What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America’s Future Through Art

This guide offers three concrete actions school leaders can take to increase arts education in their schools.

1. Establish Arts Education
   - Use resources to support arts learning in your school. Each action is supported with several low-cost or no-cost strategies that other school leaders have used and found to be effective—whether it’s beginning an arts program stronger, or preserving an arts program where none exists, making an existing arts program more sustainable over time.

2. Create Arts Learning Community
   - Support a school-wide commitment to arts learning. Any of these actions or strategies can be taken one at a time or implemented several at once. When taken together, the actions are likely to be cumulative, mutually reinforcing, and more sustainable over time.

3. Rethink Arts Education
   - Ensure the use of time and resources. Further action is supported with several low-cost or no-cost strategies that other school leaders have used and found to be effective—whether it’s beginning an arts program where none exists, or implementing several at once.

About the Arts Education Partnership and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is dedicated to ensuring a high quality arts education for every young person in America. A national coalition of more than 100 education, arts, cultural, government, and philanthropic organizations, AEP was created in 1995 by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education. AEP is administered by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

Acknowledgements

The Arts Education Partnership thanks the following individuals for their insightful perspective in preparing this guide: Arnold Aprill, Michael Bissell, Richard Kessler, Una McAlinden, Anne Ostholthoff and Peg Winkelman. AEP also appreciates the generous support the Presidents Committee on the Arts and the Humanities provided toward the preparation and publication of this guide. And, most importantly, the guide would not have been possible without the assistance of the school principals and administrators who shared their stories and their wisdom. While AEP is grateful to all its valuable contributors, AEP alone is responsible for the content and views represented in this guide.

Visit the AEP Website at www.aep-arts.org for references and additional resources.

About the Arts Education Partnership and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is an advisory committee to the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) and is an auxiliary committee to the White House on cultural issues. Central to the PCAH mission is using the power of the arts and humanities to contribute to the strengthening of our society, the education of our children, the creativity of our citizens and the strength of our democracy. www.pcah.gov

Visit the AEP Website at www.aep-arts.org for references and additional resources.

About the Arts Education Partnership and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is an advisory committee to the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) and is an auxiliary committee to the White House on cultural issues. Central to the PCAH mission is using the power of the arts and humanities to contribute to the strengthening of our society, the education of our children, the creativity of our citizens and the strength of our democracy. www.pcah.gov
Strategies School Leaders Can Use to Increase Arts Education

About the Arts Education Partnership and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is dedicated to ensuring a high quality arts education for every young person in America. A national coalition of more than 100 education, arts, government, and philanthropic organizations, AEP was created in 1995 by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education to be administrated by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) is an advisory committee to the White House on cultural issues. Central to the PCAH mission is using the power of the arts and humanities to contribute to the strength of our society, the education of our children, the creativity of our citizens and the strength of our democracy. www.pcah.gov

Acknowledgements

The Arts Education Partnership thanks the following individuals for their insightful expertise in preparing this guide: Amberl Brown, Michael Freilich, Carl Gefsman, Alice Goldschlager and Peg Weinkin. AEP also appreciates the generous support the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities provided towards the preparation and publication of this guide. And most importantly, this guide would not have been possible without the assistance of the school principals and administrator who shared their stories and their wisdom. While AEP is grateful to all of their valuable contributions, AEP alone is responsible for the content and views represented in this guide.

Visit the AEP Website at www.aep-arts.org for references and additional resources.

What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make arts learning visible and increase arts education in their schools?

AEP provides a set of no-cost strategies that other school leaders have used and found to be effective—whether it's beginning an arts learning community, rethinking the use of time and resources, or implementing several at once. When taken together, these actions allow arts education to be more likely to be cumulative, mutually reinforcing, and applicable in a variety of grade levels.

What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

1. Establish a school-wide commitment to arts learning;
2. Create an arts-rich learning environment;
3. Increase the use of time and resources;
4. Build community resources.

