



We Are Listening Arts in Education Session - June 7, 2018

Link to Recording:

[Play recording](#) (1 hr 24 min)

Recording password: JmeFghp3

Notes:

MSAC: In what ways can the Maryland State Arts Council enhance arts education throughout the state in both schools and communities?

Review all guideline, interim report, and final report language and requirements via links provided:

- o [Artist in Residence](#)
- o [Visiting Performer](#)
- o [Poetry Out Loud](#)
- o Partnerships

Artist in Residence Program:

--Do we think there will be any change in time frame in which teaching artists are paid?

(Answer: shared information on website. New process—fall and spring payments:

<https://www.msac.org/arts-education-applications-and-forms>)

--Do only schools apply for the residency grant? (Answer: yes, using MSAC approved artist from roster.)

--Teaching artist expectation that the payment process to artists working in schools associated with the grant will change. Artists are grateful for MSAC system in existence and are concerned about the new process because they hear from other orgs and independent artists how

challenging it can be to collect money directly from the schools. Hope the grant paperwork would help with some reasonably timed payment request, with some sanction behind that.

MSAC: To clarify: the better approach being artists being paid directly by MSAC?

--Yes. The organizational leverage of the arts council is likely to be more successful than the individual teaching artist collecting from schools, counties, independently. Concern that because PTAs don't have the bureaucratic process the schools have – this may prejudice artists toward working in schools where PTAs have deep pockets. Underserved communities may not be served.

--Access and equity issue: one of the possible implications of this—understanding that in Baltimore City vendors must go through PQS process to be a provider in the K-12 system. Schools use this to get money from district to pay for this. This is an arduous process, about 75 pages.

--As a teacher in Prince George's County, working with [Young Audiences](#) and they have been extremely helpful to walk through process. Helpful in terms of getting the artist and the financial aspects done. Benefit from assistance there to help. Since they've completed four years, it becomes smoother each year.

--There is a decentralized school system in Baltimore City. If students will have less access if schools have to pay the artists.

--Is the MSAC Artist in Residence Program K-12 only? (Answer: yes)

Visiting Performer Program:

--Regarding the application process for the teaching artist rosters. Have heard from teaching artists that it's hard to get on the roster and that it doesn't change frequently. A lot of same artists have been on there a long time. Is there effort to reach out beyond current roster artists for other opportunities?

MSAC: Anything about parameters around the application?

--From artist's perspective. Make sure there's not some bias brought to the application process that's favoring high art above other cultural arts or other arts that could be speaking more toward the students.

--Looking at the website info about paying the artists – the artists receive funds once in the fall and once in the spring. Artists are getting paid twice versus after every session. TA's may complain about having to wait to get that money.

--The Artist in Residence program is terrific. Concerned about putting the onus on the artist to track down the money from the schools. Different for an artist with a large organization like Young Audiences. Artists have no leverage. We're all overworked and understaffed and the burden is too much on the artist. Paying artists twice a year is difficult as they live paycheck to paycheck. Need the arts council to support the reality of our lives.

Poetry Out Loud:

No comments.

MSAC: How can MSAC strengthen its partnership with the [Fine Arts Office of Maryland State Department of Education \(MSDE\)](#). What's the connection between these two orgs that anyone sees/thinks that would be helpful?

Alysia Lee, new Coordinator of Fine Arts for MSDE: just finished first tour around the state—visiting 18 counties in 5 weeks. Responding to comments about the roster and making sure the roster itself lists professional artists that are diving into art forms relevant to the kids. A lot more contemporary artists like graffiti artists, DJ and hip hop artists, country dancers/singers. Artists who are relevant and creating. Help artists that don't have experience working in schools—to give them training—and send in artists ready and competent to work with students. To help bridge that gap and get those artists into schools.

--How do we strengthen the exposure to teachers—to help them welcome these programs into their building? It's a struggle helping teachers understand the value of the artist and making connections to standards--that arts do meet those standards. Teachers are nervous about bringing other into classroom. They are nervous about administrators coming into classrooms and questioning what the teacher is doing. How do we help teachers feel comfortable embracing the arts? Speaking to approach of arts integration.

MSAC: from the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) perspective: what's missing in supporting arts educators?

Alysia Lee/MSDE: uplifting what is art. Classically and classically-adjacent arts. MSDE and MSAC can spread the news that all music is worthy of study and all artist disciplines are the same. The roster is a good place to start. Sets the tone of "this graffiti artist is an artist." Helps teachers see the value in these artists and encourage them to bring them into the classroom. Would like to see happen more with homegrown people.

