

Research Brief

Arts-Focused School Partnerships

Question: What are the benefits of and characteristics of arts focused after school partnerships with high standards and expectations? Please provide curricular models.

Summary of Findings:

In a Nutshell

Joyce Epstein at Johns Hopkins University is the nation's pre-eminent expert on School, Family and Community Partnerships. Dr. Epstein is the Director of the Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships (<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/center.htm>). A membership organization associated with the center is available and provides significant help in the development of school/family/community partnerships. This organization and the research available support the creation of partnerships to support the success of all youngsters' in school and in later life. Dr. Epstein's research is centered on identifying the attributes of successful partnerships and how schools can nurture and sustain such partnerships.

The Center conducted a multi-year study to examine the effects of partnerships on student learning. A positive relationship was found between the two and the results of these studies are available at <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/research/index.htm>. The research suggests that those who participate in arts education after-school programs experience higher academic achievement, better behavior, handle conflict more effectively, and cooperate more with authority figures. Such programs also develop, among participating students, the capacity for using the arts as a way to overcome obstacles of to learning. The arts become a way to learn.

In a report, *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, published jointly by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities and the Arts Education Partnership, several independent researchers concluded that engagement in the arts nurtures the development of cognitive, social and personal competencies. The researchers found that learning in and through the arts:

- Contributed significantly to improved critical thinking, problem posing, problem solving and decision-making;
 - Involved the communication, manipulation, interpretation and understanding of complex symbols, much as do language and mathematics;
 - Fostered higher-order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation;
 - Regularly engaged multiple skills and abilities' and
 - Developed a person's imagination and judgment.
- <http://www.nea.gov/pub/ArtAfterSchool/how.html>.



The National Endowment for the Arts and the US Department of Education provide information about how the arts can enhance after school programs and the attributes of successful programs. The website (<http://www.nea.gov/pub/ArtsAfterSchool/artsedpub.html>) provides data about exemplary programs and an extensive list of resources.

A review of the research revealed that the most critical element in sustaining arts learning opportunities and programs is community support and involvement. After-school programs that offer opportunities to use community resources, volunteers, suppliers and others provide greater sustainability. The arts connection provides a more inclusive, global focus for every student that supports improved achievement and competency not only in the arts but also in other content areas. Such partnerships provide students with authentic learning experiences that support and enhance their learning in traditional classrooms and programs

Resources:

Americans for the Arts

Americans for the Arts has produced the YouthARTS Tool Kit (<http://www.artsusa.org/youtharts/index.asp>). Based on rigorous research, the kit features a step-by-step handbook, a video and "lessons learned" video supplement, and a diskette with sample paperwork such as contracts, evaluation forms and other materials already in use by youth arts programs. The complete book is available online as a PDF file www.artsusa.org

Arts Education Partnership

The Arts Education Partnership is a coalition of over 100 national education, arts, business, philanthropic and government organizations that promote arts education and demonstrate its role in enabling all students to succeed in school, life and work. www.aep-arts.org

Making Community School Partnerships Work

A detailed report and resource guide prepared by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time includes explicit steps for sustaining a partnership. http://www.americconnects.net/Research/PromPractices/Citywide_Afterschool.doc

National Endowment for the Arts

The endowment supports arts education in numerous ways. Information about its grants programs may be obtained through the website. www.arts.gov

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

The Kennedy Center www.kennedy-center.org/education provides resources for students, educators, artists, and the public to experience and explore the arts. It has issued "The Arts Beyond the School Day: Extending the Power" identifying essential elements of arts-based after-school programs and a list of quality indicators that help describe each essential element. ARTSEEDGE, a national arts and education information network, supports the place of arts education at the center of the curriculum through creative and appropriate uses of technology and helps educators to teach in, through and about the arts: www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org

<http://www.educationpartnerships.org/>



After the Bell: What Makes a Successful After-School Program?

A website featuring key research findings about after school programming. Access is http://www.cisnet.org/working_together/after-school.asp. This site provides information needed to build an after-school program that is designed to produce measurable outcomes for student achievement.

Promising Practices in Afterschool Arts Programs Shown in Online Toolkit

View the component of the Afterschool Training Toolkit at <http://www.sedl.org>. There is an inclusive list of partners. For more information about the Partnership, visit <http://www.sedl.org/afterschool>.

The Arts and After-School Programs

Archived information on the benefits of a quality arts education. Arts education develops a diverse range of cognitive abilities and helps promote achievement across disciplines. http://www.ed.gov/pubs/After_School_Programs/Arts_Programs.html

How the Arts

A full copy of How the Arts Can Enhance After-School Programs is available from the National Endowment for the Arts; 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW: Washington, DC 20506-001; 202-682-5400. <http://www.nea.gov/pub/ArtsAfterSchool/artsedpub.html>

After School Providers Support Stronger Role for Arts

Young Scholars Program Case Study provides data for State and local arts organizations to review as a part of taking a stronger role in initiating partnerships with afterschool programs. <http://www.nccap.net>

After School Alliance

The article provides insight on building sustainability including funding tips for after school programs. http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/funding_main.cfm

Partnership for After School Education

The Partnership for After School Education (PASE) promotes and supports quality afterschool programs for youth, particularly those from underserved communities. The site includes details on demonstration projects. <http://www.pasesetter.com>

The After School Investments Project Resource List

This comprehensive list of resources includes publications and web resources in the areas of development, financing & sustainability, measuring results, collaboration & partnerships, quality improvement, school-age care settings and community mobilization & outreach. Sponsored by the Us Department of Health and Human Services. <http://www.nccic.org/afterschool/rresources.html>

American Youth Policy Forum – Ways to Interest Funders

This is a report of high school reform and programs serving out-of-school youth in New York City. The useful part of this is a list of identified issues and components of youth transitions that were of interest to participating funders. www.aypf.org/tripreports/1997/tr051597.htm

Darden College of Education PREPS Projects - Funding

<http://www.educationpartnerships.org/>



The Program for Research and Evaluation in Public Schools (PREPS) is successful in helping districts tap external resources to fund their school improvement projects. An example was the American History Grant which provided resources to develop vertical teams in a K -12 setting.

<http://www.education.odu.edu/preps/projects.html>

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