



# Links & Threads

A Newsletter for Arts Partners Published by the Ohio Arts Council and the Ohio Department of Education **Volume 1 Issue 1**

*Links and Threads* is an electronic newsletter for district and school leaders who value arts learning as an integral part of the core curriculum. Its purpose is to assist school leaders in achieving the greatest advantage possible from the arts for their schools and districts. The publication will build upon the knowledge gained through the 2004 NEA Summer Institute for School Leaders, promote dialogue about the role of arts learning in school improvement, share success stories, and keep schools and districts informed about arts-related developments and opportunities.

## Leadership Voices

*This is the inaugural issue of Links & Threads, an electronic newsletter that continues the learning and dialogue started at the 2004 National Endowment for the Arts Summer Institute for School Leaders, held at the Fitton Center in Hamilton, Ohio. The Institute launched an NEA leadership initiative focused on highlighting the value of arts education. For the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Arts Council, the NEA's co-developers, it began a sustained effort to help Ohio's school leaders realize the power of the arts.*

The arts can and should play an important and effective role in the results-oriented, accountability-driven arena of school improvement. That was the central statement when about 50 Ohio school leaders, as well as state and national policy makers and scholars, gathered this August. For two days, they pursued a stimulating, promising line of inquiry through presentations, breakout sessions, demonstrations, and Q&A sessions. Dr. David O'Fallon, president of the MacPhail Center for Music in Minnesota, was the Institute facilitator.

Preceding the two-day Institute was an evening reception. Attendees were welcomed by Mrs. Hope Taft, First Lady of Ohio; Susan Tave Zelman, Ohio's State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Wayne Lawson, OAC Executive Director; and, via videorecording, Dana Gioia, the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. Also present were Ohio Senate President Doug White and leaders from NEA and other national and state arts and education organizations.

The two days of learning and dialogue were rich with ideas, but three themes continued to surface.

### 1) No Child Left Behind supports quality arts education.

Dr. Susan Sclafani, Counselor to the U.S. Secretary of Education, focused her opening speech on the value of the fine arts for all children. She stated emphatically that her agency considers the fine arts to be an essential part of the core curriculum. A letter from U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige underscored her assertion.

Dr. Sclafani said standardized test results will reflect excellent arts instruction. Dr. Zelman affirmed that belief, citing the arts as a factor in the achievements of Ohio's "Schools of Promise."

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## SiteLines

*Highlighting how school leaders support arts learning.*

When Ohio's new academic content standards in the fine arts were adopted, curriculum leaders took immediate and effective steps:

- Sara Suver, **Clark County ESC**, began working with partners in area consortia to make sure all presentations and workshops addressed the standards.
- Mike Huffman, **Lima City Schools**, made a presentation to the local school board.
- Cindi Menefield, **Cincinnati Public Schools**, met with area professional developers to ensure that teacher training will be standards-based.
- John Eby, **Cleveland Municipal School District**, supported standards-based professional development for artists and teachers in the Young Audiences of Greater Cleveland program.

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# Institute Reflections

David O'Fallon, President, MacPhail Center for Music

Do you remember marveling as your baby responded to music while still in the womb or your toddler moved to the rhythm of music? Have you noticed how children love stories and imaginary games? Have you seen them entranced by colors or engrossed in paints, clay, and blocks? Clearly, every person born is naturally drawn to the arts.

Arts experiences are "natural" because we are biologically constructed to receive them. The arts are a primary means for making sense of the world.

Now think for a moment about your day. When are you not in an environment that reflects people's artistic choices—designs, colors, lighting, sound, shapes, textures, even smells? Think about how each of us shapes our surroundings. From the

decor of our homes to our effects on air, water, and landscape, our imaginations are projected outward onto the world. In fact, most of us in the so called "developed" countries rarely experience a setting not altered by human works.

Most agree that the arts are fundamental to being human. Now research demonstrates the power of the arts to motivate and engage learners, to promote high achievement, to improve attendance and graduation rates, and to reach the students left behind by the older lecture- and teacher-centered styles.

