Crayola believes in unleashing, nurturing, and honoring the colorful originality in every child. That’s why we celebrate and support educators who inspire and value creative expression in their students. Like you, we know that arts-infused education helps kids acquire critical 21st century skills. So Crayola champions creatively alive children with you by offering free videos, grants and free professional development resources. To learn more, visit Crayola.com/CreativelyAlive

©2011 Crayola
Photos courtesy of John Pinderhughes

Together, we give colorful wings to the invisible things that grow in the hearts and minds of children.

“Creativity gives us wings”
Emma Z. Grade 5
Chenery School, Massachusetts

“Creativity shapes the world, giving us wings.
If there is no creativity, the world is a barren field without color.”
Dear Friends:

Crayola and NAESP believe in the power of arts-infused education to create memorable, engaged learning. A recent study conducted by Crayola confirms this belief, showing that 89 percent of elementary principals place a high priority on incorporating visual art in curriculum. Yet, less than half of classroom teachers realize that art matters to their principal. Our collective challenge is to better communicate this commitment, especially to teachers, 77 percent of whom also believe that arts education is a high priority.

As a school leader, you shape the culture that encourages creativity throughout the learning community; you are the catalyst that sparks school improvement. We urge you to use the compelling evidence, profiles, and resources featured in this special supplement, “Champion Creatively Alive Children,” to start a conversation about the value of arts education, challenging your faculty to infuse art across the curriculum.

You might think of this role as the “Chief Creative Officer”—one that nurtures an entire faculty’s creative confidence and capabilities, resulting in students who are connected to the world and ready to make innovative contributions. Take this opportunity to ignite the creative potential that lives in every child.

Mike Perry, CEO, Crayola LLC
Gail Connelly, Executive Director, NAESP

---

**Connect With the Arts**

Profiles of four schools whose principals dare to ask “What if...?”

**Arts Opportunity Gap**

The latest research reveals a decline in arts education, and notably that high-poverty schools are least likely to offer such instruction.

**From Intuition to Action**

Arts-engaged principals share strategies for becoming instructional leaders for the arts.

**Infusing the Arts Into Literacy & Math**

Grant-winning schools provide proven examples of arts integration.

**Build a Creative Leadership Team**

Take a unified approach to fostering arts education in your school.

**20 Promising Practices**

Ideas from winners of 2011-2012 Champion Creatively Alive Children grants
Schools are preparing students to thrive in a globally connected world and fostering 21st century skills (the 4 C’s—creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration). The arts offer tremendous tools for exploring connections through every school subject and across language, societal, cultural, and geographic boundaries. The principals whose schools are profiled are engaging students by using the arts as:

- Entry points for imagination and wonder, engagement, and motivation;
- Methods for exploration and discovery;
- Processes for making connections as well as making learning meaningful and memorable;
- Practices for building the 4 C’s; and
- Forms for expressing, demonstrating, and celebrating learning.

What if we explored Islamic and Eastern arts?

Despite years of investing in professional development to improve literacy, North Street School was not seeing the expected results. Principal Jeffrey Ferreira attributes this to changing demographics—more minorities, English-language learners, and high-need students. “Teachers are working so hard,” he says. “We needed some different strategies.”

The school decided to make purposeful use of the arts to connect with students—and connect students to the world. Staff first identified specific countries represented in the student body. They found a mismatch between many students’ countries of origin or background—India, Pakistan, Laos, and Indonesia, among others—and the European and Western dominance in the curriculum.

With that, the arts teacher orchestrated an amazing arts-infused exploration of the visual arts, fairy tales, and fables of Islamic and Eastern cultures. Teachers traveled to the Islamic Arts exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to research artwork and storytelling traditions of these cultures. They brought back posters and artifacts to inspire classrooms. Teachers collaborated to align the arts with the lit-
Profiles of four schools whose principals dare to ask “What if...?”