--In schools the view of creative arts is that they're frivolous – they're on the fringe, instead of the content area for teachers. The perception is that kids go to art classes to have fun; they aren't learning anything real that is applicable to the test. The mindset is that they don't understand/grasp how students can do critical thinking/problem solving. They have to see/touch it before they can embrace the concept and see its value. How do get that to spread? There are some challenges there. Another question/area speaks to standards. A lot of teachers will say: that doesn't fit, I'll do it when I have time. Can offer them the appropriate standards they can meet with drama or music. It's an uphill battle. Support around that would be helpful.

MSAC: This relates specifically to arts integration?

Answer: yes

MSAC: regarding the Maryland State Department of Education partnership, circling back to arts educators, if we have the bar of the new COMAR and new standards, what can MSAC contribute below that get us up to COMAR and the new standards?

Alysia Lee/MSDE: what are the ways to use the professional teaching artist resource in schools? Teachers are struggling to engage students. Key is to motivate them by presenting

materials in hands on, participatory ways. They are struggling because they don't have the background in those art forms. Arts educators don't have the background in how to teach a class about blues and they know that that's a more contemporary form their students would like to explore. Or K-pop (South Korean pop music), instead of general musical review of the canon. Kids would love to see a class on K-pop. There are professional artists who could provide educators with content information through the lens of that genre. Otherwise, we'll have to wait 20 years until kids go to music school and get degrees in K-pop and then teach.

One of the hardest classes to teach is middle school general music. That should actually be a simple class to teach because the kids love music, but we're asking them to learn music that's not connected to them. Some agency has to spread the message that it's not dumbing down the curriculum spending the year teaching certain kinds of music.

--Can arts presenters be considered in this conversation instead of just in-school performances? We provide field trips that encompass many of the arts integration opportunities that you are speaking of. All the different subject areas, you would experience math, social studies, etc., for an hour. There's a study guide that's given to teachers to incorporate into the curriculum. There are offerings outside school as well.

--Would love to see work of MSDE's longitudinal data work connect with MSAC grant-making to address the equity issues. We know there are schools that are rarely, if ever, leave the school on field trips or bring artists into schools. We can't see that via longitudinal data, but maybe can see it in other ways. Would love to see MSAC data to find out what schools aren't receiving anything. There could be a false assumption that the same schools apply year after year. The application is submitted in the year prior to the school year for which they are applying. Schools must have teacher-champion or someone at an organization to help them complete it. It has to be on their radar. There are access issues there that are frustrating. With that much money being earmarked for the work. Could be targeting outreach to schools not receiving anything and bridge those gaps.

--Also true for rural areas. Equity looks at the greatest needs and some areas need more.

--Maybe it's possible for teachers who have been through the process to talk to a teacher at these schools and help with the process.

--MSAC can leverage local partnerships to help with the application process.

MSAC: from a grassroots perspective, that's where partnership with MSDE's Fine Arts Office would come in. As Alysia (Lee, Coordinator of Fine Arts, MSDE) is on the ground, can see where MSAC is not found. MSDE can help.

--Is there any initiative where MSAC engages with institutions of higher learning where MSAC goes into institutions of higher learning and talks about the program as a resource? Goes into programs with artists in them—like the ones mentioned (blues, etc.) and talks to them about getting on the roster. In dealing with K-12 teachers and hearing about their schedule--there are hurdles and obstacles there. In a college or university there is more room for exploration for a student at Carroll County community college, MICA, etc., to begin the process in a grassroots effort. Does MSAC work with those arts programs?

--That could support burgeoning teaching artists and teaching artists could mention MSAC as the catalyst.

--A teaching artist with experience working with early learning/childhood and high schools—high schools could be a great place to spread the news about teaching artistry as a career.

--If an artist is going into a K-12 school, they are coming in as a representative of MSAC and are a model for students in K-12, but also for college students as a possible future (education majors as well).

--Young Audiences noticed several years ago that there's a lack of higher knowledge among artists that one can have a sustainable career as a teaching artist and ran a pilot course to help students understand it can be a possibility. It's a big knowledge gap. Students in college majoring in the arts don't understand what a teaching artist is. Colleagues in visual arts think it's certification—being certified as an arts teacher in K-12. There was one pilot course—could be scaled up or down (to high school students). There are those pockets of knowledge. We just have to expand them.

