

Report to the State of Minnesota and the Minnesota Legislature

Perpich Center for Arts Education

January 15, 2014

*Status of projects supported by funds from
the Minnesota Legislature's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund
in 2013*



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Legacy Initiative Background

As the state agency dedicated to K-12 arts education since 1985, the Perpich Center for Arts Education has the expertise, tools, and infrastructure to design and provide innovative and effective programs to meet the learning needs of students and teachers statewide. The Center is comprised of an arts high school, outreach initiatives, and a state arts education library. More information about the Perpich Center can be found at <http://www.pcae.k12.mn.us/>

In November 2008, Minnesota voters approved a constitutional amendment that created a dedicated sales tax to fund work related to clean water, land, habitat, parks, trails, arts, and cultural heritage. In 2009, a Senate sub-committee on arts education tasked the Perpich Center for Arts Education with designing and implementing two high quality educational projects using Arts and Cultural Heritage funds: the *Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers* and the *Arts Education in Minnesota Schools Research Project*. The *Arts Education in Minnesota Schools Research Project* concluded in 2012. Due to initial successes, the Minnesota Legislature asked the Perpich Center to continue and expand its *Arts Integration Network of Teachers* for two successive biennia, including the current 2014-15 biennium, with an appropriation of \$1.5 million for those two years.

The following chart indicates the budget categories for this project and use of funds from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015.

Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers Fiscal Years 2014-2015 Activity	Budgeted Funds
Program Development and Delivery; Technology Integration	\$ 303,000
Lakes Country Region: Teacher Professional Development, Network of Teachers and Implementation at School Sites (FY 2014 only)	\$ 72,000
Southeast Region: Teacher Professional Development, Network of Teachers and Implementation at School Sites	\$ 483,000
Northeast Region: Teacher Professional Development, Network of Teachers and Implementation at School Sites (FY 2015 only)	\$ 270,000
Arts-Integrated Secondary Course Initiative: Teacher Professional Development, Network of Teachers and Course Planning (FY 2015 only)	\$ 140,000
Curriculum Documentation, Project Dissemination and Accountability	\$ 192,000
Legacy Project Administration	\$ 40,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,500,000

Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers

Overview and Goals

A recent report from the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities¹ recommends that the field of arts integration be expanded (p. vii). This recommendation comes at a time when research is leading diverse national professional organizations to adopt arguments for strong arts in education. These groups, and research, often point to four major categories of influence that the arts have on students:

- **Student achievement**, including transfer of skill learning from the arts to other content areas
- **Student motivation and engagement**, including persistence and focused attention
- Development of **habits of mind**, including problem solving and critical and creative thinking
- Development of **social competencies**, including collaboration, tolerance, and self-confidence.

Building on this powerful connection between the arts and success in academics and life, the Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers helps expand the use of arts integration as a strategy for increasing student learning and engagement. The Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers fosters collaborative arts integration in Minnesota through K-12 teacher professional development and funding to schools. The project is regionally based; in 2013, networks are active in Lakes Country (west central Minnesota) and the southeast, and applications are open for an additional network in the northeast. Through this project, the Perpich Center is providing a vision and demonstrating what can be possible in education reform and improvement.

The project defines *arts integration* as a strategy involving teaching the content and processes of two or more subject areas, including the arts, in combination to increase and deepen student learning, inquiry and engagement. With arts integration at the center, the Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers aims to reach the following project goals:

Goal 1: Increase the capacity of teachers to design, implement, and assess collaborative arts integration in Minnesota schools, and the capacity of administrators to support this instructional strategy.

Goal 2: Improve standards-based student learning through collaborative arts integration, a strategy used by teachers and supported by administrators.

I think about lesson design in a new way. I have changed my role in the classroom to more of a guide or facilitator.
--Teacher, 2012-13

Our strategies for reaching these goals include:

- professional development for teachers and administrators on standards-based collaborative arts integration; aligned curriculum; instruction and evaluation; and technology tools

¹ President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (2011). *Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America's Future Through Creative Schools*. www.pcah.gov, 15-16.

