

I attended the June FAAE "Leadership Conference" in Lakeland as a representative of FSMTA. This three day conference brings arts leaders from throughout the nation and the state together as a time to educate, network and problem solve.

The arts community has been at a standstill waiting for the decision of the 2010 mid-term elections. The recession continues to have drastic effects on programs and jobs. The outcome of the vote on Amendment 8 has local School Boards holding their breath. Everyone is looking for solutions to all of the financial problems.

BRAVO! to Sherron Long, President of the Florida Cultural Alliance. Sherron created a Arts Advocacy survey and sent it to all of the candidates running for National and State offices. A copy of the survey was on the FCA website for use by local advocates. Each day Sherron would update the website so that candidate opinions were known to voters. Throughout the state people have been working to get candidates who did not return the survey to give an answer to very important questions. Many times this took a personal meeting with the candidate to impress on them the need to complete this survey. The information compiled by Sherron has been invaluable for making informed decisions about candidates and the arts. All this information continues to be on the FCA website. www.flca.net Just seeing who gave a response, even after personal contact, tells a lot about the candidate.

The Florida Association for Arts Education local coalitions have been organizing "Meet the Candidates". While this is a grassroots method of meeting local politicians, it also leads into many discussions of possible legislation to be presented in Tallahassee. FAAE is organizing "Leadership Symposiums" to be held in different areas of the state, which will make attendance easier for those interested in supporting the arts. Monthly webinars are being held with Board members and Statewide Partners (FSMTA is a partner) to share information and strategies.

The Department of Education released the **Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for the Arts** in September. This was published so that all interested in arts education had a voice in what will be taught in the Florida classrooms. The **NGSSS-Arts** were developed by an education team and the public was given a chance to give their opinion on the subject matter. FSMTA had a link to the DOE on our website so that our members could be informed. The NGSSS-Arts will become law in 2012 and will govern what arts teachers will be expected to teach in their classroom. There is still a lot of discussion about making a music test (grades 4, 8 10) as part of the FCAT test. FMEA has already created the leveled test and has pilot tested in Grade 4. Grades 8 and 10 are ready to pilot test. Due to finances, this has been delayed to an unknown date.

Respectfully submitted

Sonja Rozier, Chair