Well-Rounded Access Program (WRAP): Theory of Action

This Theory of Action outlines the strategies for the Well-Rounded Access Program (WRAP), provides rationale for the strategies used, and describes the plan for testing, revising, and refining the approach to various strategies within the plan.

What is going on that needs to change?

There is inequitable access to arts educational opportunities and to STEAM-based instructional practices. Specifically, there are inequities to the availability of courses as well as access to courses.

Availability of Courses:
- There are numerous sources of funding and programs that provide educational opportunities to students in STEAM and the arts, both within and outside of school. However, knowledge and awareness of these opportunities may not be widespread among educators, students, or families.
- Students in rural communities experience disparate opportunities to engage in STEAM and arts courses when compared to their peers in more densely populated localities.

Access to Courses:
- Even when courses are available at their schools, many students are experiencing disparate access to courses in STEAM and the arts. These barriers often include staff bias and gatekeeping, course scheduling practices, the cost of courses, the location and time of courses, or students feeling unsafe or unwelcome in courses.

How do we know?

During the initial planning year (October 2020 – September 2021) of the Access to Well-Rounded Courses Federal grant, the WRAP team conducted a [Needs Assessment](#) that identified the above priorities for this work.

What is the impact of this?

- High demand, high wage career options are not accessible to many students, based on their K-12 educational experience, and there is a lack of diversity in STEAM-related fields of study for college and the workforce.
- Schools may be missing opportunities to increase student engagement, ensure that students are welcomed and their identities are honored in school – leading to more

equitable educational outcomes, and to provide well-rounded and project-based curriculum that provides students with authentic, integrated learning experiences.

Where do we see evidence of this impact?

In addition to the evidence gathered during the Needs Assessment process, ODE knows that rural students, students experiencing disabilities, and many communities of color have been underserved by the educational system and have not historically had the same access to a well-rounded education. An analysis of civil rights data from the U.S. Department of Education indicates that students with disabilities are less likely to enroll in common STEM courses such as Algebra II, Calculus, and Physics. Similar inequities in access show up in the arts: according to a 2019 report by the Oregon Community Foundation, 179 schools throughout Oregon reported offering zero arts courses; many of those schools are very small, such as one-room schoolhouses in rural Oregon. In addition to lack of funding, some report that schools have difficulty attracting and retaining high-quality arts teachers to rural communities. Lack of funding also results in inequitable access to the arts; in order to keep their doors open, some arts providers are unable to offer their services at an affordable rate for partners and students.

Which students are impacted?

The current educational landscape is impacting currently and historically marginalized students, including:

- Black/African American students
- American Indian/Alaska Native students
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students
- Latino/a/x students
- Emerging Bilingual students
- Students experiencing disability
- LGBTQ2SIA+ students
- Students experiencing poverty

In addition, students living in rural communities often lack availability of well-rounded courses.

Key Strategies for this Program:

Strategy One: Utilizing Oregon's statewide system of regional STEM Hubs and higher education partners to both expand development of STEAM-related course content and provide professional learning opportunities for educators at the local and regional levels to support high quality instructional practices in delivering STEAM-related courses.

Strategy Two: Increasing ODE's internal staffing capacity to coordinate engagement of Oregon art educators in developing and identifying existing high-quality creative commons licensed arts related course content.

Strategy Three: Utilizing existing state programs to provide educators with access to STEAM related course content.

Strategy Four: Engaging in a competitive procurement process to identify additional partners to help ODE meet the needs of Oregon students in accessing well-rounded courses.

What are we hoping to see?

Availability:

Accessibility to courses cannot happen if they are not available. It is critical to support availability of courses for all students as a foundation for accessibility. In this, we hope to see every public K-12 student having a high quality, comprehensive arts education program available to them within the school day. We also hope to see every public K-12 student having a high quality integrated-content program available to them in the areas of science, technology (including computer science), engineering, arts, and mathematics within the school day.

