

THINK³⁶⁰

Arts Complete Education

The merged entity of Young Audiences of Colorado and Colorado Alliance for Arts Education

Colorado Arts Education Advocacy Toolkit



COLORADO ARTS EDUCATION ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Arts Complete Education	3
Why Advocate? The Sad State of Arts Education in Colorado	4
The 1-2-3: Colorado Lags in Arts Education	6
The 1-2-3: If You're Concerned, You're Not Alone.....	7
The 1-2-3: Citizens Across America Agree	8
Why Arts Education Is Crucial	9
The 1-2-3: Arts Education Matters to Academic Achievement.....	10
The 1-2-3: Arts Education Matters to Workforce Development.....	11
The 1-2-3: No Child Left Behind Seeks a Complete Education	12
What Arts Education Should Look Like	13
Arts Education Can Work: Stories to Inspire Advocacy	14
Successful Colorado Schools: Where the Arts Are Alive.....	16
Affecting Change	18
The 1-2-3: Affecting Change in Your School	19
The 1-2-3: Affecting Change in Your Company.....	20
The 1-2-3: Affecting Change in the Legislature.....	21
Tools to Take Action	22
Worksheet 1: Bills to Watch in the Colorado State Legislature	22
Worksheet 2: My Elected Officials	23
Worksheet 3: Arts Education Goals for My School.....	24
About Think 360 Arts Complete Education	25

INTRODUCTION: ARTS COMPLETE EDUCATION

You're at a lovely cocktail party. You meet a young couple and during the course of the conversation, you realize that when you say 'Beethoven,' they think big, drooling dog. Would you think of these new friends as educated? Be honest.

Without the arts, education simply isn't complete.

Colorado children deserve better. You can help.

Chances are you learned your ABCs through song. Most children articulate their ideas through crayons and paint long before they can read and write, and as they grow older, children's investment in the arts actually grows deeper. In fact, the arts reach those children that the traditional classroom leaves behind, and the arts bring a joy to the classroom that keeps them coming back.

Arts education has never been more important than it is today. If the United States is to remain economically competitive in the 21st century, we will need workers who can communicate, collaborate, create, innovate invent and think critically – all skills the arts uniquely develop and hone.

Yet, over the past 30 years, we've witnessed the decline of arts education in public schools across the country and throughout Colorado. If you believe it is time to reverse this trend, you join a majority of Americans. Now is the time to get involved.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide will provide you with:

- A status report on arts education in the country and in Colorado.
- Information to help you build the case for arts education.
- Portraits of schools where arts are integral to academic excellence.
- A variety of ways you can advocate for arts education.

Scan the guide to educate yourself on how the arts are taught. Highlight one or two facts that speak to you, that you can easily remember and share. Use the legislative action tool at the back of the guide to make a difference – and pass on the passion for arts education.

This toolkit offers simple steps EVERY citizen can take to advocate for arts education.

WHY ADVOCATE?

THE SAD STATE OF ARTS EDUCATION IN COLORADO

Advocate:

-*verb* 1. to speak or write in favor of; support or urge by argument; recommend publicly.

-*noun* 2. a person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc.

-*synonyms*: champion, proponent, backer

-- Random House Dictionary

In Colorado, children have the right to arts in education.

Theoretically, the State Board of Education supports arts education. They even went so far as to pass a resolution in 2005 in response to concerns that reductions in arts education would limit its benefits. The resolution stated that the State Board of Education “reaffirms the importance of the arts as an essential part of a classic, well-rounded, strong academic education, and...encourages local school districts to ensure equal opportunity and access to the study of and participation in the arts as part of a core curriculum within the school day for all Colorado students.”

Despite this theoretical support, Colorado’s structure of locally controlled districts means that every school district takes a different approach to setting actual standards for education.

In addition, our tax scenario and recent economic conditions provide fierce competition for public dollars. And with Colorado's term-limit laws for elected officials, the face of our legislature changes every few years. Without consistent public support, in these times of

Think 360 Arts Complete Education, Colorado

©2008

embattled resources and juggled priorities, children are increasingly left to their own devices when it comes to their creative lives.

