

Mississippi Arts Commission - Whole Schools Initiative Program Guidelines, Fiscal Year 2013

Application deadline for WSI First Year AND Year 2-6 applicants: Thursday, March 1, 2012.

Applications must be submitted through eGRANT, postal mail, or delivered by hand to MAC's office by the due date. Faxed or emailed applications are not accepted.

Please submit WSI Grant applications no earlier than 30 days prior to the deadlines listed above. Applications received prior to this date will be returned.

Overview

The Whole Schools Initiative (WSI) is one of MAC's most prominent special initiatives. It focuses on assisting Mississippi schools in using the arts as a vehicle for promoting comprehensive school reform. MAC accomplishes this through supporting high-quality arts instruction and arts-integrated learning for students at all grade levels, from elementary through high school.

Schools accepted into WSI are required to participate in the program for six years. The initiative provides three primary benefits to participating schools:

- **Grant funds:** Schools can receive up to \$10,000 during their first year of participation in the program (in which the school focuses on planning). During the remaining five years, schools are eligible to receive up to \$15,000 per year to implement their plans (see "Grant Awards" section below for the funding levels available throughout the project).
- **Professional development:** This includes participation in the weeklong WSI Summer Institute, biannual retreats during the school year and on-site assistance.
- **Technical assistance:** Participating schools are assigned a Field Advisor who can assist school staff with grant writing, strategic planning, identifying appropriate artists, and lesson planning, among other activities.

For more detailed information on WSI, including the history of the program, a list of current participating schools, research, and lesson plans, visit the WSI website (www.mswholeschools.org).

Eligibility Requirements

Schools may apply if they:

- Are a public school or a school that has been incorporated in Mississippi as a non-profit organization with tax-exempt status under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service code
- Commit to producing a project that will benefit all of the students in their school, rather than just a single class or designated group

- Successfully participated in MAC's Arts in the Classroom (AIC) grant program, sent a letter of intent to apply for WSI funds (*next deadline: January 17, 2012*) and MAC staff approved the request.

Grant Awards & Matching Funds Requirements

WSI grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$15,000. The total award amounts change as a school progresses through the initiative:

Years in Program	Max. Grant Award	Match Requirement
Year #1 (Planning)	\$10,000	\$10,000 (1:1)
Year #2 (Implementation)	\$15,000	\$15,000 (1:1)
Year #3	\$15,000	\$15,000 (1:1)
Year #4	\$12,500	\$17,500 (1:1.4)
Year #5	\$10,000	\$20,000 (1:2)
Year #6	\$7,500	\$22,500 (1:3)

A dollar-for-dollar cash match is required from WSI grantees during the first three years of their participation. Starting in Year Four, grantees are required to increase their match each year to ensure that their program will be sustainable once MAC funding ends. Matching funds can come from a variety of sources, including from the district, a parent/teacher organization, federal funds, foundation grants, or contributions from local businesses.

Applicants are eligible to receive WSI funding for up to six consecutive years. MAC expects that schools that complete the initiative will sustain the work through their own resources. The school may also work to develop their partnerships and program to a level that will enable them to apply for funding through MAC's Project Grant Program.

Review Criteria

WSI applications are reviewed utilizing the following criteria:

1. Improving Academic Achievement (20 points)

- Planned instruction and assessments are based on state and national standards
- The proposed project includes common planning time for teachers
- Time is set aside for curriculum planning and developing arts integrated lessons
- The project uses the arts to focus on an area of instruction that needs improvement

2. Increasing Students' Skills in and Knowledge of All Arts Disciplines (20 points)

- Professional artists and arts specialists are employed for leading arts experiences (for students) and training faculty
- Students are connected with arts resources in the community (such as museums, festivals, local artists)
- Arts instruction is aligned with the state and national level standards

3. Professional Growth for Teachers and Administrators (20 points)

The project proposal includes:

- professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators
- team building exercises and cross-curricular lesson planning work
- All faculty are trained through participation in the WSI Summer Institute and Fall and Spring Retreats (this can be accomplished over the entire length of the school's involvement in WSI).
- Appropriate preparation and follow-up activities are in place for artist and consultant presentations.

