

ADVOCACY TIDBITS FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS

15 WAYS AN ARTS EDUCATION HELPS CHILDREN DEVELOP AND GROW

1. Develops creative thinking.
2. Provides means of self-expression and communication.
3. Serves as an emotional release.
4. Strengthens a student's self-concept and confidence.
5. Increases self-understanding.
6. Heightens aesthetic awareness and sensitivity.
7. Enhances the ability to visualize.
8. Encourages creative problem-solving/decision-making.
9. Develops appreciation for the individuality of others.
10. Leads to the integration of the individual.
11. Serves as a balance to classroom activities.
12. Aids physical coordination.
13. Develops work habits and a sense of responsibility.
14. Aids the adult in understanding and helping the child.
15. Generates JOY!

THE ARTS MAKE THE GRADE: Strengthen Academic Performance

- Because the arts stress creative thinking and analytical skills, students who have a strong background in the arts are more likely to outperform academically than their peers who do not.
- According to a study by the Business Committee for the Arts, students who study the arts perform academically 30% better than those who do not study the arts.

Improve SAT Scores

- Because the arts are closely associated with important ideas and events in history and contemporary life, students who have a background in the arts are likely to have more information and insight to draw upon than those who do not.
- Thus, students in strong arts programs score well above their peers on SAT exams. In a recent study, SAT takers who studied the arts for more than four years, scored 53 points higher on the verbal and 37 points higher on the math sections of the SAT exam.

HOW SCHOOLS BENEFIT FROM A STRONG ARTS PROGRAM

Intensified student motivation to learn.

Better attendance among students and teachers.

Increased graduation rates.

Improved multicultural understanding.

Renewed and invigorated faculty.

More highly engaged students.

Development of a higher order of thinking skills, creativity, and problem-solving ability. Greater community participation and support.

Source: The Power of the Arts to Transform Education

DID YOU KNOW?

Young people who participate in the arts for at least three hours on three days each week through at least one full school year:

4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement

3 times more likely to be elected to class office within their schools

4 times more likely to participate in math and science fair

3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance

4 times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem

Young artists, as compared with their peers, are likely to:

- Attend music, art, and dance classes nearly three times as frequently
- Participate in youth groups nearly four times as frequently
- Read for pleasure nearly twice as often
- Perform community service more than four times as often

HOW THE ARTS HUMANIZE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

-The aesthetic environment of the school improves and relates better to the students.

-The intuitive, imaginative, and emotive aspects of the children are engaged in a complement to the sciences.

-History and geography are made personal and real. Artists' perceptions add insight about life now and in the past.

-Students can develop empathy and compassion - the basis of relating to and cooperating with others.

-The multicultural/transcultural aspects of the arts foster appreciation and acceptance of diversity.

-Whereas the focus on the "three R's" can often stress skills over personal development, the arts teach both.

Source: Understanding How the Arts Contribute to Excellent Education, prepared for the National Endowment for the Arts by OMC, INC. with Charles Fowler and Bernard J. McMullan

HOW ARTS EDUCATION BUILDS THE SKILLS THAT BUSINESS VALUES

1. An education in the arts encourages high achievement.

2. Study of the arts encourages a suppleness of mind, toleration for ambiguity, a taste for nuance, and the ability to make trade-offs among alternative courses of action.

3. Study of the arts helps students to think and work across traditional disciplines. They learn both to integrate knowledge and to "think outside the box."

4. An education in the arts teaches students how to work cooperatively.

5. An education in the arts builds an understanding of diversity and the multicultural dimensions of our world.

6. An arts education contributes to technological competence.

Source: Business Week

GAINING THE ARTS ADVANTAGE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT VALUE ARTS EDUCATION

13 critical factors that must be in place to implement and sustain comprehensive arts education programs:

INFORMED LEADERSHIP

- **The School Board:** School districts with strong arts education programs generally have boards of education that provide a supportive policy framework and environment for the arts.
- **The Superintendent:** Superintendents who regularly articulate a vision for arts education are critically important to its successful implementation and stability.
- **A Cadre of Principals:** School principals who collectively support the policy of arts education for all students often are instrumental in the policy's successful district-wide implementation.
- **The District Arts Coordinator:** District arts coordinators facilitate program implementation through a school system(s) and maintain an environment of support for arts education.
- **Parent/Public Relations:** School leaders in districts with strong, system-wide arts education seize opportunities to make their programs known throughout the community in order to secure support and funding for them.
- **Continuity of Leadership:** There is enough continuity in the school and community leadership to implement comprehensive arts education.

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

- **Planning:** School leaders in the study advised the adoption of a comprehensive vision and plan for arts education but recommended its incremental implementation.
- **An Elementary Foundation:** Strong arts programs in the elementary school years are the foundation for strong system-wide programs.
- **Opportunities for High Levels of Achievement:** School leaders in districts with strong arts programs provide specialized arts programs as part of their broad strategy for securing and sustaining community support for the district's overall educational goals.
- **The Teacher as Artist:** Effective teachers of the arts are allowed to – indeed are encouraged to – continue to learn and grow in mastery of their art form as well as in their teaching competence.
- **National, State, and Other Outside Forces:** Many school districts with strong arts programs employ state or national policies and programs to advance arts education.
- **Continuous Improvement:** School districts that succeed in advancing arts education promote reflective practices at all levels of the schools to improve quality.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- **The Community:** In school districts with strong arts education, the community – broadly defined as parents and families, artists, arts organizations, businesses, local civic and cultural leaders and institutions – is actively engaged in the arts policies and instructional programs of the district.

Source: Gaining the Arts Advantage, a study of 91 school districts from across the country that were recognized for the quality of their arts education programs in their schools, funded by GE and the Macarthur Foundation.