

Young Audiences Arts for Learning



Oregon & SW Washington

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February 15, 2019

Testimony to and in reference to:
House Committee on Economic Development
Re: HB 2052, Oregon Cultural Trust
Extends sunset for tax credit for contributions to Trust for Cultural
Development Account

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Young Audiences of Oregon (YA) to urge you to support HB 2052, extending the sunset for the Oregon Cultural Trust tax credit for 10 years.

Every school year, as one of Oregon's cornerstone arts education nonprofits, YA provides powerful arts-education experiences to more than 70,000 students by bringing artists into schools for residencies and performances. Research shows that arts education benefits youth in school and work. For example, low-income students are five times more likely to graduate high school if they earn many arts credits, and the arts are demonstrated to develop critical 21st-century job skills such as creativity and collaboration. Despite this evidence, almost 65,000 Oregon students attend a public school with no arts coursework taught by a licensed arts teacher. YA helps educators and families meet their students' arts-education needs—and we could not do so without support from the Cultural Trust.

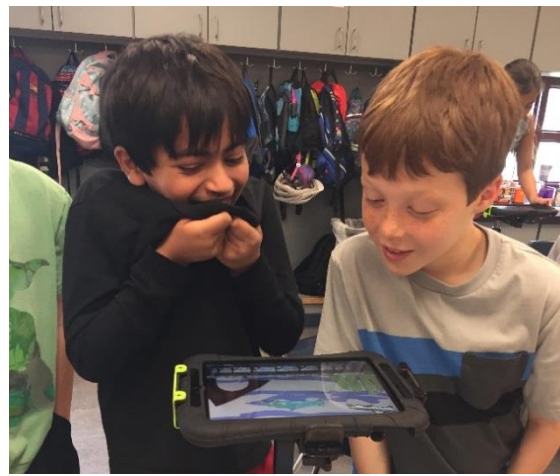
In 2017 and 2018, our organization was awarded competitive grants from the Cultural Trust to help a diverse array of visual artists, musicians, dancers, actors, writers and filmmakers develop their teaching skills so they can be more effective arts educators, benefitting students around Oregon. These state funds allowed us to leverage additional dollars from the National Endowment for the Arts, private foundations and individuals. In the 2017-18 school year alone, the state's investment in YA yielded professional development for dozens of artists across the state, including artists affiliated with La Grande's Art Center East. This training has an exponential impact on students: a typical artist who completes our training goes on to bring their improved teaching skills to more than 2,600 students each year. That's a lot of young people's lives and classrooms made brighter thanks to the Cultural Trust.

We deeply appreciate the state's support in making this vital work possible. We hope you will sustain Oregon's support by extending the sunset for the tax credit for contributions to the Trust for Cultural Development Account for 10 years. Your investment in arts education will pay invaluable dividends: a generation of educated, dynamic Oregonians prepared to lead our state into a brighter future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cary Clarke'.

Cary Clarke
Executive Director



Students explore stop-motion animation during a Young Audiences STEAM artist residency.