4. Increasing Parental and Community Involvement (20 points)

- The project makes use of the community's artistic resources (such as local artists, museums, and other institutions)
- Parents and community members are invested in the project through participation in the advisory team and specific project activities.
- Information sessions on arts education are offered for parents and community members.
- The school develops partnerships with community arts organizations to help support life long learning activities.

5. Building a Sustainable System for Arts-Integrated Learning (20 points)

The Project:

- is supported at all levels in the school (staff, administration, and parents)
- receives adequate financial support at the local level
- is promoted in the community, which builds support for arts education
- includes a thorough evaluation process
- meshes well with the school's existing mission or focus

Also:

- Newly hired staff demonstrate a commitment to the arts
- New staff will be mentored on arts integration
- Artistic supplies are maintained and replenished when needed

First year applicants, please note: the criteria reflect strategies that a school participating in WSI needs to put in place over the course of the entire project. First year applicants are not expected to have a detailed plan in place for all of them. Rather, they need to provide an overview on how they will accomplish them during the project and give specific details on their proposed activities during their first year in the program.

How to Apply

Please submit one original and one copy of the following in the order listed:

- Whole Schools Initiative Application Form
- Narrative (three-page maximum) in which you address the review criteria
- Project timeline, listing all of the major activities for the upcoming school year
- Budget itemization that explains in greater detail each expense and source of income included on the Budget page of the application
- Your school's strategic plan, which should include the current year of the application.

- Resumés or promotional materials for consultants, artists and key personnel who will be involved in the project (Their roles in the project should be stated in your narrative.)
- A copy of the contract or letter of agreement between your school and artists or consultants who will be working on the project.
- Promotional materials from the artists and consultants who will be working on your project, if the individuals are not members of MAC's Artist Roster. Please submit:
 - Artists: a brochure or promotional materials and work samples (see the guidelines for MAC's Artist Roster program for appropriate formats for the work samples)
 - Consultants: a resumé and list of recent clients (including contact information for the clients)
- Letters of support from organizations that are partnering with you on the project. The letters should clearly explain the partner's role in the project.

Applications should be complete, including all required information and materials. Incomplete applications, defined as applications missing one or more of the above-listed documents, will not be considered for funding and will be returned to the applicant.

Supplementary Materials

In addition, you may also submit a binder of supplementary materials to help panelists get a better understanding of your school and project. Supplementary materials should relate to your proposed project activities. They should support information provided in the narrative.

The binder may include:

- Copies of programs, brochures, videos, or lesson plans that relate to the project
- News clippings that show past activities that are related to your project
- Letters of support (from parents, community members, administrators or others) for the project (no more than five).

Please submit the supplementary materials in a three-ring binder to expedite panel review. The binder should not exceed 25 pages of material and the items included should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches.

Return of Support Materials & Work Samples

Schools that want their supplementary materials and work samples returned by mail must provide a self-addressed mailer with sufficient postage affixed to it. They may also be picked up between July 1st and August 30th at MAC's office during regular business hours. Please make arrangements with the Whole Schools Program Director before visiting the office. All applicant materials will be discarded after August 30th if no instructions are given for their return.

Dates to Remember

March 1, 2012 –Whole Schools application deadline

April 2012 – Review of applications by the grant panel (the specific panel date will be available by mid-March. Applicants are allowed to attend panels.)

June 2012 – MAC Board meets and makes final funding decisions on all applications

July 2, 2012 – Applicants are notified whether their application was funded or not. No information on the grants will be available from MAC prior to this date.

For more information about WSI or to discuss an application to the program, please contact Jodie Engle, Whole Schools Initiative Program Director at (601) 359-6040 or jengle@arts.state.ms.us.