Alabama State Council on the Arts
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The Artistic Literacy Consortium

The Artistic Literacy Consortium is a group of Alabama organizations and citizens with a mission **to provide fully funded high-quality arts education that enlightens, inspires, and develops in every Alabama student the creative and innovative thinking necessary to ensure college and career readiness**. It is the result of two years of work accomplished by the Arts Education Leadership Team, a task force established by Al Head, Executive Director of the Alabama State Council on the Arts, and Dr. Tommy Bice, State Superintendent of Alabama Schools.

The purpose of the **Artistic Literacy Consortium** is to make collective impact for arts education in the state of Alabama. As a consortium, members join to combine resources to accomplish a shared mission with the desired outcome of providing *artistic literacy* for every Alabama student.

Literacy indicates knowledge and competence in a specific language system or field. It requires a lifelong, intellectual process of gaining understanding. In the arts, literacy is the ability to "read" a work of art and to understand how to find meaning through that work of art. It is also the ability to create a work of art using the appropriate symbol system to be understood by others (See pg 3).

The responsibility to provide high quality arts education for every student is not limited to any one stakeholder. Success requires the collective impact of multiple and diverse stakeholders. Each stakeholder, whether working locally or statewide, has the power to make measureable progress toward the mission and goals of the Artistic Literacy Consortium. To do so, consortium members should, when appropriate, align their efforts and agree to track progress through a shared evaluation system.

Shared Agenda

The mission and goals below have been adopted by the *Artistic Literacy Consortium* for use by all stakeholders in designing support for arts education in Alabama. These goals are the basis for data collection to track progress and the means by which to provide information to be used by all stakeholders in order to learn from each other as they contribute to enhancing arts education in the State of Alabama.

Shared Mission:

To provide fully funded, high-quality arts education that enlightens, inspires, and develops in every Alabama student the creative and innovative thinking necessary to ensure college and career readiness.

Shared Goals:

Build expectations for the arts to enhance economy, community, and quality of life

- target messaging
- strengthen advocacy efforts
- develop public policy

Provide, both virtual and actual, access and equity to quality arts learning for all students

- provide sequential, standards-based arts instruction by qualified arts educators
- train educators qualified in diverse fields of study to connect standards-based arts learning to their curriculum.
- train community arts organizations and teaching artists in effective collaborations that provide standards-based learning

Advance arts education opportunities to facilitate college and career readiness

- align arts instruction to support non-arts college and career ready standards
- balance instruction in the arts between creating, performing, and responding to foster the skills needed in a competitive workforce, including creativity, innovation, persistence, and the ability to take risk
- provide opportunities for collaborations between teachers, programs, businesses, community organizations, and arts organizations to engage students in innovative, real world, multi-disciplinary learning

Employ the arts as a catalyst to create and maintain an engaged school and community environment

- create school and community visibility for the arts by sharing with and involving the entire school community as well as parents, local businesses, community organizations and policy makers
- provide opportunities for community partners and schools to collaborate on the planning and implementation of comprehensive arts education programming
- involve students in identifying and addressing community challenges and opportunities through problem solving in the arts

A Three Pronged Approach

Consortium members understand acquiring artistic literacy requires rigor, and there are many methods and delivery systems that may work together to provide artistic literacy for our students. Each stakeholder and consortium member should consider the capabilities of their organization as they plan to support artistic literacy. They should also study opportunities for arts education that already exist in their local communities, support and enhance those opportunities, and work toward filling gaps in areas needed most.

Ideally, our students would receive a comprehensive arts education in one or more art forms as part of their general K-12 education experience. Realistically, we must share this responsibility by offering or supporting one or more of these essential components of arts education:

Exposure
Interest in the arts is developed through exposure. Exposure is as simple as attending a performance at the symphony or a dance concert at a festival, touring an exhibit at an art museum, or joining the audience at a Shakespearean play. Exposure creates appreciation. Appreciation for the arts is acknowledgement that there is deep meaning to be understood in art. That meaning may be "read" and understood just as any verbal language. Exposure to the arts develops aesthetic appreciation.

Experience
Experiencing the arts by practicing and doing allows students to hone artistic skills and to begin to understand the way the arts create meaning beyond words. With rigorous practice, students advance in their ability to produce movements, brush strokes, notes, scripts, media, and literary works in order to "speak the language" of the creative arts.

Craft and Creativity
"Speaking" is important, but speaking without comprehension is not literacy. Developing the skills to employ craft by arranging, sequencing, and developing nuances in order to communicate is required to create expression and understanding. The ability to create a work of art that may be "read" and understood by others is the highest form of artistic literacy.

Comprehensive Arts Education
A comprehensive arts education will include exposure, experience, and the act of creating art, and there is no one right place to begin. Entry points exist in all three. However, continuous exposure, experience, and creativity are necessary for a complete education in the arts.

Stakeholders should ask themselves: What do our students need? What can I provide? Who could I work with to provide more?

And always remember to let us know**: How might the Artistic Literacy Consortium help you make a difference for our students?**

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

As a consortium member, our organization is committed to the shared mission of the Artistic Literacy Consortium with the desired combined outcome of providing *artistic literacy* for every Alabama student.

We agree when appropriate and as resources become available, to align our efforts in support of arts education in the State of Alabama toward one or more of the Consortium Goals.

We further agree that when we align our efforts in support of arts education, we will participate in the shared evaluation system in order to track progress and help others learn from our efforts.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
                    (Authorizing Official)

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

This signature signifies a formal endorsement of the Artistic Literacy Consortium and its mission **to provide fully funded high-quality arts education that enlightens, inspires, and develops in every Alabama student the creative and innovative thinking necessary to ensure college and career readiness.**

Mail, email or fax completed forms to Diana Green at: **Alabama State Council on the Arts,** 201 Monroe Street, Suite 110, Montgomery, AL 36013; diana.green@arts.alabama.gov; Fax: 334-240-3269