--It would be wonderful to see MSAC and MSDE work in that space. We want to have a roster that reflects our state and our society—how do we prepare them and draw them into the field? Wondering about opportunities for young artists to apprentice with seasoned artists in the field. Young Audiences has 40 artist apprentices working with professional artists to help develop that next generation. How can we coordinate resources together to provide what's needed? Artists are hungry for it. The Maryland Artist Teaching Institute (now [Maryland Centers for Creative Classroom](#)) really built the system of a community of people who recognized the role artists could play. Built demand. Need to have relevant, highly-skilled artists.

--It works on the flip side with teachers in terms of other content areas. Teachers aren't going to be an expert. How do we get teachers to point to where they aren't hesitant to bring artists into the classroom and try something new (residencies, etc. when they don't have the skill set)? Embrace using a new art form into the classroom and work with a teaching artist.

Alysia Lee/MSDE: Need to uplift arts educators as artists and validate them in that way.

**MSAC: What's the role of [Arts Education in Maryland Schools \(AEMS\) Alliance](#)?
Perspective/knowledge of that?**

--They are serving in an advocacy role specific to policy, statewide policy around arts education and working in partnership with MSDE and the Fine Arts Office to understand how they can put pressure on the rest of the state around funding, curriculum, other issues, to make the arts high quality statewide.

--AEMS has gone in and out of being an umbrella representing the different factions of arts education. A mission that could be clarified even deeper. We can look at all the different ways the arts connect with the schools.

--The [Higher Education Task Force](#) –AEMS has been convening that. Interesting insights that come out of that that inform what we need to do. The lack of preparation for teachers, certified teachers, in terms of studio time. We see that as a result of teachers not feeling comfortable

leading the creative process actually being an artist going through their education. That convening has been an important role over the decades.

Mary Dell'Erba, AEMS: the role AEMS has always had is not always going to be the role AEMS has. Now trying to be responsible to on the ground needs. Strong in advocacy, but can grow into grassroots arts education and breaking into those areas that don't know about it. For example, the dance program at Queen Anne's Co has been proposed to be cut this year—doing reactive advocacy for that, but need to be moving to proactive advocacy.

--Would love to see more alignment between AEMS and [Maryland Citizens for the Arts](#) (MCA). Good meeting of minds there. That's all legislators want to talk about during session: arts education. MCA does have their clear talking points. AEMS and MCA paired together could be mutually helpful. If there's more energy being put on local grassroots areas, wonder if professional development side-convenings around the [Maryland Fine Arts Education Conference](#) (info only; event has passed. Was formerly CAFÉ) and other teacher trainings, could be moved to MSDE and then AEMS could focus efforts on building strong advocacy effort in each county. Might give more bandwidth to play with.

MSAC: from a funding perspective, another thing to add to the list for AEMS/MSDE/MSAC partnership.

MSAC: How can MSAC better support Teaching Artists?

--A long time ago, there used to be mini grants. Helped teaching artists get started before being accepted to the MSAC roster. Is it possible to do these again? Introduce a grant category that would support project development toward arts education, supporting program development, and research that would be available for the community and for the benefit of teachers, teaching artists—project development.

MSAC: looking at this through the lens of mini-grant, can you give an example?

--For this teaching artists the grant paid for time to go into a school and do a short program that had not otherwise been vetted by the arts council. School requested this artist to work in with students. That was mid-1990s. Helped the artist develop a residency program that they have been doing for 20 years. Many artists have projects that they don't have time or funding to fulfill because they are on treadmill of doing residencies. Big ones are called fellowships. Helpful if there was a way to get a small chunk of funding for this type of project. A lot of good could come out of teaching artist community that there isn't time for now.

--The [Teaching Artist Institute](#) was founded by Young Audiences, AEMS, and MSAC about 10 years ago. About 150 artists have gone through this professional development. Some artists are accepted to the MSAC roster, some on the YA roster, and some don't. Think how we might be able to support the teaching artists who have developed a residency—could we add on some technical assistance from MSAC and MSDE that helps them figure out how to get on the residency roster and what that work looks like? Help with the mechanics of the application. It's a huge leap to become an artist on the MSAC roster and hold a full time job somewhere else. There needs to be more technical assistance for those who would be great for the roster but need hand-holding. Some want to be individual artists and don't want to be on anyone's roster,

but still need help. There's a lack of infrastructure and support that will bring them into the field and keep them there. Two different issues and a lot that the orgs in the room could be doing to help them. There are a number of cultural orgs that really depend on highly skilled teaching artists for their programs. Many of us are dealing with the same challenge: find, train, keep teaching artists. Role of MSAC—convene the folks that work with teaching artists. How can we create the environment that really supports teaching artists as a profession? There are so many barriers. The cultural orgs are struggling with it and it impacts the quality of our work. If we could put together the puzzle of something better for them, we would all be better off.

