



THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

KENNEDY CENTER ALLIANCE
FOR ARTS EDUCATION NETWORK



KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit

A FRAMEWORK FOR STATE ALLIANCES
FOR ARTS EDUCATION TO USE TO CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT
OF THEIR OPERATIONS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



The Kennedy Center

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Introduction

KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit

The KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit is a framework for State Alliances for Arts Education to use to conduct an assessment of Alliance operations, programs and services. The kit was originally developed by the 1998–99 KCAAEN National Governance Committee, additional KCAAEN appointed leaders and Kennedy Center Staff for the use of Staff and Board Members involved with managing State Alliances. In the development of the KCAAEN Strategic Plan (2006–2009), the KCAAEN Network Leadership Committee (NLC) identified the need to review and refine the existing KCAAEN professional resources to continue to provide Alliances access to quality resources. This guide assists Alliances in understanding how they are performing by providing a comprehensive overview of all aspects of managing the work of Alliances as independent, not-for-profit organizations.

This *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* is designed for use by Staff and Board members involved with managing KCAAEN State Alliances for Arts Education. This is truly a self-assessment tool. It is designed for State Alliances leaders to use together without the aide of outside consultants or facilitators. **This Kit will help you see how well your State Alliance is performing.** It includes a comprehensive overview of all aspects of managing the work of State Alliances as independent, not-for-profit organizations.

Topic areas in the *Kit* include:

- **Internal operations** — identifying and training board and staff
- **External relationships** — working with partners, funders and audiences
- **Ongoing programs** — supporting arts education
- **Special projects** — enriching the mission and vision

Using the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* can help the leadership of your State Alliance gain a “snapshot” of how well you are doing. It can help you to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. It is an excellent tool for clarifying what you are doing well, while helping your organization to identify and self-select areas that you might want to work on. The *Self-Assessment Kit* is an aide in your planning efforts.

The KCAAEN represents a wide variety of individual State Alliance organizations. Each is unique. This *KCAAEN Self Assessment Kit* has been designed as a resource for State Alliances that operate with or without paid Staff, with small and large Boards and with a variety of programs and services.

Overview

The *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* includes the following materials:

1. **Instructions, Terms and Definitions**, which provide an overview of the KCAAEN Self-Assessment Matrix and how it should be used for assessing your work, identifying areas of both strength and needs for improvement and all-around planning.
2. **KCAAEN Self-Assessment Matrix**, which provides the overall framework of the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit*. This is a summary table of the categories (Focus Areas) and indicators (Criteria) that should be considered in conducting the self-assessment. The indicators lead to identifying key quality characteristics of successful State Alliances.
3. **Evidence/Indicators of Success**, which provides space to document evidence or indicators of success and/or develop action steps.

Instructions, Terms and Definitions

This introductory section provides basic information for understanding how to use the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit*, and in particular, the Matrix, which is the foundation of the assessment materials.

KCAAEN Self-Assessment Matrix

The Matrix is the framework that provides the structure for the entire *Self-Assessment*. The Evidence Guide provides criteria and a column to write-in evidence or indicators of success. The matrix should be the starting place for your self-assessment work.

The Levels of the Matrix:

Foundation, Building, Best Practice

The Matrix is divided into three main levels:

Foundation, Building, and Best Practice. Each criteria is numbered within the grid (i.e. 1.1, 1.5, 1.9, etc.) As you review the criteria, you will see that you will be assessing the status of your Alliance's accomplishment on each of the items within the grid.

- **Foundation Criteria** describes what should be achievable in the early stages of starting and developing a State Alliance organization.
- **Building Criteria** describes what is being achieved in a State Alliance organization that is functioning well. The State Alliance has a clear direction and has resources and systems in place that enable it to implement ongoing activities and special projects which make a difference in support for arts education in its state.
- **Best Practice Criteria** describes what can be achieved by State Alliances that are particularly successful in a given focus area. These Best Practice Criteria generally reflect a long-term view of the particular focus area. These State Alliances are notable for having a track record as well-managed organizations with measurable noteworthy accomplishments.

While you may feel that your State Alliance is at the **Foundation** or **Building** or **Best Practice** level in every focus area, or on balance can predominantly be described at a particular level, this self-assessment is not designed to “grade” your organization or “label” your organization at one particular level. In fact, you may find that your Alliance has Foundation, Building, and Best Practice characteristics in all eight focus areas.

Summary Comments Regarding Criteria

As you review each item, note that, in an overall sense, the criteria are cumulative. As you move across the matrix from the left column to the right, you will notice that similar concepts are reviewed at each level of the Focus Area. However, the considerations and degree of sophistication in approaching each criteria will become more complex as the State Alliance builds its expertise in addressing each Focus Area overall.

Focus Areas

The criteria are grouped in the Self-Assessment Matrix under eight focus areas. They overlap and work together. This is intentional because when you are operating an efficient organization you understand that all aspects of the organization are interrelated.

The Focus Areas Are:

1. **Governance and Strategic Planning**

This area is about the governance of your organization—identifying its mission/vision; ensuring that legal and financial requirements as a not-for-profit organization are met; creating and implementing policies and procedures; and the entire function of planning.

2. **State Alliance Leadership**

This area focuses in the personnel involved with guiding the Alliance. This includes Board Members, paid Staff—as well as other human resources that provide professional expertise for your organization—lawyers, accountants, computer experts, etc.

3. **Fund Development**

This area addresses the range of criteria dealing with financial management, including budgeting, monitoring finances, reporting and fundraising.

4. **Information and Analysis**

This area emphasizes the need to gather information and use facts and data to guide the development of programs and services, as well as to be effective in describing the impact of arts education and the work of a State Alliance.

5. **Building Collaborations— Partnership Development**

This area addresses the overall criteria related to partnership and collaboration, essential methodologies for the way in which Alliances conduct their business.

6. **Ongoing Alliance Activities**

This area addresses the ongoing work which State Alliances must undertake to be effective, including monitoring current policy and securing changes in policy, gathering and disseminating information, building support for arts education among target audiences, building membership and/or grassroots coalitions, providing professional development and technical assistance, producing newsletters, maintaining a website and other ongoing activities.

