Sustainable CT
Local Actions. Statewide Impact.

3.4 Provide an Arts and Culture Program for Youth

20 Points

Objective

Gather organizations working with youth to explore what has been done and create an education program dedicated to arts and culture, aligned with curricular goals, for current K-12 public school students.

What to Do

All elements must be completed to receive credit.

1. Inventory what is currently offered in the school system and after school, what types of arts and culture programming community members want to create in the future, and what has been done historically (go as far back as is appropriate for your community).

   Submit: Completed inventory.
2. Convene a diverse selection of community representatives for a round table discussion about connecting to the town's youth (aged K-12, may select any particular age group within this range). Include youth voices, artists, and culture bearers in the conversation. Develop a list of recommended steps. (Might include Boy and Girl Scouts, boys/girls clubs, service organizations such as Lions and Rotary, PTO/PTAs, religious communities, after school programs, sports programs, local librarians, and arts services providers. Take care to ensure that contributors do not have exclusionary practices).

   Submit: Date of the stakeholder meeting, and the list of recommended steps developed.
3. Using the inventory, create an education program that includes the recommended steps developed in the stakeholder meeting, plus event examples and/or documentation of completion. Identify which entity will implement each recommended step. At least one staff person from the entity must attend a professional development session prior to implementing the program. The training may be identified by the entity, and may be a webinar or in-person event. The training must relate to arts and youth.

   Submit: Copy of the educational program, lead entity, description of training session attended, including a description of why it was relevant, proof of attendance.
4. Describe the budget and funding source to implement the program.

   Submit: Copy of the budget and proof of funding source.
5. Implement elements of the program as identified in the recommended actions.

   Submit: Documentation of completion of actions recommended in the program.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the following municipal departments could be helpful in implementing this action: parks and recreation, library, and Board of Education.

In addition, the following committees, community groups or agencies could help implement this action: individuals interested in arts and culture, PTO/PTA members, curriculum leaders, arts and non-arts teachers, parents, students, community organizations, faith leaders, local librarians, etc.

Funding

Below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the Sustainable CT Resources for Certification page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- CT Department of Community and Economic Development, Arts Learning Grants (pending)

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents, General Information

- YouthARTS
- National Guild for Community Arts Education, "Engaging Adolescents Building Youth Participation in the Arts"
- Americans for the Arts, "Training and Professional Development"

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- CT Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts
- Higher Order Thinking Schools Program
- National Guild for Community Arts Education
- Americans for the Arts

Benefits

Celebrating arts and culture is essential to educating the 'whole child.' By finding the middle ground between cultural groups in a friendly and supportive setting, you support understanding that can alleviate community stress. Arts and heritage celebrations foster a sense of community and personal pride, and are often a meeting ground between generations. The conversations that arise in these events often support other partnerships between the school and the community.

According to the CT Department of Economic and Community Development's Office of the Arts, the arts are integral to building and unifying our communities, "63% believe the arts lift them up beyond everyday experiences; 73% believe the arts are a positive experience in a troubled world; 62% believe that the arts help them understand other cultures better; and 67% believe the arts unify their communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity."

CT Success Stories

- Hartford, CT: "Out-of-School Art Programs"

Credit for Past Action

- The arts program must be completed in the 12 months prior to the time of application submission.