



# ARTSGEORGIA PROPOSAL FOR STATE FUNDING OF ARTS EDUCATION IN GEORGIA

## Funding Arts Education in Georgia

### Part I – Benefits and Budgets

#### Introduction

ArtsGeorgia finds that sufficient information and research exists to justify the implementation of applicable policy decisions and the investment of state funding in support of arts education. This section addresses those issues.

#### ◆ Reviewing Recent Studies

There have been multiple studies related to arts education in Georgia over the last two decades. The two newest studies released in 2015 by Georgia's state arts council included 16 specific recommendations with two thirds of those on the list requiring money and funding for implementation, but without any discussion of how much it would cost or where to find the funding for a statewide arts education program. Before addressing how much arts education will cost and where to find the money, let's consider the many benefits and why it matters.

The [Arts Learning Task Force Final Recommendations](#) clearly summarized the benefits of arts learning and how it improves student outcomes: 1) improves school engagement, 2) improves academic performance, 3) improves literacy, 4) positively impacts brain development, 5) improves college and career development, and 6) improves social development. [pp 5-6]

The [Arts Education in Georgia Full Report](#) published by the state arts council concluded 1) arts education is essential and gives students an advantage in learning, and 2) that there is a disparity in access to arts learning opportunities in Georgia largely attributable to poverty rates and population density. In other words, the poorer and/or more rural the school district, the less likely students in those districts will have access to basic arts education and less likely to have access to quality arts education. What the **Full Report** implies without saying it directly is that neither the state budget nor the Department of Education budget have in the past or are currently providing the funds necessary for statewide arts learning and arts education. [pp 79-80]

The **Full Report** includes a comprehensive list of the existing sources of funding in Georgia's public schools for arts education by percentage of their relative contribution without any amounts included; the report also includes separate data by percentage of their contribution without any amounts attributable to those sources for elementary, middle and high school levels: 1) district school budget; 2) arts fund raisers; 3) school budget; 4) PTA/PTO; 5) individual contributions; 6) in-kind donations; 7) other grants; 8) foundations; 9) businesses; 10) local arts

councils\*; 11) state arts agency grants \*; and 12) other. [pp 29, 47, 60, 73] (\*The report is unclear on whether money from local arts councils is the same money as that from the state arts council. Arts education funds granted by the state arts agency are awarded to a few local arts councils and other nonprofits for arts education programs. The funds are primarily federal arts education funds as part of Georgia's partner grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.)

### ◆ **Determining an Arts Education Budget**

There is no data in the two existing publications about the current amounts spent or the budgets for arts education programs related to public or private schools for individual schools, school districts, city or county school systems, or an amount representing the total money currently being spent statewide on arts education. The survey used in the fall of 2012 did not ask how much was budgeted or how much money was spent on arts education. [pp 83-86]

To consider an appropriate amount in the state budget for arts education, one option is to look at other similar southern states. ArtsGeorgia for purposes of this proposal will consider our neighbors in South Carolina which budgets approximately \$11.5 million dollars for arts education with a state population of approximately 5 million. Georgia has a state population of approximately 10 million. Using this very basic comparison, Georgia would need to begin funding arts education with an annual state budget amount of over \$20 million dollars. When you consider Florida or Tennessee, their arts education budgets and their populations, Georgia should be investing over \$30 million dollars annually for statewide arts education. Future studies or surveys could include direct input from the schools to determine more accurately what funding the schools are currently spending and what they need to implement the proposed recommendations.

[Sources: The *Arts Learning Task Force Final Recommendations* were supplemented with the publication of *Arts Education In Georgia Public School Data and Principal Perspectives Full Report'* based on the earlier South Arts research in *Arts Education in the South Phase I: Public School Data and Principals' Perspectives*. Both publications rely on the earlier data collected at the state and regional levels by South Arts, but both provide a more comprehensive analysis of access to statewide arts education in Georgia's K-12 public schools.]

## **Funding Arts Education in Georgia**

### **Part II – Funding and Administration**

#### **Introduction**

ArtsGeorgia finds that reasonable and adequate sources of state revenue exist to provide for an investment in state funding for programs of comprehensive statewide arts education. This section addresses those options.

