Introduction to the Essential Arts Toolkit

The Hawai`i Essential Arts Toolkit is a grade level guide designed for use by elementary classroom teachers. Scarcity of instructional time and the pressures of an already crowded curriculum necessitate an approach to the arts as an integral part of elementary classroom learning. Rather than overwhelm K-5 generalist teachers with hundreds of arts benchmarks, this guide focuses on the most essential arts content for every child in Hawai`i elementary schools.

The first edition of the Toolkit was developed and piloted at statewide summer institutes for teachers and during a three-year research project funded by a U.S. Department of Education Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD) grant. This second edition of the Toolkit reflects the learning gained during the research project and incorporates the 2005 revision of the Hawai`i Content and Performance Standards (HCPS III).

History and Background

In 1998, a survey in the state of Hawai`i found that none of the elementary schools were offering standards based arts curriculum. It also revealed that of three hundred four full-time elementary school teachers only thirty-one teachers were specialists in the arts. The ARTS FIRST Partners, which includes Hawai`i Alliance for Arts Education, Hawai`i Department of Education, University of Hawai`i College of Education, University of Hawai`i College of Arts and Humanities, Hawai`i State Foundation on Culture and Arts, Hawai`i Association of Independent Schools, was formed to address this need. The coalition led to the signing of ACT 80 during the 1999 state legislative session, which mandated the creation of a strategic plan to address the revised Hawai`i fine arts standards. ACT 306 signed in the 2001 legislative session mandated the Partners to implement this plan.

Recognizing that classroom teachers need effective tools to provide consistent standards based–arts learning, several ARTS FIRST initiatives were launched:

1. Professional Development Institutes, workshops, and mentoring programs for teachers and teaching artists;
2. A library of sample arts integrated lessons on the Hawai`i Learning Interchange website (supported by a Challenge America Grant in Arts and Technology from the National Endowment for the Arts);
3. ARTS FIRST Windward Research Project funded by the U.S. Department of Education;
4. ARTS FIRST Waiahole Action Research Project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts;
5. The Essential Arts Toolkit.
Hawai`i Arts Education Timeline

**1994–1998**

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
Included the arts as a core subject for the first time, under what was called Goals 2000

National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts
Developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations

National Assessment of Educational Progress
Arts Report Card: Eighth-Grade Findings

1998 survey in the state of Hawai`i revealed that of 304 full-time elementary school teachers only 31 teachers are specialists in the arts.

1999 Hawai`i fine arts content standards are written based on the National Standards for Arts Education.

**1999–2001**

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act entitled, No Child Left Behind
Retained the arts among listings of core subjects however high stakes testing mandated only for math and language arts

Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning
Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons Learned from School Districts that Value Arts Education

The ARTS FIRST Partners - Hawai`i Alliance for Arts Education, Hawai`i Department of Education, University of Hawai`i College of Education, University of Hawai`i College of Arts and Humanities, Hawai`i State Foundation on Culture and Arts, Hawai`i Association of Independent Schools - leads to signing of ACT 80 during the 1999 state legislative session which mandated the creation of a strategic plan to address revised Hawai`i fine arts standards. ACT 306 signed during 2001 legislative session mandated Partners to implement the strategic plan. Due to the lack of elementary arts specialists, the focus is an arts integrated approach for generalist classroom teachers.

Recognizing that classroom teachers need effective tools to provide consistent standards-based arts learning, several initiatives were launched:
1. Development of the ARTS FIRST Essential Arts Toolkit for the K-5 Classroom Teacher: Hawai`i Fine Arts Grade Level Guide, Supplement to the Hawai`i Department of Education’s Arts Instructional Guide;
2. Professional Development Institutes, workshops, and mentoring programs for teachers and teaching artists to disseminate the Toolkit;
3. Hawai`i Learning Interchange (supported by a National Endowment for the Arts Challenge America Grant in Arts and Technology).
4. ARTS FIRST Windward Research Project funded by the U.S. Department of Education;
5. ARTS FIRST Waiahole Action Research Project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Creating Capacity – A Framework for Providing Professional Development Opportunities for Teaching Artists

Ongoing professional development for teaching artists to provide standards-based arts lessons in the classroom.
Hawai`i Arts Education Timeline continued

U.S. Department of Education Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD) Grants

Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development

Model Standards for Licensing Classroom Teachers and Specialists in the Arts: A Resource for State Dialogue
Developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Arts Education Committee

Hawai`i receives funding to support ARTS FIRST Windward Research Project, a model to implement the Essential Arts Toolkit and infuse standards-based arts in three elementary schools.

Creative Curriculum, a Honolulu Theatre for Youth program presented in partnership with the University of Hawai`i College of Education, teaches pre-service teachers how to implement and integrate standards-based drama education in the classroom.

Hawai`i DOE works with MCREL developing the Hawai`i Content and Performance Standards III (HCPS III) fine arts standards. The fine arts standards are streamlined and revised to provide more clarity and “ease of use” for teachers. HCPS III fine arts standards are approved in August 2005.

Essential Arts Toolkit is revised to align with HCPS III and reflect findings from Hawai`i US DOE research project.

