



2013-2016 Strategic Plan

The mission of Kansas City Young Audiences is to engage all youth in the arts, promote creativity, and inspire success in education.

The Kansas City Young Audiences (KCYA) vision statement is “opening a window to the arts...inspiring youth to discover their creative talents and passions...transforming lives and communities.” To achieve this vision, KCYA will provide comprehensive arts learning experiences that will lead to young people who:

- Are self-aware and can express themselves effectively
- Are aware of the world outside their own community
- Are nimble and rigorous thinkers
- Value the arts and engage in them as an essential part of their lives, and
- Are able to nurture these qualities in others.

Since its establishment in 1961, KCYA has been a forerunner in the arts community, leading the way in providing quality programming and excellence in arts education. We believe the arts have the ability to transform lives and communities; that the arts prepare youth to be better students, be more successful and have richer lives.

Writing the Strategic Plan

After extensive survey work and stakeholder deliberation, a team of past and present board members and KCYA staff met on September 28, 2013 to create the draft of the KCYA three-year strategic plan. Bernard Consulting of Kansas City facilitated the meeting. Since that date, KCYA staff has developed objectives and tactics related to the strategic direction created by KCYA stakeholders. In addition, staff created a specific timetable for completion and responsible persons. The plan centers on four key questions:

1. **How do we elevate and broaden KCYA’s identity and recognition in the KC metro area?**
2. **How do we ensure long-term financial sustainability to further our mission?**
3. **How do we position KCYA for mutual success with Arts Partners?**
4. **How do we create and successfully market programs that facilitate learning, impact educational outcomes and enhance our overall mission?**

Key Question 1 Narration

One of the challenges we face at KCYA is that we provide exceptional programming at schools that changes the lives of students. However, when the students go home to share their experience with their parents, they say things like “I learned to dance...” “We heard a great storyteller...” “I wrote a poem...” But they may not remember that the program was

provided by KCYA. Therefore, KCYA needs to develop ways to communicate to the public the value of arts education programs presented by KCYA.

Key Question 1: How do we elevate and broaden KCYA's identity and recognition in the KC metro area?

Action 1. Define KCYA's brand and story.

Action 2. Develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan that prepares KCYA for the next 3-5 years.

Key Question 2 Narration

Like many area non-profit organizations, KCYA has had to make adjustments in response to the recent recession. These include:

- aggressive management of expenses
- increased focus on contributed revenue
- boosted marketing efforts to increase recognition and community participation
- targeted fundraising to underwrite programming for underserved students

These efforts have allowed us look forward to securing long-term financial stability.

Key Question 2: How do we ensure long-term financial sustainability to further our mission?

Action 1. Review, evaluate and determine strategies to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Action 2. Working with funders, board members and other stakeholders, KCYA will examine the percentage of earned vs. contributed revenue to develop an appropriate target mix for the organization.

Action 3. Grow contributed revenues in individual, corporate and foundation giving through board engagement, increased diversity in our donor portfolio and expanded use of new media.

Action 4. Increase engagement opportunities for current funders.

Action 5. Diversify and grow earned revenue by expanding relationships with public schools, further engaging charter and private schools, increasing artist professional development to meet higher education standards, and seeking additional strategic partners.

Key Question 3 Narration

As more arts organizations develop their own education programs for students, KCYA has an opportunity, through Arts Partners, to position itself as the primary facilitator of comprehensive area-wide arts education offerings.

Key Question 3: How do we position KCYA for mutual success with Arts Partners?

Action 1. Work with the Arts Partners organizations to define and communicate a clear vision for the partnership.

Action 2. Increase designated funding sources for Arts Partners.

Action 3. Improve and deepen relationships with Arts Partners schools by providing expanded subsidized programs for their students.

Key Question 4 Narration

As education resources become scarce and school districts implement Common Core state standards, KCYA will be challenged to offer programs that meet the changing needs of educational institutions. Therefore, it is vital that KCYA develop relationships and communicate with school superintendents, those who are training future educators, and after-school providers to determine specific needs and how our programming can fill those gaps.

Key Question 4: How do we create and successfully market programs that facilitate learning, impact educational outcomes and enhance our overall mission?

Action 1. Further promote training and communication related to Common Core.

Action 2. Build partnerships with area education institutions and organizations in order to familiarize future educators with KCYA programs and the value of arts education to enhance learning across the curriculum.

Action 3. Pinpoint gaps in area programs and services to identify opportunities to create new and unique programs which could attract additional funders.