Trends in Arts Education Collaborations

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Biographical Information

Craig Dreeszen, Director, Arts Extension Service, University of Massachusetts, Amherst spoke on the maturing of arts and education collaborations. Collaborations between arts organizations and American schools have come a long way since Dr. Dreeszen first described them in the 1991 publication, *Intersections: Community Arts and Education Collaborations*. He examined some of the ways partnerships have evolved to become more sophisticated and the challenges that remain. Effective school and art partners seem to better appreciate both the substance and process of organizing for arts education that involves schools, artists, and community-based arts organizations. The presentation built upon the earlier work and recent research in educational partnerships. It explored definitions, processes, collaborative planning, assessment and evaluation, and interorganizational principles that apply to the collaborative process. Dr. Dreeszen is an educator, consultant, and writer who works nationally in arts organizational development and planning, community arts and education planning, program evaluation, and community cultural planning. He provides planning and policy formulation, program evaluation, training, organizational development, and meeting facilitation solutions for not-for-profit organizations, foundations, and public agencies. Since 1990 he has directed the Arts Extension Service (AES), University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is also principal consultant of Dreeszen and Associates.
Introduction

Thanks to arts education partnerships that are generously sharing their experiences, we are becoming more experienced with such collaborations and we understand them better. While collaborations may be challenging to manage, evaluations find that schools and community organizations working together succeed to integrate arts into education and help students learn.

Partnerships have grown between individual artists and teachers, between schools and local cultural organizations, between school districts and local arts agencies, and between state departments of education, state arts agencies and alliances for arts education. State arts agencies and foundations often invite collaborative proposals for arts education funding. Funders, national service organizations, and researchers have been actively examining partnerships to understand how they work. Several national initiatives have been working to convene partners, to teach the art of collaboration, to document exemplary partnerships, and to encourage active collaboration at the state level.

The Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) was launched in 1993 by a group of corporations and foundations as a network of Chicago public schools, professional arts organizations, and community organizations. Partnerships were arranged that are typically comprised of two to three schools, four to five arts organizations, and one to two community organizations...

...program evaluation of CAPE revealed that teachers, artists, and other CAPE participants believe quite strongly that the integrated arts units developed in CAPE Partnerships have had cognitive, affective, and social benefits for their students. Students are perceived to be more motivated to learn and more engaged in learning: that they participate, collaborate, and model more; and that they are more confident learners who comprehend, retain, and transfer more information and skills...preliminary [research] work indicates greater improvements on standardized test scores in reading and mathematics in CAPE schools as compared to non-CAPE schools in Chicago (Learning Partnerships, 1999, www.aep-arts.org).

Collaborations between arts organizations and American schools have come a long way since first described in Intersections: Community Arts and Education Collaborations. This paper examines some of the ways partnerships have evolved to become more sophisticated and the challenges that remain. School and arts partners seem to better appreciate both the substance and process of organizing for arts education that involves schools, artists, and community-based arts organizations. The paper builds upon earlier work and recent research in educational partnerships. It explores definitions, processes, collaborative planning, assessment and evaluation, and organizational principles that apply to the collaborative process.
Definitions

First, let’s define our terms. Steve Seidel and his colleagues defined an arts education partnership as "a collaborative educational effort between a school or school district and professional artists or arts organizations to provide in-depth arts experiences for children" (Seidel, et. al. 2001, p. 3). In Intersections (1992), Dreeszen defines arts partnerships as "the deliberate cooperation of community cultural organizations, school teachers and administrators, local arts agencies, and public and private funders to connect children with arts experiences and instruction in and out of school" (p. 11). Dreeszen also observed that there was a wide range of relationships between schools and the community that are commonly called "partnerships." In fact there is considerable variability in the intensity, formality, and purpose of such relationships. Habana-Haffner and Reed (1989) first described how partnerships often evolve from simple networks characterized by informal procedures and structures to more complicated collaborations. In Intersections, we named a succession of more complicated partnerships starting with simple transactions, to joint ventures, information networks, coordinated tasks, ongoing collaborations and culminating with institutional collaborations. Of course not all partnerships evolve in these ways.

