



School Arts Leader Program

Information Packet

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School Arts Leader (SAL) Program – Introduction

The **School Arts Leader (SAL) Program** is a collective-impact collaboration which annually guides a cohort of MA school principals and/or district leaders through a two-year process to forge sustainable, high-quality arts-education programs that transform their schools. This is achieved by the school leader actively directing a team of educators, parents, and community members to develop and implement school arts-action plans.

The goal is to build and support systemic change in public PreK—12 schools so that all students can benefit from the vital role of dance-drama-media-music-visual art in a complete, balanced education as called for in the 2015 Federal “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA). It is a proven strategy for improving education outcomes in underperforming schools and developing culturally-inclusive school communities. Arts|Learning is happy to work with a variety of schools and districts. However, working with schools having 50+% diverse BIPOC student populations, and/or with BIPOC school leaders, is a priority.

Potential SAL Program Focal Points may be in a specific school, or via a vertical-alignment team in a district, Pre-K—12. Any of the following concentrations may be chosen by the participating school or district, either alone, or in combination:

- One or more arts domain(s) specific focus (dance, drama, media arts, music, visual arts)
- Integrating arts *with* and *across* other academic subjects
- STEAM—Integrating and infusing arts across STEM subjects (STEAM)
- Post-pandemic response—strengthening student resiliency, social-emotional learning, and building community through the arts
- Using the unique languages and forms of communication of the arts to better integrate and support English Language Learners
- Applying arts-learning creative processes and thinking strategies across the curriculum
- Utilizing local arts and cultural organizations and resources
- Other arts-related focus of school’s or district’s choice

SAL offers the support and expertise needed to sustain powerful arts programming via concentrated professional development and sustained, on-site coaching and mentoring to the school leader and arts-action team. This approach is modeled after the highly successful similar programs in Washington state and California, where there is a significant track record of improving the quality and quantity of arts programs in participating schools, as well as a host of other academic, social, and community benefits to the schools.

Arts|Learning is accepting applications from school districts, individual schools, and charter schools that are interested in participating in the School Arts Leader (SAL) Program for our next cohort of leaders. A|L will work with urban, rural, and suburban districts and schools, and is especially interested in working with schools and/or districts which have 50% or higher of low-income students and/or BIPOC students who traditionally have had less arts access and equity.

The planning process employed by the arts-action team is also an ideal vehicle for schools wishing to incorporate the arts into their strategies for improving overall learning and academic success.

For those interested in this program in their districts, we offer the following information:

Key Program Highlights—Year one:

1. Principals or School Leaders receive a half day of training in the fall of year one
2. Each school leader is assigned an experienced retired principal as a coach for the two-year duration of this project
3. After each principal selects his or her arts-action team, the entire team will receive a full day of training during late fall or early winter of year one
4. Arts|Learning will provide additional coaching three times during the strategic planning that each school's arts-action team will embark upon during the winter/spring of year one
5. A|L will review the school arts-action plan ready for implementation during the second year

Key Program Highlights—Year two:

1. During year two, participating schools will receive additional coaching to guide implementation of their plan
2. A|L will assist the school leader and team to review and revise their plan for year three and beyond

Requirements from a participating districts or schools:

1. Each school principal or school leader who is participating has to agree to be the active leader of his or her school arts-action team. The leader may not delegate this to another person.
2. Each school or district must agree to provide baseline data at the beginning and end of the project for evaluation purposes (see page 5 of this packet)
3. The principal must agree to schedule adequate time for the schools arts team to meet regularly (weekly or bi-weekly) to develop an arts-action plan.
4. Each school needs to either release district employees from regular duties for meetings, or pay contractual stipends (hourly rates) for after-school hours for any meetings. The typical committee might have 3-4 teachers on it, consisting of a combination of performing/visual arts teachers, and classroom teachers. The rest of the committee might consist of one or two parents, community leaders, representatives from any cultural organizations in your region, business partner, or a member of the local arts council from the town. These community representatives are expected to volunteer to serve on the arts planning committee of each school and would require no stipend (please page 4 on school arts teams).

For more information, contact Jonathan Rappaport, SAL Coordinator:

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School Arts Leader (SAL) Program Funding Opportunities

Please contact the A|L office for a full listing of costs for the two years of the School Arts Leader Program. Wherever possible, A|L will seek foundation and government grants to offset some of the expenses of the SAL program. However, such offsets cannot be guaranteed in any given year.

Currently there are two funding opportunities, one federal, and one statewide, that schools and districts can access to help pay for the modest costs of the SAL Program:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Student Opportunity Act. <https://www.doe.mass.edu/soa/>

Reportedly will be fully funded for 2022-23 academic year. This will provide a huge influx of state funding for all districts, but especially for urban districts/gateway cities.

Goal: inequitable gaps in experiences and outcomes across racial and ethnic groups, in economically disadvantaged communities compared to higher income communities, for students with disabilities relative to their non-disabled peers, and for English learners compared to students whose first language is English.

ESSER Federal funding. (https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf)

American Rescue Plan—Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Fund under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, enacted on March 11, 2021.

Local education agencies must reserve at least 20% of funds which must address COVID-19 learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions and ensure that those interventions respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs, and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented subgroups, including each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.

