

AFTER SCHOOL ARTS: ARTISTS AND TEACHERS WORKING TOGETHER

A Report to the Community

“The people, the excitement, the many forms of art made me feel like I was an artist too!”

(Student)

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At A Glance

Features of After School Arts:

- Partnerships between school staff and community artists
- Theme-based projects in multiple art forms
- Multi-age groups meeting 1-1/2 hours, three to four days per week
- 18 week programs at each school
- Visits to galleries, museums, and performances
- Interdisciplinary learning, reflective thinking practices, and portfolio assessment
- Family engagement
- Professional development
- Principal support

Costs per school:

- \$9500 including team member stipends, program materials, trips, and guest artists

School District of Philadelphia After School Arts Schools to Date:

- Ada Lewis Middle School
- FitzSimons Middle School
- Harding Middle School
- Houston School
- John Marshall Elementary School
- Lingelbach Elementary School
- Middle Years Alternative School
- Walton Elementary School

For more information about how to implement this model, contact the Philadelphia Education Fund at (215) 665-1400.

Overview

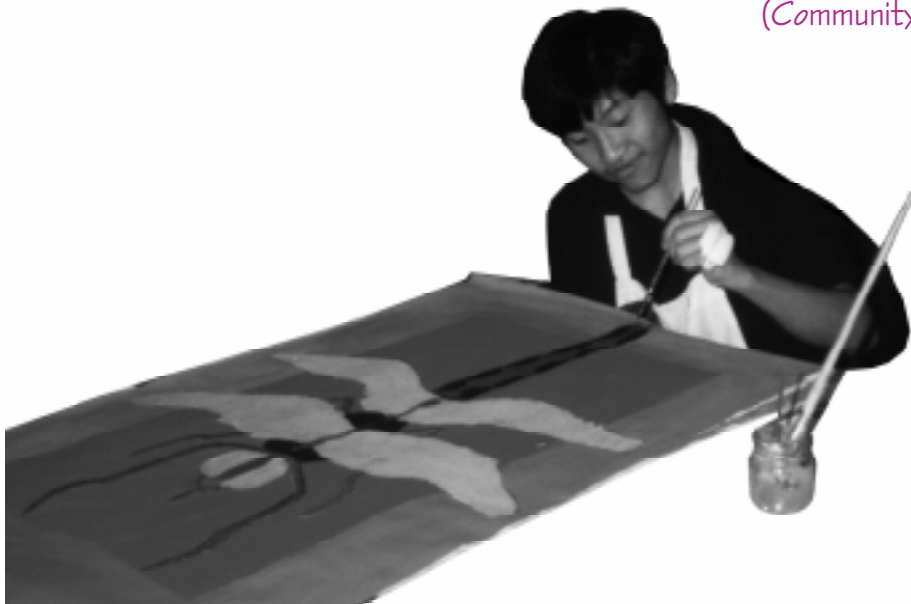
Since 1992, the Philadelphia Education Fund has worked with eight school-based teams of artists and teachers within the School District of Philadelphia. During many hours of hard work, teams have merged vision, commitment and skill to bring innovative After School Arts programs to their students. As a result, participating sites have emerged with new models for arts-centered teaching and learning, involving parents in school activities, and building partnerships between classroom teachers and community artists.

The goals of After School Arts are to: offer students high quality arts experiences; build long-term partnerships between teachers and artists; offer professional development opportunities; document program outcomes; foster new roles for parents; and create new links between home and school. Teams meet regularly to discuss and reflect on their work, to make connections to school-day activities, and to plan workshops for all staff members.

This publication is a culmination of the ideas, stories and lessons shared by program participants. With this publication, the Philadelphia Education Fund aims to profile components of the After School Arts program that have helped provide students with integrated, rich learning experiences. Further, the Fund hopes this work will assist those embarking on or implementing similar endeavors in the arts.

“The students’ art-making experience was very much like my own: momentary inspiration reinforced by hours of commitment. Art does, after all, take time.”

(Community Artist)



... Student-Artist-Parent-Teacher-Student-Parent-Artist...

