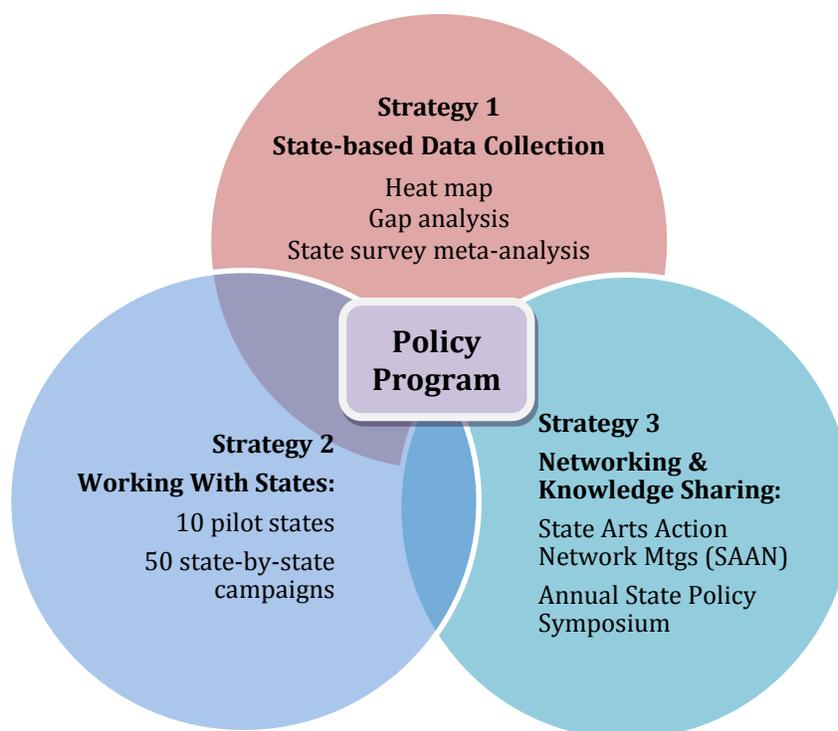


Americans for the Arts' State Policy Pilot Program Policy vs. Practice Gap Analysis



Americans for the Arts' State Policy Pilot Program aims to influence implementation of federal mandates at the state level; expand state support of arts education in policy and appropriations; and impact local access to arts programs and instruction for students. The State Policy Pilot Program has three main strategies, outlined below:



Gap Analysis Overview

Starting in 2013, Americans for the Arts began three distinct projects to collect data that will help inform the ongoing work of the State Policy Pilot Program, as well as share vital information with the field about what is happening at the state level in arts education. One of the projects is a “Gap Analysis” to see where policy differs from practice.

Currently the most information we have about arts education state policy comes from ArtScan, a database managed by the Arts Education Partnership. However, this policy database does not make determinations of how effective these policies are; which polices are being implemented; or what constitutes good policy language.

The Gap Analysis will help the field gain a greater understanding of trends and influences in arts education by comparing and contrasting policies currently in the ArtScan database and through in-depth interviews with state level leaders. The information gleaned from both the review and the interviews will provide policy makers

with a better understanding of how effectively their policies are being implemented and give advocates a clearer picture of where to focus their advocacy efforts.

Barb Whitney from the University of Michigan, Flint, has been selected as a fellow to conduct the Gap Analysis with Americans for the Arts. Her work started with a complete review of the existing database, ArtScan, reading through full text of policy statute and code for all 50 states and DC, with a particular eye for effective language or trends.

Americans for the Arts has identified multiple leaders across various agencies in all 50 states whom the fellow will contact. The interviews will provide the opportunity for multiple voices to weigh in from various roles in the education, arts, and advocacy fields. We will work to uncover how policy is (or isn't) implemented in each state by illuminating any nuance in the state's policies, discussing where policies differ from practice, noting additional sources of policy such as case law, legal opinions, or other mandates, and revealing implementation factors such as leadership and advocacy.

All interview information will remain confidential, and will be aggregated—both from the various interviews within each state and again from all 50 states—to inform the final report. Americans for the Arts hopes to tell a story about the factors that affect whether or not policy gets implemented in any given state.

Our final report will likely be grouped around categories that influence implementation of policy (such as advocacy, politics, leadership, and accountability), citing best practice and examples where policy is effectively being implemented. The paper will also outline potential steps an arts education supporter could take to advocate for better implementation of their own state's arts education policies.

After the final report has been written, Americans for the Arts will work with partner organizations (Arts Education Partnership, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, State Education Agencies Directors of Arts Education, Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network, the National Association of State Boards of Education, and our own State Arts Action Network) to determine what additional end products (tools, publications, and resources) could be useful to both advocates and policymakers alike in navigating how to support arts education through policy, whether that is through better accountability, leadership, policy language, or through the mobilization of advocates.

For more information about the Gap Analysis, please contact Americans for the Arts' Arts Education Program Manager, Kristen Engebretsen:
email: kengebretsen@artsusa.org phone: 202-371-2830.

For more information about the State Policy Pilot Program, please visit:
www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SP3.