7. **Special Projects (Program Design and Operation)**

This area identifies criteria for creating, planning, and implementing specific projects by considering what needs they are designed to meet as well as how they are planned, implemented, sustained and documented.

8. **Leveraging Our KCAAEN Connection**

This area relates to the relationship of each individual State Alliance to the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network. Its criteria describe ways in which State Alliances and their leaders participate in KCAAEN committees and special initiatives, including the Annual Meeting, the grants program and other opportunities.

Measuring Your Success

Starting Out

The first time that you use the Matrix, check off criteria that you think your State Alliance is achieving. If you are unsure, review the detail about each of the criteria in the Matrix. For example,

5.4 AAE and its programs have collaborative leadership that creates links to schools, cultural organizations, and others in the community.	
a. draws upon a mix of individuals with specialized expertise to guide its special initiatives.	X
b. identifies and involves individuals in its work, which can help expand its effectiveness among administrators, educators, cultural and community leaders.	X
c. draws upon a broad cross-section of its community in selecting individuals to lead the organization.	(-)

Each category in the Matrix is numbered. The criteria describe what is needed, or “evidence” for the Alliance to consider in assessing how well it addresses the criteria—it is not a “how to” guide. However, it can provide direction for the items an Alliance might think about in rating its success in that Matrix item.

When you are more used to using the criteria ...

There is no scoring or “pass or fail” using the Matrix. It is also not a review or evaluation of any individual. It is a toll for people leading each State Alliance to assess how the Alliance is performing and to identify where there are opportunities for improvement. Remember that the Matrix enables your organization to identify its strengths as well as its weaknesses. You may be surprised at how well your State Alliance is doing!

Should you decide to tackle an area for improvement, do not feel that you need to address all areas for improvement at the same time. Select one or more focus areas or categories, which you feel you can work on and identify ways to improve over a set period of time.

If a Focus Area seems not to apply to your State Alliance ...

All State Alliances should be addressing each of the focus areas, regardless of their stage of development, length of existence, staffing level, or project focus. If an entire focus area seems to be something that is not related to what your State Alliance is currently doing, you will want to give this careful consideration. Why is this area something you have not or are currently not addressing? Is there another Member State

Alliance that you could speak with to gain another perspective on this area? Do you need to contact the National Partnerships Office at The Kennedy Center or an NLC representative to gain further clarification regarding the importance of this focus area, or to have some examples, which you can discuss at one of your Board/Executive Committee meetings to help you pursue further discussion of this area in relation to your Alliance?

If an individual Criterion seems not to apply to your State Alliance ...

Perhaps the recent work of your State Alliance has made other criteria items within this focus area of greater importance in your work. Perhaps this is an item you haven’t thought about yet. If a criterion seems confusing or inappropriate to your situation, refer to the details which provide further clarification about “what the writers meant” or “ideas which your Alliance should consider” in thinking about this criterion.

Optional Scoring Scale

If you are interested in rating or ranking the criteria, you might consider using this numerical scale:

- 4 points** — consistently applied with outstanding results
- 3 points** — regularly applied with positive results
- 2 points** — beginning to apply and starting to have results
- 1 point** — commenced planning and developing strategies
- 0 points** — haven't considered this at all yet

For example,

For the Focus Area: Ongoing Alliance Activities, Foundation Level criteria:

6.2 Alliance takes a lead role in the development and implementation of arts education advocacy and public awareness initiatives at the state, district, and local levels.

Ask yourself how well your Alliance is achieving this. Check the criteria:

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. develops and implements public awareness campaigns, alone and/or with others to support arts education | 3 |
| b. identifies strategies for rallying support for policies and programs that support arts education | 4 |
| c. considers ways to build long-term public awareness and support for arts education among its target audiences | 3 |
| d. is able to take a leadership role in distributing information regarding short-term crisis developments | 2 |

Then fill in the matrix or score column. You could give your Alliance 3 points if that is something you already do well but think there is room for improvement.

6.2 Alliance takes a lead role in the development and implementation of arts education advocacy and public awareness initiatives at the state, district, and local levels.

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1. Governance and Strategic Planning Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 1.1–1.4	X	BUILDING 1.5–1.8	X
<p>1.1 Alliance requirements (such as 501(c) 3; state incorporations; insurance) are in place.</p> <p>a. has insurance coverage appropriate to its needs</p> <p>b. if a fiscal agent is used for Alliance start-up, Alliance is pursuing 501(c)3 status</p> <p>c. accurate records are maintained either at the Alliance office or through legal and/or accounting agents</p> <p>d. all required filings including local, state, attorney general’s office, IRS and financial reports are up-to-date</p>		<p>1.5 Monitors status of strategic plan and use of resources on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>a. board and staff knowledge of strategic plan and resources enable them to make joint decisions about new opportunities and changes in the operating environment</p> <p>b. board and staff meet regularly (in person, video conference, phone, and/or email) to review status of strategic plan and current activities, making adjustments as needed</p>	
<p>1.2 Alliance has unity of purpose reflected in a clearly articulated mission/vision statement.</p> <p>a. is guided by a written statement of its mission/vision which has been developed by Board and Staff leadership (Mission describes a core belief in promoting learning in and through the arts for all students)</p>		<p>1.6 Management of the Alliance is based on consistent decision-making and procedures.</p> <p>a. procedures are reviewed at least once per year and updated in response to feedback</p> <p>b. operational procedures are written, distributed and followed</p> <p>c. board and staff has an understanding of its organizational structure and decision-making process</p>	
<p>1.3 Alliance is aware of its environment (arts, education, and community) at both the state and local levels.</p> <p>a. monitors general support for arts and education throughout its state, including awareness of state arts agency policies and programs</p> <p>b. monitors status of school improvement trends and initiatives, such as graduation requirements, standards and assessment, including awareness of state Department of Education policies and programs</p> <p>c. monitors status of state policies and legislation that affect support for arts education</p>		<p>1.7 Planning is a formal, regular process, which uses feedback and recognized planning tools. Strategic plan is written in clear manner, incorporates all programs and services, and is distributed to Board, Staff and members as appropriate.</p> <p>a. convenes annual planning retreat or other opportunity to assess its work and make future plans</p> <p>b. incorporates information gleaned from surveys or program evaluations into its planning process</p>	
<p>1.4 Has current strategic plan in place, including timeline, tasks and budget.</p> <p>a. is able to use annual strategic plan at the close of the year to assess what has been accomplished</p> <p>b. the strategic plan is well thought out, including details regarding who, what, when and how specific tasks will be accomplished</p> <p>c. identifies and states goals and objectives to be accomplished for the year and identifies strategies and action steps to accomplish them</p> <p>d. identifies timeframe for creating the next year’s plan of action well before the start of the new fiscal year</p>		<p>1.8 Mission/Vision statements are consistently expressed in plans, policies and procedures.</p> <p>a. uses its mission/vision statement on printed materials</p> <p>b. has a set of beliefs and values that have been developed by the board and staff and are referred to in plans and policies</p> <p>c. the direction of the Alliance and its purpose guides decisions and day-to-day operations</p>	

