



NATIONAL
ART EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

2021–2025
STRATEGIC VISION

FEBRUARY 2021



Lord Cultural Resources is a global professional practice dedicated to creating cultural capital worldwide.

We assist people, communities, and organizations to realize and enhance cultural meaning and expression.

We distinguish ourselves through a comprehensive and integrated full-service offering built on a foundation of key competencies: visioning, planning, and implementation.

We value and believe in cultural expression as essential for all people. We conduct ourselves with respect for collaboration, local adaptation, and cultural diversity, embodying the highest standards of integrity, ethics, and professional practice.

We help clients clarify their goals; we provide them with the tools to achieve those goals; and we leave a legacy as a result of training and collaboration.

Our Toronto office is located within the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. Toronto is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Our New York office is located on the traditional lands of the Lenape peoples. We encourage you to acknowledge the presence of the people who came before, wherever you are.





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1. FOREWORD

Then, Now, and Into the Future

“By members, for members.” The National Art Education Association (NAEA) is an association driven by the needs of its members. During the 2010 Convention in Baltimore, NAEA set up a Strategic Planning Studio (“NAEA NEXT”) and invited attendees to offer their ideas and opinions—by sharing visually in the studio, by commenting on cards, or through participation in focus groups. Responses from over 700 participants revealed that members expected NAEA to keep pace with the challenging environments in which art educators must function. Members indicated a need for downloadable advocacy tools on an updated NAEA website; more professional development opportunities in the summer or in virtual format; user-friendly research to inform practice; the building of leadership capacity through professional development; and the need for a wide, diverse, inclusive, collaborative, supportive network of art educators. Member input guided the NAEA Board of Directors to develop the 2010-2015 Strategic Vision with five pillars as basic functions the association must perform: advocacy, learning, research and knowledge, community, and organizational vibrancy. The pillars helped focus the association on taking NAEA to the next level.¹

The 2015-2020 Strategic Vision² revealed progress made toward fulfilling ever-changing member needs. Our NAEA community was connecting through our online platform Collaborate and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Each year, Platform and Position Statements³ that serve as advocacy tools were adopted or reviewed as needed. Learning opportunities were increased through the hosting of webinars and archiving of convention videos on our Virtual Art Educators page.⁴ The NAEA Research Commission⁵ continued to share knowledge through our publications (*Art Education*, *Studies in Art Education*, and *NAEA News*) and a pre-conference during our annual convention. Organizational vibrancy was being strengthened through the School for Art Leaders⁶ and the development of a partnership program with state and province associations. Our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) Task Force provided 16 recommendations laying the foundation for the work ahead of us!

¹ <https://arteducators-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/1450/22ae9ec4-a58d-4285-a948-a0fca48830e7.pdf?1573070745>

² <https://arteducators-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/244/c7ff8ff6-56f2-48df-b67d-a090b1080d42.pdf?1469826978>

³ <https://www.arteducators.org/about/platform-and-position-statements>

⁴ <https://virtual.arteducators.org/>

⁵ <https://www.arteducators.org/research/naea-research-commission>

⁶ <https://www.arteducators.org/events/school-for-art-leaders>

As the premier professional organization for visual arts, design, and media arts education, NAEA now serves more than 15,000 members. In addressing the needs of these individuals, as well as those of the greater visual arts, design, and media arts education field, NAEA has developed many resources and initiatives to provide supports to educators, visual artists, and leaders within the field. NAEA has nimbly responded to the conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic by creating responsible fiscal policy along with educational resources for members in our Remote Learning Toolkit. The NAEA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Commission has developed many goals addressing not only the association's policy and procedures but also to increase diversity within the field. The current slate of webinars, webcasts, and Town Hall events are responding to member needs in a consistent, ongoing basis. The NAEA Research Commission has generated a robust research agenda to assist in the development of educational researchers as well as produce data to guide and advance visual arts and design education. NAEA has also deepened its focus on creating new leaders to invigorate our professional fields through our School for Art Leaders (SAL), and our National Leadership Conference, along with providing many leadership opportunities and supports for its members.