Accessibility:

In addition to availability, we are hoping to see an extension from only making well-rounded learning opportunities available to making them accessible for all students. This looks like:

- Well-rounded opportunities embodying the full definition of a well-rounded education: moving beyond the courses students take into the essential knowledge and skills the students are learning in those courses; providing the knowledge and skills to live, learn, work, create, and contribute; ensuring that each and every student is known, heard, and supported; focuses on the whole student and their community, the learning experiences they are given, and the beliefs and attributes they develop. (*Oregon's ESSA State Plan, 2017*)
- High quality, STEAM pedagogical practices (such as a hands-on, collaborative, and integrated environments rooted in inquiry and discovery and utilizing project based learning or other student-led strategies) implemented in all public K-12 classrooms.
- Equitable student participation and benefits from high quality STEAM-based practices and well-rounded course content for all students.

Within the Scope of the WRAP:

This extension in instructional practices and equity of access requires a long-term, systems change approach, which is outside of the scope of a 5-year grant. Within the scope of the WRAP, ODE is hoping to see the following outcomes, which can help build toward this larger, long-term vision of a well-rounded education:

Short-Term Outcomes (by October 2023)

Increased Communication Efforts, including:

- All STEM/STEAM hubs having communication tools to effectively communicate with their communities and local schools what STEAM means, the benefits of STEAM, and the connection to high demand/ high wage careers.

- Arts Organizations and Arts Educators having communication tools to effectively communicate with their schools and communities what high quality arts education looks like, the benefits of Arts Education, and the connection of the Arts to career opportunities.
- Administrators and CBOs understanding sustainable funding options for well-rounded learning opportunities.

Increased Course Availability:
- K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to high quality Arts and STEAM course content.

Increased Supportive Course Access Structures:
- The Oregon Department of Education clearly identifying which schools and which students have and do not have access to Arts and STEAM education opportunities.

Mid-Term Outcomes (by September 2025)

Impacts of Communication Efforts, including:
- Educators, students, and families understanding the benefits of arts and STEAM education, including the connection to high demand/ high wage careers.
- Educators, students, and families able to define what STEAM education is and have a collective understanding across the state.

Continued Increase in Course Availability:
- All public K-12 schools having at least one arts teacher dedicated to teaching an arts course, arts integrated courses, or connection to an out-of-school arts or arts integrated program that is easily accessible to all students.
- All educators having access to high quality Arts and STEAM in-person and online curriculum and professional development to support content delivery.
- K-5 students having increased instructional time in STEAM-related content standards.

Course Availability beginning to Expand toward greater Equitable Access for Students:
- Historically and currently marginalized students having positive self-efficacy, engagement, and access to relevant content in STEAM courses.
- K-5 educators implementing Social Emotional Learning and Trauma Informed Practices within Arts Education.
- Arts and STEAM educators implementing culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive teaching practices, specifically within the courses implemented by this program.

How will we get there?

The Expanding Access to Well-Rounded Courses grant is intended to increase access to well-rounded courses and is measured by course development, participation in courses, and family and student satisfaction with courses, so a main focus for this work is centered on course expansion and development. However, developing or expanding courses will not be enough to

achieve the desired outcomes above. To do this, the WRAP will also be focusing on course access structures and communication efforts.

The WRAP has identified the following activities to support increasing access to well-rounded opportunities and help achieve the outcomes identified above.

Course Expansion and Development:

Expansion of 9th Grade Computer Science Course:
Within the WRAP Needs Assessment, Computer Science was identified as a key content area that was not available at many schools within the state. The WRAP will increase access to this course with a focus on expanding to rural areas of the state. This activity aligns with the following outcomes:
- Short-Term Increased Course Availability: K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to high quality STEAM course content.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality STEAM in-person curriculum and professional development to support content delivery.
- Mid-Term Course Availability beginning to Expand toward greater Equitable Access for Students: Historically and currently marginalized students having positive self-efficacy, engagement, and access to relevant content in STEAM courses; STEAM educators implementing culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive teaching practices.