What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

Winning America’s Future Through Arts

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) prepared this guide with support from the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH). The increasingly critical role of school leaders, along with the growing body of evidence on the benefits of arts learning, has prompted the development of the guide Artsmaking in and through the arts develops the essential knowledge, skills, and create opportunities for students to succeed in school, work, and life. As the top building-level leaders, school principals play a key role in making every student receives a high-quality arts education as part of a complete and balanced education.

The funding for this guide is made possible by the generous support provided toward the PCAH by the White House. AEP staff reviewed the relevant literature as well as conducted personal interviews with school principals and with practitioners who work closely with principals. Each action is supported with several low-cost or no-cost strategies that other school leaders have used and found to be effective—whether it's beginning an arts learning community, rethinking the use of time and resources, or implementing several at once. When taken together, these actions allow arts education to be more likely to be cumulative, mutually reinforcing, and applicable in a variety of grade levels.

1. Establish a school-wide commitment to arts learning;
2. Create an arts-rich learning environment;
3. Increase the use of time and resources;
4. Build community resources.

What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

Winning America’s Future Through Arts
What School Leaders Can Do To Increase Arts Education

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?

In a time of shrinking budgets and shifting priorities, what can school principals do to make and keep the arts strong in their school?
Establish a School-Wide Commitment to Arts Learning

1 Articulate clear goals. School principals play a crucial role in establishing a vision for high-quality and equitable arts education for every student. Effective artistic leadership begins with a clear articulation of the school’s goals for arts education. Principals can build a school-wide commitment to arts learning by creating a district-wide arts education policy or by creating their own school arts policy.

2 Bring arts to life. The arts can provide a variety of benefits, both academic and personal. For example, at one elementary school, arts education has been shown to contribute to ensuring a close alignment between the arts and the core curriculum, helping to ensure that all students have access to high-quality arts education.

3 Support professional development for arts teachers. High-quality arts education depends on well-trained and motivated arts teachers. Principals can support professional development for arts teachers by providing opportunities for continued learning and professional growth.

4 Engage students and families. Artistic learning is most effective when it is embedded in the fabric of daily life. Principals can engage students and families by creating opportunities for student-led arts initiatives and involving parents in the arts education process.

5 Involve the local arts community. Arts education is strengthened when it is connected to the broader arts community. Principals can involve the local arts community by creating partnerships with local arts organizations, artists, and schools.

Create an Arts-Rich Learning Environment

1 Bring the arts into daily classroom instruction. Arts education is an essential part of the K-12 curriculum in the United States. By bringing arts to the classroom, students have the opportunity to learn about the arts and develop an appreciation for their role in our society.

2 Support student-led learning. Students are the experts on their own learning, and they can use their creativity to explore the arts. Principals can support student-led learning by providing opportunities for students to lead their own learning, such as student-led art clubs or student-designed arts projects.

3 Engage arts in the budget. School budgets are crucial for ensuring that arts education is a priority. Principals can play a key role in engaging arts in the budget by advocating for arts funding and ensuring that arts education is adequately supported.

4 Incorporate the arts into professional development. Professional development is an essential part of arts education, and principals can play a key role in incorporating the arts into professional development by providing opportunities for teachers to learn about the arts and how to integrate them into the curriculum.

5 Involve the local arts community. The arts community can provide valuable resources and support for arts education. Principals can involve the local arts community by partnering with local arts organizations and artists to create opportunities for students to learn about the arts and develop their own artistic skills.

Rethink the Use of Time and Resources

1 Reallocation resources. According to Una McAlinden of ArtsEd Washington, “The schools that use the arts most effectively also plan activities that work well with our Principal’s Arts Leadership program.” This means that schools can use their resources in creative ways to ensure that all students have access to arts education.

2 Engage school staff in planning. By involving school staff in planning decisions, principals can ensure that arts education is an integral part of the school’s overall educational goals. This can help ensure that arts education is both high quality and equitable.

3 Professional development alone doesn’t necessarily correlate with better outcomes. The best approaches to arts education are those that are developed collaboratively with the school community, and that take into account the specific needs and resources of the school.

4 Adjust schedules and reshape the day. The Arts Education Partnership’s “In the Classroom” series provides examples of how schools can adjust their schedules and reshape the day to allow for arts education.

