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Any Given Child Madison Releases Phase I Report

Findings reaffirm arts are essential element in well-rounded education.

Madison, WI, October 17, 2014— Mayor Paul Soglin, Superintendent Jennifer Cheatham and Overture President /CEO Ted DeDee joined Darrell Ayres, Kennedy Center Vice President for Education to release the first year findings of their *Any Given Child* partnership around arts education in the Madison community, outlining new goals for ensuring equitable arts access for every K-8 child in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD).

“Our community’s future depends on all of our children having equitable access to quality arts education that teaches critical skills such as innovation, creativity, and problem solving. Given the number of significant challenges our city and schools continue to face, this task is more difficult and important than ever, “ Mayor Paul Soglin said. “Thanks to the Kennedy Center and the incredible working relationships that have developed under the *Any Given Child* initiative, we are now moving forward with several key recommendations to increase our capacity to ensure that every child has the opportunity to engage and participate in the arts.”

“Arts education plays a crucial role for our students – it helps literacy and language development, it sparks creativity and imagination and is a crucial part of a well-rounded education,” Superintendent Jennifer Cheatham said. “We are excited to use the information gathered in this first phase to move forward our goal of ensuring equity and access in arts education for our students.”

In July 2013, Madison became the 12th city for the Kennedy Center's comprehensive arts education program, *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child*, a program that brings together multiple sectors of a community to create a plan to improve equity and access in arts education for students in grades K-8.

Under the guidance and expertise of the Kennedy Center's Education Department staff and consultants, Madison's Community Arts Team, comprised of 40 community arts, education, business and philanthropic leaders, focused their first year on collecting data and analyzing the current access and equity of arts education in the Madison public schools. Over the course of the year, educators, community members, and artists and arts organizations were asked to answer surveys and provide input that will be used in drafting a detailed strategic plan in Phase Two of the project. The data and analysis will be reflected in the report that will guide the Community Arts Team and MMSD staff in moving the *Any Given Child Madison* initiative forward.

"The first step in the process was defining Arts Education as a teaching strategy that places the student at the center of learning with arts access from arts teachers, non-arts teachers and community arts providers," Overture Center Director of Programming and Community Engagement Ray Gargano, who serves as the *Any Given Child Madison* coordinator, said. "From there, we were able to collect data to see which students were involved in the arts during the school day."

The data collection consisted of three separate tools provided by the Kennedy Center and adapted for Madison by the Community Arts Team: A survey to arts and cultural organizations and community artists, a survey to MMSD educators and an inventory of current arts offerings and experiences, along with student participation data in arts-related coursework within each MMSD school.

Madison's response rate was 60 percent from the arts survey and 75 percent from the educator survey. "Our response rate to the surveys was incredible. Kennedy Center consultants advised that we might anticipate a much smaller response rate than was achieved," said MMSD Fine Arts Coordinator Laurie Fellenz. "We were able use that robust data to help in our decision-making."

The data shows that 92 percent of all educators surveyed strongly agree or agree that that arts are important in their own lives, and 96 percent strongly agree or agree that arts should be part of a school education program, educators said. They responded that the arts are important in developing creativity, self-expression, confidence, motivation and elevating academic achievement.

The inventory of arts offerings and experiences collected through school survey and district participation data showed that nearly all students in grades K-5 receive music and visual arts instruction by a certified arts teacher; none receive instruction by certified specialists in theatre, dance or other arts forms, such as media arts or spoken word. The data also showed similar results in grades 6-8: students receive varying amounts of music and visual arts instruction with very limited access to other art forms.

When asked what prevents consistent access to curriculum-based arts in schools, educators and community arts providers agreed that schedule, funding and time were the greatest barriers. Similarly, when asked the greatest barriers in offering curriculum-based arts off-site, such as field trips to an art museum or performance, both groups cited transportation, funding and time.

Sixty percent of educators report that they receive no arts-related professional development.

“This is not surprising data nationally, but we believe we can do better for our students in Madison by creating communication and professional learning systems that will ensure our students receive quality arts experiences from MMSD educators and professional, working artists in the community,” Gargano said.

Starting with the vision statement “that all students have access to a comprehensive arts education with inclusive, diverse and integrated learning in all art forms every year,” the Madison Community Arts Team identified five long-term goals to support high quality arts education as an essential part of a well-rounded education for all students: Cultivate leaders and develop and sustain systems for access and equity, create arts-rich schools, cultivate a community network, develop an accountability system that tracks and reports *Any Given Child Madison* progress and advocate for arts education.

Phase 2 of *Any Given Child Madison* is about capacity-building to begin implementing those goals. “From the data we collected, we realized that we need to build a larger network of arts education providers in the schools and in the community who know how to provide quality and rigorous arts education experiences,” Gargano said.

Any Given Child Madison received a generous gift from the Carl M. Hudig estate to begin its capacity-building efforts and established a fund through the Foundation for Madison’s Public Schools. “It is important for people to realize that the Kennedy Center brought their expertise—not funding,” Gargano said. “Although the City of Madison, MMSD and Overture have been able to offer in-kind services to implement the program, we need to continue to raise money to develop and implement the systems to achieve our goals.”

As Phase 2 begins, the focus will be in developing an extended strategic plan and increasing the capacity to provide more arts education to students. Fellenz has established a network within MMSD, identifying an Arts Liaison in each school building and will facilitate conversations in November and December to gather feedback about how community members articulate thriving arts-rich schools for all students. Gargano and Karin Wolf, City of Madison Arts Administrator, have reconvened the Arts Education Roundtable, setting an April 25, 2015 date for the first Arts Education Fair in Madison, bringing together educators and arts providers together.

Additionally, *Any Given Child Madison* is presenting an arts integration professional learning series of sixteen Kennedy Center workshops for educators throughout the 2014-15 school year. “It is essential we provide opportunities for our teachers to learn from experts in the arts integration field and to know that this engaging way of approaching learning can be an additional support in their classroom,” Fellenz said. The series began with Kennedy Center Teaching Artist Stuart Stotts, a Wisconsin native, presenting “Laying a foundation: Defining Arts Integration,” on October 7-8.

Overture Center for the Arts has taken a leading role in developing a Teaching Artist Training program for professional artists to learn how to take their art form into an educational setting. “We are

overwhelmed with the response from artists. We piloted the training last year with 15 artists. We set a goal of 15 artists for this year and have had more than 25 artists register,” Gargano said.

Overture will present a three-day Teaching Artist Training seminar December 11-13, 2014 and mentor the artists as they develop and implement residency plans. Overture Center plans to make the training an annual event. “Although Overture Center is taking the lead on this community arts training, it is aligned with the goals of *Any Given Child Madison*, and, we hope, an example of how organizations and artists may maintain their own initiatives while aligning with this city-wide initiative,” Gargano said.

Any Given Child is a program of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, designed to help communities use existing resources to design a sustainable long-range plan to ensure that all K-8 students receive a complete arts education. Learn more about Kennedy Center, *Any Given Child* at <http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/anygivenchild>.

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