#### ◆ **Potential Sources of State Arts Education Funding**

The current source of arts education funding in Georgia's public schools is a hodgepodge of money from the sources listed in Part I. They include some or all of the following sources in the

order of their contribution: 1) district school budget; 2) arts fund raisers; 3) school budget; 4) PTA/PTO; 5) individual contributions; 6) in-kind donations; 7) other grants; 8) foundations; 9) businesses; 10) local arts councils; 11) state arts agency grants; and 12) other.

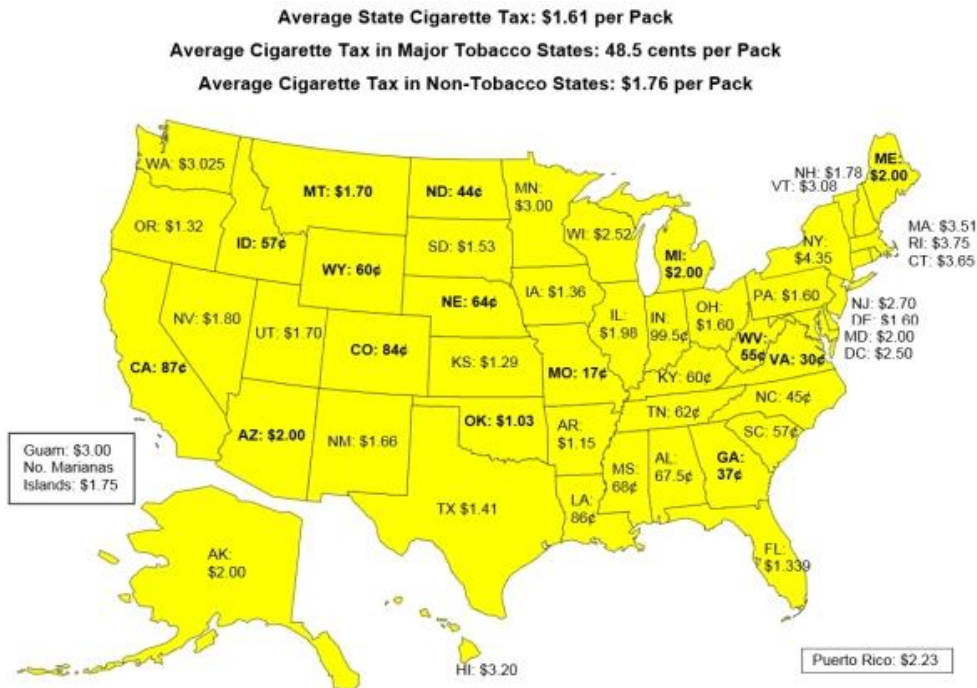
Therefore, individual school expenditures for arts education are made with funds that vary by year and are unreliable, that are extremely limited, that are unequal across the state for different schools and school districts, and that are dramatically less or nonexistent in many rural and minority communities. Even large school systems like the Atlanta Public Schools have cut back on arts education spending with art and music teachers being fired, music (band, chorus and orchestra), and other art programs being eliminated from the curriculum.

There are traditional sources for funding arts education at the state level. These include an allocation from the general fund to pay for a statewide program of arts education, an allocation to the Georgia Department of Education in its budget for arts education, and a line item (also called an ear mark) in the state budget to fund arts education.

There are a variety of alternative dedicated income sources used in other states to fund arts education at the state level. These include special taxes and fees (10 states), income tax checkoffs (5 states), license plates (13 states), and cultural trusts (18 states).

◆ **An FY2017 Dedicated Income Source for Arts Education Funding**

ArtsGeorgia proposes an increase in the rate of the state excise tax on tobacco (cigarettes) as a source of funding for statewide arts education programs.



[Source: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0222.pdf> ]

Consider the chart comparing the tax per pack of cigarettes by state. Georgia is substantially lower at 0.37 than our neighboring states. The South Carolina tax is 0.57, Alabama is 0.68, Tennessee is 0.62, and Florida is \$1.34. The national average is \$1.54 per pack. In terms of cigarette taxes, Georgia is ranked as the 48<sup>th</sup> lowest of the 50 states with only two states having a lower tax rate. An increase in the rate would fund the startup of statewide arts education.