What you can do

- Parents and neighbors can influence change, build partnerships and encourage hands-on programming for their school from the district.
- Teachers and administrators can create connections and innovate solutions in their classrooms and their schools.
- Legislators can nurture a culture of 360-degree education in our state.

Arts are a part of a complete education.

THE 1-2-3: COLORADO LAGS IN ARTS EDUCATION

1. Arts educators are stretched thin.

In 2002, the last year for which data are available:

- the ratio of K-12 students to Visual Arts Specialists was 575 to 1
- the ratio of K-12 students to Music Specialists was 478 to 1
- the ratio of K-12 students to Theatre Specialists was 6,204 to 1
- the ratio of K-12 students to Dance Specialists was 28,607 to 1

-- Colorado Alliance for Arts Education Survey on the Status of Arts Education, 2001-2002.

2. Funding is lacking in all areas of education.

Colorado ranks 34th in the country for per-pupil expenditures in education (\$7,826). The top three are: New Jersey (\$14,117), New York (\$13,703) and the District of Columbia (\$13,348). The bottom three are: Idaho (\$6,319), Arizona (\$6,184) and Utah (\$5,216).

-- National Center for Education Statistics, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/expenditures/tables.asp>

Teachers spend an average of \$443 from their own pocket on school supplies – many of which are art-related supplies.

-- Teacher Magazine, 2006

3. Colorado does not require arts instruction be provided.

The Education Commission of the States, a Denver-based, national non-profit organization dedicated to helping states develop effective policy and practice for public education, has created ArtScan – a database containing arts in education policies in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. According to its findings:

- Colorado is one of only six U.S. states that *do not* require schools and/or districts to provide arts instruction. The other states that *do not* require arts education are Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, Michigan and South Dakota.
- Iowa is the only state remaining that does not have content standards in the arts.
- Kentucky is the only state that has a state-level assessment in the arts.
- Eight states require district-level arts assessments: Arizona, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Washington.

-- ArtScan database, www.ecs.org

In *Education Week's* "Quality Counts 2008," Colorado received a grade of **D** for its educational transitions and alignment – that is, the way the state's school districts put together academic and other programs to ensure a smooth transition from K-12 education into the workforce.

-- <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2008/18shr.co.h27.pdf>

THE 1-2-3: IF YOU'RE CONCERNED, YOU'RE NOT ALONE

1. Parents care about arts education.

In an online survey of Colorado parents, Think 360 Arts learned:

- 68% of respondents say it is “very important” that the arts are a part of the academic curriculum during the school day.
- 87% of respondents say the arts are “important” or “very important” in preparing students for a variety of career choices.
- 76% of respondents state that the arts are a critical component of a well-rounded education.
- 48% of respondents say the No. 1 reason for the lack of arts instruction and offerings in school is because of the increased focus on testing shifting resources away from the arts; 35% say the reason is insufficient funding for the arts.
- 59% of respondents describe the amount of arts instruction their children receive in school, both curricular and extracurricular, as “not enough time.”

2. Advocates for the arts in education have clear, bi-partisan support at both the federal and Colorado state levels.

Advocates for the arts in education are on solid footing and should remain vocal proponents of these stated goals.

School districts in Colorado need support and encouragement from the communities they serve to follow the arts education resolution from the State Board of Education.

Citizens support arts education.

88% would be more likely to vote for a candidate whose list of priorities included more access to the arts in school.

Source: Think 360 Arts Complete Education survey

3. The Colorado State Board of Education understands the many benefits of arts education.

The Colorado Department of Education has identified “Vocational Clusters” to assist Colorado students in choosing a career path and lists “Communication, Visual and Performing Arts” as a major employment option.

These career options are more than valid: According to the National Endowment for the Arts, in 2002 the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics counted more than 2 million full-time workers in artist occupations.

In addition, No Child Left Behind clearly includes the arts as a necessary ingredient to the complete education of our children.