- leveraging technology for professional development and dissemination of teacher and student learning and examples

Project components include:

Professional Development and Facilitation: Arts Integration Network teachers work together to plan, teach, and assess integrated lessons that are student-centered and standards-based. Supported by Perpich facilitators, teams of three to eight teachers build skills as they plan and teach units of study that integrate the arts (dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts) with other subjects such as social studies, math, English language arts, and science.

- Teachers in the network use inquiry to expand thinking on arts integration and their own practice. They learn strategies for:
 - integrating the arts with other content areas in meaningful, engaging ways;
 - aligning standards, learning goals, and assessments; and
 - reflecting on and learning from student work.

We had to start with the standards. That is very different from anything we have ever done before. It is one of the most solid pieces of work I have done. The key was to start with the standards and figure out what kids need to learn and then scaffold from there.

--Teacher, 2012-13

- **Professional development components:**
 - multi-day workshops during summers;
 - three one-day network meetings with other school teams throughout the school year, each preceded by online learning modules;
 - coaching meetings with Perpich facilitators on-site and online.

Professional Network, Online and In-Person: Building bridges across disciplines involves tearing down silos and finding exciting and important connections between content areas, within school teams, and across regions. Together, throughout the program, school teams:

- share expertise,
 - solve problems,
 - give and get feedback,
 - brainstorm instructional strategies,
 - reflect on lessons, and
 - celebrate successes.
- **Networking with other teachers in two different spaces:** in person at workshops and meetings, and online in a learning community and through learning modules.

We have been looking for a long time for ways to collaborate. We have to change the fear from isolation. The key to change is mentoring and coaching [across peers]. This [project] is a great vehicle – it shows exactly what you can do if you share expertise.

--Teacher, 2012-13

Documentation and Technology: The Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers is an arts integration laboratory to create, try out, and refine units. School teams contribute to the big picture of arts integration in Minnesota by digitally documenting and sharing their exemplary unit plans, practices, and samples of student work.

They let you grow at a pace you are capable of handling. I also like that it is certainly more in-depth than most training. It involves higher level thinking and there is a creative aspect which helps with kids seeing connections to other learning. . . . This is such a deeper level of learning and teaching. It is hard to explain to other peers. This is what quality work looks like. --Teacher, 2012-13

Teacher professional development is one of the best investments that can be made in increasing student achievement and engagement. In the Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers' first four years (2010-2014) the project has positively impacted the learning of more than 5,000 students in the Lakes Country and Southeast regions. Nearly 200 teachers in the arts and in other content areas have engaged in professional development leading to intentional, collaborative planning and teaching of arts-integrated curriculum based on the Minnesota Academic Standards. The year 2013 has seen the continuation and expansion of critical aspects of Perpich Center professional development initiatives leading to impact on teacher growth and student learning and engagement in participating schools as described below.

Results 2012-13: Teacher and Student Learning

The following is an overview of impact of the project in 2012-13, based on documentation and analysis completed by the project's external evaluators, George Noblit, Dick Corbett, Bruce Wilson, and Alison LaGarry. This school year was the first year this group evaluated the project's progress toward its goals. These findings are from the evaluator final report for the 2012-13 project year, *Student and Teacher Learning in the Perpich Arts Integration Project 2012-13*, resulting from data gathered in both the Lakes Country and southeast regions. These results not only help Perpich staff define and measure impact, but also improve the project design and implementation. The full report can be found on the project website, <http://artsintegration.perpich.mn.gov/>

Students

Evaluators found that to a great extent, students learned what was intended through arts integration, in all content areas involved. Importantly, though, the way they arrived at that point differed from the typical classroom experience, both in terms of engagement and degree of thoughtfulness and rigor.

The evaluation team observed 55 classroom lessons in participating schools taught during the 2012-13 academic year. Some lessons were part of an arts-integrated unit, some were not; some lessons involved the arts, and some did not. Evaluators observed that 92% of lessons involving the arts showed students highly engaged, versus 53% of those lessons not involving the arts. 56% of lessons involving the arts showed students highly thoughtful, or acting rigorously, versus 32% of those lessons not involving

the arts. This suggests that the presence of the arts has an impact on both engagement and depth of thought and rigor—both of which the evaluation team will continue to examine in coming years.