BEST PRACTICES 1.9–1.11

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

1.9 Alliance's key partners are consulted as part of annual planning activities

- a. encourages its key partners to contribute ideas for new initiatives and incorporates these suggestions into the planning process
- b. identifies comfortable ways for its key major partners to provide feedback about its programs and services

1.10 Board or Executive Committee is actively determining scope and direction of the Alliance through plans, policies and supporting work of Executive Director and/or other personnel.

- a. board takes responsibility for securing and sustaining resources to enable Alliance to be effective
- b. leadership of the Alliance is truly a team effort

1.11 All Alliance activity is based on measurable outcomes, which are linked to a planning cycle, target audience needs and have allocated resources and meet defined policies.

- a. has long-term plans and defined direction which supports the mission/vision of the organization.
- b. partners and target audiences know what to expect and where the Alliance is headed
- c. outcomes are measured in relationship to the strategic plan
- d. there is cohesion and consistency between plans, outcomes, policies and procedures

2. State Alliance Leadership Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 2.1–2.4	X	BUILDING 2.5–2.8	X
<p>2.1 Roles are defined (including Board, Staff and committees).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. committees are appointed with a clear purpose and timeframe and responsibilities of members are defined b. paid Staff functions are separate from board functions, with each having clearly understood responsibilities c. board positions are defined in writing, including such expectations as attendance at board meetings, committee service, philanthropic duties including financial contributions, etc. d. staff job descriptions are defined in writing 		<p>2.5 Board/Staff orientation and training are an ongoing part of the Alliance operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. professional development opportunities are provided to Board/Staff Members including representing the Alliance at conferences and meetings b. an orientation session is planned and held for new Board and Staff Members c. all new Board/Staff Members receive materials, which help them to build immediate understanding of the history, policies, procedures and plans of the Alliance 	
<p>2.2 Board and/or Executive Committee are recruited on basis of having the skills to lead and extend the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. builds its leadership infrastructure by supporting a formal nomination process b. selects Board Chair/Chair-Elect from among its experienced leadership c. recruits Board Members from a wider network (outside the usual suspects) as a means to extend its reach and impact d. recruits Board Members from among current members and partners e. recruits Board Members with a knowledge of the fields of arts, education, community development, and not-for-profit management f. seeks Board Members with a passion for arts education and is willing to become knowledgeable 		<p>2.6 Alliance leadership manages its operations through sound not-for-profit practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. communication strategies are pursued to keep leadership informed b. Board/Staff/Committee leadership manage meetings well, including advance planning, agendas, minutes and other documentation c. Staff leadership communicates regularly with Board Chair 	
<p>2.3 Executive Director and/or other personnel are recruited on the basis of defined responsibilities and appropriate skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. employment conditions for personnel are defined and documented (contract, letter of agreement, etc.) b. Board understands its role and responsibilities as an employer c. detailed job descriptions, which define full range of responsibilities, are developed and appropriately skilled individuals are recruited 		<p>2.7 Alliance considers and makes use of external support to meet its operational needs (lawyer, accountant, IT, development, marketing, media, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. has a network of individuals with expertise it can draw upon for advice and support b. contracts with independent contractors to provide specialized, high-quality support services (i.e. accounting, legal, computer, etc.) 	
<p>2.4 Alliance actively identifies and pursues ways of increasing diversity among its leadership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. recruits Board Members with a sensitivity to issues of gender, ethnic and geographic diversity b. personnel placement strategies include sensitivity to issues of gender, ethnic and geographic diversity 		<p>2.8 Procedures are implemented annually to evaluate paid personnel, Board Members, consultants and other volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Board and Committee Members are reviewed annually based upon clearly defined expectations for service (i.e. attend meetings, fulfilling committee assignments, making contributions, meeting fundraising goals, etc.) b. performance of employed Staff is reviewed formally and objectively on an annual basis and professional development opportunities are provided to improve performance c. positive feedback and reward strategies for personnel are developed d. independent contractor services are reviewed upon completion of work or at other times as provided in the work agreement 	

BEST PRACTICES 2.9–2.11

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- 2.9 Management of Alliance readily monitors and adapts changes from internal and external sources.
 - a. has an ongoing vision and is self-sustaining
 - b. has the flexibility to adjust to external changes in its environment including education policies, increases or decreases in funding sources and support
 - c. has the flexibility to adjust to internal changes in personnel, Committee membership, and Board leadership; equipment and other resources
- 2.10 Alliance maximizes its use of human resources.
 - a. successfully manages a balance of Board, Staff, independent contractors, advisors and volunteers in meeting its needs
- 2.11 Alliance sustains stable, but flexible infrastructure and manages leadership transitions smoothly.
 - a. plans for changes in leadership, encourages the involvement of new leaders, supports the development of current leaders and maintains the involvement of former leaders in ways that support continuity and stability throughout the Alliance