Think 360 Arts Complete Education, Colorado

THE 1-2-3: CITIZENS ACROSS AMERICA AGREE

1. The arts are very important to Americans.

A Harris Poll released in June 2005 revealed that **93 percent** of Americans think that the arts are an integral part of a well-rounded education for children.

2. Citizens are unsure how to support arts education.

The Harris survey also revealed high levels of uncertainty amongst “those involved in the life of a child” about how to advocate on behalf of arts education in schools.

- **40 percent** say they do not know how to get involved in arts education.
- **63 percent** say there are others in the community more qualified than they to take action.

3. Advocates must get involved at all levels.

In order for the arts to regain a place in public education, arts advocates must insert themselves into the broader conversations on education reform:

- Within their own schools.
- At the district level.
- At the city and county level.
- At the state level.
- At the national level.

WHY ARTS EDUCATION IS CRUCIAL

Now that you've seen how dire Colorado's situation is, here are some facts to motivate your arts education advocacy:

- **It's federal law.** Arts education is required as a component of the core curriculum defined by the Federal No Child Left Behind Act.
- **Arts education helps kids learn.** Children and youth who study the arts demonstrate higher all-around academic achievement.
- **Arts education keeps kids in school.** School programs that incorporate the arts have documented significant improvements in student attendance – specifically for high-risk populations.
- **Arts education makes schools better.** The arts build community in schools and give students exciting challenges.
- **Arts education makes better employees.** In the future, as the workplace becomes more competitive, employers will seek workers who are innovative, as well as skilled – a background that comes from arts education.

It's the law.

82% of respondents were not aware that the federal No Child Left Behind Act authorizes federal funds for the arts to be taught as a core subject in school.

Source: Think 360 Arts Complete Education survey

THE 1-2-3: ARTS EDUCATION MATTERS TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

1. Study of the arts enhances academic achievement.

Students who study the arts are:

- Four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement
- Elected to class office within their school three times more often
- Four times more likely to participate in math & science fair
- Three times more likely to win award for school attendance
- Four times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem

-- *"Living the Arts Through Language + Learning: A Report on Community-Based Youth Organizations,"*
Shirley Brice Heath, *Americans for the Arts*, Nov. 1998.

2. Arts keep kids in schools.

Arts-infused school programs from around the country that have been established for an extended period of time have documented significant improvements in student attendance, specifically for at-risk and incarcerated youth populations. Some of the programs that have documented these findings are:

- Connecticut's HOT (Higher Order Thinking) Schools
- Mississippi's Whole Schools
- New York's Empire State Partnership (ESP)
- Hamilton, Ohio's SPECTRA+ schools (Schools, Parents, Educators, Children, Teachers Rediscover the Arts)

Some of these findings can be found in the NGA Center for Best Practices report, "The Impact of Arts Education on Workforce Preparation," found at <http://www.nga.org/cda/files/050102ARTSED.pdf>

3. The arts build better, more effective schools.

According to Brent Wilson, Ph.D., three ways the arts improve schools are by:

- Improving the School Climate
- Ensuring Comprehensive Tasks that Challenge Students
- Turning Schools Into Communities

-- *From "Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons From School Districts That Value Arts Education,"*
President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, 1999.

Do you agree? If so, it's time to let someone know.

ADVOCATE.

THE 1-2-3: ARTS EDUCATION MATTERS TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1. Arts education improves our competitive edge.

The National Center on Education and the Economy sponsored a report entitled "Tough Choices, Tough Times," issued after a two-year study conducted by the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. In the executive summary of this report, the authors question how Americans can compete with workers from other countries who are at least as qualified to do the same work for much less pay. The answer, of course, lies in finding the competitive edge. The report states (emphasis added):

"This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history, and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after... It is a world in which comfort with ideas and abstractions is the passport to a good job, in which creativity and innovation are the key to the good life, in which high levels of education – a very different kind of education than most of us have had – are going to be the only security there is. A world in which...software engineers who are also musicians and artists will have an edge over those who are not.... The best employers the world over will be looking for the most competent, most creative, and most innovative people on the face of the earth and will be willing to pay them top dollar for their services."

