Introduction

Founded in 2007 in response to budget cuts that slashed arts programming from public schools throughout San Diego County, ArtReach began by working with one Title 1 school and has since grown to serve more than 40 schools annually, has expanded to work with other partner organizations, and has evolved its programming to include customized In-class (Artist-in-Residence) and Distance Learning Programs for schools, a robust ArtReach Mural Program, resources for classroom teachers, and virtual offerings. Since our founding, we have prioritized working in communities that wouldn’t otherwise have access to quality arts education and to valuing teaching artists and the important role they play in arts education.

In 2020 and early 2021, ArtReach (and the world) found itself in an interesting time. The COVID-19 global pandemic forced us to rethink our programs. Schools that were longtime partners no longer had in-person students, and we could no longer bring teaching artists and students together in any of our programs. ArtReach quickly pivoted and developed Distance Learning classes for our school partners. Once we were able to resume the ArtReach Mural Program, we also adapted to allow for social distancing while creating a community experience. Our ability to quickly adapt opened opportunities and enabled us to be forward-thinking during the pandemic. Our Board and staff team decided to be bold and leverage this time to develop a new strategic plan. This document captures the context and content of our FY 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. We are excited about ArtReach’s future, and look forward to partnering with others to make it a reality.

Our Mission and Values

A key goal for our strategic planning process was to revise our mission statement. We knew that our mission had evolved, and we wanted a shorter statement. Our original mission statement was: ArtReach believes that all children, regardless of zip code or socioeconomic status, benefit from the opportunity to practice creative thinking and creative doing. We exist to increase access to visual arts education by connecting students at K-12 schools throughout San Diego County with professional artists. We focus on providing free programs to students at schools that meet need criteria and have no or scant visual arts education resources. Upon thoughtful review, our Board and staff team came to a few key realizations:

- While working with schools is a key component of our program model, we have evolved to work with students through other spaces as well
In addition to increasing access to arts education, we hold ourselves accountable for broader youth outcomes

- Our focus on visual art is a differentiator in the San Diego youth arts landscape and should remain part of our mission
- Community connection is an important aspect of our work, and something we plan to focus on even more going forward

Based on these realizations and careful consideration of who we are as an organization, we developed our new mission statement:

**ArtReach ignites youth creativity through visual arts expression and community connection.**

In addition to examining our mission statement, we worked together to articulate our organizational values. Our shared values will help with decision-making and onboarding new staff, board, teaching artists and other key stakeholders.

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**ArtReach’s Values**

**Creative Practice |** We believe art and creative practice play a crucial role in human development and are an essential part of education for all. Through the transformative power of hands-on artmaking, our Teaching Artists inspire young people to harness their artistic potential and apply it throughout their lives.

**Youth Voice |** We believe in the power of youth voice, active listening, and self-expression without judgment. Because people learn and express themselves in different ways, our approach helps students build confidence and take ownership of their unique ideas.

**Integrity |** We believe all humans should be valued, seen, and heard. Our daily interactions prioritize wellbeing, creativity, and balance. When we lead with compassion and heart, we see pressure dissolve and true creative exploration unfold.

**Equity |** We believe all young people need access to art, regardless of zip code or socioeconomic status. We embrace diverse perspectives, listening first, and working with young people and collaborators with the intention to learn as much as we teach. We commit to ongoing learning and to the advancement of social, racial, and economic equity.

**Community Connection |** We believe art brings people together and builds belonging and connectedness. By collaborating through artmaking, we gather, share, learn, uplift, brighten, and bring joy to communities.
Where We’re Headed Next:  
Overview of ArtReach’s 5-Year Strategic Vision

To initiate our strategic visioning and planning process, in the Spring of 2021 we began a multipronged discovery process to gather input and ideas from key stakeholder groups. Based on this input our board and staff team developed our 5-Year Strategic vision. We agreed that we will continue to grow, but that our focus is on quality, deepening impact and supporting artists that work with us rather than growth for growth’s sake.

ArtReach’s 5-Year Strategic Vision has Three Pillars:

- Continue to prioritize quality as we evolve and grow.
- Deepen our programs, partnerships and community building for greater impact.
- Create an environment for artists to work and thrive.