Some writers emphasize that words like partnership and collaboration are distinctly different. Precision in labels is less important than understanding that partnerships vary and evolve. Their organizational structures and procedures vary according to how intentionally the partners are engaged with each other and how formal are their relationships. For those who would advise or fund collaborations, it is useful to know that a parents' arts education advocacy network whose aim is to share information may need nothing more than a steering committee and a mailing list to accomplish its work. A statewide alliance for arts education requires formal representation from its constituents, funding, staff, and administrative support.

It is a mistake to expect an informal network to invest time in writing by-laws. It is also an error to undertake a two-year curriculum development program without organizing partnership leadership, decision-making procedures, and securing funding. In brief, simple joint ventures or networks require little in the way of formal partnership systems. More complicated collaborations require more sophisticated partnership organizations.

A critique

Jane Remer (1996) found the definitions in Intersections useful, but noted the difference between administrative partnerships and instructional partnerships. She said administrative partnerships deal with "program design, structure, and operation of a relationship" and are concerned with issues of "organization, design, coordination, governance, overall roles and responsibilities, and evaluation of program effectiveness" (p. 114). She wrote that, "instructional partnerships deal with the design, organization, context, and methodology of the curriculum" (p. 114) and are concerned with teaching, learning, and the assessment of student learning. She observed that these two were two related modes and the functions of people engaged in such partnerships frequently overlap. The distinction is most marked during partnership evaluations. Administrative
partnerships are subject to program evaluations and instructional partnerships are subject to assessment of student learning.

Remer’s analysis is useful, mostly to reinforce that the real work of partnerships makes its impact when the teacher or teaching artist develops a person-to-person partnership with students in the classroom, concert hall, or museum. What we do in institutional partnerships is all in support of and subordinate to student learning. As we observed in Learning Partnerships, "the evaluator’s simple question is, 'what happened to the kids?''" (Dreeszen, Aprill, & Deasy, 1999, p. 5).

Some partnerships do operate solely at the level of policy, advocacy, funding or research and do not become engaged in teaching and learning. For example, a national consortium is working to encourage the professional development of arts education coordinators in state arts agencies and to strengthen state-level partnerships between departments of education, state arts agencies and alliances for arts education. In most partnerships however, there is little distinction between administrative support of the partnership and the design and delivery of teaching. If a school and an arts center can’t improve student learning what is the point of funding or sustaining their partnership? An effective partnership’s administration is seldom isolated from effective teaching and learning. From observations and recent research we note that the most effective partnerships manage to sustain their organization, funding, and procedures and attend intentionally to teaching, learning, and student assessment.

Recent research

The research on arts and education collaborations has found some consistent patterns, agreeing that successful partnerships are built around shared goals that pay attention to students’ learning needs. The latest research also observes that successful partnerships are now attending to program evaluation and student assessment, mirroring the growing importance of standards and accountability in education and funding.

Since the book Intersections: Community Arts and Education Collaborations (Dreeszen) was first published in 1992, more research has helped us to understand how arts and education partnerships work. Intersections researchers convened 250 representatives of partnerships in nine cities and regions to ask what worked and what did not. The resulting publication documented support systems required for successful partnerships, critical success factors, and predictable problems.

In 1999 the Arts Education Partnership published Learning Partnerships: Improving learning in schools with arts partners in the community (Dreeszen, Aprill & Deasy). This publication drew on the experience of the authors and 23 exemplary partnerships to describe the impact of arts education partnerships, factors that make them successful and to recommend what partners should consider as they plan collaborative initiatives. This guide subsequently was adapted for a free online workbook on planning and evaluating partnerships (www.umass.edu/aes).
Project Zero researchers at Harvard University closely examined 21 surviving partnerships to determine how arts education partnerships are sustained beyond their initial funding. Their results are described in *Arts Survive* (Seidel, Eppel, & Martiniello, 2001). "Strengthening State-Level Arts Education Partnerships" reports the results of a meeting of 46 state arts education consultants from state departments of education convened to explore how to encourage state-level partnerships (Arts Education Partnership, 2001).