-- National Center on Education and the Economy, "Tough Choices, Tough Times," 2007

2. Arts education prepares students for the future.

Daniel Pink, celebrated author of "A Whole New Mind," which outlines how right-brain thinkers will be critical to America's ability to compete in the international marketplace, relates the story of a Virginia superintendent who noted that **we are preparing kids for our past rather than their future.** Arts education helps learners be prepared for anything.

Citizens are unsatisfied with arts education funding.

Over 70% describe the amount of government funding of arts education as "too low" at federal, state and local/district levels.

Source: Think 360 Arts Complete Education survey

3. Arts education is significant for the 21st century workforce.

A brief reporting on a series of studies by the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices concluded that arts education supports the needs of a changing workforce, "including flexibility, highly developed interpersonal skills and problem-solving ability." The brief recommends governors include arts education in education reform plans, include arts and culture officers in state-school interactions, and provide seed funding to arts organizations to encourage private-sector involvement.

-- "The Impact of Arts Education on Workforce Preparation," National Governors Association, 2002.

THE 1-2-3: NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND SEEKS A COMPLETE EDUCATION

1. Sustained, quality arts education programming is critical to the future success of our nation's children as they enter the workforce of the 21st century.

Leaders across the country and across party lines understand this. The Federal **No Child Left Behind Act** defines core curriculum as:

English, Reading or Language Arts, Math, Science, Foreign Languages, Civics and Government, Economics, **Arts**, History, and Geography (emphasis added).

One listed objective of No Child Left Behind is:

"...to support systemic education reform by strengthening arts education as an integral part of the elementary school and secondary school curriculum."

The legislation goes on to state its aim is to:

"...ensure that all students meet challenging content standards and challenging state student academic achievement standards in the arts" and "...to support the national effort to enable all students to demonstrate competence in the arts."

-- U.S. Department of Education, No Child Left Behind Act, 2001, SubPart 15, Section 5551

2. The core curriculum includes the arts.

Despite the support of the No Child Left Behind Act, schools are understandably forced to focus only on those parts of the "core curriculum" that directly impact the future funding and stability of their school – that is to say, those curriculum areas included on standardized tests.

3. Reform efforts must demand that the arts are included alongside other academic subjects.

Many education reform efforts are underway across the nation and here in Colorado, all aimed at addressing deficits in the education system. To ensure our children are receiving a complete, well-rounded education, any attempts at reform must include:

math AND music; history AND drama; science AND visual art; geography AND dance

*Education should not be an "either/or" proposition.
Every child deserves a complete education.
**Break down barriers and ADVOCATE
for systemic education reform.***

WHAT ARTS EDUCATION *SHOULD* LOOK LIKE

Arts education can fit into a variety of education frameworks. To give you an idea of what a well-rounded arts education should look like, the Think 360 Arts Schools of Excellence program requires schools to demonstrate the following:

1. Inclusion of music, visual art, theater and dance as **essential components** of the school's curriculum;
2. Active use of **imaginative learning approaches**.
3. **Parental involvement** in the educational lives of children through hands-on, creative, arts-based activities.
4. Opportunities **to learn about other cultures** through the arts.
5. **Community connections** that offer arts-based learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

These are the fundamentals that make arts education work for our children.

ARTS EDUCATION CAN WORK! STORIES TO INSPIRE ADVOCACY

California

California experienced erosion in arts education programs beginning in 1978, when Proposition 13 was passed. Prop 13's cap on property taxes forced districts to cut staff and programs across the board. The arts were hit especially hard.

In September 2006, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law **the single largest investment in music and arts education programs in the history of our country.**

A block grant of **\$105 million** was distributed to school districts, charter schools and county offices of education. The funds were available for hiring additional staff, professional development, and purchasing supplies (including books) and equipment. In addition, a one-time allocation of **\$500 million** funded the purchase of arts, music and/or physical education professional development, supplies and equipment – including musical instruments, kilns, photography equipment and other supplies that support standards-based instruction.