Systematic training program of teaching artists developed and implemented by Hawai`i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Hawai`i Alliance for Arts Education and Maui Arts and Cultural Center.
Professional Development

The core of ARTS FIRST is statewide professional development for classroom teachers and teaching artists. Due to the lack of district arts specialists, Hawai`i’s teaching artists have been trained to develop arts integrated standards-based instruction and to mentor classroom teachers.

The interaction between classroom teachers and artists gives teachers opportunities to fully comprehend the elements and principles of the arts and to learn effective arts instructional practice. Both artists and classroom teachers attend weeklong summer institutes to gain a working knowledge of the Essential Arts Toolkit. At each institute, teachers attend hands-on sessions led by teaching artists that are focused on integrating arts content with benchmarks in other core subjects.

Teachers also receive an artist mentor to assist them in the development of integrated arts lessons that will be taught in their classrooms. Following lesson planning, the mentor first demonstrates arts instruction in the classroom, then co-teaches an integrated lesson with the teacher, and finally observes the teacher, providing helpful feedback along the way.

The Hawai`i Alliance for Arts Education and the Maui Arts and Cultural Center also offer on-going professional development workshops led by local and visiting teaching artists. All of these workshops are aligned with the Toolkit and are designed to help teachers address Hawai`i state benchmarks in the arts and other core subjects.
Hawai`i Learning Interchange

The Hawai`i Learning Interchange supports the Essential Arts Toolkit with a library of model lessons designed to assist classroom teachers in delivering standards-based arts and arts integrated lessons. All lessons encompass the criteria of “creating, performing and responding,” and include:

- **Introduction**
  Overview of the lesson and definition of which standards are addressed

- **Lesson Preparation**
  Vocabulary, Arts Materials, Sample Artworks

- **Lesson**
  Guides the teacher through lesson delivery with video highlights of key sections

- **Student Reflection**
  Questions for teachers to pose to students to engage them in reflection and response about their work

- **Assessment**
  Teachers and students use a rubric to assess the work

- **Teacher Reflection**
  Teacher shares tips for delivery, ways to improve, possible changes for next time

- **Resources**
  Sections of the Essential Arts Toolkit in PDF format that are specific to the grade level of the lesson plus other pertinent resources

To visit the Hawai`i Learning Interchange, go to www.apple.com/ali/hawaii
ARTS FIRST Windward Research Project

The ARTS FIRST Windward Research Project (AFWRP) was a three-year endeavor funded by the U.S. Department of Education Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD) Grant Program. The research addressed the merit of ARTS FIRST instruction as shown by changes in student achievement in reading, writing and math, as well as student attitudes towards school and behavior.

In the research project, all third, fourth, and fifth grade classroom teachers in three randomly assigned public schools on the island of Oahu received professional development and artist mentors. The research teachers received five days of professional development and a minimum of twenty hours of artist mentor support in the classroom each year. A group of three matched control schools were also studied.

The professional development and mentoring were organized around the principle of the arts as tools for thinking. In *Sparks of Genius*¹, the Root-Bernsteins identify the following thirteen thinking tools: observing, imaging, abstracting, recognizing patterns, forming patterns, analogizing, body thinking, empathizing, dimensional thinking, modeling, playing, transforming and synthesizing. In our professional development work with teachers in Oahu’s Windward District, we selected three combinations of the Root-Bernsteins “tools”: observing, recognizing and forming patterns, and representing – a combination of body thinking, modeling and transforming. We discovered that non-arts teachers quickly understood the power of using these tools in the classroom.

**Observing**

“Discovery consists of seeing what everybody else has seen and thinking what nobody else has thought.”

*(Sparks of Genius)*

Through observing, students examine details closely, yielding deeper understanding of the subject. Observing not only promotes awareness of details but also increases depth of visualization. Observing helps students see patterns and relationships in math and text, and, as students become more aware of details in stories, their own writing reflects the importance of detail in communicating ideas.

**Patterning**

“Artists, musicians, dancers, physicists, mathematicians and inventors imagine and make new patterns all the time, with almost any type of material, mental or physical.” *(Sparks of Genius)*

Developing the ability to see and produce patterns in the arts helps students discern and understand relationships in general. Visual and rhythmic patterns can promote organization within student writing and students’ abilities to comprehend sequential relationships and patterns within mathematical concepts. Students demonstrate their understanding of patterns through the arts by creating scenes, images or musical phrases that exemplify patterns in reading, writing or math.

**Representing**

“Understanding is most complete when you are not you but the thing you wish to understand.” *(Sparks of Genius)*

Students express ideas in multiple ways: words, movements, equations, songs, symbols, or images. To move from ideas to communication almost always requires a series of steps: translating the idea or problem into images or models, searching for patterns through careful observation or experiment, abstracting the most important elements, and playing around with various solutions, searching for the language that can best express one’s insight.

The arts allow teachers to better see or hear student understanding. When students are asked to represent an idea with their bodies or through visual symbols, their understanding becomes visible. Representing thinking through the arts can be especially valuable in early literacy or for second language learners who may not yet have the verbal skills to communicate their understanding.

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### Overview for the Three Primary Arts Strategies in the Research

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