



**To: Waterfront Futures Group**  
**From: Allied Arts Education Project**  
**Date: March 13, 2003**

**Re: Proposals for Planning Effort**

The Allied Arts Education Project (AAEP) requests that a community arts education facility (i.e.- children's theatre, art classes, performing classes, administrative and meeting room space) be incorporated into the exploration and planning phase of the Waterfront Project.

AAEP (originated as the Whatcom Arts Education Consortium in 1999) is a partnership of community-based organizations, schools and individuals dedicated to providing arts education (art, music, theatre, dance) opportunities for our children. In the three years since its inception, AAEP has become a clearinghouse for local arts education activities. The current Project goals are for the community to assist schools with state mandated learning goals, train and mentor educators and pre-service teachers, strengthen community bonds and advocate for arts education. Future programs include after-school and summer camp opportunities and a Summer Arts Education Training Institute. AAEP is currently receiving cash and/or in-kind support from Washington State Arts Commission and National Endowment for the (Arts in Education Programs), Whatcom Community Foundation, local school districts and arts organizations (Allied Arts of Whatcom County, Whatcom Museum and Children's Museum, Mount Baker Theatre), Western Washington University, Downtown Renaissance Network, small businesses and private donations.

AAEP has on-going general meetings, bringing together a full spectrum of arts education enthusiasts from the community. In addition, there are committees for specialized groups and projects, and an e-mail distribution list of over 150 people, and growing weekly. Also, Arts Literacy Link of Whatcom, a grassroots parent group, formed as an out-growth of AAEP is distributing an arts education newsletter throughout the county. Currently, most direct services to students are happening at school facilities via artist workshops and longer-term residencies. A visible full-community manifestation of the Project is the Annual Children's Gallery Walk (upcoming on May 2 in downtown Bellingham), showcasing 1500 pieces of student artwork and a variety of performances. The most recent AAEP sponsored adult event occurred on February 10<sup>th</sup>, whereby fifty people participated in an all-day arts education Forum, hosted by the Whatcom Museum. With a

focus on action planning for the future, the Forum confirmed that there is significant energy in our community desiring to continue development of arts education programs and facilities. Indeed, a family oriented arts facility on the Waterfront would be an asset to our community for generations. For future conversation, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

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