Takeaway: As Colorado legislators contemplate statewide high school graduation requirements in our locally controlled schools, they need to take a holistic look at a comprehensive education reform plan that encompasses all "core curriculum," with options tailored to students' post-graduation plans. And they need to earmark funds, statewide, to restore quality arts education programming.

New Jersey

In 1996, music, theater, dance and the visual arts became part of the New Jersey state-mandated "core curriculum."

Ten years later, in September 2006, the New Jersey Arts Education Census Project completed a preliminary survey of 2,376 public schools – with an amazing completion rate of 98.5 percent of schools in New Jersey – to see how they're doing.

- 95 percent of elementary, middle and high schools use certified arts specialists to teach music and the visual arts.
- 81 percent of schools have updated and aligned their curriculum to meet state requirements.
- 89 percent of schools use community resources to bolster their arts curriculum.
- Many schools have long-term contracts with artists who come into classrooms to teach, and many others made field trips a regular occurrence.

The survey was a three-year project of the New Jersey State Arts Council, the Music for All Foundation, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Playwright's Theatre of New Jersey and the New Jersey Department of Education.

Source: The Bergen Record, Nov. 12, 2006, Jim Beckerman

Takeaway: Colorado can learn from New Jersey's outstanding model of cooperation among state arts agencies, state educational agencies, community arts organizations, and national support.

Alaska

An inspiring story of successful, comprehensive education reform can be found in Alaska's Chugach School District.

The Chugach School District has 214 students spread over 22,000 square miles of remote, isolated areas in South Central Alaska. Some of the villages in the district are 100 percent Aleut (Native Alaskan).

In 1994, Chugach underwent a comprehensive restructuring effort, realigning its curriculum to create 10 performance-based standards:

mathematics, science, technology, reading, writing, social sciences, service learning, career development, **cultural awareness and expression**, and personal/social/health development. Proven educational tools support and document consistent progress toward proficiency in all standards, and grading standards were tightened.

As a result, Chugach became the smallest school district to receive a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, given by the President of the United States to a business, education, health care, and non-profit organization that demonstrate extreme excellence in seven categories and that are models for excellence in gaining the competitive edge.

The new system was created as a collaborative effort of village elders, teachers, parents, students and community members – and all of these groups assist students in reaching proficient levels.

Takeaway: Coloradans can look to the Chugach School District as an example of the necessary unification of every element of the community, all of which are direct contributors to each child's overall educational development.

Connecticut

Connecticut has gained national and international recognition since 1994 when the state formed the Higher Order Thinking (HOT) School model.

HOT schools:

- Promote teaching and learning in, about and through the arts in a democratic setting.
- Include the arts as rigorous academic subjects, each with its own sequential curriculum that conveys knowledge not learned through other academic disciplines.
- Integrate the arts across disciplines, creating arts-rich environments that motivate students to make connections between and among subject areas and ideas.
- Cultivate a school culture to which all members of the school community contribute and in which individual leadership is emphasized.

Takeaway: Connecticut's example shows a statewide commitment to a particular school model, but in any format, educators can learn from Connecticut's dedication to integrating the arts throughout the educational experience.

SUCCESSFUL COLORADO SCHOOLS: WHERE THE ARTS ARE ALIVE

Coloradans have been experimenting with a commitment to the arts in schools for years and have a number of success stories to show for their efforts.

Based upon their published information, here are several examples of successful arts education programs in Colorado. Check your school district's Web site to learn their approach.

Urban School: **Polaris at Ebert Elementary, Denver Public Schools**

This elementary program serves highly gifted and high-achieving children in Northeast Denver. The Polaris Program is both an exciting learning community and a safe haven where parents are supported in nurturing the development of their gifted children.

CD players and listening centers are available in each classroom and numerous TV/VCR/DVD carts are available in the building. An array of musical instruments from around the world enhances vocal music instruction, and the children perform outstanding music throughout the year.