Each research project and publication describes factors that encourage or inhibit the building and sustaining of arts education partnerships. As one might expect, they tend to reinforce each other with some similar observations. Each also identified unique partnership features. All four reports reached the same primary conclusion about what makes effective and sustainable partnerships. This was described in *Learning Partnerships* as: "The partners understand shared goals that ultimately enhance student learning." *Arts Survive* (2001) reported that "Surviving partnerships place the needs of students and schools at the center of their mission" (p. xv) The *Arts Survive* authors also stress the need to attend to "clarifying values and negotiating partnership goals" (p. xvi).

All reports agreed that leadership and good relationships among the partners are critical. *Arts Survive* noted the need for "developing strong leadership and locus of decision making" (p. 32). *Learning Partnerships* also observed that, "In sustained partnerships, leadership becomes shared" (p. 6). Each of the reports found that partnerships take work to build and to sustain. The state curriculum specialists reported "a common misperception that a partnership, once formed, will automatically work" (Arts Education Partnership, 2001, p. 6). Three of the four studies agreed that successful partnerships derive from community support and ownership. *Intersections* reported for example, that "broad-based community participation" is one of the fundamental factors needed to support partnerships (p. 3).

**Summary of key findings from the arts education partnership literature**

*Arts Survive*

This study contributes much to our understanding of mature partnerships that have survived over time. Its observations are consistent with *Intersections*. Of particular value are the affirmation of the importance of shared goals, shared values, and personal commitment of members of partnerships to arts education and to the other partners. Seidel and his colleagues also stress the importance of increasing visibility and accountability through assessment and evaluation. *Arts Survive* documented five major findings:

1. Surviving partnerships place the needs of students and schools at the center of their mission.
2. Deep personal commitments to the educational power of the arts experiences fuel surviving partnerships.
3. In surviving partnerships, multiple dimensions of the work receive regular attention. These include (summarized)
   - building and maintaining strong relationships;
4. Surviving partnerships embrace the need to listen, to learn, and to change.
5. Surviving partnerships require a broad base of ownership and investment. (Arts Survive, pp. xv-xvi)

Arts Survive outlines common elements that characterize surviving arts education partnerships. These respond to seven persistent challenges (p.32). The authors likened these elements to lug nuts on a wheel that need to be in tune for the wheel to run smoothly.

- The need to maintain and continually evolve the quality and design of the educational program;
- The need to make the work of the partnership visible through documentation, evaluation, and assessment;
- The need for clear goals and regular clarification and negotiation of values among partners;
- The need for building and maintaining strong relationships among people, organizations, and initiatives;
- The need for leadership;
- The need for adequate funding and resources; and
- The need for broad and constant education and advocacy.

Arts Survive’s findings are generally consistent with Learning Partnerships. The Project Zero study stressed more the need for evaluation. Learning Partnerships supports these factors and acknowledges the role of enlightened self-interest from each of the partners and the strength that comes from surviving setbacks.

Learning Partnerships

Learning Partnerships asked, "What makes an effective and sustainable arts and education partnership?"

The partners understand shared goals that ultimately enhance student learning. An effective, sustainable partnership makes documented progress toward fulfilling its goals. Different members of the partnerships may have complementary, subordinate goals, but improved student learning is the essential measure of good partnerships.

In sustained partnerships, leadership becomes shared. Leadership is perhaps the most critical factor that sustains collaborative action.

Partners within effective partnerships assume a shared sense of ownership in the collaborative program. While the commitment and intensity of engagement will vary among partners and over time, the partnership will only last if members feel the project belongs to them.
Effective partnerships are creative. Good partners think outside the box, combine existing resources in innovative ways, and create learning opportunities that did not previously exist.