3. Funding Development Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 3.1–3.3	X	BUILDING 3.4–3.6	X
<p>3.1 Alliance develops and monitors an annual budget that correlates to the strategic plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Board and Staff receive regular budget reports b. accurate and timely financial records are maintained c. not-for-profit budgets are prepared by senior Staff and/or Board, and are adopted by a vote of the Board 		<p>3.4 Alliance monitors its financial status on a regular basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Board and Staff identify cash flow needs and are able to account for both general operations and restricted funds b. Board and Staff receive and analyze regular financial statements 	
<p>3.2 Alliance develops/maintains chart of accounts/balance books/reconciles books etc., and conducts an annual audit or external professional review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. conducts financial functions in-house or contracts with an independent contractor (bookkeeper, CPA) to help with managing its finances b. understands its financial management obligations 		<p>3.5 Alliance develops and implements an annual funding strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. identifies and considers applying for funding from local, state, regional and national sources b. secures funding from individual donors c. identifies, applies for and receives funding from a variety of sources including corporate, foundation and government d. a long-term strategy to develop sustainability of the Alliance and its programs are pursued 	
<p>3.3 Alliance budgets for earned, contributed and in-kind sources of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. identifies and secures in-kind contributions b. identifies and pursues sources of earned income (registration fees, professional development or other program fees and publication or gift item sales) c. considers ways in which individuals can contribute funds, services, or in-kind contributions d. identifies, applies for and receives matching funds from a variety of sources (i.e. corporate, foundation, state arts agency, other government sources) 		<p>3.6 Alliance identifies partner services, financial contributions and other resources to be contributed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. agreement upon the ways in which earned income from partnership programs/services will be shared or distributed b. works with specific partners to identify sponsors or contributors to joint programs and initiatives c. works with specific partners to clarify the cash and/or in-kind contributions which each are making toward their partnership programs/services 	

BEST PRACTICES 3.7–3.9

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

3.7 Alliance creates and monitors progress on a comprehensive development plan which includes a cash reserve.

- a. develops a long-term financial strategy, which includes having a sufficient cash reserve in place at all times
- b. has an adequate level of funding to accomplish its strategic plan
- c. maintains a modest cash reserve to address its cash flow needs

3.8 Alliance earns a substantial portion of its income from fees paid for its programs and services.

- a. develops a successful contracted service component
- b. develops its programmatic and service partnerships in ways that help to expand its earned income

3.9 Alliance establishes successful ongoing funding relationships with government agencies, corporations, foundations and individuals.

- a. applies for support from a wide variety of sources
- b. receives annual support from state government sources
- c. has raised or received funds to support for arts education
- d. has received an exceptional level of support from one or more sources for its ongoing or special initiatives

4. Information and Analysis

Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 4.1–4.4	X	BUILDING 4.5–4.7	X
<p>4.1 Alliance keeps abreast of not-for-profit laws and legal requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. written, current documents are used to determine state and federal requirements b. qualified individuals provide guidance as needed 		<p>4.5 Range of information needs and information sources are reviewed regularly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. knowledge is kept up to date and comprehensive through identification of needs and by using a range of sources including technology, publications, meetings, etc. b. broader trends, including research in support of arts education, are followed-up by gathering information c. is aware of trends and exemplary programs in other states 	
<p>4.2 Alliance researches and knows its state demographics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. obtains and analyzes demographic information, including trends in population growth and diversity, so that this information can be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. understood in terms of its impact on school improvement efforts at the state and local levels ii. used to ensure that the Alliance is inclusive in developing its leadership infrastructure for arts education 		<p>4.6 Review of programs and services is based on written evaluations and impact data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. results are used to guide program development b. program evaluations are constructed to allow easy, fast completion, and analysis c. electronic media and on-line resources are utilized 	
<p>4.3 Record-keeping processes are thorough and formal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. records are dated and maintained in a manner that allows easy retrieval b. annual evaluation of programs and services is conducted to identify ways of improving efficiency 		<p>4.7 Evaluation and impact data provide an impetus for future planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. comparisons are made with other programs in relation to gathering and using data b. Data gathering methods and tools are reviewed based on feedback 	
<p>4.4 Research on effective arts education program models is gathered and considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. program information is reviewed as an aid in establishing Alliance programs b. information on exemplary arts education programs is utilized in advocacy efforts and recognition programs 			

BEST PRACTICES 4.8–4.10

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- 4.8 Decisions in Alliance programs and services are consistently based on reliable information.
 - a. likely impact of decisions is carefully reviewed
 - b. facts and data are used to guide the program

- 4.9 Collection and analysis of feedback are systematic, scheduled, and linked to planning cycles.
 - a. feedback is based on both quantitative and qualitative information and is timed to inform the strategic plan

- 4.10 Alliance collects and analyzes information and data to describe its impact and effectiveness at local, district, state and national levels.
 - a. is able to present information and data, which supports the value of its work on an ongoing basis

5. Building Collaborations—Partnership Development Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 5.1–5.3	X	BUILDING 5.4–5.7	X
<p>5.1 Alliance identifies state arts agencies and state departments of education as partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is familiar with the policies, programs, and services of these agencies b. maintains ongoing communication with senior Staff, arts education Staff and Board Members of these agencies when appropriate c. recognizes that these two agencies are lead government agencies for the arts and education in their state <p>5.2 Alliance identifies and pursues opportunities for partnerships on an ongoing basis among both traditional and non-traditional audiences i.e. PTA's, cultural institutions, local arts agencies, social service agencies, corporate community, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. looks for opportunities to connect with individuals and organizations that share similar vision and goals in expanding the reach of programs and services b. is familiar with what other organizations throughout their state are involved with in the area of arts education <p>5.3 Alliance further engages stakeholders who regularly attend Alliance events, participate in Alliance initiatives and support its overall mission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. meetings and events have high attendance levels b. meetings are characterized by active involvement among Board Members, partners, advisors, contributors and members 		<p>5.4 Alliance and its programs have collaborative leadership that creates links to schools, cultural organizations, and others in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. draws upon a mix of individuals with specialized expertise to guide its special initiatives b. identifies and involves individuals in its work, which can help expand its effectiveness among educators, administrators, cultural and community leaders c. draws upon a broad cross-section of its community in selecting individuals to lead the organization <p>5.5 Alliance actively participates in the development and implementation of its statewide arts education plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. maintains a presence at state conferences, town meetings, and other gatherings when state plans are being discussed b. Alliance and state agencies have a shared vision for arts education and jointly identify strategies to work toward its full implementation c. Alliance is a respected leader in its state; consequently, the state arts agency and state department of education invite the Alliance to actively participate in the development and implementation of state arts education plans <p>5.6 Alliance and its partners have defined goals and responsibilities, and acknowledge reciprocal benefits of collaborations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. partners can and do understand and articulate benefits, which each partner derives from working together b. All partners develop and agree on roles, responsibilities and goals <p>5.7 Status of collaborative activities is routinely reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. plan and implement assessment methods b. share feedback throughout the course of the projects/programs and make adjustments to ensure the ongoing effectiveness c. partners regularly meet regarding specific projects/programs d. joint project evaluations are analyzed and the results are reported to partners and funders 	