Student engagement is key to academic success. 75% of students involved with arts integration through the project reported that they would like to learn via arts integration more often; these numbers suggest a decided majority of students found learning through arts integration to be engaging. “The data show that students’ opportunities to participate actively in a range of ways broadened in the Perpich units... Students quite simply got to be more active, took on a larger decision-making role, and interacted with peers to

a greater extent in the units...” (Noblit et al, 2013) Further, teachers observed many aspects of student engagement evident in their classrooms: on-task behavior, students taking great pride in their work, engaged in tasks, applying arts and non-arts content accurately, and helping each other. Some teachers noticed that using arts integration as a learning strategy allowed struggling students to flourish.

Teachers

The project evaluation for 2012-13 suggests that teachers “gained considerable facility with collaboration (not only with colleagues but also with Perpich staff), the Minnesota system of standards and benchmarks, and arts integration.” (p. 13) Specifically,

- 85% reported that they had experienced great improvement in creating arts-integrated units
- 79% in aligning work to benchmarks
- 78% in knowledge of arts integration
- 74% in collaboration with colleagues
- 60% in making modifications to instruction based on student work

Based on what the evaluators observed in classrooms, they describe additional impacts of teacher collaboration. They suggest that collaboration:

- Led to reduced isolation
- Developed excitement and engagement in teachers
- Expanded teacher knowledge
- Allowed teachers to learn about different teaching styles and content areas
- Resulted in younger teachers learned both valuable skills and earned professional appreciation
- Focused on looking at student work together “allowed for deeper consideration of learning and was both interesting and valuable for their overall teaching practice” (p. 15)

The evaluation also found that the strategy of arts integration itself had several areas of impact on teachers. Importantly, improved planning led to increased intentionality in instruction, and adjustment during teaching: “Teachers said they were beginning to recognize how to support learning effectively by being more intentional in their instruction and adjusting plans during their implementation.” Along with this came an emphasis on higher order goals for student learning, and more engagement. Teachers were convinced that this is a worthwhile learning strategy to use, with real impact on students.



Another area of impact that the evaluators noted was that arts integration allowed teachers to try out best practices: “Teachers were often already aware of alternative instructional approaches but project participation helped them to understand those tools more deeply and to put them into practice.... Importantly the project allowed teachers to show capabilities they felt testing and accountability requirements stifled. In this way, the initiative gave them “permission” to use existing skills they did not often get to exhibit in their classrooms.” (p 20) As

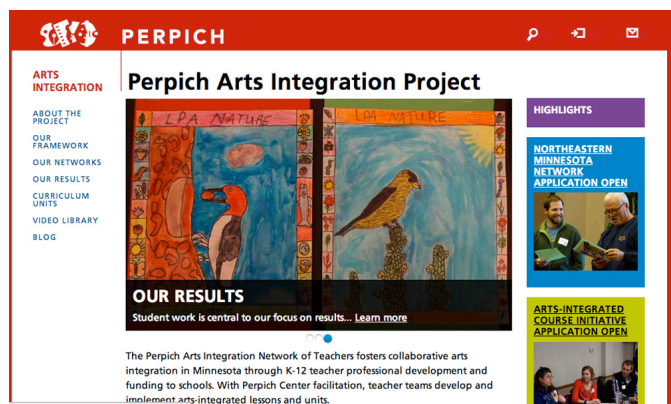
we work toward classrooms that engage all students, this opportunity for teachers to develop professionally is key.

The Perpich Center continues to value the work of external evaluators to gather and analyze data in order to understand the impact of our work on students, teachers, and administrators in the field of arts integration. The Center is dedicated to building evidence and research on the impact of arts integration as an important contribution to education reform.

Technology: Online Learning and Project Dissemination

From the start of the arts integration networks, the Perpich Center has identified technology and online learning as key strategies for furthering project goals. In addition, the project continues to expand ways in which results and knowledge generated by the Perpich Center as well as participating teachers and students can be shared statewide (and across the nation) via its website.