As we rapidly approach the 75th anniversary of our association in 2022, this newly published strategic vision lays down tracks for the work of NAEA as it gains momentum almost a quarter of the way through the 21st century, aimed at opening up new vistas for the emergence of the most diverse array of visual arts, design, and media arts educators ever before assembled throughout our varied professional fields. It turns out that providing our next generation of creative leaders with the fundamental access and support structures they need to systematically fuel their own ongoing professional development also happens to be the perfect growth strategy for our association in a time of global crisis. If I invite diversity and welcome exchanges with those whose life experiences and communities of creative practice are most unlike my own, I am the one who is enriched. If we include a wealth of new stories that our members authentically and competently tell, NAEA will be enduringly strengthened as a whole.



Kim Huyler Defibaugh, Past President



Thom Knab, President



James Haywood Rolling, Jr., President-Elect



2. NAEA STRATEGIC VISION

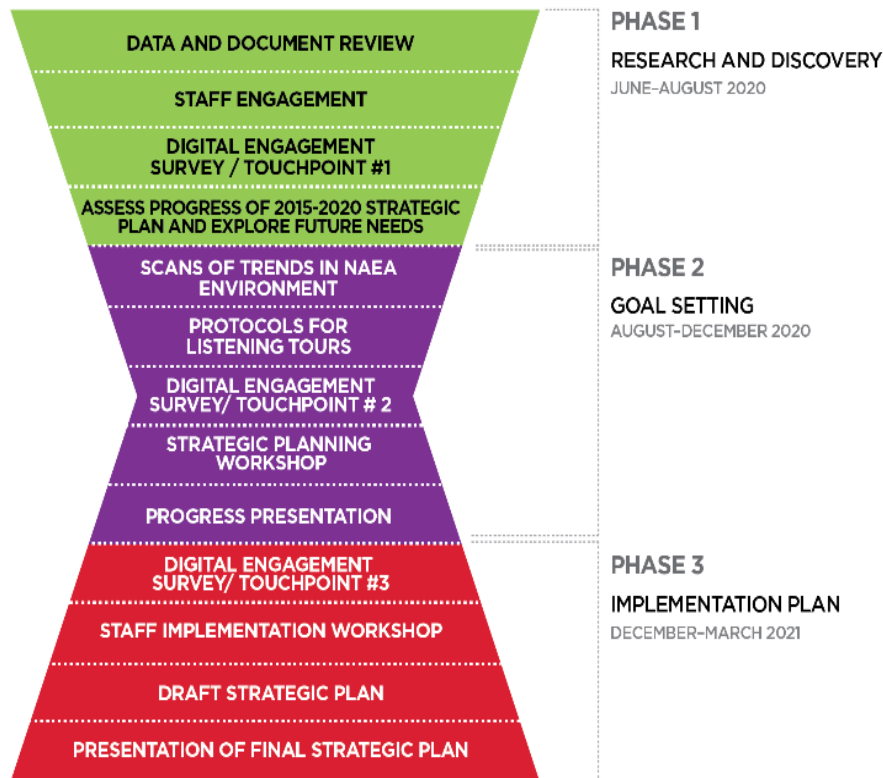
2.1. INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1947, the National Art Education Association (NAEA) is the leading professional membership organization for visual arts, design, and media arts educators. In 2015, NAEA went through a strategic planning process that charted a path forward, organized around five pillars to guide NAEA's work through 2020. With the end of the previous plan comes the opportunity for NAEA to revisit the 2015–2020 plan and identify the future viability of the existing pillars while creating a renewed road map for the future. Through this process, NAEA seeks to understand the needs of its members and the field while embracing a renewed focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I).

NAEA is looking toward the future. The field of visual arts, design, and media arts education is at a critical point in the sociocultural environment. Through the revamped pillars identified in this plan, NAEA is actively engaging with the current teaching environment and the crises facing the nation. Building from NAEA's core achievements as a membership-based organization, the organization is now leveraging its internal strengths to grow its role with external stakeholders in the field of visual arts, design, and media arts education. NAEA is enthusiastically reimagining how it can engage with current members, potential members, and the communities it serves. With the world-altering events of 2020, the future looks very different now than just a year ago. Many of the steps ahead are viewed through the lens of a post-pandemic world, which has illuminated and accentuated so many challenges facing visual arts, design, and media arts educators and general education overall. Through this strategic process, NAEA has positioned itself to be a beacon of adaptable resources for educators and a leader in the development of effective ED&I strategies for organizations similarly committed to meeting their members where they are while providing support in the classroom (virtual and/or in person) and beyond.

