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WAAE - A Coalition of Arts

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WAAE - A COALITION OF ARTS

The Alliance for Arts Education (AAE) is a joint project of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the U.S. Office of Education and Welfare. It is a relatively new organization founded for the purpose of developing a coalition of arts organizations to promote arts education throughout the United States.

The Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) has been formed through the support of the Department of Public Instruction, the leadership of the State Coordinator of Arts and Humanities, Earl Collins, and through the efforts of arts advocated throughout the state. The primary function of this organization is to promote and strengthen arts education at all levels within the state through representation from all the major state arts organizations, community leaders, members of the media, and school representatives.

Over the past few years, the WAAE has played a major role in promoting the arts at the state level. Major activities have included the organization of the Wingspread Conference on "The Arts in Education," held at the Johnson Foundation, Conference Center, 1976, the development of a position paper based on the Wingspread Conference, the production of a videotape television program focusing on the integration of the arts in education, and the development of the first Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan for Arts Education.

This year the WAAE has been awarded an arts Education Program Grant of $9,500 to provide funding for follow-up activities related to the implementation of the Comprehensive State Plan. The Department

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of Public Instruction has employed two additional staff members under the grant, Mark Hanna and Margaret Hess, to take action on the state plan. Hess has proceeded with plans to organize, in cooperation with a variety of arts groups, two statewide conferences. At these conferences representatives from universities, professional arts education associations, parent-teacher associations, governmental agencies, and the like will meet to devise the final implementation plan. As Earl Collins states, "The intent will be to bring

people together to determine how regional and local groups can take specific action based upon the activities identified in the Plan." The target date for these conferences was established for the latter part of April.

Hanna is in the pro-

cess of developing a plan for the self-assessment of arts education programs, a need identified in the state plan. At this stage he is preparing an evaluation model and selecting

groups to be involved in the assessment process.

The implementation of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan for Arts Education will be an important step in the development of arts education in this state.

Earl Collins points out that many positive things have occurred to date as result of its development, but if persons and organizations concerned with the establishment and growth of arts education use this plan, it can provide guidelines and the impetus for future growth of arts education.

In addition to the implementation of the state plan, WAAE has organized a Government Relations Committee for the purpose of promoting understanding and support of arts education from government agencies and legislative bodies.

Toni Sikes,chairperson of this committee, indicated that in terms of commit-

tee representation she had received commitments from the various professional arts organizations including Jaylene Armstrong (WAEA), Don Ladd (WMEC), Nancy Stearns (WTA), Earl Collins (DPI), and Margaret Hess (DPI).

The Government Rela-

tions Committee has been actively involved in requesting position statements on the arts from gubernatorial candidates. These statements have been disseminated at art education association conferences such as the WAEA and

MENC conferences.

The committee has also been instrumental in requesting changes for the DPI job description English Language Arts Supervisor to the title of English and Communications Arts Supervisor.

By Curtis L. Carter