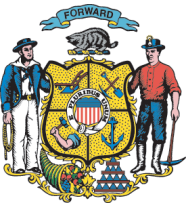


# WISCONSIN TASK FORCE ON ARTS AND CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION



## A PLAN FOR ACTION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Lieutenant Governor  
Barbara Lawton



Elizabeth Burmaster  
State Superintendent

# INTRODUCTION

**Wisconsin’s Lieutenant Governor and State Superintendent of Public Instruction convened and co-chaired a statewide Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education to address** the essential role that arts education and the development of students’ creative capacities play in their success in reaching their full potential, in the quality of life in Wisconsin communities, and as an animating force in our state’s economy. Thirty-six thought leaders from business, state and local government, education, and community arts organizations were appointed to the Task Force. Nine public forums were held throughout the state. The Task Force was charged with developing an action plan for strengthening arts and creativity education in Wisconsin. Workgroups developed action plans in four distinct areas of implementation: Creativity in the Classroom, Community Involvement, Business and the Creative Economy, and Legislature and State Policy.

## Rationale

In this 21st-century global economy, Wisconsin’s competitive edge will be the talent it develops for innovation and entrepreneurship. In a fast-changing world where we are bombarded with more information than can be humanly processed, knowledge represents what can be known and creativity is the capacity to navigate the unknown. In this context, the following equation must drive the smart allocation of resources in education: Knowledge + Creativity = Competitive Edge.

Creativity drives innovations in science, business, technology, and even service industries; entrepreneurs are problem-solvers, innovators by definition and visionaries when at their best. Developing arts and creativity in education programs is a deliberate workforce development strategy and will stimulate creativity and innovation and enable entrepreneurship.

We come by this honestly in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Tourism recently unveiled the following brand statement that points to our state’s historic identity as fostering a culture of original thinkers across economic sectors: “Because of the passionate nature of the state’s people to create fun, express themselves in original ways, and feel more comfortable doing it here than anywhere else, in Wisconsin originality rules.”

Wisconsin’s future prosperity depends on our success in reestablishing our leadership position in breeding innovators and entrepreneurs—Wisconsin’s next generation, ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

# IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY, AND INNOVATION

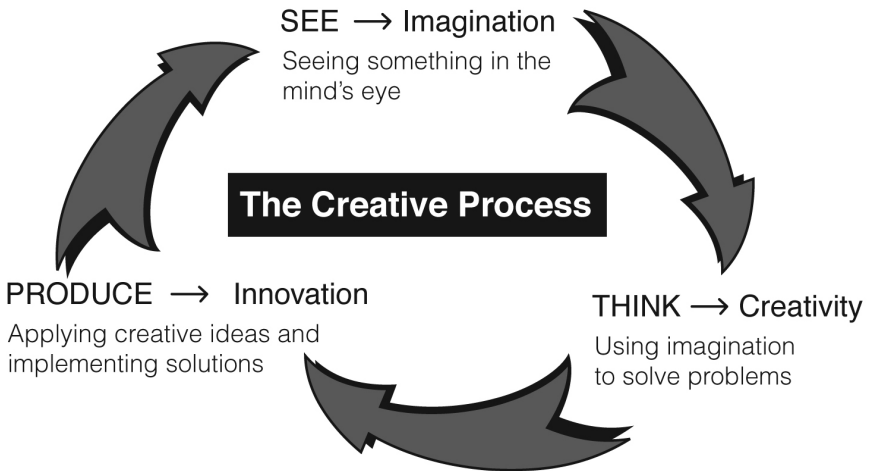
According to international education expert Sir Ken Robinson, the creative process involves being imaginative, creative, and innovative—three distinct but related concepts. Similarly, business consultant Linda Naiman defines creativity as “the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality.”

“Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing. Innovation is the production or implementation of an idea. If you have ideas, but don’t act on them, you are imaginative but not creative.”

-Linda Naiman, *What is Creativity?* <http://www.creativityatwork.com>

“The first step is imagination, the capacity that we all have to see something in the mind’s eye. Creativity is then using that imagination to solve problems—call it applied imagination. Then innovation is putting that creativity into practice as applied creativity.”