Program Components of After School Arts

High Quality Arts Experiences for Students

“*Students discuss, analyze and reflect on their own art work as well as work of their school mates. As a result, their self-esteem, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills are challenged as their competencies in the arts excel.*”

(Classroom Teacher)

High quality arts experiences for students are the core of the After School Arts model. At each school site, a team of teachers and artists offers units of study in multiple arts disciplines. Designed around a selected theme, each program lasts for at least 18 weeks and meets three to four days per week. Facilitators help students model how professional artists work, focusing on the artistic process as well as the product. Students produce, reflect on and revise their art in several stages and demonstrate their final products through performances and exhibits. In addition, students participate in peer critiques, video documentation, journal writing and other activities that foster reflective thinking. In some cases, students meet artists in their own environment—at studios, galleries, and performance spaces.

For example, After School Arts students have:

- revised plates of their own artistic prints as many as 14 times;
- created portfolios to visually record their work;
- used video to critique their own dances;
- studied four Broadway musicals as a window into 20th century United States historical events;
- completed Kente paper mats and Nigerian mirror pouches as part of their research on Nigeria and Ghana; and
- produced a Medieval feast with courtly dress, student jugglers and an exhibit of student tapestries, murals, coat of arms and shields.



“*After School Arts gave me my music and dance. It helped me to know what working and practicing is all about.*” *(Student)*

... Teacher-Artist-Parent-Student-Teacher-Artist-Student...

Teacher and Artist Partnerships

“*Pair an artist with a teacher and put students on the stage, and you have the makings of something powerful, something lasting, and something worthwhile. The After School Arts project has clearly demonstrated that when teachers and artists work as colleagues, they grow in their professional understanding of each other’s work and send a powerful message to children about the educational and personal value of the arts.*”

(Community Artist)

Ongoing partnerships between teachers and artists are key to the success of the After School Arts program. The model provides school staff with the continuity of working with one or two community artists throughout the 18 week program. As a result, this initiative gives team members the time needed to build ongoing relationships and to make decisions collaboratively about program design and implementation.

As partners, teachers and artists are encouraged to share information. Artists introduce classroom teachers to arts resources in the city such as galleries, arts organizations, and performance spaces. In turn, teachers demonstrate strategies for working with large groups of students in the classroom and managing materials. As one artist stated:

All participants had the opportunity to see each other in different ways. An eighth grade special education teacher became a dance coach, and a reading teacher became a drama coach. A social studies teacher and an instructional coordinator became artists, while the librarian became a film director.

In the end, all participants benefit from a program model informed by the minds and imaginations of teachers and artists working together over time.

“A team that really works together and complements one another breaks the barrier of isolation from teaching solo.”

(Classroom Teacher)



... Student-Artist-Parent-Teacher-Student-Parent-Artist...

Professional Development

“*Since we believe that learning is a life long process, we teachers must also be engaged in our own learning process. The active hands-on approach to learning creates an environment of shared experience and opens a gateway to enriched communication and higher standards throughout the curriculum. It is this process that we seek to give our students.*”

(Art Teacher)

Professional development is a crucial component of the model. At team meetings throughout the year, key concepts are explored including interdisciplinary teaching and learning, student reflection in the arts, and portfolio assessment. The webbing exercise to the right, for example, helps teams develop interdisciplinary program plans. Members also discuss how the work of After School Arts is aligned with the School District of Philadelphia's *Academic Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Examples*.

As in many teacher networks, these forums help participants deepen relationships across teams and share specific program challenges and successes. One teacher learns how to discuss art work with students more confidently. An artist reports learning new instructional strategies.

It is this exchange among team members that best nurtures individuals professionally and fosters the sense of professional community supported by the model.

Program Theme: Unity in Diversity



“*The ASA project offers teachers an opportunity to become students: to learn, explore, invent, and problem-solve.*”

(Art Teacher)

... Teacher-Artist-Parent-Student-Teacher-Artist-Student...

School Day Connections

“*The partnership (classroom teacher and art specialist) carried over into the school day. Once we have the experience of working closely together, we can coordinate other activities easily in the future.*”

(Classroom Teacher)

To expand the impact of the program, teams make explicit linkages between their After School Arts programs and school-day activities. By inviting the whole school staff to participate in arts-centered staff development workshops and ongoing After School Arts projects, teams engage the greater school community. At one school, team members have included school day staff in the selection of the program theme. Other strategies include collaborating with school day staff to design their program around the School District's *Language Arts Content Standards* and enlisting the school librarian to help students complete After School Arts research projects.

