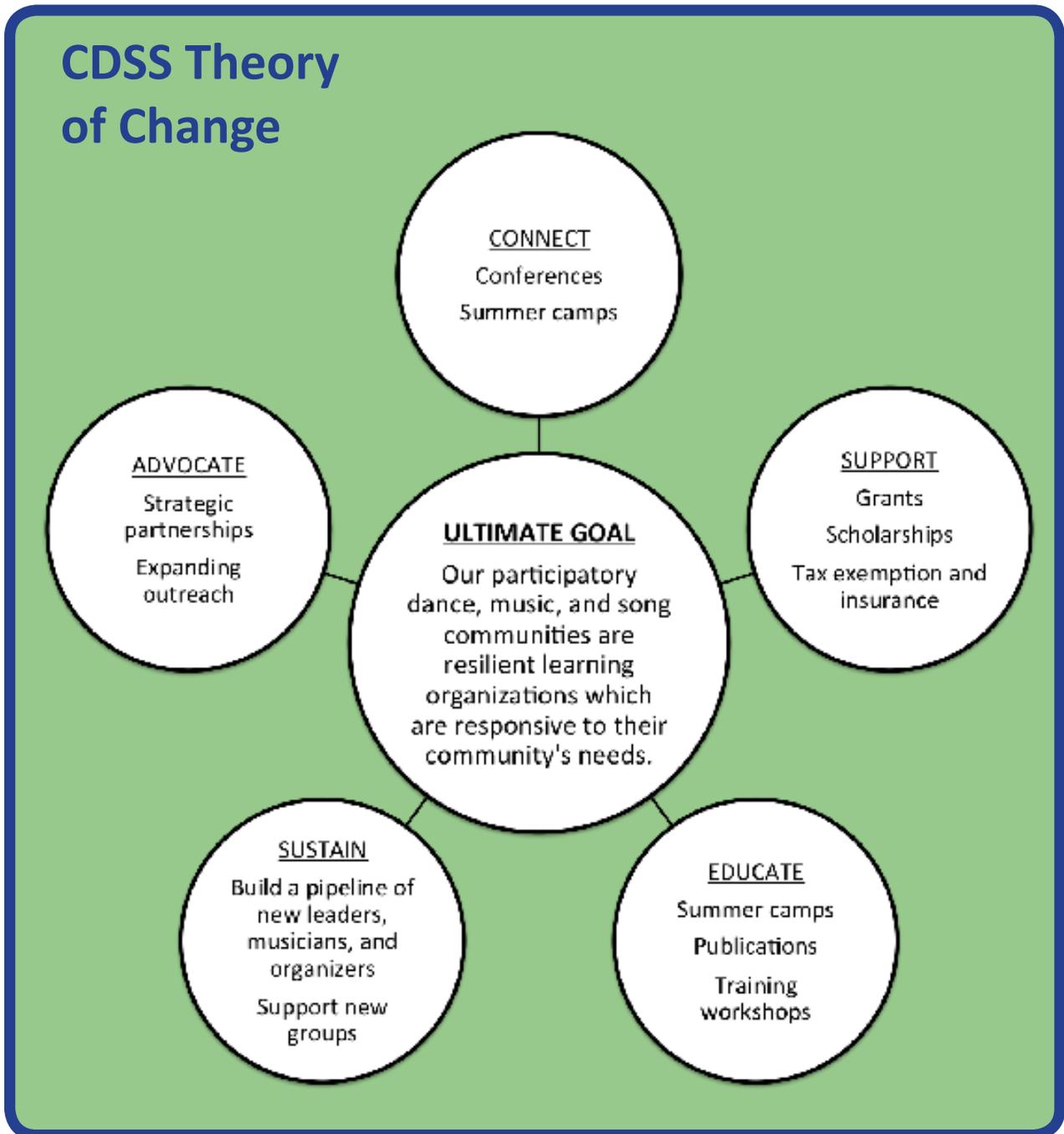


**Teaching *the* Teachers  
2015 Pilot Program**

# FOCUSING ON ART OUTREACH: CDSS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

CDSS has a strong theory of change, guided by our main goal to ensure that our dance, music, and song communities are resilient learning organizations which are responsive to their community's needs. The task of the CDSS Education Department is to create resources and experiences in alignment with the CDSS mission:

*"To support communities which participate in the traditional arts rooted in England and North America, and to help them thrive."*



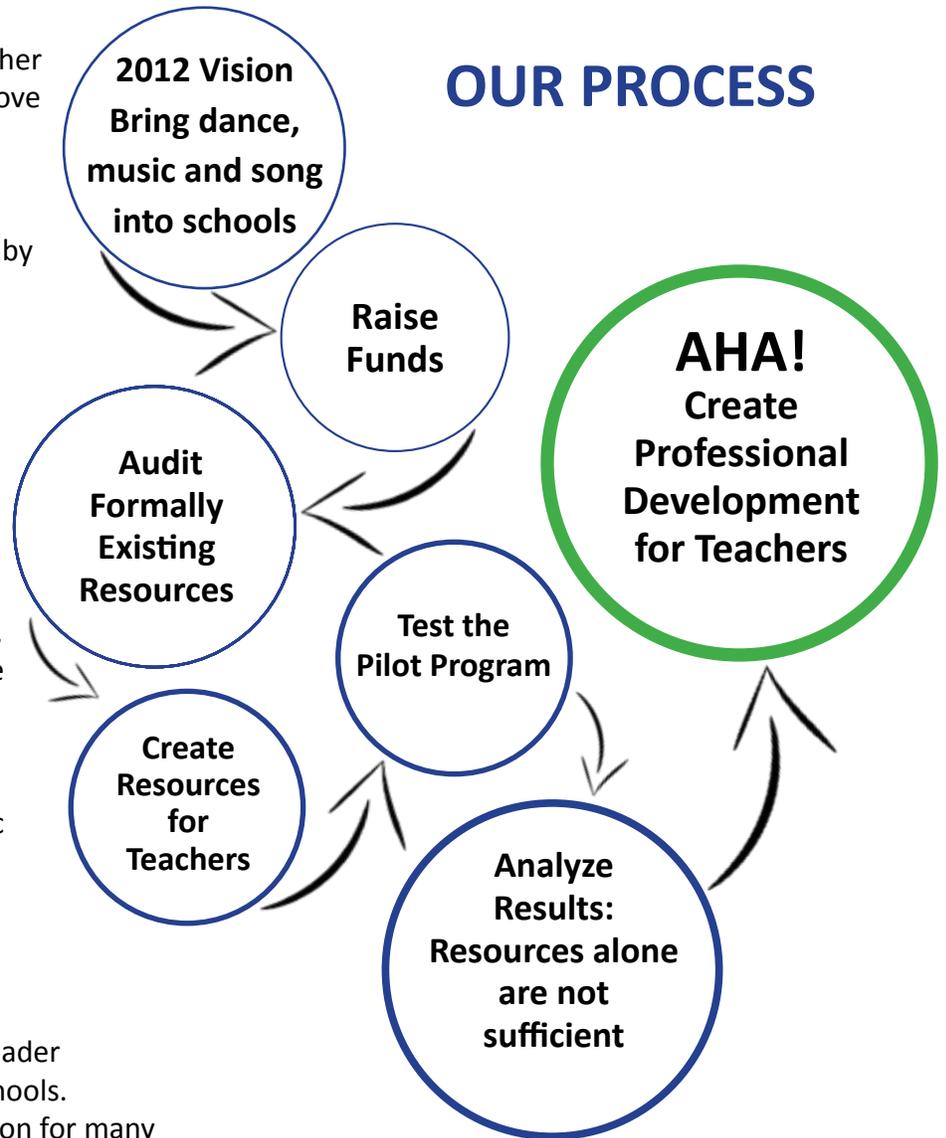
We know that children thrive when arts are integrated into their education experience. Regular community dance offers children multiple benefits:

- supports a musical life
- teaches emotional skills
- builds a culture of learning together
- teaches children to count and move to rhythm
- teaches focus
- develops social skills
- engages children in the moment by active participation
- offers opportunities for intergenerational activity among children, parents, and teachers

Unfortunately, though, many arts (visual, theatre, dance, music) programs are being cut to place more focus on academic subjects, primarily STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), or to relieve budget strains. While this impacts almost all children, those from low-income families suffer most; children from higher socio-economic families usually have greater access to an education with arts.