BEST PRACTICES 5.8–5.11**X****EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

5.8 Alliance and its partners share program promotion and provide links to wider networks.

- a. partners assist in promoting the program through their networks and offer time and resources

5.9 Create ways of strengthening the partnership through a shared vision.

- a. partnership is considered by all as a positive, dynamic association that requires each individual to contribute.
- b. partnership takes a proactive role in keeping lines of communication open

5.10 Alliance and its partners pursue ways to sustain their high quality partnerships.

- a. work together to identify resources needed to continue high quality programs and services
- b. work together to help key decision-makers understand the value of maintaining successful collaborative programs/projects
- c. work together to identify resources needed to sustain their ongoing partnership efforts

5.11 Alliance partnerships are recognized by others for excellence.

- a. partnership is recognized outside of the local community for their high quality partnerships and programs
- b. partnership celebrates their mutual success
- c. partnership jointly documents and shares information with others about their successful collaborations

6. Ongoing Alliance Activities Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 6.1–6.4	X	BUILDING 6.5–6.8	X
<p>6.1 Alliance monitors, analyzes, and distributes information regarding developments in school improvement efforts at the national, state and local levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. attends meetings to remain current on state and local developments b. subscribes to list-servs and publications to assist with its monitoring efforts c. allocates time and resources to keep abreast of legislative and policy developments that have the potential to affect arts education 		<p>6.5 A variety of strategies is used to build support for the Alliance including membership, cooperative agreements, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. considers a full range of strategies to build its identity and sustain its visibility and profile in order to be effective b. considers and selects strategies which will assist in broadening its base of support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. identifies products, programs and services, and ways to promote them and make them available to others (Services to individuals can be provided through membership or free technical assistance. Products, programs, and services can also be provided on a fee-paid basis through cooperative agreements or contracts through which the Alliance receives earned income for its work.) 	
<p>6.2 Alliance takes a lead role in the development and implementation of arts education advocacy and public awareness initiatives at the state, district and local levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. develops and implements public awareness campaigns, alone and/or with others to support arts education b. identifies strategies for rallying support for policies and programs that support arts education c. considers ways to build long-term public awareness and support for arts education among its target audiences d. is able to take a leadership role in distributing information regarding short-term crisis developments 		<p>6.6 Alliance provides quality ongoing programs/ services in one or more areas of advocacy, public awareness, information gathering and dissemination, professional development, or technical assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. identifies its strengths matched with the priority areas of need to build expertise in program/ service delivery in one or more of these areas b. becomes recognized as an excellent source of information and is noted for its work in one or more of these areas 	
<p>6.3 Alliance recognizes potential target audiences to include administrators, educators, parents, community leaders, artists and cultural organizations while considering the broadest possible base of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. utilizes a range of communication strategies to reach these audiences including meetings, newsletters, letters, list-servs, fax, phone calls, direct mail, etc. b. identifies and makes contact with key individuals among broader target audiences, including influential school and community leaders c. develops and maintains relationships with decision-makers including school boards and legislative officials who have the power to ensure the essential role of the arts in education 		<p>6.7 Alliance leadership serve as articulate spokespersons in forum, which provide opportunities for “making the case” for arts education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. leaders are able to succinctly outline issues and effectively state positions of the Alliance regarding issues b. identifies individuals among its leadership to speak on its behalf 	
<p>6.4 Alliance identifies areas of need to support arts education (as part of school improvement efforts) and implements ongoing activities to address its current environment and target audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. programs and services are designed to address specific needs that support the Alliance mission b. considers ongoing programs and services such as a newsletter, annual conference, preparation of resource publications, technical assistance and information services, information hotlines, advocacy training, community presentations, etc., to fulfill its mission 		<p>6.8 Alliance has capacity to operate both reactively and proactively by being able to respond to public requests for information on a consistent basis as part of its ongoing activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is able to anticipate the kinds of information it may be asked to provide so that it can make these resources available in a timely manner b. is able to make referrals to identify additional sources of information c. maintains reliable information, which can easily be retrieved and disseminated in response to requests 	

BEST PRACTICES 6.9–6.12

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

6.9 Ongoing programs/services are centered on delivery of quality service to target audience(s) with changing needs and expectations.

- a. all ongoing programs and services are flexible so that they can be adjusted to meet changing audience needs
- b. all ongoing programs and services are governed by the needs of target audiences
- c. all ongoing programs and services are designed to address opportunities in the environment that can support arts education and school improvement efforts

6.10 Alliance identifies and implements ongoing ways to build a grassroots infrastructure to support the importance of arts education at the state and local levels.

- a. all ongoing programs and services are designed to attract target audiences and build support among key decision-makers
- b. develops its ongoing work in ways which encourage active and sustained involvement among ongoing constituencies

6.11 Alliance communicates regularly with target audiences, members, and key stakeholders so that a statewide infrastructure is consistently informed.

- a. is actively involved in the arts and education leadership circles in the state
- b. actively pursues opportunities to connect with other organizations including presentations at conferences, newsletter exchanges, etc.
- c. communication mechanisms (information services, written and electronic) are developed and maintained
- d. contact lists for key agencies and organizations are kept up to date

6.12 Alliance is viewed as a successful agent of change and has notable achievements in ensuring the arts are an essential part of education in its state.