Expansion of STEAM-based High School Physics, Chemistry, and Biology Courses:
While Physics, Chemistry, and Biology courses are available in high schools, the WRAP is focusing on expanding a program that approaches these courses through STEAM-based pedagogical practices and supported with culturally responsive content and professional development and is targeting expansion into rural areas of the state and developing an online structure for this content. This activity aligns with the following outcomes:
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality STEAM in-person and online curriculum and professional development to support content delivery.
- Mid-Term Course Availability beginning to Expand toward greater Equitable Access for Students: Historically and currently marginalized students having positive self-efficacy, engagement, and access to relevant content in STEAM courses; STEAM educators implementing culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive teaching practices.

Development of a K-5 Arts, Care, and Connection Series of Courses:
The WRAP Needs Assessment identified a significant need of access to arts education at the elementary level, with only 55% of elementary students in rural communities attending a school with a standalone course in any arts discipline. The WRAP will be engaging in a competitive contracting process to develop a series of K-5 arts lessons connected to the integrated model of mental health and ODE's care and connection campaign. These lessons will focus on the disciplines of visual arts, music, dance, and theater. This activity aligns with the following outcomes:

- Short-Term Increased Course Availability: K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to high quality arts course content.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All public K-12 schools having at least one arts teacher dedicated to teaching an arts course, arts integrated courses, or connection to an out-of-school arts or arts integrated program that is easily accessible to all students; All educators having access to high quality Arts in-person curriculum and professional development to support content delivery; K-5 students having increased instructional time in STEAM-related content standards.
- Mid-Term Course Availability beginning to Expand toward greater Equitable Access for Students: K-5 educators implementing Social Emotional Learning and Trauma Informed Practices within Arts Education; Arts and STEAM educators implementing culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive teaching practices, specifically within the courses implemented by this program.

Development of Native Arts Lesson Plans:

One of the partnerships identified during the initial planning year was the [Senate Bill 13 (Tribal History/Shared History)](#) body of work. Partnering with this effort, the WRAP is hoping to work closely with the 9 federally recognized Tribes in Oregon and tribal arts organizations to develop a series Native Arts lesson plans for grade 4, 8, and 10. This activity aligns with the following outcomes:

- Short-Term Increased Course Availability: K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to high quality arts course content.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All public K-12 schools having at least one arts teacher dedicated to teaching an arts course, arts integrated courses, or connection to an out-of-school arts or arts integrated program that is easily accessible to all students; All educators having access to high quality Arts in-person curriculum and professional development to support content delivery; K-5 students having increased instructional time in STEAM-related content standards.
- Mid-Term Course Availability beginning to Expand toward greater Equitable Access for Students: Historically and currently marginalized students having positive self-efficacy, engagement, and access to relevant content in STEAM courses; K-5 educators implementing Social Emotional Learning and Trauma Informed Practices within Arts Education; Arts and STEAM educators implementing culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive teaching practices, specifically within the courses implemented by this program.

Arts Instructional Materials Curation:

Currently, ODE has not yet gone through the arts instructional materials adoption process, and a preliminary literature review has indicated a lack of available high quality instructional materials in the arts disciplines. To help support educators who are curating and creating their own instructional materials for the arts, as well as to draw a closer connection to arts and career connections, the WRAP will curate openly licensed arts educational materials and post them on Oregon Open Learning. As these materials do not fall under the term "course" for measurement, they will not be evaluated in the same way that the above courses will be

measured, and the WRAP team has added this activity for supplemental purposes only. However, the WRAP team is hoping that this activity will continue to support movement toward the following outcomes:

- Short-Term Increased Course Availability: K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to high quality arts course content.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality Arts in-person curriculum to support content delivery; K-5 students having increased instructional time in STEAM-related content standards.