CDSS, as a source of knowledge and learning about the traditional arts, discussed how we could support broader access to traditional arts through schools. Arts residences are a common solution for many schools. Because there is some limited funding for residences, and schools are implementing this direct teaching, the CDSS Education Department decided to focus our work on *teaching the teachers*.

We set out to find venues where we could introduce a pilot program to teach music, classroom, and physical education teachers—most of whom had no prior knowledge or skills in our traditional arts—how to call, teach, and share community dancing with their students.



# THE WORKSHOPS

With generous support from our donors through Valley Gives, CDSS implemented the *Teaching the Teachers* pilot program to introduce participatory dance at three venues.

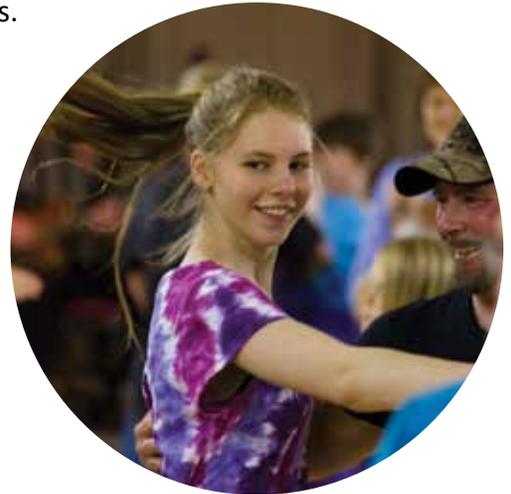
## **Kids4Harmony, October 2015**

Pittsfield, MA

Participants: Administrator and teachers

Rima Dael and Pat MacPherson connected with the Kids4Harmony Director at a Massachusetts Cultural Council conference.

Kids4Harmony is an out-of-school music program administered by Berkshire Children and Families.



### **Successes**

- Followed same lesson plan as previous workshops with the addition of movement
- Director had some experience observing the integration of dance with community life and was committed to adding movement to her music program
- Director has good resource books

### **Challenges**

- Director had no direct experience with community dance or leading dance
- Music teachers had no knowledge of dance style or calling



### **A-ha! Moment**

Kids4Harmony had the right resources, but didn't know how to use them

### **Results**

- Follow-up caller training, setting up a dance, and adding new repertoire
- 2 teachers brought the dances learned and traditional tunes to their kids
- A Kids4Harmony intern organized a community dance, funded by a CDSS Outreach Grant; a caller and 2 musicians were hired, and the children's band played for 1 dance

## **Muddy Brook Elementary School, October 2015**

Great Barrington, MA

Participants: administrators, PE and music teachers, PTA

The Muddy Brook Elementary School PTA contacted CDSS to help their school start a community dance. CDSS held a meeting attended by parents, PTA members, physical education and music teachers, and 2 senior school administrators. Small groups of 3rd-4th graders joined for two dances. This full-day workshop gave us plenty of time for extensive teaching and discussion, including a "next steps" brainstorm.

### **Success**

- Program had buy-in from Administration, Teachers and Parent/Teacher Organization wanting to create a participatory arts culture. The school principal sought to set everyone up for success.

### Challenges

- After one workshop, callers were not ready for a very challenging experience at their initial community dance; callers did not have enough experience; and the group was too large
- The children invited to the initial community dance were too varied developmentally

### Results

- In Fall 2015, Muddy Brook held two community dances facilitated by the PTA and led by workshop participants with help from CDSS' Nils Fredland (calling) and Pat MacPherson (music/band).
- Learned that, within a public school, support from parents and PTA is vital to creating an on-going community dance within a school
- Administrative support is vital for same
- A community dance will be most successful with small groups of developmentally similar children, who have had strong preparation from their classroom teachers
- On-going and individual coaching and support is needed for the teacher/callers



#### A-ha! Moment

Success happened since all parties had equal buy-in. School created a lasting committee structure to continue and engender more learning.