--Regarding the afterschool program at the Chesapeake Arts Center – kids get bits and pieces of artists. They don't have enough chance to have the interaction with the artist—there's in school and out of school time and artists need to be a constant in the student's life.

What are current challenges facing schools and Teaching Artists?

--Background checks—different requirement for each county.

--Do we think the conversations about school safety are going to impact that problem even more? How do we think that's going to impact teaching artists?

--One important piece of the puzzle is how do we get principals to value what teaching artists bring to the table. Is there some or experience that we can put principals through to understand the power of the work.

--Would like to see us uplift examples of arts teachers utilizing teaching artists and showing that model as much as we can.

How might MSAC support lifelong learning/creative aging in the arts?

--As a coordinator with CCBC handling a lot of our visual arts, crafts, culinary, performing arts, and youth programming, don't know where anything that's been discussed would fit into current programs. We are not K-12. Perhaps recruit teaching artists to teach adult ed and senior programming classes. Struggling with outmoded model of continuing ed and lifelong learning. The classes are only supported through registration fees. Try to keep those costs down. They need traditional arts classes support—there are not enough students enrolled to keep the class open. CCBC does programming all over Baltimore County. Need to develop programming aimed at lifelong learners/students. There an opportunity to build out initiative there. There's interest from across the state. Where does CCBC fit into all this?

--Regarding challenges facing schools and teaching artists—schools that serve students with multiple cognitive disabilities don't always receive the program they expected. Teacher had brought in a teaching artists and was underwhelmed and frustrated by the experience. The teaching artist didn't see the potential for pushing the students and challenging them. There was an assumption that they could only do a little bit when they could do more. Critical need to engage teaching artists with different abilities and skills. Other cultural orgs could be part of that—it's a common training needed across the state—not just in reaching the students with disabilities, but also figuring out how to engage them in the richest most amazing beautiful experience possible. Going above and beyond what they assume might be their limit.

What's the role of the County Arts Councils (CAC) in arts education?

Mary Dell'Erba, AEMS: Kent County is a great model for how that's working. Hosting professional development days. They brought in teachers and artists, arts org reps. Higher education was brought in. They performed a needs assessment of how they can elevate arts education. Their students are then going out into the community and becoming artists. Would like to see a lot more of them happening. AEMS helped be a connector between the CAC and the schools. AEMS help connect MSDE and the state arts council.

--About arts integration—how are we moving toward arts integration? If we look at all teachers in terms of getting arts into the building to our kids, how do we get everybody—a groundswell of enthusiasm—to bring artists into schools. Per description of the CACs, how can we bring in educators from different disciplines. Who touches the lives of kids in their school building and who can reach them?

--Would like CACs to see themselves as the gatekeeper of culture in that county. When the arts teachers are thinking of ways to building connection in local community, the CAC knows the artists, the cultural traditions. The CAC should hold that info for people. Arts are connected to place and the CAC embodies that and carries and preserves the history so people can tap into it and know what's there.

--There are places where there aren't a lot of dance studios people are worried about the lack of opportunity. Is there a history of cultural dance in these areas? Who are the dancers? The schools don't know. Would be great to find out the artistic resources of the community via the CACs.

--Would like to pass that question back to the CACs. What is the articulated expectation with regard to arts education? Not seeing a consistent focus on arts education from the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, for example, or them seeing that as their role. If they do see that, they aren't sharing that with their constituents.

MSAC: Clarifying that structure. What is that responsibility with regard to CACs? What are our expectations of them and what are theirs as a whole organization—these questions are being asked that now. The same with the Arts & Entertainment Districts too. They are having these conversations among themselves asking questions like: What does it look like? What are our similarities? That allows for accountability. In the convenings like in Kent Co, including the Fine Arts Office of MSDE, AEMS, and higher education too, would be great.

Mary Dell'Erba, AEMS: Gina, the fine arts coordinator, and John Schratwieser, the county arts council executive director (Kent County) were already committed to the work. That made it seamless. We've tried communicating in other counties and it hasn't been so seamless as they don't see the value/connection. MSAC's help would make it more seamless.

--MSAC could communicate that K-12 education is your pipeline. If you're not focusing on this, then you're setting yourself up for issues with artists, audiences, etc. The message is not clearly heard sometimes.

Comment: the message should be scaled to the size of the county.

MSAC: Any loose end thoughts, comments, recommendations?