With the arts

North Street School, Windsor Locks, Connecticut

eracy curriculum. They strengthened classroom libraries with international fairy tales and fables to compare and contrast. Two artists who specialize in multicultural children’s stories worked with students in writing and illustrating their own stories.

An end-of-year International Art Night drew extended families, many dressed proudly in clothing and bearing food from their native lands, to celebrate students’ achievements. Projects included extraordinary student artwork that showcased their careful study of great artists and their techniques; illustrated, imaginative stories with “beginnings, middles, and ends” and extended use of language; favorite characters memorialized as whimsical hand puppets and giant sculptures; performances inspired by reading; and exchanges with a sister school in Egypt. A heroic parent effort helped stage this school-wide event.

North Street’s great idea focused initially on second graders—but it soon inspired the whole school, with all teachers making more use of visual communication to help students learn. The staff hopes to expand arts-infused education schoolwide.

What if we study Georgia O’Keeffe as an entry point to social studies?
Social studies did not get a lot of emphasis at Greenfield Elementary because there is no standardized state test for the subject in Florida. The staff wanted to change that. “We were looking at ways to give our students an opportunity to look at our city and all the wonderful opportunities they have here,” principal Art Lauzon explains. “In doing that we found an artist whose techniques could bring the city to life.”

Georgia O’Keeffe’s lush paintings and drawings of flora and fauna, cityscapes, and landscapes sparked third graders’ connections to the wider world. In addition to studying O’Keeffe’s paintings, students conducted fieldwork in the gardens of Jacksonville’s Cummer Museum of Art and sketched flowers in O’Keeffe’s style. They toured the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Jacksonville, which opened its fifth floor for students to view the cityscape and channel O’Keeffe while sketching it. They trekked to coastal beaches to explore nature, shorelines, and shells and create sketches from different vantage points. Throughout this study, they kept journals to describe and reflect on what they saw. Students worked for hours to turn their sketches into gorgeous, color-saturated paintings.

Exploring the city prompted students
to question city planning and budgets for schools and community resources—and awakened their sense of civic responsibility. Students prepared presentations and posed questions to Jacksonville’s education commissioner and a school board member. When Greenfield’s third graders heard about funding cuts to the public library, they decided to help. With staff and parent support, students contributed their own artwork, held an art show fundraiser, and donated $400 to the local branch of the library.

The project resulted in other unexpected bonuses, including a new relationship with MOCA and a Rainforest Alliance grant that enabled students to exchange their artwork and journal writing with students at a school in Guatemala—and to connect with their international peers and discuss their work via video link.

Creativity Connects Schools With Families
The arts work wonderfully to engage parents and families in student learning. Here’s how schools are using the arts to strengthen school-family bonds:

■ To show parents what students are doing at school and to celebrate success;
■ To share strategies and model interactions that support learning at home;
■ To create a welcoming environment and positive school climate;
■ To build community and create partnerships between teachers and parents; and
■ To increase family participation and improve student attendance and behavior.

What if the arts could help a community heal?
Sunnyside Elementary, where 75 percent of students live in poverty, has struggled for years to make the school a welcome place for parents, many of whom stay away because they had negative school experiences themselves. The school sought to increase parent involvement through the arts.

Then the flood came. In June 2011, overflowing levees on the Souris River devastated Minot, North Dakota, displacing almost 90 percent of the school’s families into Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailers. By the end of the 2011-2012 school year, 60 percent of families still lived in two huge FEMA parks.

Despite the crisis, the school moved forward with its plan to host monthly family nights. Students, parents, and teachers turned out in force to share a PTAdvised meal, work on an art project, and then listen to a speaker or participate in a family activity.

For a “Books and Blankies” night, families made colorful, comforting fleece blankets, which they were encouraged to use at home during 20 minutes of required nightly reading. The school provided each student with their choice of two free books to rebuild or start home libraries.

Grief counselors, parenting experts, and staff from the local arts council and the Taube Art Museum spoke on topics connected to the art projects, such as how to use the arts to express emotions and support literacy and math learning.