The organization and structure of sustainable partnerships must be flexible. Just as planning must be nimble enough to accommodate unexpected programmatic or political developments, the administrative systems must be resilient to accommodate the dynamics of shared ownership. ...Partnership agreements evolve into more structured and deliberate administrative systems required, as the collaborative works becomes more complicated.

Effective partnerships attract sustained funding. The approaching conclusion of initial funding is a critical period for partnerships that intend to continue.

The individual partners' own needs are met within an effective partnership. If enlightened self-interest [of each partner] is not served by the partnership, predictable difficulties may derail the initiative.

Effective partnerships engage multiple community sectors. Research evidence demonstrates that more diversified partnerships are most successful in achieving broadly supported community consensus and the most sustainable educational initiatives.

Good community arts and education partnerships involve multiple artistic and academic disciplines. Students and teachers will respond to different art forms and various artistic approaches that can help students learn in many subjects. Partnerships expand the range of artistic instruction offered students and increase the opportunity to involve teachers from different disciplines.

The arts are valued for themselves and for their capacity to enhance student learning. Effective partnerships...help students learn both in and through the arts by engaging classroom teachers, school specialists, and community professionals in collaborative teaching and learning.

Sustained partnerships are concerned comprehensively with education. The more comprehensive partnerships require more careful planning and time, more funding, and better-developed administrative systems. In return, they are more sustainable and more profoundly affect learning.

Strong partnerships survive setbacks. Collaboration is a learned skill and complicated enough to predict some frustrating problems. However, if the foundations of the partnership are well built on shared values and goals, agreements are written, communications are frequent, problems are confronted, and the focus is kept upon the students' well being, then partnerships thrive.

Partner institutions learn and change. In the best partnerships the participating schools and agencies are changed.

Sustained partnerships create an infrastructure that supports community/school learning relations. Collaborations can yield lasting impact when school systems are
moved to hire and retain curriculum specialists and arts educators. Other infrastructure improvements include hiring educators within cultural organizations, creating alliances for arts education, arts education advocacy groups, professional associations of arts educators, etc. (Learning Partnerships, Dreeszen, 2001a, pp. 5-14)

Learning Partnerships was intended primarily to document impacts, illustrate exemplary practices, and to inform potential partners of the benefits of collaboration. While it cites the need for evaluation, it did not feature evaluation and assessment as critical factors. Of course, high-stakes testing in the schools has since become critically important as accountability for results became a premier value in politics and education. The subsequent online workbook, Learning Partnerships: Online Help for Arts and Education Collaborations, responded to the changed environment. It features an interactive workbook that explains program evaluation and provides instructions to plan an evaluation.

"Strengthening State-level Partnerships"

State department of education, arts education consultants gathered in 2001 to discuss how to strengthen state-level arts education partnerships. This meeting was convened by the Arts Education Partnership, Kennedy Center, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the National Endowment for the Arts. The arts education consultants identified why some state-level partnerships succeed.

They observed three important factors, "successful partnerships are strong in resources, communications and partnership relations, and effectiveness and impact" (p. 7). Other factors that strengthened state-level partnerships:

- Developing a common vision and aligning their message and efforts to address the learning needs of students as these are defined in national and state arts education standards.
- Establishing processes that clarify conflicting or competing perspectives and needs and help forge a common agenda.
- Insisting that arts education should be the responsibility of educators.
- Providing curriculum, assessment, and teaching methods to the artists and administrators of arts and cultural organizations working with schools (p. 7).