Visual art products fill the halls and are on display during the scheduled music performances. A celebration of the arts culminates the year in May. Instrumental music (band and string) is taught before and after school.

The school actively seeks grants to benefit the learning of students, and each year involves students with artists-in-residence. Frequent access to Denver's cultural centers and events enhance student learning. The Polaris Program began in 2000 with 98 students and is now at maximum capacity with 312 students.

Takeaway: Parent involvement and investment in the arts makes art education a key element of the Polaris Program's curriculum.

Suburban School: **Walnut Hills Elementary School, Cherry Creek School District**

Walnut Hills Community Elementary School is committed to educating the **head, heart** and **hand** of each child by providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

Educating the Head

Walnut Hills expects academic excellence for all children. Teachers acknowledge that students learn in a variety of ways and respond with a rigorous core curriculum that integrates the eight multiple intelligences into instruction.

Educating the Heart

Walnut Hills has a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. All students participate in a bully-proofing program that discusses the importance of social problem solving, the need for a caring community, and the recognition of the efforts made by all.

Educating the Hand

When children study the arts, significant elements of their education find focus and expression. Walnut Hills believes in the importance of the arts in school. The integrity of each arts class (art, media, music, movement and technology) is maintained while integrating core curriculum content. In addition, Walnut Hills offers Plus Time classes. Plus Time is an opportunity for students to be captivated by exciting, energizing classes that purposefully integrate the arts with core curriculum.

Takeaway: Walnut Hills melds all academic subjects with the arts, while also providing dedicated classroom and Plus Time arts instruction to produce well-rounded, well-educated students.

SUCCESSFUL COLORADO SCHOOLS: WHERE THE ARTS ARE ALIVE

Rural School: Paradox Valley Charter School, Paradox, Colo.

Mission: To inspire children to have goals and dreams for their future, and to provide a level of educational excellence that teaches the knowledge, skills, character and creativity necessary to manifest their greatest potential in life.

Vision: To create a place where the community and the school work together for the literacy and vitality of the rural culture.

Emphasis: To maintain a school to benefit both students and the community. Students benefit through the love and close connection of their parents, relatives and community members of all generations. The vitality of the community increases by having the school as the hub of the community.

In addition, Paradox Valley School aims to:

- Provide a well-rounded curriculum with emphasis in reading, writing and math.
- Ensure every child will experience success.
- Select teachers who have the gift of teaching, who can demonstrate that they care for children, and who strive to learn more about the profession.
- Teach the significance of the location.
- Give each student as much individualized attention as possible.
- Promote an enthusiasm and motivation for learning with hands-on projects, field trips and real-life work.
- Use **the arts** to enhance children's academic experience and success, and to help children to express themselves and think creatively.
- Provide a nurturing setting that demonstrates tolerance, respect, compassion, and cooperation.

Takeaway: As the Colorado State Legislature contemplates mandates to high school graduation, Paradox Valley School stands out as a shining example of how schools can emphasize reading, writing, math and science *inclusive* of the arts. The arts are no longer an elective.

AFFECTING CHANGE

Your voice is stronger than you think! No matter what your role in education, your opinion *does* matter.

- **Parents make a difference.** Local control means schools – and districts – can emphasize curriculum that meets the needs of the local community. A critical mass of engaged parents *can* make a big difference by advocating for quality arts education.
- **Teachers matter.** Teachers' opinions and actions have tremendous impact on the way schools implement curriculum, especially when supported by parent action.
- **The community should be involved.** Including community members in arts activities brings audiences to appreciate students' work, give students a chance to contribute to their neighborhoods, and can enrich students' learning with the skills and talents community members can contribute.
- **Businesses can help.** The schools are a wonderful recipient for businesses' support – from helping today's learners to building tomorrow's workforce.
- **You can influence your legislators.** It is our **right** and our **duty** as American citizens to convey our wishes to the officials we have put into office, and to remind them of the impact their decisions have on our everyday lives. It's especially important for citizens to get involved in states -- like Colorado -- where term limits ensure legislators will change every few years.