--In terms of the Artist in Residence grant – is there the opportunity for the school to continue for the entire year to come back periodically to come back later and do other sessions and PD.

--This is an exciting process of us getting to talk and think about this things and share. This meeting is fabulous.

MSAC will share the notes with everyone who registered. (See Feedback Post-Session)

FEEDBACK POST-SESSION:

1. Fund initiatives that invite school collaboration within and across school districts. Resources tend to be siloed amongst the most affluent districts.

Collaboration can create cross-promotional opportunities for student work, facilitate diverse dialogues, and help developing art programs thrive.

Ideas include:

- off-site galleries of student work
- collaborative mixed media mural with mailed materials
- a shared blog

2. Organize a consortium of part-time art teachers split between two schools. Their needs are going to be different from full-time teachers.

This feedback could generate new rights and protections for teacher contracts.

3. Consider existing pathways to art certification before creating new initiatives. There have been recent announcements regarding providing alternative certification for teaching artists through the MSDE. This hiring bell will be hard to unring, as this is taking place in Baltimore City with contractual teaching artists.

Principals will choose to hire a variety of part-time contractual artists in lieu of full-time arts and music instructors. This would also have long-term repercussions with schools offering arts education programs like MICA, Towson, and the University of Maryland. A Teaching Artist Institute would make the most sense if consistent training in planning and classroom management are concerns. However, a part-time certification shuts out artists from benefits, such as health insurance, 401K, educational reimbursement, and salaried income. I know many artists who also work as para-educators for this reason. In my career, I started as a teaching artist, worked as a para-educator and had my tuition reimbursed as I obtained my certificate. Alternative pathways to certification will definitely open up the teaching pool to a more diverse staff and this is also very important. This decision must be carefully considered before implementing, otherwise, it will inadvertently exclude artists from full teacher benefits.

I coordinate many community arts classes and programs at the Community College of Baltimore County. On the topic of challenges to schools, as well as how MSAC can support lifelong learning/senior programs, I am currently unaware of any MSAC initiatives or opportunities that my work fits into. Most are geared toward k-12 schools, museums, or cultural organizations.

My program area alone at CCBC offers visual art, crafts, jewelry, design, cultural, culinary, and other creative classes, year round, at more than 15 locations across Baltimore County and sometimes in the city, including some public school sites. I actively recruit, hire, and pay teaching artists and subject matter experts as instructors for upwards of 50 community classes a semester. CCBC Continuing Education also includes a Performing Arts coordinator, Seniors coordinator, and Youth coordinator offering the same level of arts related classes in each of those audience areas.

Our self-supporting business model historically has been fee based, passing class costs directly onto students with no outside subsidy to support our programs. This requires a minimum enrollment for a class to run in order to pay instructor costs (teaching artists). In recent years, as competition in the cultural and online learning sectors has grown, our enrollment has taken a deep plunge. We are in the process of evaluating both our programs and business model. Many of our traditional craft classes that run several weeks have taken the hardest hit. To run a class with a lower number of students means raising the cost of a community education class that has the mission of being accessible and affordable. Or the class is cancelled altogether, losing an opportunity for interested students and loss of income for teaching artists. On the other end of the spectrum, the ability to develop new programming- including affordable professional development courses and certificate programs for artists- is equally important and falls under my sco

CCBC is just one of several community colleges hosting life enrichment/lifelong learning arts related programs in Maryland. From the view I have, most seem to be in a similar boat as me. We fall off the arts and culture radar in the community and get buried under degree programs or workforce development within our own institutions.

In a more concise list are some items MSAC could very well offer assistance with:

- Promotional and marketing support for arts related community courses offered at community colleges
- Subsidizing course costs through earmarked funds or grants to retain classes, students, and teaching artists that otherwise would be cancelled
- Opening other funding opportunities for developing new professional development programs for artists
- Matching teaching artists to teaching opportunities at community colleges
- Streamlined application and reporting process for community arts education and projects- I'm sure you will hear a thousand times over that this is an obstacle to artists and organizations

You might want to check out Maryland Community College Association for Continuing Education and Training if you are not overly familiar with this system - you can also see how we get lost in other facets of Continuing Education (i.e. job training)

<http://mccacet.cbcmd.edu/mccacet-member-directory.php>

And just as a sample, here is CCBC's Life Enrichment site

<http://www.ccbcmd.edu/programs-and-courses/life-enrichment#?page=1>

Thank you again to opening up the conversation. My apologies for the length of my comments, I had to exit the conference session early to go to another work related event. There's a lot to say about the worth of community colleges in promoting arts education in the community!