The project’s new website is a growing resource. For example, the library of examples of the arts-integrated curricula developed and tested by teachers in the project is expanding. The website outlines and provides resources for an approach to arts integration professional learning that has been created and refined over the last



few years. The website also has a community side, which is a space for teachers in the project, and possibly for others in the future, to engage in threaded discussions and access each other's projects in order to share and receive feedback. This website can be accessed at artsintegration.perpich.mn.gov

Technology for online collaboration and learning is developing quickly. The Perpich Center is engaged in investigating tools that currently exist and testing them as assets for teacher professional learning in the project. The Lakes Country region shifted to using more technology in the 2013-14 school year as a vehicle for teachers to learn from and collaborate with each other (see below for more details). Project staff piloted a Cadre of Digital Learners in 2013, which included teachers from both Southeast and Lakes Country regional networks, to test contemporary tools and strategies for online professional development and networking. These teachers engaged with social bookmarking, blogging, Voicethread, and the project website's community side to further their learning and understanding of arts integration. The work was presented at the annual TIES (Technology and Information Education Services) conference.

Meeting with teachers via video has also expanded this year. Project staff members have been testing video conferencing as a tool for holding coaching conversations with rural teacher teams without having to travel long distances. While there are many variables that can affect the success of a video conference, such as internet speed and access at different sites, this medium is promising as a way to expand the reach of individually tailored professional development such as coaching and curriculum development to meet the needs of teachers in their schools.

Videos of the projects at several schools have been created to demonstrate key aspects of arts integration and student engagement for use in professional development settings. A new video filmed in the spring of 2013 portrays arts integration in a STEM school, and will be available soon, with the other videos, at the project website.

Regional Network Snapshot: Lakes Country, Year 4

As the first region selected to be a part of this project, the Lakes Country network has been active since the 2010-11 school year. In the fourth year of the project (academic year 2013-14), 26 teaches at six schools in the Lakes Country region (Clay, Becker, Wilkin, Otter Tail, Traverse, Grant, Douglas, Stevens, and Pope counties) participated in the Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers:

- Breckenridge High School, 9-12
- Lake Park Audubon Elementary School, K-6
- New York Mills Secondary School, 7-12
- Osakis Elementary School, K-6
- Pelican Rapids Elementary School, K-4
- Rothsay Elementary and Secondary School, K-12

Content areas included in arts integrated units in the 2013-14 academic year included visual arts, music, media arts, theater, dance, history, social studies, science, math, geography, English and language arts, family and consumer sciences, and technology.

Leveraging Technology

In this final year of the Lakes Country network, Perpich is supporting teacher teams to find ways to sustain their collaborative arts integration and their professional learning as they build on the knowledge and skills developed in previous years with Perpich facilitation. Teachers are engaging in fewer in-person workshops and coaching sessions than in the past three years. More interactions between teachers are happening online, and more of the professional development is occurring with peers, instead of directly with Perpich facilitators.

As teacher teams are planning arts integrated units with decreased Perpich facilitation, they are accessing their peers in the regional network for feedback on their units, via online collaborative tools such as google docs, instead of relying on feedback from Perpich coaches. Additionally, teachers will be engaging in online learning modules this winter to expand their knowledge of arts integration in the context of contemporary educational frameworks, such as the Common Core Standards and twenty-first century skills. All of these project developments are intended to help teachers sustain their good work by building networks, both in their school and across the region, with whom they can continue arts integration in the years to come.

Regional Network Snapshot: Southeast, Year 2

The Southeast regional network began activity in the 2012-13 school year, and has expanded in its second year to involve 61 participants in 13 schools.

- Alden Conger Elementary School, Alden, K-6
- John Adams Middle School, Rochester, 6-8
- La Crescent Middle School, La Crescent, 6-8
- La Crescent High School, La Crescent, 9-12
- LeRoy-Ostrander Secondary School, LeRoy, 6-12
- Mabel Canton School, Mabel, K-12
- McKinley Elementary School, Owatonna, 6-12
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Upper Elementary, Elgin, 4-6
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville High School, Plainview, 9-12
- Sibley Elementary School, Albert Lea, K-5
- Southland Middle and High School, Adams, 6-12
- Southland Elementary School, Adams, K-5
- Triton High School, Dodge Center, K-12

Just as in the Lakes Country region, the Perpich team is leading workshops and providing coaching to teacher teams as they integrate the arts and other subjects. Teachers are working together in cross-

disciplinary teams to create new curriculum that is rigorous, engaging and aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards.

Principals Network

An additional component of this region's program is a network for principals and other education leaders from each participating school and district. Research indicates that administrators are key to sustaining education improvement initiatives such as arts integration. This network's aim is to build administrators' knowledge and understanding of arts integration's impact on their teachers and students, and to help them develop ways to sustain that activity and impact into the future.