Additional ESSER funds may be used for addressing the needs of children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth; and addressing learning loss.



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School Arts Leader (SAL) Program School Arts Teams

The School Leader should assemble a team representative of the school community, and include team members from both within the school as well as the broader community outside the school walls. Team members need to know that this is a time commitment of a full day of training (required) as well as regular (weekly or bi-weekly) meetings for a period of several months.

The following categories may be considered by the school leader when assembling a team. This is not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive, just as a guide for consideration:

From within the school or district

Please note: In-district employees are expected to be appropriately compensated for their time according to district employee contracts

- Arts educator(s)—(music, art, drama/theatre, dance, media arts)
- Classroom teacher(s) with expertise in a variety of subjects who recognize the importance of the arts in education
- Special education teacher
- Curriculum coordinator
- District administrator
- School Committee member
- Student

From the community at large

- Parent(s)
- Business leader
- Community arts organization representative (e.g. museums, performing groups)
- Practicing artist
- Local Cultural Council member
- Civic or faith organization
- Youth services organization
- Town finance committee member
- City or town councilor or representative
- City arts manager

Consideration should be given to having a diverse team membership that reflects various ethnicities, economic groups, genders, sexual orientations, and ages from your community.



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School Arts Leader (SAL) Program Participating School or District Data Collection

Before and after implementation of the *School Arts Leader Program* it is important to capture data about the status of arts education in your school or district. This will be one real measurement of the success of your arts plan and the impact it has on arts instruction, school climate, parental involvement, and academic excellence.

A baseline audit may include any, if not most, of the following elements:

1. **Arts scheduled during regular school day**

- a. Arts as a core academic discipline; e.g.: number of FTE licensed **arts** teachers in your school; frequency and length of instruction weekly per grade of each arts discipline by a licensed teacher; annual budget amounts for supplies to support arts programs; designated rooms for arts instruction in the school.
- b. Arts Integration: organized, intentional efforts in the school to integrate the arts across the curriculum.
- c. Outside Resources—does the school, or has the school, done any of the following: current grants to support teaching artists; employed teaching artists; current collaborations with outside cultural organizations (museum, performing arts groups, etc.); current volunteers who have an arts background in the school.
- d. Arts Electives: in-school arts electives (such as instrumental lessons, chorus, art club, drama club, etc.)

2. **Arts scheduled after or before regular school hours**

- a. Provided by licensed staff members; provided by outside individuals or agencies or cultural organizations; how the above programs are paid for (e.g. school budget, grants, student activities fees, etc.).

3. **Professional Development for Staff in Arts Education and/or Arts Integration**

- a. List any arts-focused professional development; Arts Education, Arts Integration, Arts and STEM; visits to other schools that have had success in arts education/integration

4. **Parental Involvement**

- a. Regular performances, classroom observations, or arts exhibits for parents and members of the community to attend; Parental feedback about these events

5. **Academic Impact**. Generalized data from standardized testing; list typical standardized testing

6. **School Climate**. Any assessment instruments used to evaluate school climate and student attitudes; data that your school reports to DESE on suspensions, attendance, etc. which may help measure school climate.



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About Arts|Learning, Inc.

Arts|Learning is a thought leader and change agent promoting arts education policies, practices and partnerships in Massachusetts public education, pre-K—college. Arts|Learning is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] catalyst that accomplishes this mission through strategic objectives such as the following:

- Re-imagine school and district models
- Provide professional development for school teachers and administrators
- Advocate for strong, sequential, curricular arts programs and arts integration for all PK-12 school students regardless of ZIP code
- Facilitate school/higher education/arts organization partnerships
- Convene education leaders and arts experts to promote awareness, dialogue, and community
- Build networks and alliances

Arts|Learning is a pre-qualified vendor by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education under their *21MASSAR1 Supporting School, District, and DESE Sustainable Improvement Efforts* program.

- Our vendor code is VC6000236051
- Our master agreement # is MADOE-21MADOE21MASSAR1H23

Our areas of content expertise recognized by DESE includes the following:

- Strategic planning—Arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts)
- Consulting/technical assistance—Arts
- Professional development/coaching—Arts
- Curriculum development/implementation—Arts
- Assessment development and implementation—Arts

As part of this program, A|L is prepared to offer schools, districts, and statewide agencies:

1. **Leadership Development and School Improvement Support** through the School Arts Leader Program
2. **Curriculum/Assessment Development and Professional Development** for all school, district, and state stakeholders

More information about the history of Arts|Learning may be found at:

<https://www.artslearning.org/history-of-artslearning/>



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For the School Arts Leader Program, we have as a priority to serve underserved youth who currently may not have equal access and opportunities to learn comprehensive, sequential arts through their schools. Thus we are particularly seeking schools that have 50% or greater BIPOC students, as well as BIPOC school leaders. We welcome, however, all schools and districts interested in this program to fully participate, whether urban, rural, or suburban, in traditional district settings as well as charter schools.

Wherever possible, A/L will seek foundation and government grants to offset some of the expenses of the SAL program. However, such offsets can not be guaranteed in any given year.

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