



December 15, 2021

Dr. Sonja Santelises, CEO  
Baltimore City Public School District  
200 E. North Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Dr. Santelises,

The Baltimore Arts Education Advisory Committee recognizes the extraordinary efforts of the Fine Arts Administrators and Arts Teachers throughout the District in maintaining arts programming for students, despite the unprecedented challenges presented by COVID and virtual teaching and learning. The demand for consistent, quality access to arts instruction has never been as patently obvious as it is now after a year of isolation - students need and want creative outlets and opportunities.

As you may recall, in 2018, as part of the Baltimore City Public School's *Blueprint for Success*, the District adopted the Fine Arts Strategic Plan with the goals of providing equitable access to arts instruction taught by certified fine arts teachers to each student, meeting the expectations of COMAR Regulation 13A, and aligning arts education opportunities with those in other Maryland school districts. The Plan was developed during a six month planning process under the leadership of the Office of Teaching and Learning, and Arts Every Day, funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, involving 100 stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, Board Commissioners, and arts and community organizations with expertise in developing strong K-12 programs in the arts. **Phase One Goals Included:**

**By 2023-2024**

- Ensure and sustain base level staffing of certified art and general music teachers in every school relative to school population.
- Ensure funding for materials, equipment and supplies to support the programs. ● Plan to expand instrumental music, theater and dance, and career path programs beginning 2022-2023.

Significant progress has been made towards those goals, despite the challenges of COVID-19.

**Relevant data is provided in Appendix I**

- Revised enrollment-based budget guidance for Pre-K through 8 schools has increased arts program staffing, especially at elementary schools. Citywide arts staffing has increased from 174 in 2017 to 273 in 2021.
- Working groups including BCPS administrators and stakeholders have continued to meet, developing detailed budget and implementation recommendations for instrumental music, theater, dance, media arts and arts career path expansion.

As the opportunity to allocate funding approaches, we are requesting inclusion of the following recommendations for **Phase Two Fine Arts Strategic Plan Goals for the 2022-2023 budget and beyond.**

1. Strategic investment of new State and Federal funding to sustainably expand equitable access to the arts.
  - Ensure all 6-8 graders have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument and participate in a curricular band program during the school day.
  - Expand access to theater and dance instruction and experiences
  - Develop district-supported arts-related criteria for program implementation, staffing, facilities, and equipment.
2. Revise High School Budget Guidance to ensure equitable access to sequential Fine Arts learning pathways that support college and career readiness.
3. Continued implementation of K-8 Fine Arts Budget Guidance with improved oversight of *actual* school spending on materials of instruction by the Office of Teaching and Learning.

An appendix follows this letter with details on each request. The Baltimore Arts Education Advisory Committee and working groups value the opportunity to continue to support Baltimore City Schools in the implementation of the Fine Arts Strategic Plan. Thank you,

- Arts Every Day
- Art with a Heart
- Arts Education in Maryland Schools
- The Baltimore Museum of Art
- Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, Baltimore City Arts Council

- Baltimore School for the Arts
- Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, OrchKids
- Chesapeake Shakespeare Company
- Coppin State University, Visual and Performing Arts Committee
- Everyman Theater
- FutureMakers
- Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance
- Hippodrome Foundation, Inc.
- International Arts + Mind Lab, Johns Hopkins University
- Leaders of Tomorrow Youth Center
- Maryland Citizens for the Arts
- Maryland Institute College of Art
- MECU
- The Lyric
- The Reginald F. Lewis Museum
- T. Rowe Price Foundation
- The Walters Art Museum
- Visit Baltimore
- Young Audiences of Maryland

Cc: Baltimore City School Board of Commissioners

## **Appendix**

Appendix I: Arts Access Data as of SY 20-21

Appendix II: Instrumental Music, Theater, Dance Recommendations

Appendix III: High School Budget Guidance Recommendations

Appendix IV: Budget Guidance for Materials of Instruction

## **Appendix I: Arts Access Data as of School Year 2020-21**

### **Arts Access in Schools Serving Grades PK-5**

- 84% Visual Art
- 68% Music
- **57% Both visual art and music (goal 100%)**
- Less than 10% of schools offer dance, theater, or instrumental music

### **Arts Access in Schools Serving Grades 6-8**

- 78% Visual Art
- 63% Music
- **65% of schools offered 2 or more fine arts disciplines (goal 100%)**
- Less than 10% of schools offer dance, theater, or instrumental music