Arts education specialists in state departments of education identified why some state-level partnerships fail. Some factors include:

- Lack of full-time arts education consultants employed by the state education agency.
- Misconceptions and mistrust due to differing institutional cultures, different understandings of what constitutes quality arts education, and a lack of sustained, effective communications.
- The common misperception that a partnership, once formed, will automatically work.
• Lack of a basic model for successful partnerships.
• Complicating cultural and environmental factors. (e.g., bureaucratic structures, staff changes, resistance to state assessment, school reform issues, politics.) (pp. 5-6)

This study has been important, because it is the first that approaches the understanding of arts education partnerships from the perspective of state departments of education. Most of these observations are consistent with *Intersections, Learning Partnerships, and Arts Survive*. One notable new contribution to the partnership literature is the strong assertion to "insist that arts education be the responsibility of educators" (p.7) This acknowledges the concern that community-based collaborations could supplant arts specialist teachers working in the schools.

The partnership planning process

We have learned much about how successful partnerships are planned and implemented. Empirical evidence shows wide variety in the way collaborations work, yet we can observe patterns. While partnership planning can be untidy, we've learned enough from watching successful ones that we can confidently recommend a partnership planning process that works. This process is documented in a free online workshop and workbook the *Learning Partnerships Planning Workbook* (Dreeszen, 2001a).

1. Prepare for the partnership - Potential partners should consider their motivations for entering into collaboration, their needs, and limits. Acknowledging these needs up front prevents misunderstandings later.
2. Explore a shared need - The partners should understand to what specific community or educational need, problem or opportunity will this partnership respond.
3. Decide to act in collaboration - After understanding the potential partners' individual interests and a shared need, the partners should agree to enter into collaboration. This should be an intentional step.
4. Write goals - All the research agrees that successful partners understand common goals that respond to genuine educational needs. This step is critical.
5. Set objectives - After long-range goals, the partnership planners should identify short-term objectives or anticipated outcomes they intend to achieve. This becomes the basis for assigning tasks.
6. Describe specific tasks and activities - Many partnerships go on to identify specific action steps that need to be taken. These may be documented in work plans, timelines, or grant proposals. Other partnerships resolve these tasks as they start to implement their initiative.
7. Budget - As most projects incur costs, the budget is critically important. Many partnerships flounder because they have no systems to anticipate or control costs. The budget and the plans must be consistent.
8. Fundraise - While some partnerships organize programs with just the resources of the partners, most seek outside funds. The partnership plans and budget prepares for successful fundraising. Start-up funds are much easier to obtain than sustaining support.
9. Anticipate evaluation - It is becoming increasingly important for accountability and good management to evaluate program outcomes and to assess student learning. Evaluations are much simpler if data is deliberately collected as programs proceed intended to demonstrate that outcomes are achieved.

10. Implement the plan - This prescribed set of steps assumes that planning precedes the actions that achieve the plan. In many effective partnerships though, planning and action happen concurrently or in short planning/action cycles.

11. Evaluate results -- Evaluations will measure the extent to which anticipated outcomes are achieved.

(For more information on how to do collaborative planning and evaluating, visit Learning Partnerships: Online Help for Arts and Education Collaborations at www.umass.edu/aes)

Continued challenges to arts and education collaborations

The author’s early research and teaching on partnerships focused on the intrinsic nature of collaboration. Habana-Haffner and Reed (1989) showed that the nature of partnerships fundamentally differs in important respects from single organizations. Much of what we have learned within institutions has to be adapted for partnerships. For example decision-making, information, and financial control systems are all established in most organizations but have to be created for a new partnership. Collaborations also grapple with mixed cultures, multiple leaders, and ambiguous membership. The commonly observed problem of sustained funding is complicated by predictable conflicts of loyalty for partners who must balance the interests of their own organization and the new partnership.

Challenges persist, but we have learned much about the partnerships. Intersections identifies 11 predictable problems with collaborations. Arts Survive outlined seven challenges to the thriving and surviving of partnerships (Seidel, pp. 33-41). Each suggests how to anticipate and resolve these predictable problems. Lately research and coordinated national action is addressing extrinsic challenges to arts education partnerships.