In its first year (2012-13), the principal group conducted observations in their buildings, and in a final meeting at the end of the school year, the principals shared these observations with each other. Many observations were shared by principals:

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

- Insightful questions from kids about how different disciplines are related
- Students could choose how to apply the learning and demonstrate it.
- Students see "connections" and staff collaboration.
- Students - connection between writing and art-- also both have a process
- Increased level of engagement and ownership in project and a noticeably higher level of product than other assignments.
- More connections to individual differences/cultures - more alike in many ways

IMPACT ON TEACHERS

- Focused collaboration.
- Increased dialogue and collaboration around big ideas and learning targets.
- Collaboration between music/art/PE and gen. ed. classroom teachers in much more impactful ways.
- Art and writing collaboration. Also writing assessments and rubrics.
- More standards focused and directly connecting the standards to instruction and assessment.
- Professional development in assessments tied to standards - content.
- Inspired teachers around project and learning—professionally treated.
- Allowed real brainstorming to make connections and engage kids. Not limited by typical difficult scheduling issues and time constraints.

IMPACT ON SCHOOL

- Positive staff engagement.
- Shared pride in group project - display of products that may not have happened without collaborative efforts.
- Became a whole school learning project around "community" theme.

- Brought staff in project together more in terms of instruction - not on own.
- Staff looked deeper into what they wanted students to learn.
- Created discussion on why things have been done the way they were.
- Provided opportunity and permission to take time with collaboration.

2013-14: New Developments and Project Expansion

Building on this foundation of embedded professional development, focused on increasing student learning, new project developments underway during the 2013-14 school year include:

- A final year for the Lakes Country Network, which is supporting teacher teams to find ways to sustain their collaborative arts integration and learning in the network through increased use of technology.
- Preparing and recruiting for two new networks which will begin the 2014-15 school year:
 - A K-12 arts integration network in the Northeast region, built on the model of the current Southeast and Lakes Country regional networks but expanding the use of technology as a vehicle for teacher professional learning and networking. This network will experience the introduction of a “flipped” professional development model, where teachers engage with content online prior to workshops, and then practice new skills on-site.
 - A statewide network for teachers to develop arts-integrated secondary courses. Planning will occur in the 2014-15 school year, with courses piloted in the 2015-16 school year.

In November 2013, four one-day arts integration workshops were held in the Northeast region of the state as an introduction to these two networks, serving a total of 96 educators. In mid-December, applications opened for both the Northeast Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers, and the Perpich Arts Integrated Secondary Course Initiative. These two networks will begin work in 2014-15.

- Expanded technology for online professional development and dissemination of learning. This includes a Cadre of Digital Learners, which involved teachers from both regional networks testing out contemporary tools and strategies for online professional development and networking.
- Introduction of new online arts-integration course modules addressing the Common Core Standards and 21st Century Skills.

Perpich Legacy Project Advisory Group

To ensure transparency and broad public participation in the Perpich Center’s Legacy projects, the Perpich Center has an advisory group of volunteers knowledgeable about the arts and education. They represent arts education professional service organizations, elementary and secondary school leadership organizations, the Minnesota Legislature, regional Service Cooperatives, the Minnesota Department of Education, and arts education and teacher preparation programs at major Minnesota colleges and universities. In 2013, this group assembled February 19.

About the Perpich Center for Arts Education

Perpich Center for Arts Education is a state agency that serves all school districts in Minnesota. Created in 1985 by the state legislature, Perpich seeks to advance K-12 education throughout Minnesota by teaching in and through the arts. The Perpich outreach group provides expertise in professional development for educators, research and curriculum and standards development in arts education. The center also includes the Perpich Arts High School, a public, residential program for grades 11 and 12, and the arts education library, which serves the high school and all Minnesota arts educators and teaching artists.

Perpich Center for Arts Education General Contact Information:

763-279-4200, 800-657-3515 (toll free)

www.pcae.k12.mn.us

For more information about these Legacy-funded initiatives please contact:

Dr. Pamela Paulson, Senior Director of Policy

763-279-4187

pam.paulson@pcae.k12.mn.us