



Barbara Lawton
Lieutenant Governor

Wisconsin Task Force on
Arts and Creativity
In Education



Elizabeth Burmaster
State Superintendent

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Action plan sets creative pace for Wisconsin

Lawton and Burmaster unveil recommendations from Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education

MADISON—Investment in the artistic and creative energy of Wisconsin students throughout their education is the over-arching recommendation of the Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education final report and action plan unveiled today.

The 36-member task force, appointed in March 2008 by State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster and Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton, was charged with examining state-level policies and local practices to determine their impact on the scope and access to quality arts education opportunities in Wisconsin. To develop its recommendations for strengthening arts and creativity education in Wisconsin, the task force conducted nine public forums and reviewed the status of arts education in Wisconsin and research done by experts in the field.

“The arts have a potent effect on student achievement and engagement in school,” Burmaster said. “Despite clear research that shows how vital the arts and creativity are for all students, access to the full range of the arts is continuing to decline in Wisconsin. Revitalizing our arts education programs and infusing creativity throughout the curriculum is critical for our students’ success.”

“Every child has tremendous creative capacity; it is our responsibility to develop and harvest it,” Lawton said. “Wisconsin’s competitive edge in this global economy will be a workforce well-prepared to think boldly and work innovatively, with that risk-taking confidence of an entrepreneur.”

A common definition of creativity, which describes the creative process as a combination of imagination, creativity, and innovation to produce something unique that has value and meaning, provides the foundation of the task force recommendations. The group’s plan for action addresses four areas. The first three, Legislative and State Policy, Creativity in the Classroom, and Community Involvement, focus on strengthening arts education in Wisconsin schools. The fourth, Business and

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the Creative Economy, focuses on engaging the business community—especially those on the leading edge of the creative economy—to propel business growth and economic development and to help strengthen arts and creativity programs for students.

Specifically, recommendations call for:

- Revising standards and assessment to infuse creativity development into class work;
- Ensuring that every Wisconsin school uses an interdisciplinary curriculum that systematically integrates creativity development into class work;
- Ensuring that all students have access to education in the full spectrum of the arts taught by qualified instructors and abundant opportunities to develop creativity throughout the curriculum;
- Identifying best practices and models for arts and creativity education as well as methods for sharing successful practices;
- Increasing professional learning opportunities and support for school staff to implement creative processes in the classroom;
- Continuing outreach to communities, business, and educational and arts organizations to foster partnerships and collaboration that strengthen arts education and the development of creative potential in all students;
- Fostering a climate of creative inquiry and innovation in the state through business partnerships and endorsements that support the arts and arts education; and
- Improving the arts and cultural environment—through state-level government, business, cultural, and professional organizations—as a tool for economic development, employee attraction and retention, and competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

“This task force assumed a leadership role nationally with its vision to essentially transform schools to more effectively prepare children for this complex and fast-changing world we live in today,” Lawton said. “Creativity is the renewable energy in a 21st century global economy; this well-wrought plan maps Wisconsin’s course toward a sustainable and prosperous future.”

“All students can develop their creative capacities if they have access to rich learning opportunities in environments that nurture and support their creative development,” Burmaster said. “These task force recommendations set a creative pace for our efforts to use arts and creativity education to increase academic achievement and provide our students the 21st century skills they need for success in our interconnected world.”

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2009_03.pdf. The final report for the Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education is available on the task force website <http://www.creative.wisconsin.gov/>.