

Background and Rationale

The Perpich Center for Arts Education is a Minnesota State Agency with an annual budget of approximately seven million dollars and combines a 300 student State Arts High School with statutory responsibilities to lead the development and improvement of arts education in Minnesota. The Perpich Center provides for its statutory responsibilities for statewide arts education leadership with a staff of arts area coordinators and support staff. In addition, thirty to fifty contractors annually assist Perpich Center staff in delivering services related to each of the six arts areas—dance, literary art, music, theater and visual art.

Grant supported projects include Quality Teaching in the Arts: The Minnesota Arts Education Network, a one and an half million dollar, three-year professional development project for arts educators from high poverty schools, 80% of which was supported by a U.S. Department of Education grant. The Perpich Center also recently concluded activities supported by a two million dollar, three-year grant from The McKnight Foundation.

The Perpich Center regularly provides technical assistance for the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) in arts education. MDE provides funds to the Perpich Center to support a quality teaching network (QTN) for arts educators, and MDE convenes Perpich Center leadership along with QTN representation from each arts area for special arts-related education projects. The Perpich Center has also collaborated with The Minnesota Board of Teaching, the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teaching Education (MACTE) and the arts professional service organizations to revise licensure for teachers of music and visual arts, and to develop licensure for teachers of dance and theater. Currently, the Perpich Center is assisting in the development of certification for teachers in media arts.

The Perpich Center partnered with MDE to convene writing groups to develop the original set of Minnesota state standards in the arts, the Profile of Learning (1998), the first revision of those standards, The Minnesota Academic Standards in the Arts (2003) and the most recent revision in 2008. Raising student achievement through the development of standards-based arts teaching and learning is the Perpich Center's primary goal.