**If you don't lobby for that in which you believe,
you put yourself at the mercy
of those who differ.**

THE 1-2-3: AFFECTING CHANGE IN YOUR SCHOOL

Here are some ways parents and neighbors can make their voices heard.

1. Involve the principal.

Talk to your principal. Encourage him/her to understand the value of the arts to the whole child. Give your principal “permission” to break down the “either/or” construct and include arts education AND other core curriculum subjects.

2. Involve parents and the parent association.

- Survey the parents at your school. Find out what they do. Find out what they know. Encourage them to share their talents and their skills with the student body. With over 2 million people employed in arts-related jobs, chances are you have a parent in the field.

The arts get people involved!

58% of citizens have participated in or promoted arts education programs in their school district.

Source: Think 360 Arts Complete Education survey

- Appoint “Art Parents” in every class to report to district officials about the fabulous ways the arts are affecting learning at your school. Remind them that continued and increased funding for the arts from the district will enhance these experiences for kids. You know what the booster club does for your sports programs. You and your friends can do the same for the arts.
 - Use PTA/PTCO moneys to bring an artist-in-residence or educational performance into your school. Encourage local business to support such efforts.
- Remember that Think360: Arts Complete Education is a resource – we can speak to your school or parent group.

3. Present the arts at school.

- Organize an art show. Collect the artwork students create throughout the course of the school year. Have a “matting” party, hang the artworks around the school, and encourage everyone who attends to pay at least \$1 to purchase the art from the show. Publicize the show through community newsletters as well as school publications.
- Bring in community members or business leaders who engage in arts activities either professionally or personally to teach and mentor students, formally or informally.

THE 1-2-3: AFFECTING CHANGE IN YOUR COMPANY

1. Give your time and money.

Volunteer with an arts organization and encourage schools to participate. When you donate to qualified, 501 (c) 3 non-profit arts organizations, be sure to take advantage of your company's matching gift program.

2. Ask for your employer's sponsorship.

Encourage your company to sponsor art programs in schools.

Contact Think 360 Arts at (720) 904-8890 to find schools in your neighborhood that would benefit from an educational performance, artist-in-residence, or artist workshop sponsored by your company.

3. Advocate at work.

Convince the management at your company that they, too, have a vested interest in improving Colorado schools. The arts enhance the overall learning of students – creative thinking, problem solving, communicating effectively and working as part of a team. These are all critical components needed as we develop our 21st century workforce.

With encouragement, many organizations might find a good link between the arts and their company – and those connections can turn into real support for arts education.

THE 1-2-3: AFFECTING CHANGE IN THE LEGISLATURE

1. Find your voice – and express it.

While most people have clear ideas in their own heads about what they believe their elected officials should or should not be doing, the average citizen tends to play a passive role in exactly how this plays out. We watch the news, we read the paper, we comment on what we see and hear, but we do not pick up the telephone or open the e-mail to dialogue directly with the people that WE have put into office. Vow to make the change to being an active participant in your community with at least ONE action this year.

2. Stay informed.

- While the Colorado Legislature is in session, generally January through early May, the **local section of the newspaper** contains items with titles such as “Under the Dome” or “Legislature 2008.” It includes summaries of the bills being discussed in the state legislature that day.
- **In Colorado**, you can check the Colorado General Assembly Web site regularly at www.leg.state.co.us to see exactly what is being discussed.
- **At the federal level**, you can check www.senate.gov to view recent activity in the Senate or www.house.gov to view the House of Representatives.
- For **specific legislation concerning the arts**, visit www.americansforthearts.org/get_involved/advocate.asp, where you can view all federal issues around the arts and specifically arts in education.