The proposal of this source has additional benefits for Georgia's children. According to the [\*Georgians for a Healthy Future\*](#), tobacco tax increases are one of the most effective ways to reduce smoking among kids. States that have significantly increased tobacco taxes have enjoyed substantial increases in revenue and save money by reducing tobacco-related health care costs. The CDC and other studies estimate that annual health care costs in Georgia directly caused by smoking amounts to \$3.18 Billion. [Why Increase the Tobacco Tax](#) (1 pager)

[\*Georgians for a Healthy Future\*](#) advocates for a suggested increase of \$1.23 that would generate \$425 million per year in new revenue. A smaller increase or a portion of that added revenue could fund arts education statewide with an annual budget between \$20-\$30 million.

### ◆ Administration of State Arts Education Funding

In response to major budget cuts by Georgia's state legislature in fiscal year 2010, Georgia's state arts agency eliminated three arts education grants and one community arts grant. Afterwards, only arts curriculum enhancement grants that were in continuation received an award. Further, extensive cuts for FY2011 forced the termination of two complete program areas: Arts Education and Traditional Arts. Arts education grants until last year were awarded directly to nonprofit arts organizations for their after school and summer school programming. The 39 arts education grants awarded in FY2010 had a total dollar value of \$140,250. During recent fiscal years, fewer than 12 grants were awarded with a total dollar value of less than \$60,000. The state arts agency budget at same time was cut from \$5.2 million dollars to approximately \$600K with almost all of the remaining arts education funding supported by the federal partner grant allocation for arts education from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The state arts agency has neither the mission nor the capacity to administer significant arts education funding and lacks the manpower and capacity to administer a statewide program for arts education. The state arts agency has a role to play and should be included in the long range planning and development of policy, programs and can be an important liaison to the state's local arts councils and nonprofit arts organizations. The Georgia Department of Education remains the appropriate agency to receive and administer statewide arts education funding and to administer the statewide arts education program to insure arts education reaches all of Georgia's schools

### ◆ A long-term strategy for current and future funding

ArtsGeorgia proposes and advocates for Georgia to begin funding arts education with an alternative source of income from a dedicated source that could begin in the next fiscal year.

ArtsGeorgia advocates for the use of surveys to collect the essential data about historic and current levels of spending for arts education in order to determine the amount of funding that is reasonably necessary to implement the Arts Learning Task Force's recommendations statewide.

ArsGeorgia advocates for a transition from a temporary dedicated source of funding to full state funding of arts education based on the outcome of survey results, the planning and development for the implementation of a statewide arts education program with future funding either from the state general fund or as part of the Department of Education budget.

### ◆ Investing or Re-investing in Arts Education is a priority

The President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities reports: “Decades of research show strong and consistent links between high quality arts education and a wide range of impressive educational outcomes. This is true even though, as in most areas where learning is complex, the research base does not yet establish causal proof. Arts integration models, the practice of teaching across classroom subjects in tandem with the arts, have been yielding some particularly promising results in school reform and closing the achievement gap. Most recently, cutting-edge studies in neuroscience have been further developing our understanding of how arts strategies support crucial brain development in learning.”

“At the same time, due to budget constraints and emphasis on the subjects of high stakes testing, arts instruction in schools is on a downward trend. Just when they need it most, the classroom tasks and tools that could best reach and inspire these students — visual art, writing, music, dance and theater — are less available to them. Sadly, this is especially true for students from lower-income schools, where analyses show that access to the arts in schools is disproportionately absent.” [\*The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities ReInvesting in Arts Education\*](#) [PCAH 2011]

[Source: [http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Research/Key-Topics/Arts-Education/PCAH\\_Reinvesting\\_In%20\\_Arts\\_Education.pdf](http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Research/Key-Topics/Arts-Education/PCAH_Reinvesting_In%20_Arts_Education.pdf) ]

## Conclusion

ArsGeorgia advocates that the Georgia General Assembly increase the rate of the excise tax on a pack of cigarettes in an amount that would fund arts education beginning in FY2017. That the Arts Learning Task Force’s recommendations be implemented with all deliberate speed and that Georgia continue full funding and support of a statewide arts education program.

Credits: ArtsGeorgia thanks all of those who have contributed to this arts education advocacy publication. **ARTSGEORGIA PROPOSAL FOR STATE FUNDING OF ARTS EDUCATION IN GEORGIA**