The discovery process to inform our Strategic Vision and Strategic Plan included:

- **Board, Staff, Teaching Artists:** Input captured through one-on-one interviews, two Teaching Artist focus groups, and strategic discussion in multiple planning sessions
- **External Stakeholders & Research:** Key stakeholder interviews conducted by NP Strategies with partners, potential partners, funders and other organizations
- **Review of Internal Documents:** Financials, program results, grant proposals

A number of key themes and implications emerged from the discovery process. These informed our visioning discussions and decisions regarding priorities for the next three years. Below is a recap of the key themes/findings from the discovery process.

1. The passion and commitment to ArtReach’s work is palpable and the team is highly respected

   “I literally cannot wait to get back in the classroom with the kids! When you show someone a new potential they have, it is the best feeling.” - ArtReach Staff

   “The teaching artists are so creative and really let kids have their own voice - their programs feel really accessible.” - External Stakeholder

   “Their staff, teaching artists, board...I really have high respect for this organization.” - External Stakeholder
2. ArtReach’s approach (its ‘how’) is as important as ‘what’ it does

“They really are activists for art. It’s not just a crafting program. They really believe in the power of art to help kids express themselves and change lives.” - External Stakeholder

“The staff is very engaging and respectful - they know how to talk to people but also come in knowing they didn’t know a lot about this community and created space for people to inform them about the community. They understood the importance of respect for the culture and people.” - External Stakeholder

“We bring art to kids who wouldn’t otherwise have access, but there is so much that comes with that -- the social-emotional piece that is so important for children’s brain development.” - ArtReach Team Member

3. Opportunities for improvement center around capacity

“I think they could grow their teaching artist pool and diversify it, though they do a great job now working with diverse groups because of their approach.” - External Stakeholder

“Expanding their language abilities and offering programs in Spanish would be great.” - External Stakeholder

“Internally, we can strengthen our administrative and program support, marketing and fundraising capacity, and ensure we are investing in our team.” - ArtReach Board Member

4. ArtReach is well positioned in the external landscape

“ArtReach is unique in the youth arts space with their focus on visual art. There are a lot of organizations that do media and performing arts, but their focus on visual arts is unique.” - External Stakeholder

“ArtReach really has facilitated social-emotional support and engagement at our school site. Partners need to realize this is more than just time for art.” - External Stakeholder

“There is kind of an explosion of art in San Diego that I am seeing in a lot of spaces - an intense desire to create visibility for marginalized communities -- ArtReach is well positioned to do this work.” - External Stakeholder
5. Partners want to do more with ArtReach and have ideas for growth

“I would love to expand within my school. My district has more than 20 schools and I know about 3 are with ArtReach now so they have plenty of room to grow.” - External Stakeholder

“I think ArtReach can do so much. I would like to see them continuing school projects but also branching out into the community more.” - External Stakeholder

Strategic Priorities

To accomplish our Strategic Vision, the following Strategic Priorities will help us focus our efforts over the next three years, from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024 (we have Three Year Priorities and Year One Goals for each, and will be developing new goals each year):

1. **Programs & Partnerships:** Deepen partnerships with existing school sites and partners.

2. **Staff & Board:** Develop, diversify, and retain our team.

3. **Operations:** Make operations improvements to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness.

4. **Visibility & Sustainability:** Increase visibility and community connections in San Diego County and beyond and increase funding.

Conclusion

At ArtReach we know that when we work together, beautiful change can happen. Our Board and staff team worked together to develop our Strategic Plan and are committed to its successful implementation. We know that we operate in an ever-changing landscape and we were intentional in developing a plan that sets clear direction and priorities, while allowing us to update and evolve it as we go. We will conduct a 6-month review and incorporate annual goal setting into our normal process. Our board and staff will work together, in their respective roles, to implement the plan but we know we can’t do this alone -- we are excited to continue working with our amazing partners and funders to implement this plan.
## Appendix A: Year-One Action Plan (FY 2022-2024)

### Three Year Strategic Priorities

(Starting Date: July 1, 2021 – Ending Date: June 30, 2024)

