



Students from Blue Heron School worked with teaching artist Margie McDonald in a “Tales, Texts, and Theatre Workshop”. Photo by: David Conklin.

Planning for Equity

ArtsWA’s current strategic plan includes a “[Crosscutting Objective](#)” focused on advancing equity and inclusion in arts programming. We are continuously refining our work to ensure that ArtsWA-funded programs are reflective and supportive of Washington’s diverse populations including cultural diversity, artistic disciplines, geographic locations, and under-invited populations.

Application Connection

Effective Creative Start Site applications demonstrate knowledge of the strengths, contributions, and needs of their community, students, and educators. Successful overall project plans include specific goals that support ongoing commitment to racial and regional equity and access. **Applicants will need to address the prompt below as part of the narrative application.**

Application Prompt: Explain how you currently identify and respond to opportunity and equity gaps in your early learning community. Describe any professional learning focus on culturally responsive teaching that your teachers and leadership have participated in.

Move from ideas to action:

1. Establish Community Strengths and Need

- Identify your community and cultural **assets**. What is/has been thriving? (e.g., community leaders, educators with thriving programs, youth, student voice and leadership, family resilience, and resources).
- Discuss what racial and regional equity goals your community has, and how an arts integration plan can support the work already being done.
- Identify both the strengths and needs of the students and educators in your community (e.g., languages spoken, student voice and leadership, neurodiversity, impact of food scarcity and/or poverty, access to transportation, student interests).
- Alongside racial and regional equity needs, what most impacts your students and families? How do you know?

2. Partnerships

- What local leaders, educators, teaching artists, and organizations can support your community adopting a comprehensive arts integration plan?
- Included specifics: How do you envision communities and families participating in this work? What training might help? How will you highlight community assets and leaders already engaging in arts integration work?
- Demonstrate knowledge of diversity in your community. How is this reflected in your plans for leadership?

3. Teacher-Leadership

- Identify early learning educators and teaching artists in your community as key leaders and partners in arts integration planning.
- What professional development is currently available to early learning educators in your community? How do you envision professional arts integration training fitting into current opportunities? Discuss capacity.
- Demonstrate understanding for how teacher-leadership can be supported and maintained. What resources are available for supporting.

Racial Equity Resources

Inequitable practices and systems in schools continue in many forms—racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, ageism, heterosexism, and more. Because data has persistently highlighted that students of color have disproportionate access to the arts in school, we have the obligation as educators to address racial disparity alongside all other work for equity. These links below offer a small slice of arts education/equity resources as needed. If you have other resources to add, please let us know!

4. Aim to Serve All Students

- [Demographic Data, OSPI](#)
- [Racial Equity tool, PSESD](#)
- [Classroom Resources, Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [Knowing our students as learners](#)
- [Arts Education Research Initiative, ArtsWA](#)
- [#artssowhite-How can arts education help build equity in the arts?](#)

5. Invite Communities

- [What is Culturally responsive Teaching?](#)
- [Racial Justice is Education Justice, NEA](#)
- [Family and community engagement, teaching tolerance](#)
- [“Talking to Kids About Racism and Justice: a list for parents, caregivers & educators” Oakland Library](#)
- [Talking About Racism And Bias: Resources For Parents And Caregivers, Children’s Alliance](#)

6. Focus on Outcomes

- [Tool for reflection: Shoreline Public Schools](#)
- [Resources for Educators Focusing on Anti-Racist Learning and Teaching, Early Childhood Education Assembly](#)
- [Social Justice and Racial Equity Resources packet , Puget Sound Educational Service District and the heArtWork Collective.](#)
- [Anti-bias Framework, Teaching Tolerance](#)

Contact Us

This is ongoing work for all of us and efforts are responsive as the strengths, leadership focus, and dynamic tensions within our communities change. If you have further questions regarding equity and inclusion in arts programming, we are available to provide support to applicants in responding to this requirement.

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