### **Arts Access in Schools Serving Grades 9-12**

#### Courses Offered in a Variety of Disciplines

- 78% of schools offer courses in 1-2 disciplines, 18% offer courses in 3 disciplines ●
- Only 6% of schools offer all 4 disciplines
- Advanced Placement (AP) in at least 1 Fine Arts course is offered at 20% of schools

#### Depth of Study

- 40% of schools only offer 1-credit Arts courses only to meet graduation requirements
- 46% of schools offer courses beyond graduation requirements in at least 1 discipline
- Less than 10% of schools offer depth of study in all 4 disciplines

#### Trends

- Access to Advanced Placement, depth of study, *and* variety of offerings are found at the most competitive high schools
- **ConneXions:** A Community Based Arts School is the only “choice” high school with depth of study in all 4 discipline

## **Appendix II: Instrumental Music, Theater, Dance Recommendations**

### **Instrumental Music Recommendations:**

- Ten band teachers for schools with middle grades hired for SY 2022-23, and approximately another ten for SY 2023-24.
- All instrumental music teachers will be hired as 1.0 ‘locked’ centrally funded positions assigned as 1.0, .5, or .33 at schools depending on enrollment. These positions are in addition to existing instrumental music teachers whose positions should also become locked.
- Appropriate scheduling is crucial and must include ability-based large ensemble student

grouping and sectionals (small group instruction).

- Teachers will have been trained in instrumental music pedagogy specifically. The Fine Arts Office will participate in the hiring process.
- Coordinated central office implementation effort for logistics, sustainability, and evaluation (Budget + Finance, Scheduling, Operations + Facilities, Office of Achievement and Accountability, Teaching and Learning, Communications + Engagement). Collaboration with BAEI community partners.

**Financial Requirements (Central) for SY 2022-23 (approx.)**

The instrument purchase estimates contained in this proposal are based on an average of 90 6-8th grade students participating per school at 20 schools. Exact numbers and staffing will need to be based on actual enrollment.

	<b>SY 22-23</b>	<b>SY23-24</b>	<b>SY24-25 +beyond</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	\$1M for 10 FTE	\$2M for a total 20 FTE (sustain 10 FTE, hire 10 new FTE)	\$2M
<b>Band Instrument Purchase</b>	\$2M	\$2M	\$1M
<b>Elementary School General Music Instrument Pkg</b>	\$1M	\$115,000	\$115,000
<b>Miscellaneous</b> (accessories, repairs/maintenance, professional development, curriculum development, assessment, etc.)	\$1M	\$1M	\$1M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$5,115,000</b>	<b>\$4,115,000</b>

**Please see full Instrumental Music Plan for details on budget, staffing, scheduling.**

**Theater and Dance Recommendations:**

- **Pk-5 Instructional Goal: Exposure to Dance and Theater**
  - Revise Dance Unit within P.E. curriculum and train all P.E. teachers in unit implementation
  - Professional development to support the Integration of Theater/Drama strategies into ELA/Wit and Wisdom
  - Provide schools with annual funding to support performance experiences, after-school clubs, summer programs, and artist residencies

- **6-8 Instructional Goal: Opportunity to participate and/or specialize in Dance and Theater.**
  - Curricular elective courses for credit in dance and theater taught by certified teachers hired as locked positions and shared across multiple schools
  - Provide schools with annual funding to support performance experiences, after-school clubs, summer programs, and artist residencies
  
- **9-12 Instructional Goal: Depth of study/college and career readiness.**
  - Sequential standards-aligned courses that prepare students for further study taught by certified teachers hired as 'locked' centrally funded positions and assigned across multiple schools
  - Provide schools with stipends to support performance experiences, after-school clubs, and artist residencies
  
- **Annual Performance Space Infrastructure Budget**
  - Fine Arts and Operations Offices collaborate and administer funds based on school-specific needs to improve, maintain, and/or retrofit learning spaces for arts instruction.

<b>Financial Requirements (Central) for SY 2022-23 (approx.)</b>			
	<b>SY 22-23</b>	<b>SY23-24</b>	<b>SY24-25 +beyond</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	\$2M for 20 FTE (10 dance, 10 theater)	\$2M for 20 FTE (10 dance, 10 theater)	\$2M for 20 FTE (10 dance, 10 theater)
<b>Performing Arts Enrichment Experiences</b>	\$1 million	\$1 million	\$1 million
<b>Curriculum Development and PD for Elementary Physical Education/ELA</b>	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Annual Performance Space Infrastructure Budget</b>	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,155,000</b>	<b>\$3,155,000</b>	<b>\$3,155,000</b>

## Appendix III: High School Budget Guidance Recommendations

Access to sequential Fine Arts study necessary for college and career readiness remains highly inequitable across schools serving grades 9-12. Based on SY 2020-21 course and staffing analysis, we reached the following conclusions:

- Entrance Criteria Schools are the most likely to offer comprehensive depth of study (multiple, scaffolded courses within a single discipline), a variety of Fine Arts disciplines, and access to Pre-AP and AP Fine Arts courses. The district's six Entrance Criteria Schools are extremely competitive. This leaves the majority of high school students with little to no access to a variety of arts disciplines offered or pathways of study that can prepare them for college and career or scholarship opportunities.
- Eleven schools serving grades 9-12 offer Survey of Music or Fundamentals of Art ONLY. Twelve schools serving grades 9-12 have only 1 certified fine arts teacher. While Survey and Fundamentals are 1-credit courses that technically satisfy the Maryland graduation requirement, they do not prepare students for college and careers in the arts.
- Inadequate access to fine arts courses and certified fine arts teachers is *not* a 'small school' issue, it is an equity issue. The average enrollment of schools that offer 1-credit graduation requirement courses is 644 while the average enrollment for schools with 2 or more fine arts teachers is 687.
- As of SY2020-21, 20% of schools offer Pre-AP and AP Fine Arts courses. We are thrilled to see the expansion efforts of the Fine Arts and Gifted and Advanced Learners Offices. We also applaud the efforts to improve the visual art course maps to improve scaffolding and instructional quality. In order for continued AP expansion to be successful, additional staffing is necessary.

Based on these findings, we recommend that high school budget guidance be based on school enrollment size.

### ***Draft Secondary and High School Fine Arts Budget Guidance***

*Per COMAR all schools with grades 9-12 must provide an instructional program for students to meet graduation requirements and offer at least 1-2 additional courses in a discipline to provide depth of study. Schools are encouraged to implement Pre-AP and/or AP fine arts across all disciplines of visual art, music, dance, theater, and media arts. Instruction must be provided by certified fine arts teachers.*

- *In FY23 City Schools will continue prioritizing the hiring of certified fine arts teachers in multiple arts disciplines at each school in order to meet COMAR fine arts requirements and offer students depth of study.*
- *The below staffing guidance must be used by all schools with grades 9-12. ● The below staffing guidance is also recommended for middle schools adopting the high school scheduling model to increase access to opportunities to specialize in a fine arts subject per COMAR requirements for instructional programs in*

middle grades.

- The five-period day schedule is strongly recommended to support depth of study

<b>Fine Arts Certified Teacher Staffing Requirements for All Schools with Grades 9-12 and middle schools adopting the high school scheduling model</b>	
<b># of students (9-12)</b>	<b>Required Fine Arts Staffing Allocation Additional Information</b>
300 or fewer	<i>Minimum 2.0 FTE Staffing in Music and Visual Art. Graduation requirement courses plus at least 1 additional depth of study course in each discipline</i>
301-500	<i>Minimum 3.0 FTE Staffing in Music, Visual Art and Theater OR Dance. Graduation requirement courses plus at least 1 additional depth of study course in each discipline in a four-period day, or at least two in a five-period day</i>
501-750	<i>Minimum 4.0 FTE Staffing in Music, Visual Art, Theater AND Dance. Graduation requirement courses plus at least 2 additional depth of study courses in each discipline in a four-period day, or a total of four depth of study courses across fine arts disciplines.</i>
751-950	<i>Minimum 5.0 FTE Staffing in Music, Visual Art, Dance and Theater. Graduation requirement courses plus at least 4 additional depth of study courses in each discipline.</i>
951-1250	<i>Minimum 6.0 FTE Staffing in Music, Visual Art, Dance and Theater. Graduation requirement courses plus at least 4 additional depth of study courses in each discipline using the five-period day scheduling model.</i>

1251 or more	<i>Minimum 7.0 FTE Staffing in Music, Visual Art, Dance and Theater. Graduation requirement courses plus at least 4 additional depth of study courses in each discipline using the five-period day scheduling model.</i>
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#### **Appendix IV: Budget Guidance for Materials of Instruction**

Year after year, we continue to hear from teachers who receive inadequate budgets for materials of instruction to support numbers of students enrolled, and sometimes no budget at all. Teachers fundraise or buy supplies with their own money, in some cases, to provide instruction. The current guidance is unclear and lacks process and accountability measures. We recommend the following be considered for developing new budget guidance:

- Include allocations for annual consumable supplies per Fine Arts Office recommendation and as part of the school budget collaborative review process in the Spring. Allocations must align with the number of students being served by the programs.
- Ensure accountability and tracking of actual expenditures through K12 Buy and end of year teacher surveys.