



MERSD Arts & Cultural Vitality Index

2024 Summary
of Findings

MERSD Vision

MERSD, with the partnership and support of member communities, will provide educational opportunities and resources so that all students can realize their individual, unique, and highest potential, achieve academic excellence, value integrity and honesty, and become intellectually curious and critical thinkers.



Arts & Cultural Vitality Index

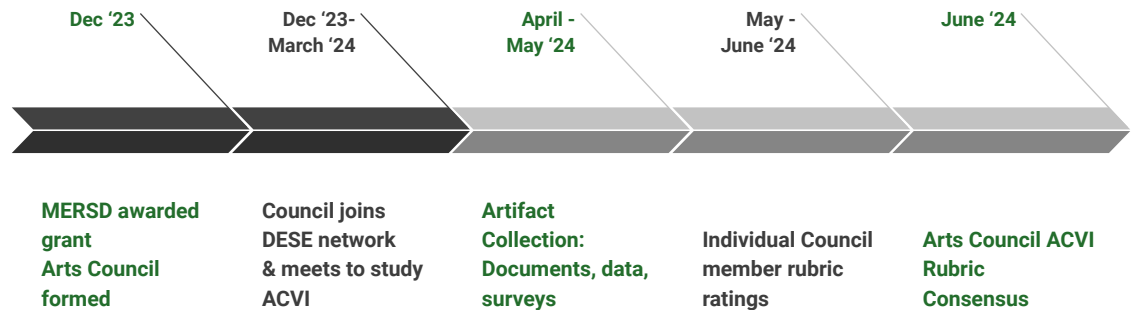
In December 2023 MERSD was awarded a competitive grant from DESE which provided funding support for schools to conduct an arts program review using DESE's 'Arts & Cultural Vitality (ACV) Index'. The grant supported stipends and necessary materials for the members of the review team.

[The Arts & Cultural Vitality Index for Massachusetts Schools](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/arts/acv-grant.html)



<https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/arts/acv-grant.html>

Process



MERSD Arts Council

- Mark Whitman, Community Member
- Shoshy Starr, Community Member
- Courtney Joly-Lowdermilk, Community Member
- Brandon Lamphear, Community Member
- Lisa Etna, Community Member
- Tyler Garofalo, Memorial Teacher & Play Advisor
- Joe Janack, MS/HS Music Teacher
- Colleen Shannon, Essex Counselor
- Tamera Burns, HS Art Teacher
- Tina Doherty, MS Art Teacher
- Allison Collins, Director of Student Services
- Heather Leonard, Director of Curriculum
- Pam Beaudoin, Superintendent



Arts Council Goal

In order to ensure that our MERSD arts program is aligned to state frameworks, accessible to all students, and reflects district, school and community goals, the arts council will complete an arts curriculum review process. We will utilize the Arts & Cultural Vitality Index to evaluate indicators of our arts & culture programming. By June 2024 the Arts Council will have identified areas of strength and areas of potential need/growth and will provide a summary of findings to inform development of data-driven district action plans for arts curriculum and programming.

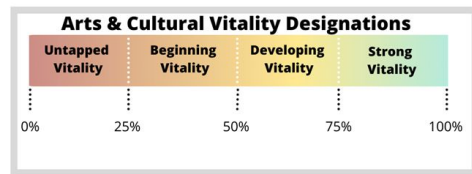


ACVI

The **Arts & Cultural Vitality (ACV) Index** is a self-evaluation tool that provides schools and districts with a scoring mechanism to improve the understanding of their unique arts and cultural assets as part of their school climate. The Index details a structure for identifying areas of strength, and pinpointing opportunities to advance arts and culture within the school community.



“Vitality” refers to the “healthiness” of a school’s arts and culture



How is each indicator rated?

Attempting

The arts and culture asset exists without established supporting structures or commitments; may be considered a one-time, seldom, or sporadic occurrence, or has been ineffective in practice and/or inconsistently implemented (i.e., not regularly recurrent, or not addressing the same objectives on each repetition).

Effective

The arts and culture asset represents a one-time, seldom, or sporadic occurrence without structures or commitments, but may be considered to have resulted in favorable outcomes and has potential for continued success and growth in future occurrences.

Supported

The arts and culture asset has an established system for creating a successful experience that recurs over time. The asset is made possible through the collective efforts of both arts-specific and other entities. Adequate resources (financial, in-kind, organizational, and human) are generally provided for ensuring the success of the asset, with a general commitment to ongoing repetition though variances in implementation may often occur.

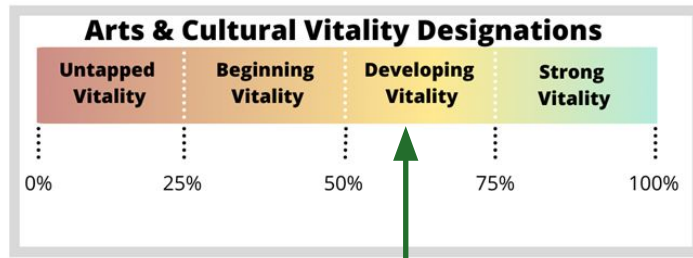
Sustaining

The arts and culture asset meets the ACV Index ‘Supported’ criteria and shows maintenance or growth over multiple fiscal years. It is considered regularly recurring with the ability to assess trends from it over a period of time.



Lever One: Infrastructure

Schools with Arts & Cultural Vitality examine systems and structures in place for implementing culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, routine procedures, policies, and provisioning for successful and equitable arts and culture programming and services, as well as processes in place to remove historically inequitable barriers to learning.