*Considering all that, why aren't we further along? Why are we using such a powerful resource only in some places, at some times, with some people? The curriculum guide my mother used as a public school teacher in the 1920s called the arts essential, assuming that all students*

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## Learning Links

Need to learn more for your work in the months ahead? These websites are valuable resources:

### Arts Education Partnership

[www.aep-arts.org](http://www.aep-arts.org)

Includes such research collections as *Champions of Change* and *Critical Links*.

### Harvard Project Zero

[www.pz.harvard.edu/](http://www.pz.harvard.edu/)

Contains links to a number of projects and principal investigators that link arts learning to achievement.

### National Endowment for the Arts

[www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)

Learn more about NEA's Shakespeare in American Communities (via National Initiatives) and other ideas and programs.

### Ohio Arts Council

[www.oac.state.oh.us](http://www.oac.state.oh.us)

The state's primary information source on arts and arts education. Explore the entire site, but especially *Arts in Education* (via *Grants and Programs* and then *Programs*).

### Ohio Department of Education

[www.ode.state.ohio.gov](http://www.ode.state.ohio.gov)

Choose *Topic*, then *Academic Standards, Model Curricula* to access information about the fine arts academic content standards.

## ODE Update *Ohio's Fine Arts Standards*

Ohio's framework for comprehensive, standards-based arts education is in place and growing stronger. District administration buildings received the fine arts academic content standards books in early September, and the standards should now be in the hands of educators, particularly specialists in dance, drama/theatre, music, and visual art. Many districts are already reviewing their courses of study to align them with the standards.

Currently, the first set of model curricula lessons written by thirty-six exemplary teachers in the fine arts are being field tested. These education professionals represent all Ohio regions, grade levels, and fine arts disciplines. They are guided by the Model Curricula Advisory Committee, consisting of twenty-five

leading arts educators, arts professionals, and school leaders. The team will use feedback from the field tests to improve the model lessons and guide development of the next set. The State Board of Education will review the models for adoption in May 2005.

*To download the complete standards book from the ODE Web site ([www.ode.state.oh.us](http://www.ode.state.oh.us)), select "Academic Content Standards" in the "Quick Links" section, then "Arts" in the list of standards areas, then "Fine Arts Academic Content Standards." To order a book, contact [Karen.Paschal@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:Karen.Paschal@ode.state.oh.us) or 614-728-3471.*

*Direct questions to Nancy Pistone (614-466-7908) or Ray Lowther (614-387-2275). Send email to [Nancy.Pistone@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:Nancy.Pistone@ode.state.oh.us) or [Ray.Lowther@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:Ray.Lowther@ode.state.oh.us).*

# Newsbreaks

**National Overture Program Comes to Ohio.** Stark County and Columbus are Ohio's first pilot sites for National Overture of Education and the Arts, a multi-year program that highlights the power of the creative arts to help improve academic performance. The Institute for Education and the Arts, a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., is working with ODE and OAC to help the two pilot sites establish advisory and working committees that will encourage participation in the Overture. To learn more, go to [www.edartsinstitute.org](http://www.edartsinstitute.org).

**SPECTRA+ Recognized.** Americans for the Arts recently featured the SPECTRA+ program in **Hamilton** as an example of powerful arts learning and integration. Read the story at [www.artsusa.org](http://www.artsusa.org).

**ECS Chairman Chooses Arts Education As Focus.** The Education Commission of the States (ECS) has launched the Chairman's Initiative on Arts in Education. Governor Mike Huckabee of Arkansas will lead the initiative during his two-year term as the 2004-06 ECS chairman. The goal of the initiative is to lead states in ensuring that every child has the opportunity to participate in, learn about, and enjoy the arts. Read more at [www.ecs.org/ArtsinEducation](http://www.ecs.org/ArtsinEducation).

**U.S. Education Secretary Supports Arts.** The perception that the arts are endangered because of No Child Left Behind is "both disturbing and just plain wrong," says a letter from U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige. To read the letter, go to [www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/040701.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/040701.html).

## Institute Reflections

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would be involved in at least music and visual arts. Why then are the arts still on the edge? We have more than 30 years of successful pilot projects and at least 10 of solid research, including SPECTRA+ in Ohio. Why don't we take better advantage of the arts?