-Sir Ken Robinson, *Reading, Writing, and Creativity*, *Business Week*, February 23, 2006, <http://www.businessweek.com>



According to these experts, learners who exercise creativity combine imagination, creative thought, and innovation to produce something novel that has value. The ability to imagine, create, and innovate are key components of what it means to be “creative”—a quality that is fast becoming a key to future success.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following action plan for Wisconsin’s public, private and nonprofit sectors has broad implications for K-12 education as well as business growth and community/ regional/state economic development. It supports the development of learners’ creative capacities using the creative process.

# LEGISLATIVE AND STATE POLICY:

Develop policy to support all the changes identified in the action plan developed by the Wisconsin Task Force for Arts and Creativity in Education.

## Recommended Strategies Include:

A. Recommendations to revise assessments and standards. The goal is to ensure every Wisconsin school employs an interdisciplinary curriculum designed to systematically integrate creativity development into the class work.

1. DPI should more explicitly describe goals for developing creativity and arts education across disciplines within the 21st century skills initiative.
2. DPI should evaluate all Model Academic Standards to address the inclusion of creativity and the arts.
3. DPI should examine how best to include arts and creativity in their work on “next-generation” assessments.
4. DPI should create a voluntary assessment tool for creativity as a method for schools to identify and nurture those skills and talent.

B. Recommendations to ensure every Wisconsin student enjoys access to education in the arts and creativity, taught by qualified instructors.

1. DPI, the Legislature and the Governor should create a new matching grant program for districts introducing new arts and creativity education into their curriculum.
2. The Task Force should request that the UW Board of Regents and Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) explore the standard under PI 8 to ensure only licensed art and music teachers can teach those classes in grades K-6.
3. The Legislature and Governor should establish a specific matching grant program to expand artists-in-residence programs in Wisconsin schools. An alternative strategy would be to provide funds to expand the existing Arts Education Component of the Creative Communities grants program through the Wisconsin Arts Board. This program would fund artists-in-residence in Wisconsin public and private K-12 schools.

C. Recommendation to establish best practices and models for arts and creativity in education that other school districts can easily adopt.

1. DPI and the Wisconsin Arts Board should initiate a pilot program for six to ten school districts to create and implement an arts and creativity in education action plan. The plan would incorporate successful practices discovered through the Task Force work and invite input from business and community leaders, educators, and lawmakers.

D. Recommendations to better prepare students for success as they enter the workforce in this 21st century global economy.

1. DPI should research and create a career development program for arts and arts industries following the career pathways model already established through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.
2. The Task Force should petition the UW Board of Regents and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) to explore the merits of adding demonstration of achievement in the arts and development of creative capacities to admissions requirements, either through credit or extracurricular activities.

E. Recommendations for research needed for ongoing improvement in arts and creativity education in our schools.

1. DPI should collect building-level data of student access to arts experiences and opportunities on an annual basis to record disparities and inequities in opportunities for study and participation that exist, even within districts. Districts should report that data and participate in a study to improve both access and accountability.
2. DPI should research and replicate other states' successful programs for restoration of the arts curriculum.
3. DPI should create an arts education research center to provide teachers with best practices, research, etc.
4. DPI should regularly hold creativity in education roundtables with business leaders to identify how best to develop the capacity for innovative thinking needed in the workplace. Feedback should be integrated into DPI Planning.



*State Superintendent Burmaster addressing Second Task Force Meeting*

# CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Educators at all levels place creative processes at the core of all disciplines taught in the classroom, professional learning programs, parent/community relationships, and teacher education.

## Recommended Strategies Include:

- The DPI and local districts should ensure that all students have access to courses in a variety of visual and performing arts.
- Local districts, schools, and teachers should implement creative processes in all classrooms and in each discipline.
- The DPI, Wisconsin Arts Board, CESAs, professional organizations, and local school districts should provide professional learning opportunities and necessary support for school staff to implement creative processes in the classroom.
- The DPI, Wisconsin Arts Board, other state agencies, and local school districts should involve parents and the community in arts and creativity in education.
- Universities and the DPI should implement creative processes in pre-service teacher education.

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Describe a community partnership process/protocol that will expand and improve available arts and creativity programs and services in Wisconsin schools.

## Recommended Strategies Include:

- Local communities should identify potential community partners. Describe a community partnership process/protocol that will expand and improve available arts and creativity programs and services in Wisconsin schools.
- State-level community organizations should recommend ways that local agencies, organizations, and businesses can collaborate with schools to strengthen arts education and the development of creative potential in all students.
- State-level community organizations should identify models for partnership within the community.
- State-level community organizations should recommend measures for the ongoing sharing of successful practices.