Conclusion

Taking any one of all these actions, school leaders can help students to enjoy a richer, more meaningful education without significant trade-offs in funding, personnel, or learning in other programs. Through a variety of proven strategies, these actions can provide sustainable support for arts education in schools, for educators, and for schools—that will endure well beyond any costs.
Establish a School-Wide Commitment to Arts Learning

1. **Articulate clear goals.** School principals play a crucial role in ensuring that arts education is a priority. Setting clear, high-quality, and measurable arts education goals for every student is essential. These goals should be communicated to all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students, to ensure alignment and commitment.

2. **Create an Arts-Rich Learning Environment.** Arts programs should be integrated into the curriculum, extending beyond traditional arts classrooms. This can include incorporating arts into other subjects, such as science, history, and language arts. Arts education should be a priority in school planning and budgeting.

3. **Bring the arts into daily classroom instruction.** Arts integration at the High School of Arts Education and Innovation in New York City is an example of how arts can be integrated into the curriculum. The school’s success is a testament to the power of arts when combined with high-quality teaching.

4. **Use existing arts programs.** Many schools already have arts programs in place. By leveraging these resources and finding ways to support them, school leaders can ensure that arts education is effective. This may involve reallocating resources or finding new funding opportunities.

5. **Incorporate the arts into staffing and resources.** Arts education requires a dedicated staff and resources. This can include hiring new arts teachers, providing professional development for current staff, or securing additional funding.

6. **Engage the arts in the community.** Arts education should extend beyond the school walls. Engaging the community can provide additional support and resources. This can include partnerships with local businesses, cultural organizations, or community members.

Conclusion

Taking any or all of these actions, school leaders can help students to enjoy a richer, more meaningful education. Without adequate support and funding, arts education can fall far short of its potential to transform lives.
Establish a School-Wide Commitment to Arts Learning

- Articulate clear goals. School principals play a crucial role in ensuring a school’s commitment to high-quality and equitable arts education for every student. It is essential to develop a comprehensive plan that outlines the school’s arts education goals and how they will be implemented. This requires clear communication and collaboration with school leaders, art educators, and other stakeholders.

- Create arts-rich learning environments. To bring arts to the forefront of the school environment, school leaders can create arts-infused spaces that reflect their vision and values. This can include integrating arts into the physical design of the school, as well as embedding arts into the curriculum and daily school life.

- Build staff capacity by reinforcing the commitment to arts education. By providing professional development and support, school leaders can help their staff become more confident and skilled in integrating arts into their teaching.

- Develop job descriptions for staff positions. Developing clear job descriptions can help school leaders attract and retain high-quality staff, including arts educators and arts-based program leaders.

- Rethink the Use of Time and Resources

- Reallocation of resources. Resources can be reallocated to prioritize arts education. This may involve reconfiguring Title I and ESEA funds, as well as leveraging other available federal aid to schools based on the number of students in poverty they enroll. In an August 2007 letter to educators and community leaders, 15 State Directors of Title I, tribal representative, and the “EPA, USDA, and local school districts have their Title I funds, and these are the only funds that Title I has.” The letter also emphasized the importance of using ESEA funds as leverage for art education or consider slightly larger class sizes and other significant trade-offs. These actions, school leaders can help students to enjoy a richer, deeper, more meaningful learning environment.

- Tapping additional resources. School leaders can tap into a variety of resources to support arts education, including partnerships with the local arts community, which can help infuse the arts into school walls, using pictures, descriptions, and the arts. By bringing community partners into the school, such as local musicians, artists, or cultural institutions, school leaders can provide students with authentic learning experiences and opportunities to connect to the arts beyond the school walls.

- Developing partnerships. By forming partnerships with cultural institutions, arts organizations, and other nonprofit organizations, school leaders can leverage their expertise, resources, and support to enhance arts education. These partnerships can provide students with opportunities to learn from professional artists, engage in arts-based projects, and participate in arts exhibitions and competitions.

- Conclusion

Taking any of these actions, school leaders can help students to enjoy a richer, deeper, more meaningful learning environment, and help to ensure that the arts are an integral part of every student’s education.