NAEA engaged the international arts and culture consulting firm Lord Cultural Resources to work collaboratively with the NAEA Board of Directors, membership, staff, and additional association leadership to facilitate a strategic visioning process to revisit the 2015–2020 strategic pillars along with its mission and vision, set impactful goals for each pillar, and develop measurable objectives for the organization.

3. THE PROCESS



Phase 1: Research and Discovery

This phase included a large internal assessment. It began with a review of the previous Strategic Plan, the 2018 Member Needs Assessment, the 2010 NAEA Next Strategic Issues & Opportunities document, the 2015-2018 NAEA Strategic Vision Outline, and the NAEA Fiscal Accomplishments from 2016 to 2018. Following the review of the documents, Lord facilitated a series of workshops in the summer of 2020. The first workshop was with the NAEA staff to identify their goals for this process. This was followed by workshops with members of the Strategic Plan Steering and Advisory Committees to create a framework for conversations with NAEA leadership. These initial conversations informed subsequent workshops conducted during the 2020 NAEA National Leadership Conference, allowing consultants to engage with the ED&I Commission leadership, Research Commission leadership, the NAEA Board of Directors, and more than 150 NAEA Regional leaders from across the country about

the needs of members and their vision for the future of NAEA as an organization. Phase 1 also included the first of three digital touch points, with a survey sent to the entire NAEA membership to identify the needs of the community in the current education environment.

Phase 2: Goal Setting

This phase began with consultants creating an environmental scan of comparable organizations to identify trends in educational organizations that have strong membership bases. The environmental scan provided context for a listening tour conducted by NAEA Executive Director Mario R. Rossero. This listening tour was important to gain an understanding of the external perceptions of NAEA and recommendations on opportunities and strategies for the future of the organization. NAEA then initiated the second digital touch-point survey that went to former NAEA members and nonmember visual arts, design, and media arts educators. This survey was to discern why former NAEA members' memberships had lapsed, whether nonmembers had ever thought about joining the organization, and what the barriers to membership were for nonmembers. Phase 2 culminated with the Strategic Visioning Workshop with the NAEA Board of Directors. During this workshop, the Board was presented with key findings from Phases 1 and 2, and were introduced to the reimagined Strategic Pillars resulting from these findings; the Board then reviewed and provided feedback on the NAEA organizational statements.

Phase 3: Implementation Planning

Phase 3 was the final phase of this strategic visioning process. The third touch-point survey was sent to NAEA Regional leaders. It provided the renewed 2021-2025 Strategic Pillars and requested their recommendations on how to accomplish each goal. After the results of the survey were collected, NAEA combined the findings from the previous phases and created an implementation plan to guide the construction of action plans detailing tasks necessary for NAEA to achieve the goals set forth in the 2021-2025 Strategic Pillars. This phase galvanized NAEA staff to take ownership of the future initiatives of NAEA. The staff built out objectives and tasks to realize the goals of each pillar. This work is an ongoing process. The implementation plan was developed using action planning workbooks that can help NAEA, now and in the future, to stay on course to achieve the goals of the pillars in the next 5 years.

“It is not just what the field has to offer NAEA
but what NAEA can bring to the field.



–NAEA Board Member



4. ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENTS

The mission and vision of an organization are a glimpse inside the inner workings of the operation. The mission is an organization's reason for being, and the vision is an organization's outward-facing aspirations, expressing the impact it wishes to have. These foundational statements of an organization are the cornerstones for building the identity of that organization. During the Strategic Visioning Workshop with the NAEA Board in November 2020, the previous organizational statements were reviewed and feedback was provided as to how these statements might be updated to reflect the renewed mandate of NAEA for its future.

4.1.1. MISSION

The National Art Education Association (NAEA) champions creative growth and innovation by equitably advancing the tools and resources for a high-quality visual arts, design, and media arts education throughout diverse populations and communities of practice.

4.1.2. VISION

The National Art Education Association (NAEA) harnesses the power of the visual arts, design, and media arts to educate and enrich the lives of all learners and communities, especially those who are members of historically marginalized groups, and serves as a catalyst for developing creative and culturally competent future generations.



5. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Strategic Pillars collectively serve as the North Star for all of NAEA's work, providing guidance and direction. Each of the pillars works interconnectedly with the others to achieve the overall goals of NAEA. The 2015–2020 Strategic Pillars provided a focused point of departure for the current strategic visioning process. This process included confirming the effectiveness of the pillars for the NAEA community and their ability to transition with NAEA into the future. Reimagining the possibilities of NAEA's Strategic Pillars has created an opportunity to reaffirm each pillar's goals and identify ways in which NAEA can achieve them. Two of the pillars from the 2015–2020 Strategic Vision—*Learning* and *Research & Knowledge*—were retained (though renewed); *Advocacy* was expanded to become *Advocacy & Policy*; two pillars—*Community* and *Organizational Vibrancy*—were combined into one new Pillar—*Community Vibrancy*; and a new “super pillar”—*Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*—was added to this new strategic plan.

PILLAR 1: EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION



This pillar is a new addition. While previous NAEA initiatives like its Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and the ED&I Commission have incorporated these ideals, it is time to make ED&I an overarching Strategic Pillar. ED&I has an important role as a “super pillar” that is both its own unique goal as well as one that is interwoven across the other four; its purpose is to ensure that NAEA's community and organizational operations are inclusive and open to all. This is only possible if all the other pillars utilize ED&I as a lens through which their initiatives are created, implemented, and evaluated. This pillar will establish comprehensive strategies that work from the classroom outward, providing practitioners and state and national leaders in the field with direction and tools for addressing ED&I.



Objectives

Create local, state, and national frameworks for addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the field of visual arts, design, and media arts education.

Explore and establish strategies for increasing diverse art educators in the field of visual arts, design, and media arts education across all roles and divisions to be a more inclusive community and to better reflect the students and communities we serve.

Create an initiative that welcomes diverse art educators into the Association and builds the value proposition for new members within diverse communities.

Provide information on career pathways in the arts and art education, as well as statistics on the creative industries, to educate students, families, and school decision makers on the opportunities available within the field and how to navigate them.

Equip members with tactical supports to address other factors impacting access to an equitable visual arts, design, and media arts education, including but not limited to financial, geographic, identity- and/or culture-based, accessibility, and technological barriers.

“Diversity for the sake of checking the boxes is not it. That would be stigmatizing and detrimental. We do this work to save lives. Because those lives matter.

 –NAEA Board Member

PILLAR 2: LEARNING



The existing Learning Pillar has been focused on aligning the goals of visual arts, design, and media arts education with trends in education writ large. Moving forward, with the environmental changes that 2020 has brought to the teaching field, it is imperative that all learning initiatives be inclusive and adaptable, able to nimbly serve learners through a variety of environments: virtual or remote, hybrid, and careful in-person instruction. Teacher leadership, social-emotional learning (SEL), differentiated instruction for all learners, and connections between visual arts, design, and media arts education will be key. All learning initiatives should be anchored in the super pillar of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and work to grow diversity in the field, as well as to open the possibilities for all students to see and express themselves in the visual arts, design, and media arts.

Objectives

Maintain and grow instructional supports to address the evolving education environment, including virtual or remote, hybrid, and in person.

Situate students at the center of learning; and design systems and approaches to fully integrate diverse cultural art forms and artists into instructional design and practice, so that our classrooms and studios become inclusive spaces that honor and reflect the diversity of our local and global communities.

Foster teacher leadership among art educators by equipping them with the necessary tools and strategies to successfully navigate school and community dynamics, systems, and bureaucracies.

Increase the formal connections between visual arts, design, and media arts education and special education, as well as the disability community, through professional development and support materials.

Increase the formal connections between visual arts, design, and media arts education and social-emotional learning (SEL) through professional development and support materials.

PILLAR 3: RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE



Through the identification of trends, issues, and strategies, NAEA members conduct research and generate knowledge that is disseminated widely through presentations, webcasts, conversations, and the publication of research and research topics. This renewed pillar will further develop a culture of supporting research throughout the association by empowering and inviting members across all divisions to participate in research as a core component of their visual arts, design, and media arts education practice. NAEA will serve as a central hub for resources to be used by the entirety of the field. While this pillar provides benefits for NAEA members, it is also devoted to the betterment of the field. Improving accessibility and practical application of all NAEA research and resources provides an opportunity to build the field and further the value of NAEA. Ensuring that initiatives include diverse perspectives and researchers, and that the research includes diverse communities, is an integral component of this pillar's viability to represent the needs of all visual arts, design, and media arts educators.