“Something that you’re physically involved in doing makes it easier for people to talk to each other,” says Cindy Cook, Sunnyside principal. “It facilitated eye-to-eye conversations.”

The informal and nonthreatening environment at Sunnyside Elementary, Minot, North Dakota

What if we integrate the arts into the curriculum through parent parties?
Principal Sherry Kijowski believes it is imperative to involve families in the academic lives of children at McIlvaine Early Childhood Center, an all-kindergarten school.

McIlvaine Early Childhood Center, Magnolia, Delaware

The school holds monthly “parent parties” with hands-on activities, games, and technology that provide practical ways to enhance academic experiences at home. Families leave each event with books, simple games, parent tips, and manipulative materials—all connected to the curriculum.

McIlvaine integrates the arts into the parent parties, which draw hundreds of parents and grandparents. Families move from one “creation station” to another, working on themed projects, such as making colorful butterflies that support symmetry study in math and insect study in science, or painting fruit watercolors to encourage healthy eating choices. Parents enjoy the playful, creative time with their children and appreciate teachers’ helpful modeling of activities and conversations that get the kindergartners off to a strong start.
The increasing focus on arts education during the past few years has brought much-needed attention to the benefits it affords to students of all ages. Past research has proved time and again that the arts support teaching and learning in numerous ways, and recommendations abound that schools should find ways to integrate the arts in classrooms. Now more recent research published this year paints a clearer picture of the state of arts education in U.S. public schools—one that shows both bright spots and places in need of improvement.

Taken together, the two reports—Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999-2000 and 2009-10 and The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies—reveal robust research data that will help principals to make more informed decisions about arts education in their schools. The findings offer the components needed to make the case for introducing, expanding, and maintaining the arts in classrooms.

The latest research reveals a decline in arts education, and notably that high-poverty schools are least likely to offer such instruction.
Access and Availability: A Good News, Bad News Story
At first glance, the state of arts education doesn’t look all that bleak. The NCES report cites these statistics for the 2009-2010 school year:

- 94 percent of public elementary schools offered music instruction, the same percentage as in 1999-2000.
- 83 percent of public elementary schools offered visual arts instruction, down from 87 percent in 1999-2000.

As with any data set, it’s important to dig into the statistics to find the real story. The findings, which are based on surveys of principals and teachers, indicate that 1.3 million elementary students receive no music instruction. And nearly 4 million elementary students receive no instruction in the visual arts at school.

In addition, the access to and availability of dance and theater instruction has fallen off considerably during the past decade. About one in five elementary schools offered dance or theater a decade ago. Today, only one out of every 25 elementary schools offers theater, and only one out of every 33 elementary schools offers dance.

There’s another caveat in understanding access to and availability of the arts. “The numbers look deceivingly positive for where the arts are, at least for music and the visual arts,” said Doug Herbert, special assistant, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. Just because schools offer arts instruction, however, doesn’t mean it is widely or equitably available to every child. Herbert explains: “In music, for example, ‘availability’ could be anything from an extreme situation—a fifth-grade-only pullout program that serves a handful of kids, literally—to all kids, grades 1 through 5, getting general music instruction once a week.”

Moreover, considerable variability is likely even in schools that provide all students with weekly instruction in the arts. Equally troubling is that schools with the highest poverty concentration were less likely to offer arts instruction than schools with the lowest concentration of poverty, according to the NCES report. Further, high-poverty schools that did offer the arts were less likely to employ arts specialists, or to have dedicated rooms with special equipment as their primary teaching space, than low-poverty schools.

“The Elementary and Secondary Education Act identifies the arts as one of the 10 core academic subjects, which means that the arts contribute just as significantly to children’s learning and development as subjects such as math and reading,” said Gail Connelly, executive director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. “That’s why it’s important that pre-K-8 principals of all schools—regardless of the demo-
the importance of arts education for students, The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth should dispel them. This study by James Catterall and his colleagues examined the relationship between early arts involvement and positive outcomes for youths from the lowest quarter of socioeconomic status. Among the benefits, they found that the arts positively affect academic achievement, civic engagement, and labor market outcomes.

