, coaching, and mentoring. Their goal for teacher resources is to be ongoing, job-embedded, relevant, reflective, school-focused, standards-based, and results driven.

ArtsNow crafts a professional learning plan with their partner schools. They work as a strategic partner with schools and school systems

ArtsNow has served 160 schools in 21 systems, directly impacting over 1,000 educators, indirectly influencing 9,100 educators, and reaching 114,000 students.

Jean Hendrickson, Director, A+ Schools National Consortium, and Director Emeritus, Oklahoma A+ Schools Network

Jean Hendrickson discussed her work with the A+ Schools Network in Oklahoma, and her recent work with the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities on the Turnaround Arts Initiative, both whole school reform programs based on arts integration.

Jean also discussed the A+ Schools National Consortium, including statewide programs in North Carolina, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana, plus stand-alone A+ Schools in four other states. Their consortium is working with three other countries to develop their own A+ Schools networks – the UK, Canada, and South Africa.

Jean talked about the history of the A+ Schools program in North Carolina and Oklahoma, and her professional history as a teacher and principal, and her roles as a practitioner and proponent of the A+ Schools model.

Jean led an exercise with the Task Force members. She asked: What do you want to see in a school that a child you know attends? Then write down those qualities. Do other kids deserve to go to that kind of school?

Jean reviewed the A+ Essentials – A Set of Commitments:

- Arts (every day)
- Curriculum
- Experiential Learning
- Multiple Learning Pathways
- Enriched Assessment
- Collaboration
- Infrastructure
- Climate

Then, referencing the qualities that Task Force members had listed that they would want in a school attended by a child that they know, Jean placed markers on each of the commitments in the A+ Essentials to show where those qualities fit in the model.

The Oklahoma A+ Schools' Systematic Approach includes:

- Networking
- Professional development
- Research

Oklahoma A+ Schools – Research Results include:

- Higher achievement
- Better attendance for students and teachers
- Fewer disciplinary problems in schools
- Happier, more effective educators
- Joyful, engaged students
- More parent and community involvement
- Creative, focused instruction

Oklahoma A+ student survey data – students find their school work:

- Enjoyable
- Interesting
- Challenging

1:15 p.m. – Q & A with Guest Speakers

The question and answer session included:

- Reviewing the details of the different A+ Schools models in each state
- Drivers for success in the A+ Schools model
- The process for a state to develop an A+ Schools network
- The role of the DOE in the A+ Schools networks
- The budget of the A+ Schools program
- The process for a school to join the A+ Schools network
- Professional development for faculty and staff as part of the A+ Schools model
- Best practices for developing a statewide A+ Schools network
- The importance of including arts learning and arts integration in pre-service training

Additional discussion included greater context around the work of the Task Force:

- The role of funders
- The role of the Task Force
- Changes at the State Department of Education

- Advocacy roles
- Communicating the work of the Task Force and limitations
- Task Force members bringing insights from other experiences to the conversation
- Sharing the Task Force experience with colleagues

1:45 p.m. – Thanks, Working Groups, Recommendations, Future Meetings

Allen thanked the guest speakers, the hosts, and the Task Force members for their work.

Task Force members committed to one of four specific Working Groups. The Working Groups will begin working on specific recommendations for each of the following four areas:

- State policies and resources
- Local policies and resources
- Arts instructor policies and resources
- Arts organization and artist policies and resources

The 2015 meeting schedule for the Arts Learning Task Force is:

- January 14 – Drew Charter School – the STEAM model
- February 19 – Carlos Museum at Emory University – Teaching Artists and Community Arts Partnerships
- March 11 – location TBD – possibly hear from principals about barriers/obstacles to providing opportunities in arts learning
- April 28 – location TBD – hear from statewide arts education organization representatives; begin finalizing recommendations
- May 26 – GDEcD – finalize recommendations
- June – Present recommendations to the Governor

2:02 p.m. – Adjourn