“Teachers at my school involved their students in related research, writing and art work during the school day.”

(Classroom Teacher)



... Student-Artist-Parent-Teacher-Student-Parent-Artist...

Parent Participation

“ I became involved in After School Arts when the arts curriculum at the school was downsized. There was a severe lack of creative outlet for children. How do you present quality arts programming to 950 kids on a regular basis? As a professional artist and long time arts educator I saw an aching need. This was something to which I could contribute.”

(Parent/Artist)

After School Arts invites family members to participate in every stage of program planning and implementation. Teams utilize a myriad of family engagement strategies. At one school, you can find parents directly involved in raising funds, developing long-range plans, and teaching a class on jewelry-making. At another school, you can see parents investing themselves in hands-on arts activities during an After School Arts Parents' Night. Other schools involve parents in the production of final theater or dance productions or in visits to area art galleries. In addition, the program evaluation team engages parents in program evaluation through the distribution of questionnaires. Whether it is by helping to make a child's costume or securing a principal's support, parent participation in the After School Arts program helps to create a building block for future family involvement and expanded community engagement.



“We were invited to work with children in the After School Arts activities. I enjoyed the glow in my children's eyes as they were anxious to share their efforts.”

(Parent)

... Teacher-Artist-Parent-Student-Teacher-Artist-Student...

Reflection and Self-Assessment

“*At each level of the program—students, teams, cross-site teams, arts administrators—the intuitive reflective process becomes a model for a more overt, shared on-going assessment. The ASA Program allows team members to take ownership of their program, giving them decision making power from planning goals to use of funds.*”

(1997 ASA Program Evaluation Report)

The practice of reflective thinking is a common thread throughout the After School Arts model. Facilitators provide students with time to reflect on their work through journals, videotapes and peer critiques. Students then use this information to make self-assessments and revise their work according to goals they set for themselves. Artist-teacher teams also use journal writing and conversation to reflect on program design and activities. As a result, they assess and adapt their programs each year. Professional development meetings provide time for all teams to come together and reflect on the model as a whole. They also provide program administrators and the evaluation team with input about the effectiveness of the program. It is this ongoing process of reflection, tightly woven throughout program activities, that strengthens the model as it continues to evolve.

“*The development of each team’s ASA project was like the development of their ‘work of art’ for the year.*”

(1997 ASA Program Evaluation Report)



... Student-Artist-Parent-Teacher-Student-Parent-Artist...



“From the first artistic encounters, one gains a sense of the nature of the enterprise of creating and reflecting; this sense is never wholly lost but continues to evolve throughout one’s life, so long as one remains actively involved in artistic activities.”

—Howard Gardner (1990)

... Teacher-Artist-Parent-Student-Teacher-Artist-Student...

Impact of After School Arts

Linking the Arts to Student Achievement

Student work from ASA sites reveals how teachers and community artists implement arts experiences that support student achievement. For example, this series of prints demonstrates that the student has acquired knowledge, concepts, and skills addressed in Philadelphia's *Academic Content Standards*.

In one program, students were introduced to dance movements and live performances. They were then encouraged to use these experiences as inspirations for creating prints.

English Language Arts Viewing Content Standard #1—View media, technology, and live performances for a variety of purposes including gathering information, making informed judgments, processing information, and for enjoyment.



In the first print, a student was challenged to place the figure within the rectangle of the picture plane.

Mathematics Content Standard #3—Geometry: Understand space and dimensionality concepts, use them appropriately and accurately, and communicate their results clearly.



After assessing her work, she then revised the print by adding line patterns to the clothing.

Visual Arts Content Standard #1—Understand and apply art media, techniques, and processes.

In her final version, she placed the figure more squarely on the paper, added line patterns in the back ground, and demonstrated an improvement in how she applied the ink.

Problem Solving Cross-Cutting Competency—Plan probable strategies for resolving an identified problem, devise a plan to the problem, evaluate the data selected, and reexamine and collect more data if necessary.



... Student-Artist-Parent-Teacher-Student-Parent-Artist...