### Year One Goals

(Starting Date: July 1, 2021 – Ending Date: June 30, 2022)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Programs and Partnerships: Deepen partnerships with existing school sites and partners.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evolve how ArtReach describes its program model so that it can tell its story and help partners better understand its offerings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Define and implement options for deepening partnerships including (but not limited to) additional lessons, more grade levels, follow-on programs, supplemental teacher resources, and additional opportunities for partner engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revisit/revise program evaluation to align with mission and program model.</td>
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<td>Re-analyze and revise our pricing model and discount strategy based on true costs and comparable programs.</td>
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<td>Proactively engage communities where we can have the greatest impact.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Team - Staff &amp; Board: Develop, diversify, and retain our team.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add entry-level positions to ArtReach structure to provide administrative and program support to the team and the opportunity to grow from within.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create a staff retention and succession plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intentionally develop ArtReach culture for the entire team to thrive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop Board in support of Strategic Vision. Evaluate and strengthen Board governance practices, including Board evaluation and a succession plan for Board leadership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruit 2-3 new Board members with an eye for future Board leadership (e.g. PR expertise).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate Board evaluations to be conducted.</td>
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annually.  
Determine potential role of Advisory Committee & parent voice and develop a plan for both.

### 3. Operations: Make operations improvements to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness.

| Establish “ArtReach headquarters” as a space for the team and community. | Research, negotiate and secure new space for ArtReach. |
| Develop a plan for upgrading staff benefits over time (vision, 401k, PTO and holidays for part-time, etc.). | Obtain quotes for expanded staff benefits for all staff; review with board to determine budget limitations and feasibility. Implement at least one benefit upgrade. |
| Review insurance and other policies to ensure compliance and to meet ArtReach’s current and future needs. | Evaluate cost and coverage for all insurance. Decide on and set up a new bank. |
| Develop culture of leveraging the Strategic Plan as a living document. | Establish an annual board & staff process to develop goals in advance of annual budget process. |

### 4. Visibility & Sustainability: Increase visibility and community connections in San Diego County and beyond and increase funding.

| Develop culture (and expectations) for our team to be active in the arts and broader nonprofit community to enhance culture and visibility for ArtReach. | Review current groups ArtReach is involved in and current memberships. |
| Analyze needs for and add to our fundraising capacity. | Create a fund development plan. Assess fundraising capacity by fiscal year-end. |
| Develop a Marketing and PR Plan and enhance and streamline all website and communications. | Identify and share where Board helps with communications. Create more press releases and outreach for key mural unveilings/ribbon cuttings/major grant awards/etc. Launch new website. |
| Increase funding  
  - Increase number of corporate donors/sponsors  
  - Increase donors that fund the mission rather than specific projects/programs  
  - Continue to pursue grants, individual and events | Set and achieve a board goal re: corporate donors/sponsors. Identify major donors. Create and implement a thank you event(s) for major donors. |
Appendix B: Summary of Our Strategic Planning Process

Our strategic planning process included extensive input gathering and planning sessions that involved the board, staff, and teaching artists. ArtReach contracted with NP Strategies (www.npstrategies.org), a nonprofit consulting organization, to guide our planning process. The framework we utilized for strategic planning is included below:

**Strategic Planning Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-Year Actions</th>
<th>3-Year Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>5+Year Strategic Vision for the Org</th>
<th>Long-term Purpose of the Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Our to-do's</td>
<td>• What we have to focus on/prioritize to get to our Strategic Vision</td>
<td>• How we deliver on long-term purpose</td>
<td>• Why we exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Key goals</td>
<td>• Where we’re headed as an organization</td>
<td>• Where we’re headed as an organization</td>
<td>• What we can be best in the world at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reviewed and developed annually</td>
<td>• What success looks like in 10 years</td>
<td>• Our mission, values, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How we get there</td>
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</table>

The planning process included interviews with a group of external stakeholders. We are grateful for their insight.

**External Stakeholders:**

- Kristen Bosner, PRIDE Academy
- Pete Cohen, Lawrence A. Appley Foundation
- Roberto Corona, San Diego Unified
- Matt D’Arrigo, Clare Rose Foundation
- Sherehe Hollins, California Center for the Arts, Escondido
- Adam Moyer, Knockaround Sunglasses
- Frank Pancucci, Southern CA American Indian Resource Center (SCAIR)
- Christine Spar, Johnson Elementary
- Cynthia Trunzo, Pacific View Elementary School

The plan and its execution would not be possible without the dedication of our entire Board, and staff, as well as teaching artists and external stakeholders that provided input into our plan. We
are grateful for their support.