



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Why the Arts Matter for America's Students:

Focus of AEP National Forum Coming to Pittsburgh – September, 2014

Heinz Endowments Awards \$10,000 Grant and Arts Education Collaborative Launches Local Planning Efforts

(Washington, DC) – Nearly every [state](#) in America has adopted standards or set expectations for what students should know and be able to do in the arts. Forty-five states require by law that elementary schools in their state provide arts instruction. Thirty-two states define the arts in statute or code as a core or academic subject. *And* decades of research show that students in schools with arts-rich learning environments academically outperform their peers in arts-poor schools. Given these facts, then, why are the arts often treated in many communities as extracurricular, extraneous, or expendable when making school staffing and funding decisions?

The [Arts Education Partnership](#) (AEP), with a generous grant of \$10,000 from [the Heinz Endowments](#) joined the [Arts Education Collaborative \(AEC\)](#) at the Carnegie Museum of Art today to announce Pittsburgh as the host city for **AEP's 2014 National Forum on Arts Education** in America and to kick off the planning with local community leaders to address these issues and more.

Some of the nation's most influential leaders in arts, education, business, and philanthropy will convene in Pittsburgh September 11-12, 2014 during [National Arts in Education Week](#) to explore arts-centered solutions as states across the country implement higher learning expectations aimed at ensuring America's young people leave high school ready for college and careers.

"Pittsburgh is rightfully known for the quality of its arts and culture resources, but more people should know that the distinctiveness of our cultural life includes arts education resources in schools, out of school time settings, and at cultural institutions," comments Janet Sarbaugh, Senior Director of the Arts and Culture Programs for the Heinz Endowments. "We are proud to support AEP's National Forum as it presents a tremendous opportunity to bring the arts education field to our great city and to showcase the great strengths of Pittsburgh and the state of Pennsylvania to a national community of advocates and practitioners committed to making the arts an essential part of a complete education for every young person."

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Pg. 2 National Forum on Arts Education in America

AEP National Forum attendees include leaders from the education, arts, business, cultural, government, and philanthropic sectors. They are administrators, advanced practitioners, consultants, directors, and researchers engaged in and committed to arts learning and education reform. The level of the conversation is one that aids these leaders in their decision making and program development, and also informs the current and future work of their organizations.

“Pittsburgh is an urban hub for quality arts education. A rich arts and cultural environment, nationally recognized education and research institutions, and community organizations engaged in collaborations provide the ideal setting for leaders and decision –makers from across the nation to explore what works in arts education and why,” comments Sarah Tambucci Ph.D., Arts Education Collaborative Director.

National Forum highlights include community-wide activities in celebration of National Arts in Education Week; prominent keynote speakers; concurrent sessions around best practices in arts learning, education policy and emerging research; and a spotlight on local student performers and rising young artists. For more information on how to get involved contact aepforums@ccsso.org or call: 202-326-8693.

Arts Education Partnership

A national coalition of more than 100 education, arts, cultural, business, government, and philanthropic organizations, AEP gathers and analyzes relevant research and policy information, fosters dialogue about what works in arts education, and supports advocacy for improved education policy and practice. AEP, a part of the [Council of Chief State School Officers](#), was established in 1995 and is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education in cooperation with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

Heinz Endowments

The Heinz Endowments, based in Pittsburgh, uses their region as a laboratory for the development of solutions to challenges that are national in scope. Its mission is to help the region thrive as a whole community, economically, ecologically, educationally and culturally, while advancing the state of knowledge and practice in the fields in which we work. Our fields of emphasis include philanthropy in general and the disciplines represented by our five grant-making programs: Arts & Culture; Children, Youth & Families; Community & Economic Development; Education; and Environment.

Arts Education Collaborative

The Arts Education Collaborative (AEC) was established in 1998 to respond strategically to regional needs and to pursue opportunities that provide sustainable solutions to advancing arts education. The AEC supplies professional development to arts educators and develops programs and services that respond to assessed needs for providers of the arts.

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Related Links

[ArtsEdSearch.org](#) – Nation’s first clearinghouse on arts education research and policy

[Preparing Students for Next America: The Benefits of an Arts Education](#)

[State of the States: Arts Education 2012 State Policy Summary](#)