- a. is able to articulate the impact, which its work has had in improving teaching and learning in, through and about the arts
- b. has a proven track record of success with its ongoing programs and services
- c. is perceived as a primary source of arts education information

7. Special Projects (Program Design and Operation) Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 7.1–7.4	X	BUILDING 7.5–7.8	X	
<p>7.1 Alliance identifies priority need(s) to be met in creating each project.</p> <p>a. prioritizes which projects they will undertake based upon the ability of each project to address an identified critical need</p> <p>b. each project is based upon a clearly identified purpose, which supports the Alliance mission and overall plan</p> <p>7.2 Project outcomes and objectives are defined and documented.</p> <p>a. project outcomes should include both quantitative and qualitative indicators</p> <p>b. project has written outcomes, which clearly describe how this project is going to make a difference for arts education</p> <p>c. follows through on plans to conduct evaluations and preparing written evaluation documents</p> <p>7.3 Project plan is devised, written in a clear manner and distributed (to funders, partners).</p> <p>a. all organizations and individuals directly involved with developing, implementing and evaluating the project understand and support the project plan</p> <p>b. written project plan is comprehensive and includes details regarding timelines, human resources, individual responsibilities, budget and allocation of other resources in addition to purpose, outcomes and objectives</p> <p>7.4 Project is implemented as described in the project plan.</p> <p>a. adjustments are made as needed in a timely fashion to ensure successful outcomes</p> <p>b. project plan is monitored and adjusted to keep the project on track</p>	X	<p>7.5 Feasibility of collaborating and promoting with others is considered.</p> <p>a. opportunities for project partnerships are considered in relation to:</p> <p>i. how collaboration can extend the impact of the project</p> <p>ii. how collaboration can maximize the numbers served by the project</p> <p>iii. how collaboration can be enhanced by sharing resources and expertise</p> <p>7.6 Documentation of the project is complete and ongoing.</p> <p>a. project documentation includes information about the impact of the project</p> <p>b. project documentation includes information about the process of planning and implementing the project</p> <p>c. records are dated and maintained in a manner that allows easy retrieval</p> <p>d. formal written evaluation strategies are used which include indicators (both quantitative and qualitative) for measuring success</p> <p>7.7 Opportunities for extending the project, if/when successful, are explored.</p> <p>a. identifies and pursues opportunities for continuing successful projects; i.e. extending the timeline and/or expanding the scope of the project to include more people, sites, events, art forms, etc.</p> <p>7.8 Processes for improving the project are constantly reviewed and incorporated to ensure delivery of maximum outcomes.</p> <p>a. project data and feedback is analyzed so that it can be used to make improvements</p> <p>b. opportunities for project leaders and/or participants to give feedback are incorporated into the project plan</p> <p>c. ongoing project documentation provides information to aid in improving the project should it be replicated or continued</p>	X	

BEST PRACTICES 7.9–7.12

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- 7.9 All aspects including sustainability and project scope are linked to long term planning process.
 - a. plans are developed to prepare for sustainability including long-term plans and defined direction
 - b. ways of expanding the sources of outside funds are identified
 - c. ways of continuing the commitment of successful project participants, partners and funders are identified
- 7.10 Alliance documents evidence of the impact of the project at the state, district and/or local school level(s).
 - a. is able to succinctly articulate (verbally and in writing) the impact of the project on improving teaching and learning in and through the arts
 - b. regularly gathers quantitative data and qualitative information about the project
- 7.11 Formal benchmarking with other Alliance programs occurs regularly.
 - a. improvements result in improved satisfaction among target audiences
 - b. reviews the project in comparison with other programs of the Alliance (at least annually) in order to gauge individual project success
- 7.12 Project is seen as integral, positive aspect of school improvements efforts by key stakeholders.
 - a. key stakeholders voice their support for the positive impact of the project and the need to sustain it
 - b. the project has achieved measurable outcomes, which have made a difference in instituting, supporting and/or sustaining arts education

8. Leveraging our KCAAEN Connection Evidence Guide and Worksheet

FOUNDATION 8.1–8.4	X	BUILDING 8.5–8.8	X
<p>8.1 Alliance reflects its KCAAEN membership through its mission statement, by-laws and identification of member status on materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. credits The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for project financial support b. identifies its KCAAEN Membership on its materials c. mission and by-laws include appropriate language, and references the Alliance as a “Member” of the KCAAEN with a mission “to promote learning in and through the arts for all students” 		<p>8.5 Alliance distributes National Partnerships electronic newsletter <i>UPDATE</i> to its board members, includes <i>UPDATE</i> material in information distributed to others, and takes action on KCAAEN requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. uses <i>UPDATE</i> and other materials in its newsletters or other information distribution efforts b. primary contact (either Director or Chair) regularly shares <i>UPDATE</i> and other materials with Board/Executive Committee to keep state leaders informed of KCAAEN information and initiatives 	
<p>8.2 Alliance leadership regularly reviews KCAAEN News and other KCAAEN materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. state contacts (Board Chair, Executive Director) review KCAAEN materials on an ongoing basis 		<p>8.6 Alliance considers use of KCAAEN initiatives, including Kennedy Center funding opportunities. (*Special initiatives have included: KCAAEN and NSBA Award program, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts National Schools of Distinction Award, NAEP Assessment, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. leadership (including Staff, Board/Executive Committee) carefully considers the ways in which participating in KCAAEN initiatives have the potential to build the identity and collective impact of the KCAAEN resulting in greater effectiveness at home b. leadership carefully considers the ways in which KCAAEN initiatives can help them to reach their goals and the needs of target audiences in their state c. leadership carefully considers application for annual project grant or other special funding opportunities through the KCAAEN 	
<p>8.3 Alliance leadership attends KC Annual Leadership Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. supports the attendance of its state leaders at the KCAAEN National Partnerships Meeting as an integral part of its leadership development process b. sends at least one representative to participate in the KCAAEN National Partnerships Meeting each year, recognizing this membership requirement as a vital part of its KCAAEN connection 		<p>8.7 Alliance leadership participates in KCAAEN committees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. considers issues of diversity when making for KCAAEN committee service b. participates in nominating process for NLC c. leaders volunteer for KCAAEN committees including Nomination Review, Advocacy, Professional Development and Awards/Recognition 	
<p>8.4 Alliance answers KC information requests and maintains “In Good Standing” status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. completes required documentation and responsibilities to maintain “In Good Standing” member status b. state contacts respond to inquiries from the Kennedy Center Education Dept., NLC, KCAAEN committees, etc. c. state contact(s) makes a concerted effort to respond to KCAAEN requests to gather and/or distribute information 		<p>8.8 Alliance shares special successes and materials it develops with KCAAEN.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. shares its major accomplishments for consideration in the KCAAEN Award/Recognition Program b. shares its achievement and successes with the NLC through conversations with its assigned NLC representative c. keeps the Kennedy Center Director of National Partnerships informed of important developments in its work d. keeps Kennedy Center Education Dept. on its mailing list for publications, newsletters, etc. 	

