



**THE STATE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT**

THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE STATE
OF NEW YORK
ALBANY, NY 12234

EXECUTIVE DEPUTY
COMMISSIONER

T: 518.473.8381

NYSED.GOV
ENGAGENY.ORG

Expanding Access to Education Programs through Cultural Institutions

THE ISSUE:

Students from throughout the state must learn how to access, interpret, and analyze information to succeed in the increasingly complex, high-tech world of the 21st century. New York has world-class cultural institutions that have the ability to engage students in unique ways that entertain and excite, helping them to learn critical higher-order thinking skills needed to meet such challenges.

Over 1,500 museums, historical societies, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, and cultural arts institutions now provide instruction to over six million children. These cultural institutions receive no direct state support to initiate, expand, and enhance educational services through access to museum collections, scholarship and virtual learning.

Students living in low-income communities in urban, suburban, or rural settings benefit from having access to the type of learning provided by cultural institutions. Fair and equal access to these types of institutions will provide enhanced learning opportunities for these students.

The state should support this programming to better ensure that these unique learning opportunities can be expanded to children and lifelong learners of the state. Cultural institutions, in collaboration with teachers and schools, can design new and innovative museum programs to address such pressing issues as science, anthropology, history, and arts literacy.

2018-19 Budget Request – \$5 million in new state funds to support:

Enactment of the Museum Education Act (S.1676 Little/A.3892 Titone) and the expansion of education programs in cultural institutions.

The Museum Education Act would establish competitive grants to support cultural institutions that seek to establish or improve museum education programs designed to improve and support student learning opportunities, including supporting the development of local curricular aids.