Lever One: Infrastructure

Strengths

- Arts classes are taught by highly qualified arts educators with license(s) in content area(s) they teach
- Arts classes are provided with sufficient equipment and facilities to ensure effective teaching and learning of content

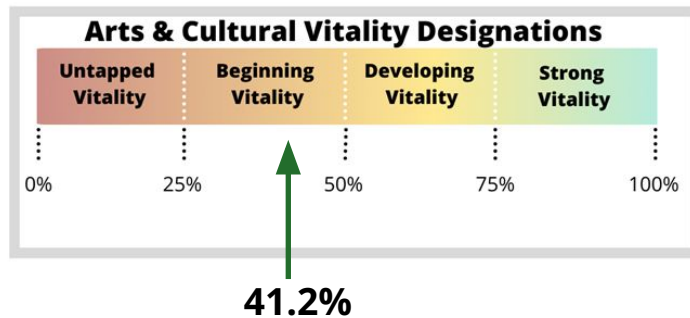
Opportunities

- Arts as Graduation Requirement
- Specific policies bolster arts and culture programming/ services and support equity



Lever Two: Opportunity

Schools with Arts & Cultural Vitality offer students, families, and staff rich opportunities to learn and engage through arts and culture. They ensure that all school members have access and equity in arts and culture programming and services both in and out of school.



Lever Two: Opportunity

Strengths

- In-school opportunities for learning standards-aligned visual arts & music content
- In-school opportunities for learning standards-aligned music content

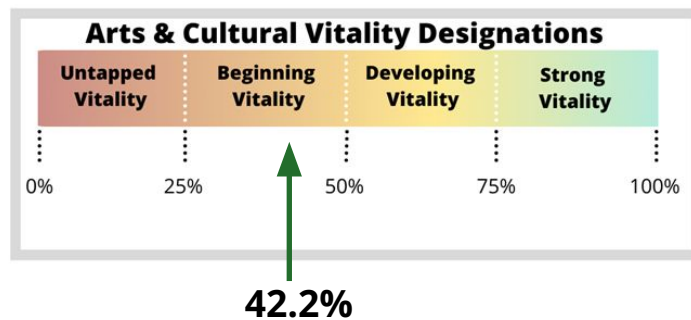
Opportunities

- In-school opportunities for learning standards-aligned dance & theatre content
- Staff members are provided with arts & culture-related professional learning and collaborative opportunities



Lever Three: Participation

Schools with Arts & Cultural Vitality have a high level of engagement, and active and equitable participation in arts and culture programming and services by all members of the school community.



Lever Three: Participation

Strengths

- High level of student involvement in arts and culture events that are held during the school day
- Enrollment in arts classes indicate a high level of interest from the student body

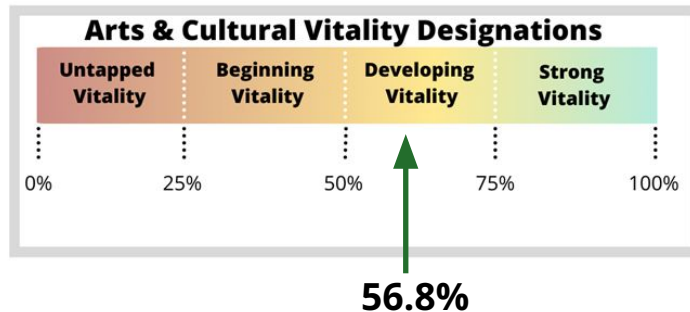
Opportunities

- All staff members proactively collaborate and integrate with one another about arts and culture content, and apply strategies shared in their practice
- Enrollment in intro-level versus advanced level classes is equitable across all student groups



Lever Four: Impact

Schools with Arts & Cultural Vitality evaluate arts and culture programming and services by the effect they have on the community, particularly on student learning, educator effectiveness, and school climate outcomes, and have evidence of significant, positive, and equitable impact.



Lever Four: Impact

Strengths

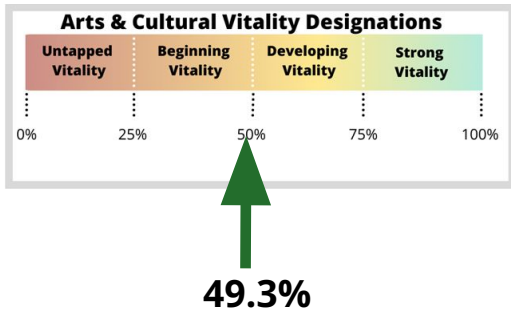
- Students' portfolios of work show measured growth within the arts
- Student / School Climate Surveys indicate a strong positive response to arts & cultural programming & services

Opportunities

- Student / school climate surveys indicate a strong positive response to arts and cultural programming and services
- There is an increase of arts integration across all disciplines



Final Scores



Lever 1 (Infrastructure): 56.9%
Lever 2 (Opportunity): 41.2%
Lever 3 (Participation): 42.2%
Lever 4 (Impact): 56.8%

Overall = 49.3%
**Beginning Vitality/
Developing Vitality**

Next Steps

Continue into Year 2 of Arts Curriculum Review:

- Reconvene Arts Council (In partnership with DESE & other MA districts that completed ACVI)
- Summarize detailed findings: share detailed report with community
- Hold listening sessions: learn more details in areas with lack of clarity
- Utilize community inputs to set priorities, including those with budgetary implications
- Map timeline for Arts programming action steps