After School Arts Program Evaluation

“ *The strongest and most direct impact ASA has had on the school day is through the teachers and students who are directly involved with the program. They bring their new knowledge, new attitudes, and new experiences to their classrooms and to other students.* ”

(1997 ASA Program Evaluation Report)

Since the program's inception, the Philadelphia Education Fund has contracted with an outside evaluation team to assess the impact of the After School Arts program. Biannual evaluation reports have documented that the program:

- enriches students' skills, knowledge and attitudes about the arts;
- provides innovative professional development;
- develops partnerships between school staff and community members;
- enriches overall school curriculum and provides a model for curricular innovation;
- garners support for the arts;
- encourages parent involvement in school activities.

Report findings are based on information gathered from site visits, interviews with students, team members, parents, and principals; questionnaires; observations of student work and journals; and discussions at team meetings. At team meetings, evaluators present strategies and materials to help teams document, reflect upon and assess their own program activities. Overall, the evaluation process articulates the strengths and challenges of After School Arts, documents the program's contributions to art-centered teaching and learning practices, and provides all members of the After School Arts community with a tool for reflecting on the comprehensive model as it continues to improve over time.

*These new ways of teaching
and learning rejuvenate
teachers and provide models for
other classrooms.*

(1997 ASA Program Evaluation Report)



... Teacher-Artist-Parent-Student-Teacher-Artist-Student...

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High Performance Art in the Public Interest Directory of Sites
<http://www.artswire.org/highperf/api/APIothersites.html>



... Student-Artist-Parent-Teacher-Student-Parent-Artist...

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We further extend our thanks to all of the participating students for taking the risks involved in trying new art forms and expressing their ideas and feelings in the arts. It is their willingness to share their experiences that keeps us learning and excited about our work.

And, finally, we would like to thank all of the After School Arts teachers, artists, and parents listed below—and those who have worked with them—for their contributions to the publication and for helping to transform the lives of their students through the arts.

Warren Simmons, Executive Director, The Philadelphia Education Fund
Karen Goldberg, After School Arts Director
Don Glass, After School Arts Program Assistant



Ada Lewis Middle School program (1992-1997)

Dahlia Johnson, principal
Sallie Flanagan-Greiss, classroom teacher and drama instructor
Lois Powell Mondesire, classroom teacher and drama instructor
Gregory Roberts, music teacher
Ernestine Tinsley, art teacher
Carla Washington, dancer/choreographer
Shirley Williams, parent volunteer

FitzSimons Middle School program (1994-1995)

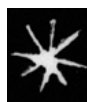
Steven Bailey, principal
Lois Isley, school counselor
Maria Lengauer, visual artist
Maria Pandolfi, art teacher

Harding Middle School program (1995-1997)

Harry Gaffney, principal
Anne Boney-Hall, classroom teacher
Diane Kunze, visual artist
Bernadine Waterman, Alternative Learning Center Coordinator

Houston School program (1995-1997)

Marie McCarthy, principal
Geri Ameri, dance teacher
Stephanie Cummings, art teacher
Carol Davis, drawing instructor
Risa Jordon, classroom teacher
Ron Kaufman, computer science teacher
Martha Kent Martin, visual artist and parent
Al Lassiter, visual artist



Lingelbach Elementary School program (1992-1994)

Joanruth Hirshman, principal
Eileen Brown, language arts teacher
Carson Fox, visual artist
Marsha Nedelman, art teacher
Stu Shames, musician

John Marshall Elementary School program (1994-1996)

Stanley Szymendera, principal
Linda Eisen, theater artist
Martha Kearns, executive director, FrankfordStyle
Bonnie McLean, classroom teacher
Lynn Rosenthal, reading and language skills teacher
Donna Sullivan, program support teacher

Middle Years Alternative School program (1995-1997)

Susan Nye, principal
Carson Fox, visual artist
June Kristensen, music teacher
Linda Laster, classroom teacher
Marsha Nedelman, art teacher
Sarah Peters, visual artist
Carla Washington, dancer/choreographer
Juanita Whatley, program assistant

Walton Elementary School program (1994-1997)

Charles Whiting, principal
Debra Bissey, classroom teacher
Risa Jordon, classroom teacher
LaVerne Levine, classroom teacher
Bruce Robinson, theater artist
Joe Smargisson, visual artist
Michelle Young, parent, vice president, Home and School Association

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