**Academic Achievement.** Young people who have a history of in-depth arts involvement earn better grades, report higher test scores and GPAs, and are more likely to graduate from high school, than their peers who have less arts involvement. They are more likely to aspire to, enroll in, and graduate from college—and earn “mostly As” while they are there. They also are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, including intramural sports, interscholastic sports, academic honor societies, and the school yearbook or newspaper, in both high school and college.

**Civic Engagement.** Young people who had intensive arts experiences are more likely to read a newspaper at least once a week, participate in student government and school service clubs, read books and visit libraries, volunteer, and vote and/or participate in a political campaign.

**Labor Market Outcomes.** Young adults who had intensive arts experiences are more likely to choose a college major that aligns with preparation for a professional career, which could position them for higher-paying, professionally rewarding jobs.

The findings from these two studies reveal where we are today as a nation with arts education and provide sound research and data about where we need to go. Use the research to reflect on the state of the arts in your school and to inform your plans for making progress.

**Quality Considerations**

Many schools are cobbling together arts experiences for students—somehow, someway. Principals report that they offer or sponsor curriculum-guided arts activities, such as school performances (75 percent), field trips (61 percent) and musical groups (46 percent), outside of regular school hours. Many also report partnerships or collaborations with cultural or community organizations (42 percent), individual artists (31 percent), museums or galleries (29 percent), and performing arts centers (26 percent). Reflecting a growing trend, many arts teachers report that they integrate the arts into other subject areas and collaborate with other teachers.

There’s a cautionary tale in this data as well. It doesn’t bode well for the quality of arts instruction if arts education specialists are missing from this picture. “We don’t want high reporting of arts integration and low reporting of people with specialty knowledge to maintain the integrity of the arts,” Herbert said. “There may be no sense of a scope and sequence of where kids should be, or any sense of arts standards.”

**The Rewards of the Arts for At-Risk Youths**

If you have any lingering doubts about the importance of arts education for students, The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth should dispel them. This study by James Catterall and his colleagues examined the relationship between early arts involvement and positive outcomes for youths from the lowest quarter of socioeconomic status. Among the benefits, they found that the arts positively affect academic achievement, civic engagement, and labor market outcomes.

**Academic Achievement.** Young people who have a history of in-depth arts involvement earn better grades, report higher test scores and GPAs, and are more likely to graduate from high school, than their peers who have less arts involvement. They are more likely to aspire to, enroll in, and graduate from college—and earn “mostly As” while they are there. They also are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, including intramural sports, interscholastic sports, academic honor societies, and the school yearbook or newspaper, in both high school and college.

**Civic Engagement.** Young people who had intensive arts experiences are more likely to read a newspaper at least once a week, participate in student government and school service clubs, read books and visit libraries, volunteer, and vote and/or participate in a political campaign.

**Labor Market Outcomes.** Young adults who had intensive arts experiences are more likely to choose a college major that aligns with preparation for a professional career, which could position them for higher-paying, professionally rewarding jobs.

The findings from these two studies reveal where we are today as a nation with arts education and provide sound research and data about where we need to go. Use the research to reflect on the state of the arts in your school and to inform your plans for making progress.

**Explore the Research—and Find Practical Tools—at ArtsEdSearch**

The Arts Education Partnership this year launched ArtsEdSearch (www.artsedsearch.org), an online clearinghouse that collects and summarizes high-quality arts education research studies and analyzes their implications for educational policy and practice.

There, you’ll find the two studies highlighted here—and hundreds more. You can search the site for research in four topic areas—outcomes of arts education for students, for educators, in the context of in-school settings, and in the context of out-of-school settings—at varying educational levels.

Sandra Ruppert, director of the Arts Education Partnership, recommends the following three areas of research that are particularly compelling for principals.

**The positive relationship between integrating the arts into literacy instruction and the language development of young children.** ArtsEdSearch has more than 40 studies that examine how the arts can be a tool for developing a much-needed and basic skill in young children.