Objectives

Establish a dynamic new research agenda for the Association that furthers the field of visual arts, design, and media arts education; connects theory to practice; and creates a networked community of resources.

Increase and improve access to research through practical application strategies designed for classroom practitioners.

Partner with teams of researchers pursuing large-scale studies and gap analyses for the benefit of the field.

Identify research synergies both within art education and with other sectors to encourage thought leadership across the organization and field.

Expand communication strategies and use of data visualization in order to express the impact of visual arts, design, and media arts education on art education outcomes, as well as on general educational outcomes, in order to strengthen our position with decision makers.

“We want to see more research in the hands of practitioners so they can understand it, use it, and contribute to it.



—NAEA Board Member

PILLAR 4: ADVOCACY & POLICY



This refreshed pillar will address the pairing of advocacy and policy efforts. Art educators regularly look ahead and formulate plans to communicate the value and impact of visual arts, design, and media arts education. There is an increased urgency to develop this pillar based on the current environment in which all educators are operating. It is imperative to develop art educators as leaders to look to the future, and NAEA can support them as a beacon of information and provide approaches for educators to navigate obstacles, whatever they may be. NAEA will work to engage with both traditional and nontraditional allies to build a national advocacy strategy centered on the importance, benefits, career opportunities, and contributions of visual arts, design, and media arts education. In so doing, NAEA's advocacy efforts can advance from information gathering and circulation to action and implementation strategies that can be utilized by and for educators.

Objectives

Engage with traditional and nontraditional allies to build a national advocacy campaign and strategy that empowers members to take action in their communities.

Establish an ongoing advocacy initiative to collect best practices and data, uphold standards, develop common language, and provide training for NAEA members to utilize.

Identify and train advocacy liaisons at the state and local levels to provide consistent, on-the-ground advocacy skill-building experiences for educators and administrators.

Research and explore the creation of an executive-level advisory board of financial supporters and/or influencers that reports to the NAEA Board, and who can increase brand recognition and aid in elevating the value of visual arts, design, and media arts education for diverse stakeholders.

Strengthen the connections and opportunities between advocacy and policy efforts in order to maximize arts-supportive actions from decision makers; and collaborate across art forms locally and nationally to maximize impact.

“Teachers need support. There is uncertainty and fear about the upcoming school year and the next few years... NAEA needs to provide language and training to educators to advocate for the field...”



—NAEA Regional Leader

PILLAR 5: COMMUNITY VIBRANCY

This new pillar (combining previous pillars of Organizational Vibrancy and Community) bridges the desire of members to ensure an internally strong organization with the need to connect the organization's support and resources with the broadest community of visual arts, design, and media arts educators. There are many opportunities within the current Regions and Divisions to maximize NAEA benefits and supports to our core membership and to explore growth for the Preservice Division, National Art Honor Society (NAHS), and National Junior Art Honor Society (NJAHS), as well as potential areas to deepen and expand, like media arts. This pillar works through the collaboration of the other four. Opportunities for community vibrancy are realized through a lens that sees strengthening the field of visual arts, design, and media arts education as an asset to the members of NAEA.

Objectives

Increase and make explicit the wide range of supports for our valued existing members and broaden the Association's visual arts, design, and media arts umbrella to ensure inclusion of all art educators.

Activate the Preservice Division and strengthen connections across NAEA Divisions to ensure the future health and vitality of the field.

Grow and expand NAHS/NJAHS programming for increased opportunities, mentorship, and amplified youth voice.

Explore new opportunities and models for membership categories and member benefits that meet the current and evolving needs of art educators to fully achieve community vibrancy.

Explore opportunities for design and media arts growth across the Association.

“We want to see teachers share their best practices and help build a stronger network, to help teachers feel more connected to the field. Becoming an NAEA member should feel like becoming a part of a supportive community.

—NAEA Research Commission Member

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With thanks for the advice, insights, and assistance of all who contributed to this strategic planning process.

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