Elementary STEAM Content Curation:

Through engagement and from findings in the Needs Assessment, ODE has identified a lack of access to STEAM content areas (particularly science and career connected lessons) at the elementary level. Similar to the activity above, the WRAP team will curate and evaluate openly licensed educational materials and post them on Oregon Open Learning. The WRAP team is hoping that this activity will continue to support movement toward the following outcomes:

- Short-Term Increased Course Availability: K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to STEAM course content.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality STEAM in-person and online curriculum to support content delivery; K-5 students having increased instructional time in STEAM-related content standards.

Course Access Structures

As mentioned above, simply making courses available to educators does not make them accessible for all students. The WRAP has identified the following key activities to support both course availability and accessibility.

Oregon Open Learning

The ODE stood up the [Oregon Open Learning platform](#) in spring 2020 as an effort to support distance learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Through this process, Oregon Open Learning has potential to become a major platform for educators to access openly licensed content and materials to better increase access to high quality content. The WRAP will be using this platform to post openly licensed content from the courses made available (as listed above) in an effort to increase availability of these courses. In addition, the WRAP will work with ODE's Oregon Open Learning team to help organize and structure the content in a way that better supports the finding and usability of the content available on the site. This activity aligns with the following outcomes:

- Short-Term Increased Course Availability: K-12 Students beginning to have increased availability to high quality Arts and STEAM course content.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality Arts and STEAM in-person and online curriculum to support content delivery.

Oregon Digital Learning

Having access to high quality online content is critical in supporting access for all students. The WRAP team is part of a larger team structure within the ODE that includes Digital Learning and is working closely with ODE's Digital Learning initiatives to better support online access for all

students. Specifically, the WRAP is looking to adapt some of the content created for online delivery, starting with the High School Science content. This activity aligns with the following outcome:

- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality STEAM online curriculum and professional development to support content delivery.

Accessibility to Accurate Data and Implementing Data Practices that Address the Whole Child

The Needs Assessment process highlighted the need for better data quality and access to publicly available data. The WRAP team also heard a clear message that data practices should include data that address the whole child. Both the High School Science and Computer Science projects have a strong element of data evaluation practices embedded within the project details. In addition, the WRAP team includes a lead Research Analyst and has contracted with an Evaluation partner to work toward this activity. Within this work, we are expecting to see the following outcome:

- Short-Term Increased Supportive Course Access Structures: The Oregon Department of Education clearly identifying which schools and which students have and do not have access to Arts and STEAM education opportunities.

Providing Professional Development for Content

In order to support culturally responsive practices and other teaching strategies, the WRAP is supporting robust professional development to accompany the courses. This activity is aligned with the following outcomes:

- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All educators having access to high quality Arts and STEAM in-person and online curriculum and professional development to support content delivery.
- Mid-Term Course Availability beginning to Expand toward greater Equitable Access for Students: Historically and currently marginalized students having positive self-efficacy, engagement, and access to relevant content in STEAM courses; K-5 educators implementing Social Emotional Learning and Trauma Informed Practices within Arts Education; Arts and STEAM educators implementing culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive teaching practices, specifically within the courses implemented by this program.

Communication

The WRAP Needs Assessment highlighted the need for better communication to support these objectives. The WRAP will concentrate on the following activities to better support course access and the understanding of why well-rounded education is important.

Arts and STEAM Toolkits/Best Practice Guidance and Training Series

The WRAP will develop best practice guidance and toolkits for arts and STEAM, accompanied by a virtual training series to support application of these tools.

Funding Resources

The WRAP will develop funding resources and a series of virtual training sessions, aligned with the toolkit activity above, to better support funding well-rounded opportunities in schools.

Social Media Templates/Content

The WRAP will work closely with Oregon STEM and STEAM hubs to create common communication tools for the hubs to use in their communications efforts.

Share Student Work

The WRAP will develop a strategy to share out student work to increase awareness of and motivation toward high quality arts and STEAM education.

Connect Directly with Schools that Have No Access

The Arts Education Specialist will reach out directly to schools that have been identified as having no access to arts education and provide supports and resources to help these schools increase their access to arts and STEAM education.