**The positive relationship between arts education and student engagement and motivation.** “We talk about higher expectations and new standards, but first you have to get students to come to school,” Ruppert said.

**The positive impact of arts integration for teachers.** The research examines teacher efficacy and retention, and shows that arts integration helps with teacher motivation, effectiveness, efficiency, and self-confidence.

ArtsEdSearch also offers a toolkit on the NCES report that can help you address issues of arts education access and equity, with more practical tools in development.
Arts-engaged principals share strategies for becoming instructional leaders for the arts.
The vast majority of principals intuitively believe that the arts belong in schools and in every child’s life. Now is the time to take action on your intuition—and become an instructional leader for the arts, just as you are for every core subject. We asked arts-oriented principals and arts education leaders to share their strategies. Whatever your starting point, here’s what the experts say that you can do now.

Take Stock of Learning
Arts educators recommend beginning with a critical eye toward the learning environment in your school and other schools to see how increasing the arts can support your work.

Examine what motivates a child to learn. “Take a hard look at the joy and the love of learning that some students have and unpack that experience,” urges Dennis Inhulsen, principal of Patterson Elementary in Holly, Michigan, and president-elect of the National Art Education Association. If we all think as administrators of the most exciting, dynamic, fun, interesting experiences, we will very easily recognize what works and what doesn’t for students. What we’re trying to do is to honor how kids learn—through hands-on, minds-on, integrated experiences.”

“A big revelation for staff is that our kids haven’t been engaged enough in their learning,” Inhulsen says. “How do we know that? They tell us. We survey students.”

Principals also should ask teachers about the best experiences of the school year, says Michelle Burrows, director of the A+ Schools Program in North Carolina, a whole-school reform model that uses arts integration, pure arts education, and arts exposure for engaged, effective learning. “Have them remember their top three school memories. They’re always centered on something hands-on, something with the arts or a personal social event,” Burrows says.

The “soft” survey data from students and teachers can complement “hard” data you already collect on student attendance, discipline referrals, and performance, which can serve as a baseline for tracking potential results of arts programs.

Ramp up on research and best practices in arts education. Start with ArtsEdSearch (www.artsedsearch.org) and the research highlighted in “Arts Opportunity Gap” on page 5, which confirms the power of the arts for improving school culture and student outcomes. Identify a few arts-infused schools and visit them.

Think about the experiences you want to provide children, your knowledge of your school, and insights from arts education research and best practices. Talk with your staff to find supporters of arts education. These listening and fact-finding efforts can help you find “entry points” and instill a sense of urgency for arts education, says Jean Hendrickson, executive director of Oklahoma A+ Schools. Working with a creative leadership team, imagine how the arts could help you deliver experiences that will engage and motivate your students.

The Principals’ Arts Leadership (PAL) program, which works with school leadership teams in Washington state to develop powerful arts programing and provides principals with peer coach and network support, calls this a “catalytic spark” process. “It’s a belief that the arts are important,” says Una McAlinden, executive director of ArtsEd Washington/Washington Alliance for Arts Education, which runs the PAL program. “Principals need to be able to articulate their belief and set an expectation for their school.”

Create a Vision and a Plan
Once you have supporters fired up about arts education, engage in the same thoughtful, strategic planning process you routinely apply to literacy, math, or any subject.

Write a three- to five-year vision and a one-year plan for arts education. This is an opportunity for your creative leadership team to put a stake in the ground as arts education advocates. A shared, aspirational vision and a comprehensive plan for arts education show that you’re serious about your intentions, opening doors to people who can help you accomplish your goals.

Put students at the center of your vision. Where do you imagine they will be as learners in three to five years if the arts play a greater role in your school? How will you get there? Think big with your vision. For example: Within three to five years, all students will...
receive a comprehensive arts education. Be realistic with your plan. What can you take on in a year’s time that will move your school 20 percent or 30 percent closer to your vision? You are less likely to fail if you try to accomplish goals in achievable steps.