BEST PRACTICES 8.9–8.11

X

EVIDENCE /INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

8.9 Alliance adopts KCAAEN initiatives.

- a. regularly shares the status of its work on special KCAAEN initiatives in a timely fashion to help ensure the collective success of KCAAEN efforts
- b. identifies the ways in which its work with special initiatives is connected with the KCAAEN
- c. identifies ways to respond to the opportunities presented by special KCAAEN initiatives, adapting these programs to meet its own goals and objectives
- d. provides feedback to the Kennedy Center and NLC during the development of special KCAAEN initiatives

8.10 Alliance regularly participates and connects with the Kennedy Center, the NLC and other State Alliance's.

- a. has been recognized for the quality of its work and achievements through the KCAAEN Awards/ Recognition Program
- b. identifies and acts on ways in which its State Alliance can help build diversity among the KCAAEN leadership pool
- c. helps to build KCAAEN leadership through involvement in KCAAEN committees
- d. leaders actively volunteer to participate in the Annual Meeting (sharing program ideas, serving as session facilitators, participating as a mentor, etc.)
- e. is always reliable and thorough in maintaining its responsibilities as a Member of the KCAAEN (accurate and timely reporting and responds to information needs)
- f. maintains open communication with the Kennedy Center Education Dept. and its NLC contact

8.11 Alliance leverages the national positioning and partnerships developed through the KCAAEN.

- a. is recognized outside of the KCAAEN as an exemplary State Alliance and an effective leader in building coalitions for arts education
- b. is a model for other State Alliances of leadership and partnership
- c. capitalizes on opportunities, which the Kennedy Center develops on behalf of the KCAAEN

(On an ongoing basis, the Kennedy Center pursues opportunities to enhance the position of State Alliances as leaders in arts education. These include assisting distribution of information or best practices, funding Alliance participation in leadership trainings, providing special funding support on a request for proposal basis, etc.)

More Information

We hope that the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* becomes a useful tool for your State Alliance. Copy the Matrix for everyone on the Board and Staff of your State Alliance and consider using it as the basis for your next retreat or planning session.

Consider Additional Ways To Use This Self-Assessment

As a professional development resource

Successful Alliances draw upon people from many different fields—arts, education, community leadership, business, etc.—to build their leadership base. In developing this broader leadership base, it becomes increasingly important to provide information and training, which help Board and Staff Members learn about all of the areas involved in having an effective State Alliance. The *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* provides a great deal of information to help build a common ground of understanding about both not-for-profit and arts education issues.

As a tool in long-range planning

This *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* includes various materials and ideas, which can be used in developing long-range plans, or as a “plan for planning.” A “plan for planning” includes a framework for asking questions and/or identifying priorities, which are then incorporated into further planning exercises and/or documents.

As a tool to identify areas to focus on for improvement

As a comprehensive framework, the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* can help ensure that the full scope of Alliance efforts is reviewed. New areas may be identified which had not been previously considered, while other areas may actually be in “better shape” than previously anticipated.

As a tool to identify or re-commit to priorities

Utilizing the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* in planning and evaluation can help State Alliances identify priorities. It can also verify that previously identified priorities are still on target and reaffirm their importance—for either short term or long term.

Consider These Ideas For Follow-Up

What should we do with the information gathered through the self-assessment?

The *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* can help your State Alliance leadership gather a great deal of information about the organization. It can also provide information about how various individuals involved with the Alliance view its work—Staff, Board leadership, long-term Board Members, new Board Members. It may take awhile to consider how to use this information. It may help to pose some questions for discussion at the outset of the process to identify a list of expectations in order to gain a clear idea about what your organization’s leaders expect as outcomes from a self-assessment process. This may help guide the kind of information you’ll be looking to gather and the ways in which the information may best be used.

Technical Assistance

Once you have used the *Self-Assessment* to thoughtfully identify areas for improvement, you may wish to use the documentation of the process to request technical assistance from an outside source. This may include

- Allocating budget dollars to work on a particular area with the aide of a consultant
- Asking one or more state level partners to provide staff assistance or funding (i.e. state arts agency, state department of education)
- Applying state arts agency, corporate or foundation grant funds to address one or more priorities

Some Thoughts About The Roles of State Alliance Leaders In Working On Self-Assessment

Chair/President

The Chair should take an active role in working on the self-assessment. Planning meetings for the year should usually be held in collaboration with the Executive Director (or other Board Member if there is no paid Staff for the organization). Setting time aside for reflection and establishing future priorities should be decided well in advance. Securing a high level of attendance with sufficient time for discussion is also important. The success of these efforts is dependent upon as much board involvement as possible. The Chair also sets the tone that self-assessment and planning are critical aspects of the Board's role in having oversight for the Alliance as a not-for-profit organization.

Chair-Elect/President-Elect

The Chair-Elect can be very helpful in being a part of the self-assessment process. This individual will more than likely be involved in developing or implementing plans which are the results of these sessions. Having plans for smooth leadership transitions helps build an institutional memory and continuity over time. As noted in the materials, whenever an organization conducts a self-assessment, there will be many areas your Alliance will want to consider working on; however, establishing priorities and determining reasonable timeframes will make a big difference in achieving lasting growth. In the not-for-profit sector, volunteers often experience burnout and turnover, so involving several leaders in the effort is an excellent way to develop not only a shared vision, but shared responsibility for making improvements over time. It is also very helpful to have the Chair-Elect as an articulate spokesperson for what your State Alliance has accomplished successfully, both in terms of its internal operations as well as its programmatic ventures. This helps build awareness among funders, partners, and members that the Alliance is truly an organization rather than a small handful of people working together.