High-stakes testing and accountability. In a meeting of the Arts Education Partnership at the Kennedy Center in 2001, discussion sessions on accountability and testing were crowded. A report of that session found, "the majority of states represented had statewide accountability testing and in all but a few states statewide assessments were being developed" (Unpublished Summary, Dreeszen, 2001, p. 1). Math and science is most often tested. Student learning in the arts was being assessed in some states and planned in others. The climate of accountability is challenging arts education partnerships to acknowledge the anxiety around high-stakes testing. Some partnerships report that educator preoccupation with testing has slowed progress or even disrupted their work to integrate the arts into education. Successful partnerships plan their arts education initiatives to align with educational standards and help schools and students succeed.

Perceived threats to arts specialists. Some arts specialists in schools and their representatives have resisted school collaborations with artists and cultural organizations. There are two concerns. The first worry is that community partnerships will conflict with
the professional teachers’ curriculum plans. Or worse, they fear school administrators will replace arts specialists in schools with part-time artists or outreach programs from the community. These risks are acknowledged by state department of education arts coordinators. Early partnerships were less attuned to school needs, curriculum frameworks, and teacher priorities. As reported in Intersections, some cultural organizations did lobby schools with the primary objective to build an audience for their arts programs.

When researchers first traveled to six cities as part of the Intersections research to meet with representatives of arts education partnerships we observed a wide range of sophistication in the kinds of arts education work being done. We heard some complaints from artists and arts leaders that the schools weren’t receptive to their overtures. We heard complaints from teachers that the arts people didn’t appreciate school priorities and culture. Arts activists used advocacy language to describe their attempts to interest educators in their artistic enrichment programs. Educators talked in turn about defending their lesson plans against those who would interrupt their curriculum by pulling kids out of class for arts programs. Some partnerships had simple objectives to expose students to the creative process by placing artists in classrooms whether or not these advanced school priorities.

The literature and most observers of arts education collaborations agree that partnerships with artists and cultural organizations must be supplementary to a program of sequential arts instruction taught by arts specialists in the school. These are mutually supportive. In schools without regular arts instruction, community arts partnerships frequently build support for arts education. In two evaluations of arts education funding programs (Evaluation Reports, 2000), the evaluators found partnerships sometimes resulted in hiring of new arts specialists in the schools. There was no evidence that partnerships resulted in firing of arts teachers.

Mary Ann Stankiewicz recently reported on a case in Sarasota Florida that exemplifies how community collaborations can strengthen arts education in schools (Stankiewicz, 2001). Intersections researchers first visited Sarasota in 1991 to study strong partnerships and found that years of collaborations between the local arts council and the school district had built successful arts programs and trust. Sarasota built a strong system of arts instruction by arts specialists in the schools enriched by artists in residency and cooperation with area cultural institutions. Then, in the mid 1990s a fiscal crisis provoked the school district to dismiss all its arts teachers. The district expected the community partners to provide for arts education. The cultural community organized and refused to replace the arts educators. With sophisticated advocacy to their audiences, the media, and to policy makers, the decision was reversed and arts specialists were restored to the schools. Without the strong network of community partners, the arts teachers would likely have been powerless to resist the budget cuts.

Unknown impact of national security concerns. This paper was written shortly after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on US citizens. We are just starting to discover the implications of conflict with terrorists on American society. We do not know the impact on funding and support for the arts. We do know from the research that collaborations are more vulnerable to changes in the environment than are established institutions. Political,
economic, and funding changes affect collaborations among organizations more profoundly than the organizations themselves. If funding for education or the arts is diverted, we suspect that the problems of funding partnership initiatives will be exacerbated. The opportunity is to make the case that school and arts collaboration strengthens our sense of community, makes us stronger, and enriches learning.

Some trends and current initiatives

Increasing sophistication of partnerships

We are seeing fewer examples of self-serving arts marketing to schools and more cases of highly sophisticated partnerships where arts and education advocates are all trying to help students learn.

