



OHIO ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION

**Ohio Senate Finance Committee**  
**Senator Matt Dolan, Chair**

**Am. Sub. House Bill 33 FY 2024-2025 Operating Budget (Edwards)**  
**Testimony in Support of Increased Funding for the Ohio Arts Council**  
**Submitted by Jarrod Hartzler, Executive Director**  
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Good afternoon, Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Jarrod Hartzler, and I am the executive director of the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE).

The OAAE works with over eight thousand arts educators in the state to ensure that Ohio students receive quality, standards-based instruction in the arts, and are prepared with the knowledge and skills to pursue careers in the arts, higher education in the arts, and participate in the arts throughout their lives.

On behalf of our Board President Michelle Muro, and our board members, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the other members of the Ohio General Assembly and Governor Mike DeWine for your continued support for the work of the Ohio Arts Council (OAC).

As an arts educator and advocate I appreciate the work that the Ohio Arts Council does in all 88 counties in Ohio to expand student access to standard-based instruction in all of the arts disciplines, including dance, drama/theatre, media arts, visual arts, and music. The OAC also provides teachers with opportunities to develop their artistic talents and skills and brings people together through the arts to strengthen communities.

The OAAE appreciates the two percent administrative increase that Governor Mike DeWine added to the OAC's budget to reach \$40.8 million, which is an all-time high budget.

The OAC is also grateful to the Ohio House of Representatives for honoring a request to increase its budget by \$11 million and generously including a \$10 million increase over the biennium.

The OAAE respectfully requests that the Senate maintain the \$10 million, which will increase Sustainability Grants to fund OAC outreach efforts in all 88 Ohio counties. This year the OAC funded 343 arts and cultural organizations. The OAC needs the increase in Sustainability Grants to maintain current grantees and serve newly eligible grantees.

The OAAE is requesting that the Senate to provide another \$1 million to expand support for TeachArtsOhio and increase OAC staff.



The \$1 million request will support ten additional TeachArtsOhio (TAO) education grants. Currently the program serves 70,000 students and educators in 100 schools, but the demand is high for this school and community-based program, and applications continue to outpace available funds.

The TAO program is unique to Ohio and connects Ohio students with professional teaching artists to experience in-depth instruction aligned to academic content standards in the arts. Teaching artists supplement arts instruction through collaboration with teachers, artists, and school administrators.

The program supports Ohio's workforce development efforts, because high school students work with professional artists who own their own businesses and contribute to Ohio's vibrant arts and culture economy. Students learn about what it takes to be an artist, and in many cases the experience gives students an opportunity to see themselves as a profession artist and helps them set a course to pursue a career in the arts.

The remainder of the \$1 million will be used to increase the OAC staff from 18 to 20. Over the past years the OAC has seen a 33 percent increase in the number of grant applications and the additional staff will make it possible for the OAC to process more effectively the nearly 3,100 applications and 2,200 grant awards in all 88 Ohio counties.

The arts are an essential component of a child's complete education and are as relevant as ever. The arts stimulate a curiosity and excitement in students for learning, which is critical as schools, parents, and communities work to re-engaged students in the learning process after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ongoing research confirms a positive relationship between arts education and improved outcomes for students, including academics, engagement in school, civic engagement, and the development of valuable life and career skills, including collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving. HERE <https://www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/publication/downloads/2021-Art-for-Lifes-Sake.pdf>

The work of the OAC through its Sustainability Grants and TeachArtsOhio Program supports arts educators in Ohio and their students. Increasing the budget for the Ohio Arts Council will enable the OAC to better serve the citizens of Ohio and increase high quality instruction in the arts for Ohio's students.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Jarrod Hartzler