Executive Director

The Alliance executive director should be involved in evaluating the work of the Alliance. If your Alliance plans to use this *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* with the full Board or Executive Committee, the Executive Director should be a part of the team using the materials and discussing them together. Often the Executive Director and Chair work together to prepare for Board or Executive Committee planning retreats. If this material were to be used in that context, the Executive Director would probably work with the Chair or another Board Member appointed to work on assessment in planning for that session.

Staff (Other than the Executive Director)

If your Alliance has Staff members (individuals with responsibility for programs, budgets, fund development, membership recruitment, etc.), then you may wish to consider having the Staff meet together with the Executive Director to use the materials in a staff forum. This staff forum would most likely be separate from the Board or Executive Committee meeting; however, using this as a tool for the Staff to conduct a self-assessment of the Alliance would provide a forum for the Staff to give constructive feedback to the Board from their perspective. The Executive Director may discuss or report the Staff's finding with the Board or Executive Committee.

continued

Roles of State Alliance Leaders *continued*

Executive Committee

Many State Alliances have large boards and conduct the day-to-day business, or even quarterly meetings, through the use of a smaller Executive Committee. Because these individuals have a greater knowledge of the workings of the operation, this may be the best group to review and use this *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit*. They may also be best suited to determine if, when, and how to bring the full Board into the process in an active way.

If you have an Executive Committee it should provide information about its work with the *Self-Assessment* to the entire Board. This may be either a verbal or written report. This report might include an overview of the process, information about the strengths and areas of improvement identified, an indication of how the information and ideas discussed will be used and any other specific details regarding priorities or future plans which were identified or re-emphasized through the process. This kind of report may be useful to share with appropriate funders and/or partner organizations.

You may also wish to provide Board Members with the opportunity to discuss the self-assessment further if they have an interest, with either the chair, Executive Director, or other Board Member involved with planning or implementing the self-assessment.

Board of Directors

For the Board to be involved in conducting this self-assessment it is important to determine the most critical priorities and action steps identified through the self-assessment. If the Executive Committee has conducted the self-assessment and reported its results to the full Board, the full Board should be involved in any follow-up action.

Representatives from Key Partnership Organizations

Depending upon the partnership relationships, some State Alliances may wish to involve key representatives from these organizations in the self-assessment process. Others may wish to share the results with partner organizations. The level of involvement will depend upon the specific relationships with partners. Many of the ideas represented in the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* may be tools for discussing and strengthening these partnerships.

Funding Organizations

Evaluation and assessment are often weak areas for not-for-profit organizations. Your Alliance may also consider sharing a report on the process with funders and/or including such a report as support material for funding proposals.

Answers To Frequently Asked Questions About the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit*

1. How much time should it take for us to complete the self-assessment process using the KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit materials?

- **The answer to this question will depend a great deal on how you decide to use the materials.** For example, you may wish to have a short general orientation to the *KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit* at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, followed by another discussion at a later meeting. You may decide to have everyone (including the Executive Director, Chair, and all Board Members) use just the Matrix to complete their own initial assessment based on their “gut reaction” to where your Alliance stands on each criteria item. This could even be done privately, before or after the Board meeting. Everyone could bring their Matrix to the next Alliance meeting, scheduled as a longer discussion session.
- **Another approach might be to use the *Self-Assessment* in a 2-4 hour session.** Everyone could review the materials and indicate their “gut reaction” using the Matrix alone. Then, small groups might work on individual Focus Areas in greater depth.
- **Over the course of a year, these small groups might parallel committees of your State Alliance.** For example, you might work on just a few of the Focus Areas, which are more critical to your priorities for a given year. If you haven’t been able to work on gathering information and data, one committee might develop plans in this area using the criteria as the foundation for planning and directing its work. If funding development is an important focus, a smaller committee might address this based upon the criteria for this area.

- **Another alternative would be to work with the *Self-Assessment* as the first part of an all day planning retreat.**

Those planning the session might structure the use of the Matrix to identify consensus for those priorities, which will be addressed further in the planning process. The criteria might be used to further explore priorities and develop action plans.

2. Can we use the KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit individually without any discussion?

While you may wish to have leaders of your Alliance take time to review the materials outside the context of a meeting format, it is critical that some kind of discussion forum take place in order to build consensus throughout your organization regarding what you have learned from a self-assessment. Without discussion, the value of the self-assessment is questionable. What have you learned about your organization? What consensus have your leaders arrived at in terms of identifying strengths of your organization and areas for improvement? How will you use the information gathered to move your organization forward in the year ahead?



The Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN), a program of the Kennedy Center Education Department, is a coalition of statewide non-profit Alliances for Arts Education working in partnership with The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to support policies, practices, programs and partnerships that ensure that the arts are an essential part of American K-12 education.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the KCAAEN is to promote learning in and through the arts for all students.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR OUR WORK

The KCAAEN maintains a commitment to arts education by:

1. advocating for arts education at the local, state and national levels;
2. creating an environment for shared values and beliefs;
3. promoting a common set of core beliefs about arts education that unites the KCAAEN in a shared vision and mission;
4. recognizing the value and demonstrating the impact of the KCAAEN's work;
5. establishing strategic communication systems; and
6. advancing leadership, knowledge and skills that are essential to strengthen arts education.

To meet the following program objectives, members of the KCAAEN in partnership with the Kennedy Center will:

- **Build Collaborations:** Develop and support innovative collaborations among schools, community partners and cultural institutions that sustain arts education.
- **Position the Arts:** Speak out on behalf of arts education to citizens, policy makers, state agencies and others about the value and benefits of arts education.
- **Generate Resources:** Develop, publish, and/or disseminate resources for arts education leaders and practitioners.
- **Provide Professional Development:** Implement professional development through educational programs, training and resources.
- **Recognize Innovation and Achievement:** Provide awards and recognitions to individuals, organizations and schools that demonstrate outstanding support for arts education.

Formed in 1973, the KCAAEN brings together educators, school administrators, parents, cultural leaders and citizens from across the nation. Throughout the United States, the KCAAEN seeks to advance the quality of education through the inclusion of the arts in the curriculum. The Kennedy Center supports the growth and development of the Network and the efforts of participating State Alliances through staff consultation, professional development, project grant support and other resources.



The Kennedy Center