3. Talk to your elected representatives.

- In Colorado, visit www.artsforcolorado.org, where there is a very simple tool to help you contact your specific elected officials directly. If the Internet is not for you, **call the Colorado Legislature** at (303) 866-2316 for the Senate or (303) 866-2904 for the House. You can request the *Pink Book*, which lists the name, address and telephone number for every elected official in Colorado.
- Your elected representatives *do respond* to direct e-mails from their constituents. Subscribe to their e-newsletters and follow their actions during the session. Many are available in person at coffee shops, schools, local businesses and other locations throughout their district on a regular basis for the purpose of meeting the people who put them in office.
- Invite your local representatives to events at your child’s school. Do this on behalf of your principal, and follow up with an e-mail or phone call to encourage them to come. SEEING the arts in action tends to inspire more than any written word.

TOOLS TO TAKE ACTION: WORKSHEET 1

Bills to Watch in the Colorado State Legislature

Check the status at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/>

Add your own interests to this sheet!

Bill Number (HB=House Bill; SB=Senate Bill)	Topic	Sponsor	Summary	Action Needed

TOOLS TO TAKE ACTION: WORKSHEET 2

My Elected Officials

Fill in this chart to have contact information at the ready for the people representing YOU in our government.

Enter your ZIP code at www.artsforcolorado.org to find out which district you live in, along with a complete listing of your elected representatives.

Office	Name	District	E-mail	Telephone	Website
U.S. Senate	Ken Salazar		http://salazar.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm	1-866-455-9866	http://salazar.senate.gov/
U.S. Senate	Wayne Allard		http://allard.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Contact.Home	(202) 224-5941	http://allard.senate.gov /
U.S. Congress					
State Senator					
State Representative					
State Senate Education Committee Chair	Sue Windels	CO-19	senatorwindels@comcast.net	303-866-4840	www.suewindels.com
State House Education Committee Chair	Michael Merrifield	CO-31			
City Council					
Mayor					
State Board of Education Representative			Find your State Board of Ed representative at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeboard/bdmap.htm	303-866-6817	http://www.cde.state.co.us/index_sbe.htm
Local Board of Education			Find your local school district Web site at http://www.cde.state.co.us/utility/k12schls.htm		

TOOLS TO TAKE ACTION: WORKSHEET 3

Arts Education Goals for My School

Description of Goal	Approval Needed	Outside Resources	Project Coordinator & description of process
<p>Examples Survey parents for professional or amateur level artistic abilities; bring in one parent per month as a guest speaker.</p>	PTA Chair / Classroom teachers	None needed	Jill Smith – send surveys home in students’ weekly newsletter packet; begin contacting parents by October; first parent presentation by November.
Establish liaison between school and district arts coordinator to report on <i>every</i> success achieved through the arts – including description of parent involvement levels due to arts related activities.	Principal	None needed	Discuss within PTA – ask for volunteers. Set up introductory meeting at district office. Try to get higher level district officials interested in hearing about arts-related achievements.
Establish relationship with community arts organization or arts service provider in order to bring high-level arts programming into the school.	PTA/Principal	Arts service organizations serving the state or community	Survey available services in the state. Review budget for outside arts programming. Decide if students can be charged small fee (\$1/student) to contribute. Begin booking programs

ABOUT THINK 360 COMPLETE EDUCATION

THINK³⁶⁰

Arts Complete Education

THINK 360 ARTS COMPLETE EDUCATION leads Colorado in cultivating and sustaining the arts as essential to a complete education, a strong economy and a dynamic cultural community.

Think 360 Arts provides creative education experiences for children throughout Colorado, equips teachers to integrate the arts into the classroom and builds statewide consensus on the value of arts and culture within all aspects of the community.

THINK 360 ARTS COMPLETE EDUCATION was formed in the January 2007 merger of *Colorado Alliance for Arts Education* and *Young Audiences of Colorado*. Together, we bring more than 70 years of experience in the field along with the invaluable resources of our national affiliations with Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and Young Audiences, Inc. We offer comprehensive programs, services and support to educators, parents, policy makers, schools and entire districts to ensure sustainable results.

To learn more, visit www.think360arts.org or call (720) 904-8890.