



State, local leaders to meet to promote arts education

BY [SHARON SULLIVAN](#)
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Colorado arts organizations are meeting with communities around the state to promote local teaching of the arts.

"Maintaining arts education in schools has been difficult," said Sheila Sears, of the Colorado Council for the Arts. "Schools focus on tested subjects and unfortunately don't always consider the arts a priority."

However, studying "the arts can be a pathway to (many) careers," Sears said.

Grand Junction's statewide arts education advisory network meeting is open to the public and will be held Saturday, Oct. 3, at the Whitman Education Center, 248 S. Fourth St.

The meeting's agenda will include a 2009 Colorado Council on the Arts study on Colorado's creative economy.

There are 900 people who work in creative industries in Mesa County, said Allison Sarmo, cultural arts coordinator for the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture.

Those industries include artists, art galleries, and picture framers, architects and interior designers, graphic designers, musicians, and entertainers, art supply and music stores, photographers and photography studios, radio and television, and audio, video, and movie production, sales and rentals.

The Colorado Council on the Arts, the Center for Integrated Arts Education, and Think 360 Arts are leading the meeting. Speakers will include Sarmo, The Art Center Director Cheryl McNab, and Ronna Lee Sharpe, cultural heritage specialist from the Museum of Western Colorado.

Lunch will be provided by the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture.

"I think education in the arts in local schools is so important," Sarmo said. "I think events like this will keep that importance in the forefront of people's minds."

"We're really hoping local (community) leaders will come."

Other agenda items include creativity resources and a presentation of the Colorado Academic Standards 2009 Revision.

"(The meeting) is for anyone interested in whole child education," Sears said.

Those interested in attending are asked to RSVP to Connie Stewart at ciae@unco.edu, or 970-351-2443.

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