

02

FOCUS AREA 2: PREPARE FOR QUALITY INSTRUCTION OVERVIEW

Once capacity for quality instruction is in place, there are steps necessary to prepare to launch quality programming. Organizations support preparation by developing their own understanding of the context in which programming will occur and the people it will reach. To varying degrees, organizations also play a design role in preparing quality curricula, assessment practices, relationship building with partners, and readying the environment in which programming will take place.

Components and Elements of Focus Area 2

Focus Area 2 consists of four components and associated elements, listed below. Each component and element is explained in further detail in this chapter.

A. SEEK UNDERSTANDING

- Understand the School
- Understand the Community
- Understand the Students

B. DESIGN CURRICULUM

- Plan for Quality
- Program Goals and Objectives

C. ALIGN ASSESSMENTS

- Aligned Assessments

D. COMPOSE THE ENVIRONMENT

- Organizational Role in Planning
- Sufficient Time
- Suitable Materials
- Physical Environment
- Physical Safety

02A

FOCUS AREA 2: PREPARE FOR QUALITY INSTRUCTION Component 2A: Seek Understanding

COMPONENT GOAL: Organizations garner the necessary knowledge and understanding to support customized quality instruction for students, communities, and schools.



Characteristics of Practice

ELEMENTS

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRACTICE

Understand the School

The process to develop customized instruction should include needs assessments, research, and discussion to identify curricular gaps, and areas of interest. Organizations build an approach that is culturally-relevant to the student population and grounded in the school's overarching approach to arts education.

Understand the Community

Deepening organizational understanding of families and community members can enable organizations to create programs accommodate family realities, and are welcoming and culturally relevant to the communities the organization seeks to reach. To develop knowledge of the community, organizations communicate in a family's language of choice, with sensitivity to cultural norms and, when possible, culturally-relevant approaches.

Understand the Students

Using a process-oriented approach to determine what is desirable and relevant for each student body can help ground programs in an appropriate cultural context. Organizations can determine what students have already experienced and what knowledge they seek.



Improving Practice in this Component

The following questions, organized by element, are designed to help organizations and program managers improve and sharpen current practices in this element as well as engage in professional conversations with colleagues and organizational decision-makers.

ELEMENTS	GUIDING QUESTIONS
Understand the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which arts and non-arts partnerships already exist or are being planning for the school? • Does the school have a staff member working in your discipline? How will your program intersect with their work? • How can all partners working in the school community collaborate? Who is responsible for launching, structuring, and nurturing collaboration? • What can the organization bring to the school that is unique or addresses a gap? • What is the school’s overarching approach to education? Does their approach align or support our approach to education? If not, should the partnership continue? What steps should we take to bridge the divide?
Understand the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the organization best partner with families to build an understanding of students’ interest and backgrounds? What information can be offered by the school/teacher, and what information is best gathered directly from parents and students themselves? • Who determines what is culturally relevant to communities? • Are our programs inclusive of racial and ethnically diverse populations? How do we know? • How must curriculum and instruction be adapted to reach the widest possible range of students and their families? • What do we need to do in order to communicate in family’s language of choice? What are the budget and planning implications?
Understand the Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is in the room? What are the demographics (race, religion, supplemental educational services, Individualized Learning Programs, level of education, parent engagement in the school community, diverse learners, English Language learners, etc.)? • Is your program expanding the knowledge of its students, introducing something that will be entirely new, or a combination of the two? To what extent will the teacher/ parent/caregiver/community knowledge of the subject impact the students’ experience?



Demonstrating Growth in this Component

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Organizations have multiple opportunities to gather tools as evidence of practice in this component. The supporting documents below can serve as artifacts and evidence of practice, and can be shared during professional conversations, uploaded to *artlook*,[®] or gathered during an observation. The following provides examples, rather than an exhaustive listing, of how organizations can showcase their practice.

- School, community, and student needs assessments and/or interest inventories
- Program materials translated into family's language of choice
- Notes from interviews with teachers, administrators, community members
- Site visit observation logs



Implications for Field Trips

Your field trip experiences will be most effective when you have a strong understanding of who will attend and participants know what to expect. Document information about each group of students and/or their families. What is the age and level of experience with the art form? Why are they attending the event or exhibit? What do participants need to feel prepared for the experience, and what tools can you provide to follow up after the field trip? What information do you want back from participants to help you demonstrate impact and/or make changes to the program? The answers to these questions may be different for each group of students and their families, but the system for documenting those answers can be standard practice.