### Amherst/Pelham School District, May 2015

Western Massachusetts (Amherst/Pelham, Erving)  
Participants: music, classroom, and arts-integration teachers

Two teachers from the Amherst/Pelham, Massachusetts school system asked CDSS for help incorporating community dance in their school. We worked together to create a workshop for music and classroom teachers, and an arts-integration teacher from Amherst/Pelham and Erving elementary schools with varying levels of dancing and calling experience (i.e., long-time dancers and musicians to those with no experience).

### Success

- Participants were actively engaged, trying all suggestions, asking questions, and dancing and calling
- Participants reported feeling more skilled and confident

### Challenges

- Finding time to hold the workshops -- public school teachers have paid professional development time during school hours; private schools provide support for out-of-school time training



#### A-ha! Moment

Teachers needed more administrative support. Some teachers felt unsupported by administration and school district, despite their mandate to develop integrated arts curriculum.

### Results

- Since the workshop, at least 1 teacher has successfully incorporated her new skills in her classroom, and facilitated a community dance for her 4th grade students and their parents
- A follow-up to share results and plan for mutual support and future plans will help the workshop participants move beyond theoretical support to practical implementation of new skills

# NEXT STEPS

CDSS asked dance and song experts, Peter and Mary Alice Amidon and Sue Hulsether to share their observations of Teach the Teachers. They noted:

- Train in person with experienced, inspiring teacher for best results
- Target small groups of interested music, classroom, and/or PE teachers
- Use resource books with hands-on experiences
- Offer teachers a 1-day follow-up workshop to strengthen competence and understanding

CDSS strongly believes Teaching the Teachers is a valuable and viable way to spread the joy and knowledge of music, dance, and song. We see the program starting with refinement of our lesson plan, including in it follow-up and support of workshop participants, then moving outward to sister organizations and select community members, bringing the work to national conferences, then sharing it broadly with the world.



After careful review and evaluation of the Teaching the Teachers pilot program, CDSS staff suggest the following next steps to continue the program:

## Expand Outreach for Current Camp-based CDSS Teacher Training Courses

- Advertise more widely to national music and physical education teacher associations and conferences
- Advertise to FAME and Kodaly conferences and members
- Advertise to teacher training institutions

## Create Resources

- Develop best practice video of calling basics for teachers
- Develop talking points teachers can use to advocate for professional development in their school districts

### Offer Hands-on Experiences

- Engage as many teachers as possible in singing, dancing, and making music with their students
- Continue CDSS' Antioch model and supplement it with a 1-day workshop at the college, to introduce students to traditional arts before mini-course enrollment opens
- Offer a second teacher training mini-course at Timber Ridge Family and Adult Week

### Engage and Cultivate Donors

- Outreach to donors interested in CDSS education initiatives and intensive training courses

### Develop Training Leaders

- Engage CDSS community members who are doing this work as leaders for intensive teacher training courses



### ***Long-term Considerations***

- Create a community residency: a tour focused exclusively on schools (team of 2 leaders; 2 musicians) to connect and lead school programs and teacher training
- Partner with school districts to offer teacher training
- Develop an online curriculum for teachers with a training team available to offer implementation support
- Create a YouTube CDSS Education site with downloadable resources
- Make teacher training an easy and fulfilling community goal for our affiliates
  - provide information needed to offer free admission for teachers to their local family/community dances
  - market teacher intensives at CDSS camps
  - support affiliates with talking points, discounted targeted sales offerings, e-blasts to school districts and state cultural organizations, and online webinars
- Establish a match program for affiliates to send teachers to camp



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participants, schools, and CDSS donors  
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Massachusetts Cultural Council

Photo credits

Cover, pages 4 and 6: Rima Dael; Page 3, Doug Plummer