At a 1997 meeting in Cleveland, the nation’s Arts in Education (AIE) coordinators studied a local arts and education partnership, the Initiative for Cultural Arts in Education (ICARE) in Cleveland. ICARE is an example of a mature and comprehensive program of partnerships with thirteen Cleveland Schools and twelve cultural organizations administered by the Cleveland Cultural Coalition. Partners are awarded funding to work together from three to five years. Artists and museum professionals work with teachers and parents to design programming, develop curricula, and assess student learning. Professional development training is offered for teachers, parents, and artists throughout the city. (Dreeszen, 1997, p. 1)

Program evaluation and student assessment. Early arts education partnerships did not typically measure results. Now evaluation and assessment is much more common. Partnerships are planning to produce specific outcomes, and budgeting for evaluation, and measuring and reporting their performance. Funders are demanding evidence of results and educational administrators expect it.

The Cultural Education Collaborative (CEC) in Charlotte, North Carolina completed this year a rigorous evaluation of their programs. This program was highlighted as an exemplary program in the Learning Partnership publication (Dreeszen, Aprill, & Deasy, 1999). In keeping with its national reputation, a team of national experts and a group of local stakeholders scrutinized this institutional partnership. The evaluators celebrated the CEC successes and recommended significant changes. This kind of external evaluation will become commonplace.

New action research initiatives

There are several national initiatives underway in 2001-2002 intended to better understand and strengthen arts education partnerships. These are intended to strengthen the infrastructure of partnerships at the state level. Here are two promising projects.
Strong State Partnerships. With support from the Packard Foundation and its partners, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies is working to advance state-level partnerships among state arts agencies, departments of education, and alliances for arts education. This initiative is part of a larger effort to strengthen the professional development and communication among arts education professionals. The project seeks to better understand what enables strong collaboration among the three state-level agencies most able to influence public policy and funding in support of arts education. This project is also investing in the professional development of education coordinators at state arts agencies and their communication systems. An early result of this work is the "Strengthening State-Level Arts Education Partnerships" (Arts Education Partnership, 2001) These findings are summarized earlier in this paper.

Higher Education Partnerships. The national Arts Education Partnership with support from the Kraft Foundation is working to identify, convene, and learn from partnerships including colleges and universities that prepare teachers and teaching artists to work in arts education. This work responds to the common concern that the system of support for arts education is incomplete without strong teacher education and in-service training. This study will be documented in a report in early 2002.

Dick Deasy and his colleagues in the Arts Education Partnership observed promising collaborations among colleges and universities, K-12 public education and cultural organizations. They looked for innovative practices in pre-service education and professional development of arts teachers and teaching artists. Early inquiry among these partnerships discovered five categories of best practices that will be the focus of a deeper inquiry and report. Effective collaborations that are working to improve teachers of the arts provide:

- professional development experiences for teachers and artists;
- processes for developing and sustaining partnerships among higher education, K-12 and arts and cultural organizations;
- processes for influencing pre-service education;
- strategies for engaging leadership at the school, school district and college level in collaboration and professional development; and
- documenting their impact through innovative assessment and evaluation methods including action research (Arts Education Partnership, 2001b, pp. 1-2)

Conclusion

Partnerships are important given the ambitious goals we set for ourselves as arts and education advocates. The planning, program development, training, advocacy, and fundraising required to integrate arts into education is usually a big job, often bigger than any one institution, even a school system, can manage alone. Arts Education partnerships can mobilize enough skills, energy, and enthusiasm for the task to develop momentum and clout that can accomplish significant improvements in arts education and education in general (Dreeszen, in Seidel, Eppel, & Martiniello, 2001, p. 5).

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Increasingly, we turn to partnerships to tackle the never-ending challenge of improving education and helping our children learn to be fulfilled and contributing members of our society. Partnerships are challenging to build and sustain. Fortunately, we are learning much from successful collaborations. Thanks to gatherings such as this Fowler Colloquium, publications like those cited here, and action research projects like those of the national Arts Education Partnership, the NEA, and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, arts and education collaborations are being actively encouraged.

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