With today's challenges, such questions are vital. We must find new ways to teach and communicate. As we face the increasingly complex responsibility of educating young people, let's stop underusing this powerful resource. Let's take advantage of a discipline that touches so many aspects of our lives and—because humans are made for it—comes so naturally to all learners.

## Leadership Institute Evaluation

*by Michael Sikes, Ph.D.*

The NEA Summer Institute for School Leaders benefits from a comprehensive evaluation plan that incorporates data collection and analysis at every stage of planning and implementation.

Prior to the Institute, participating school leaders provided data on needs, conditions, and assets in their districts and schools.

During the Institute, participants completed a three-part survey. For more complete data, a follow-up email survey is being administered.

Preliminary evaluation findings are as follows:

- 1) Most Institute participants understand the value of the arts, but lack the infrastructure and district-level readiness to implement more comprehensive arts programs.
- 2) Participants generally rate their own support of arts education as higher than their districts' support overall.
- 3) Institute planners should involve participants in selecting suitable dates and locations for future meetings.

The next step is to interview selected personnel in each district. Questions will include:

*How do the ideas of the Institute resonate, now that you are back in your district?*

*What new or unanticipated assets or barriers to implementation have arisen, if any?*

*In what ways might Ohio's Fine Arts Academic Content Standards be used?*

We hope the interviews will not only yield information but also help districts and schools think about how they will develop and implement changes.

All data will be sorted and analyzed for use by stakeholders. ODE and OAC will use evaluation findings in developing technical assistance for participants and will report results to funding agencies. All participants will receive reports of the findings.

We hope that reviewing and discussing the findings will help strengthen the learning community that began to develop at the Institute.

## OAC Update *New Grant Guidelines*

Is your school district working to align its arts education curriculum with the new academic content standards? If so, you can request funds from the Ohio Arts Council to support your work.

Meeting state standards is now a major focus for the OAC's Arts Partnership grants, says Mary Campbell-Zopf, director of OAC's Arts Learning Program.

Program coordinators Susan Schwarz and Joanne Eubanks are eager to help districts interested in applying. *Email Susan.Schwarz@oac.state.oh.us, Joanne.Eubanks@oac.state.oh.us, or call 614-466-2613.*

Educators and arts partners can apply for Arts Partnership grants to support curriculum revision and other activities that will help students meet the standards. The program

also offers Artist in Residence grants to support in-depth study with accomplished professional artists in schools and other settings.

The OAC has simplified the funding process and added new grant guidelines to its website ([www.oac.state.oh.us](http://www.oac.state.oh.us)). Also, you can now apply for grants via OAC's web-based OnLine Grant Application system (OLGA).

## Leadership Voices

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### 2) The arts are intrinsically valuable.

While research is revealing links between arts learning and achievement in other academic areas, presenters were clear in stating that arts education should not need to be justified by its impact on test scores. For example, Professor Howard Gardner, via videoconference link with Harvard, enumerated the abilities developed through arts learning: looking and listening carefully, giving and receiving criticism, conveying information clearly and attractively, dealing with multiplicity of meanings, thoughtfully improving a technique or work, and expressing powerful ideas.

### 3) Improving schools is an artistic process.

"Think of school reform as an artistic process," said Professor Jessica Hoffmann Davis, "not as a product-based approach that serves as an antidote for educational ineffectiveness." A cognitive psychologist and founding director of the Harvard School of Education's Arts in Education Program, Davis made the case that all schools would benefit from the themes she has observed in arts-focused schools—process and reflection, connection and community, difference and respect, and passion and industry.

Eric Booth, artistic director for The Juilliard School and author of *The Everyday Work of Art*, brought out the artist in everyone with an interactive demonstration. (*See the next Links & Threads for more of Eric's insights.*) Further showing how the arts change perspectives were the Fitton Center's exhibits, student jazz and Shakespeare performances, and a reception at the Taft Museum.

*The coming year is certain to offer unprecedented opportunity for school improvement in and through the arts. The learning and dialogue that started in August continues through professional development and technical assistance that will help schools make the most of Ohio's new academic content standards in the fine arts and the OAC's new guidelines for Arts Learning Grants.*

### Feedback *Institute Participants Say:*

"I'm feeling more comfortable looking at the other academics and enriching those areas through the arts thus giving our children learning experiences from the best of both worlds."