Middle and High School Engagement

Throughout the WRAP timeline, members of the WRAP team will strategically engage with middle and high schools, as well as programs geared toward the middle and high school level, to better understand their needs and what supports could be made available to them to encourage the extension of availability of courses to accessibility of courses for all students.

Newsletters

The WRAP has developed a WRAP newsletter with project updates and information as well as an Arts Education Newsletter for arts-specific announcements, information, and resources.

Internal ODE Learning Sessions

The WRAP will increase awareness and understanding of high-quality arts and STEAM instructional practices that lead to a well-rounded education through a series of internal lunch and learn sessions and establishing ongoing connections to work of other teams in ODE.

Conference Presentations

The WRAP will utilize conference presentations (such as COSA conferences) as a path for sharing WRAP communications.

These communications activities specifically align with the following outcomes:
- Short-Term Increased Communication Efforts, including: All STEM/STEAM hubs having communication tools to effectively communicate with their communities and local schools what STEAM means, the benefits of STEAM, and the connection to high demand/ high wage careers; Arts Organizations and Arts Educators having communication tools to effectively communicate with their schools and communities what high quality arts education looks like, the benefits of Arts Education, and the connection of the Arts to career opportunities; Administrators and CBOs understanding sustainable funding options for well-rounded learning opportunities.

- Mid-Term Impacts of Communication Efforts, including: Educators, students, and families understanding the benefits of arts and STEAM education, including the connection to high demand/ high wage careers; Educators, students, and families able to define what STEAM education is and have a collective understanding across the state.
- Mid-Term Continued Increase in Course Availability: All public K-12 schools having at least one arts teacher dedicated to teaching an arts course, arts integrated courses, or connection to an out-of-school arts or arts integrated program that is easily accessible to all students.

Theory of Action

By expanding courses in computer science and high school science, developing course content in elementary arts and K-12 Native arts, supporting these courses with robust, culturally responsive professional development, increasing well-rounded data practices, providing extensive resources and tools, and surrounding this work with a strong communications effort, students in K-12 public schools will receive increased access to high quality, well-rounded educational opportunities.

How will we measure this? When will we test, revise, and refine the approach?

The WRAP has contracted with a third-party evaluator to measure this program and support in the testing, revision, and refinement of the program throughout the grant period. This program is considerably large and broad in scope, and the evaluator will focus on answering the following questions to support this evaluation process:

Course Expansion/Development:

1. To what extent did the WRAP lead to increased arts availability and access for public K-12 students, and for which students?
2. To what extent did access to high quality STEAM-based or arts specific curriculum increase for educators in both in-person and online settings?
3. To what extent did instruction time increase (either through STEAM-based integration practices or individual content instruction) for elementary school students in the content areas of Science, Computer Science, Technology, or Engineering?
4. To what extent did educators feel support with the WRAP courses they used, and to what extent are they likely to continue them? Why or why not?
5. To what extent were WRAP courses [expanded courses] applicable and accessible across regions and geographic locales?

Course Access Structures:

1. How did students in WRAP courses experience self-efficacy, relevance, and did it differ for different groups of students? To what extent were students engaged with the course content and to what extent do students see themselves using the skills and knowledge they learned in the future?
2. What barriers to participation in well-rounded education persisted and for whom and why?

3. To what extent did WRAP create sustainable options for course access and why?
4. What strategies were most successful at improving WRAP course access and why?
5. To what extent did WRAP-sponsored professional development opportunities increase the implementation of social emotional learning, trauma informed, culturally responsive, and linguistically inclusive teaching practices within the WRAP courses?
6. To what extent did teachers utilize course-sponsored PD and course materials made available by WRAP and why or why not?

Communication:

1. To what extent did this program increase community, students, families and educators awareness of what STEAM and Arts education are and their benefits?
2. To what extent did school administrators understand their funding options for access to well-rounded courses, and to what extent were these funding options utilized?