# BUSINESS AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

Foster a climate of creative inquiry and innovation in Wisconsin through strategic changes in education, workforce training, and entrepreneurial development systems.

## Recommended Strategies Include:

- The Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education should develop a common language to identify problems and prescribe solutions.
- Regional and local business organizations should seek strong endorsements and partnerships from statewide business organizations and key business leaders.
- State-level business, cultural, and professional organizations should market the imperative to achieve this vision in order for Wisconsin to compete in the global creative economy.
- State-level government, business, cultural, and professional organizations should support community economic development efforts focused on improving the arts and culture environment as a tool for employee attraction and retention.
- State, regional, and local business and educational organizations should provide points of engagement and best practices for business to have continuous involvement in the schools.

Each of the action plan workgroups felt it was important for the Task Force to define concepts and key ideas that recur in this action plan such as the creative process, creative capacities, and the creative environment. The common language developed by the Task Force is included in the Toward a Definition of Creativity segment of the complete report and will guide implementation of the action plan statewide.



More complete information is available on the Task Force website: <http://www.creative.wisconsin.gov>. This website is updated regularly as the Plan for Action moves forward.

*Lieutenant Governor Lawton  
at the March 2008  
Task Force announcement*

# WISCONSIN TASK FORCE ON ARTS AND CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION

## Co-Chairs

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent  
Barbara Lawton, Lieutenant Governor

## Task Force Members

Gary Albrecht, Administrator  
CESA 2, Milton

Terry Anderson, Director  
Wisconsin Legislative Council, Madison

Rich Appel, Principal  
Chilton Middle School  
President, Association of Wisconsin School  
Administrators

Barry Applewhite, Assistant Principal  
Milwaukee High School of the Arts

John Ashley, Executive Director  
Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Madison

Jill Beck, President  
Lawrence University, Appleton

Gary Besaw, Vice President of Student Affairs  
College of Menominee Nation, Keshena

Peter Blewett, President  
Milwaukee Board of School Directors

Amy Christensen-Waddell, President and CEO  
Albion Armourers, New Glarus

Peter Crawford, Board of Directors President  
Arts Wisconsin, Waukesha

Kathleen Cullen, Vice President, Teaching and Learning  
Wisconsin Technical College System

Kit Donahue, Retired Teacher  
Waukesha Schools

Roy Elkins, Founder and CEO  
Broadjam, Madison

Marian Furlong, President and CEO  
Hudson Hospital

Ted Hamm, Principal  
Etude School, Sheboygan

Christine Harris, President  
Cultural Alliance of Greater Milwaukee

Neil Hoffman, President  
Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design

Susan Hunt, Chair, UW-Stout  
Department of Art and Design, Menomonie

Monica Kmak  
Wisconsin Education Association Council, Dodgeville

Penny Larson, President  
Wisconsin Congress of Parents and Teachers, Madison

Susan Lipp, President  
Full Compass Systems, Middleton

LaMoine MacLaughlin, Director  
Northern Lakes Center for the Arts, Amery

Gerry McKenna, Retired Dean  
UW-Stevens Point College of Fine Arts and  
Communication  
Board President, Central Wisconsin Symphony  
Orchestra, Stevens Point

William Mortimore, Chairman  
Information Technology Association of Wisconsin,  
Madison

Brian Raffel, CEO  
Raven Software, Middleton

Jim Rivett, President/Creative Director  
Arktetype Inc., Green Bay

Fred Schlichting, District Administrator  
Solon Springs School District

Barbara Schrank, Chair  
Arts Education Task Force  
Madison Metropolitan School District

Kathi Seifert, President  
Pinnacle Perspectives, Appleton

Ben Sidran  
Professional Musician, Madison

Toni Sikes, Founder  
Guild.com, Madison

Ahna Skop, Assistant Professor of Genetics  
and Scientific Artist  
UW-Madison

Tom Still, President  
Wisconsin Technology Council, Madison

Jessica Stoller, Policy Initiatives Adviser  
Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Madison

Heather Terrill-Stotts, Creative Learning Coordinator  
River Valley School District, Spring Green

Mary Lou Young, Director of Global Community  
Relations  
Rockwell Automation, Milwaukee