"Eric Booth's *Evolving Role of the Arts in Education* and Eileen Mason's *Shakespeare in Our Time* inspired us and showed us how we can implement this in our district."

"This institute reinforced my beliefs that the arts are essential to the total development of children and that we need to continue to seek opportunities to integrate the arts into all areas of the curriculum."

***We want your thoughts:***  
Why has arts education been underemphasized?

Send your response to  
[mary.campbell-zopf@oac.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.campbell-zopf@oac.state.oh.us)

# Institute Participants

- Botkins Local School District
- Cincinnati City School District
- Clark County Educational Service Center
- Cleveland Municipal School District
- Columbus City School District
- Dayton City School District
- Hamilton City School District
- Lakota Local School District
- Lima City School District
- Mississinawa Valley Local School District
- Stark County Educational Service Center
- Steubenville City School District
- Toledo City School District
- Yellow Springs Exempted Village School District

**Thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts, Governor Bob Taft, the OAC Board, and the State Board of Education for their support. Special thanks to First Lady Hope Taft, to the Fitton Center, to the Lakota West Jazz Group, and to OAC Board member Geraldine B. Warner for arranging and supporting a reception at the Taft Museum.**

**Thanks to our presenters:** Eric Booth, The Juilliard School; Jessica Hoffmann Davis and Howard Gardner, Harvard University; Dana Gioia, Eileen Mason, and David Steiner, NEA; Rick Jones, Fitton Center; Wayne Lawson, OAC; David O'Fallon, MacPhail Center for Music; Jackie Quay and Richard Luftig, SPECTRA+; Susan Sclafani, U.S. Department of Education; Patricia Stuhr, Ohio State University; Susan Tave Zelman, ODE; and Hilliard City Schools drama faculty and students.

**Thanks to our national guests:** Mark Bauerlein, NEA; Chester Finn, Jr., Thomas B. Fordham Foundation; Jonathan Katz, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies; David E. Myers, Georgia State University; Sandra Ruppert, Education Commission of the States; Ronald F. Stowe and Donna Power Stowe, Institute for Education and the Arts; Karen Lias Wolff, University of Michigan.

**Thanks to special state guests:** Susan Sofia, Martha MacDonell, and Joe Hale, OAC Board; Jennifer Stewart, State Board of Education; Doug White, Ohio Senate President.

**Thanks to Ohio organizations represented at the opening reception:** Arts Consortium of Cincinnati; Arts Council Lake Erie West; Cincinnati Art Museum; Clark State Performing Arts Center; Cleveland Orchestra; Cleveland Playhouse Foundation; Dayton Contemporary Dance Company; Eastern Catholic Alliance of Schools for Excellence; Educational Theatre Association; Greater Columbus Arts Council; Mad River Theatre Works; Miami University, OhioDance; Ohio Alliance for Arts Education; Ohio Arts Council, Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators; Ohio Department of Education; Ohio Educational Service Center Association; Ohio Music Educators Association; Ohio School Supervisors Association; Shango Center for the Study of African-American Art & Culture; The Columbus Foundation; The George Gund Foundation; The Muse Machine; The Ohio State University; The Taft Museum; Think TV, Greater Dayton Public Television; Urban Appalachian Council; VSA Arts of Ohio; WCET; Wittenberg University; Women Writing for (a) Change Foundation; Young Audiences of Greater Cleveland.

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## ODE Mission Statement

The Ohio Department of Education supports high achievement for all students every year by setting clear and high expectations for all students; by making sure that educators have the skills, knowledge and resources to help students improve; by fostering the ability of families and communities to help students succeed; and by measuring, publicizing and rewarding achievement results.



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## OAC Mission Statement

The Ohio Arts Council is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically.



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**Bob Taft, Governor**

**Susan Tave Zelman, ODE**  
*Superintendent of Public Instruction*

**Jennifer Sheets, ODE Board of Education President**

**Susan R. Sofia, OAC Board Chair**

**Wayne P. Lawson, OAC Executive Director**

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