



Natural and
Cultural Resources



TO: Members of the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations
President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, Co-Chair
Speaker of the House Tim Moore, Co-Chair
The Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture/Environment/Natural
Resources
Senator Andrew Brock, Co-Chair
Senator Bill Cook, Co-Chair
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Senators Fletcher Hartsell, Brent Jackson, John Alexander, Chad Barefoot,
Stan Bingham, Angela Bryant, Joel Ford, Valerie Foushee, Jeff Jackson,
Tom McInnis, Ronald Rabin, Bill Rabon, Shirley Randleman, Erica
Smith-Ingram and Tommy Tucker
The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Natural and
Economic Resources
Representative Jimmy Dixon, Chair
Representative Pat McElraft, Chair
Representative Roger West, Chair
Representatives Kyle Hall, Garland Pierce, Pricey Harrison, James L.
Langdon, Chris Millis, Michele Presnell, Bobbie Richardson, Brian
Turner, Michael Wray and Larry Yarborough
Fiscal Research Division
Timothy Dale
Jennifer Hoffmann
William Childs
Lanier McCree

FROM: Wayne Martin
Director, North Carolina Arts Council
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

RE: A+ Schools Special Fund
Report FY 2015-2016

DATE: 9/29/2016

Pursuant to GS 143B-87.2, please see the attached report required by September 30, 2016.



A+ Schools Program
of the North Carolina Arts Council

BUDGET CODE 24812 A+ Schools Special Fund

BEGINNING BALANCE			\$362,334.50
REVENUE			
	STIF Interest		2,508.87
	Appropriation		232,711.00
	General Revenue, Misc.	Training Revenues	<u>180,346.00</u>
		TOTAL REVENUES	\$777,900.37
EXPENDITURES			
	Personal Services		119,135.81
	Purchased Services	Training Contracts	352,231.48
	General Admin Supplies		<u>1,568.36</u>
			\$472,935.65

Brief description of the program

A+ Schools of North Carolina is a whole school reform model that began in our state as a public-private partnership in 1995. The central vision of A+ Schools is to create enhanced learning opportunities for all students by using arts-integrated instruction that incorporates Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, recent brain research findings and dance, drama, music, visual art and creative writing.

In 2010, A+ Schools moved from UNC-Greensboro to become a part of the North Carolina Arts Council and the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The state allocation that transferred to DNCR for the program was just over \$56,000 and the Arts Council has secured support from the private sector that, combined with state support, allows the program to currently serve 53 preK-12 schools in all regions of the state with over 20,000 students and 1,500 teachers/administrators. North Carolina has helped to train other states to implement the program; at present there are A+ networks in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana.

Although the majority of A+ Schools are designated Title I, they continue to demonstrate achievement at or above the state average, while teaching a much fuller curriculum than many other schools. Years of evaluation conclude that when a school is highly engaged in the A+ process, teachers are more satisfied and effective, students are more engaged, and there is more community and parental involvement.

Currently, A+ Schools of North Carolina has three full-time dedicated staff positions, two of which are receipts-based. 50 A+ Fellows, a cohort made up of master teachers and professional teaching artists,



serve the professional development needs of the schools in the network. The lion's share of expenditures goes directly for professional development for schools, teachers and administrators through summer training institutes, school-based training workshops during the school year, and school leadership meetings in the fall and spring.

The recent increases in the state appropriation will allow more schools to participate in the program. Seven new schools from across North Carolina are currently on the list to join the network in the 2017 school year.



Highlights from 2015-16

- The North Carolina network of A+ Schools continues to grow. In the summer of 2015, four new schools were added to the program: New Bridge Middle (Onslow), Townsend Middle (Robeson), North Graham Elementary (Alamance), and ZECA Charter School (Onslow). In the summer of 2016, three schools joined our team: Yadkinville Elementary (Yadkin), Scotts Elementary (Iredell), and Hickory Career and Arts Magnet High School (Catawba). This brings our network to 53 schools at the beginning of the 2016-17 academic year. **Since A+ Schools moved to the North Carolina Arts Council in 2010, we have brought a total of 21 new schools into A+.**
- Resources from the state legislature allowed us to offer professional development opportunities for veteran schools in the network. Twenty-three established A+ Schools took part in training this summer, giving over 700 teachers a chance to “refresh” their A+ skills.
- Additionally, we also trained two new A+ Schools in Texas this summer. *(Note: Schools outside of North Carolina pay a premium for our services. This revenue helps to support the training that we provide for our in-state schools year round.)*
- Serving schools beyond the A+ network, we train teachers and administrators throughout the state. Once again, we held two week-long arts integration seminars at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) in Cullowhee and two days of professional development in conjunction with NCDPI in two regions of the state. Additionally, we provided training to all of the reading specialists in the Davie County school district to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching practice through arts integration.
- Other cultural organizations hire A+ Schools to provide educational content and teacher training. The Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park in Wilson contracted A+ to develop and facilitate a two-day workshop for local school teachers to use the park as a teaching tool in their classroom. Twenty-seven teachers took part in the training this summer; plans are underway for a second cohort in 2017.
- Universities hire A+ Schools to help pre-service teachers have a better understanding for how to use the arts effectively in their classrooms. Our A+ trainers led workshops at Appalachian State University and Brevard College to support those schools of education to better prepare the college students who are becoming teachers.
- With a \$100,000 grant award from the Kenan Charitable Trust, A+ Schools contracted with a marketing firm out of Winston-Salem to refine our message and to aid in the recruitment of new schools. The new marketing materials will be ready in January of 2017 in time to recruit schools for the 2018-19 academic year.
- We continue to explore new opportunities for private funding sources as well. Earlier this year, Michelle Burrows was invited by the Beattie Foundation, a long-time supporter of A+, to present to a group of potential funders located in the western part of the state. More recently, the North Carolina Arts Council Foundation, the non-profit support group for the Arts Council, hired a fundraising firm to conduct a feasibility study for a capacity building campaign that prominently features the A+ Schools program.

