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](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](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.americaconnects.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. ARTSEDGE, 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.artedge.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
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
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

Submitted Date: 9/10/2007  By: Ella M. Burton, Eastern Michigan University

This brief is provided as a service to educators by Education Partnerships, Inc, which does not assume any responsibility for the content of the brief or the positions taken by the authors or the Web sites or other authors whose works are included. This research brief reflects information currently available and is not the official position of Education Partnerships, Inc.

Disclaimer: All URLs listed in this site have been tested for accuracy, and contents of Web sites examined for quality, at the time of addition. Content accuracy and appropriateness, however, cannot be guaranteed over time as Web sites and their contents change constantly. The author takes no responsibility for difficulties that may result from the use of any Web site listed herein. Please notify the Webmaster if you find any dead links or inappropriate material.

Permission: You may use or download content for research or educational purposes, or for your personal, noncommercial purposes, provided you keep unchanged all copyright and other notices with them. No other use of any content is permitted. You agree that you will make only lawful use of this research brief, and will only use these briefs in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations. You agree that you will make no use of the research that violates anyone else's rights, including copyright, trademark, trade secret, right of privacy, right of publicity or other rights.

http://www.educationpartnerships.org/