Connect your vision to your school’s mission, so it’s aligned and relevant to the work you are already doing. “You want to try to build a picture that is big enough that everyone in your community can see themselves in it,” Hendrickson advises. For example, if your mission is to prepare all students with the 21st century skills they need to succeed in college and careers, specify how the arts are a strategic tool to advance that mission.

At Savoy Elementary in Washington, D.C., this process involved the entire school. “The entire faculty and staff spent a couple of days working on our vision, mission, and core values,” says Patrick Pope, principal, who is leading an arts-integrated turnaround effort that now has the support of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (see “Turning Around Schools With Art” at www.naesp.org/SeptOct12). “We did a lot of work helping each of us understand the role the arts have in our lives individually and as teachers, and then we moved into our plan for the school year,” Pope explains.

Think systematically, not incrementally. Principals often ask PAL to fund a single arts-based activity. “It’s a symptom of how the arts have been provided over the last couple of decades. We try to teach them that they need to be thinking about this as a system of provision and about building the school capacity to provide the arts effectively, sequentially, and equitably. Just adding ‘a little bit of art’ won’t sustain,” McAlinden says.

At+ Schools and PAL support school leadership teams in thinking about the key components of an effective arts program, including the leadership and infrastructure—a full and well-rounded curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessment, resources (such as materials, time, and physical spaces for collaborative planning and instruction), and community engagement.

Once you agree on your vision, develop a multi-year plan that addresses some or all of these key components, with potential next steps built into the plan, and task people with responsibilities to make progress. Use what you learn in the first year to make adjustments or change course in subsequent plans. This approach ensures that your vision and plan are living documents that evolve with your school.

Build Capacity
Your vision and plan can create excitement in your community and provide a road map to support arts programming in your school.

Create a school infrastructure for the arts. Build on your school’s strengths and work to address weaknesses in the key components of effective arts education. Answer the following questions:

- What needs to change at your school so that every child benefits from arts experiences throughout the school day and year?
- How can you repurpose funds in your school budget to support arts education?
- How can you embed arts experiences in your literacy, math, science, social studies, and other curricula?
- How can you create time in your schedule for arts specialists, classroom teachers, and others to collaborate on arts-infused learning?
- How can you provide teachers and students with enough time and adequate resources for meaningful, arts-integrated learning?
- How can you support your staff with professional development that improves the quantity and quality of arts experiences?
- How can you demonstrate to parents that the arts are intrinsically connected to learning—and engage parents in supporting your vision and plan?
- How will you evaluate results and celebrate success?

Marshall support from partners.
Inevitably, you will discover that you need to reach out beyond your school to support your work. Your vision and plan will help you approach businesses, arts or cultural organizations, and other potential partners with confidence.

“Most schools say, ‘We just need money,’” Burrows says. “But there is so much beyond that that community partners can bring to you. If you come at everybody looking for money, you’re only going to get about a fourth of what they can actually offer.”

Instead, start the conversation by articulating your vision, using language and aspirations that resonate with many people today. Employers as well as arts and community leaders are impressed when educators say they are preparing students to be tomorrow’s creators and innovators, equipped with 21st century skills, and ready to succeed in college and careers. Share your professional experiences, best practices, and research about how the arts are a credible, proven, and effective strategy for preparing young people to take on the world of postsecondary education, work, and citizenship. Explain what you’re doing. Instead of asking for money, ask how the potential supporter can help.

By taking these actions to infuse the arts into your school’s curriculum, you will discover the power of the arts as a tool to boost academic achievement and increase student motivation.
Schools that are integrating the arts into literacy, math, and other core subjects are dispelling the notion that there’s an either-or choice in education—either you focus on literacy and math or you provide a well-rounded curriculum in the arts and other subjects. Crayola grant-recipient schools are demonstrating that you can do both—and end up with benefits that arts-impoverished schools never see.

Bring Story Characters to Life
When schools integrate the arts with literacy, they are giving teachers a powerful strategy for instruction and are strengthening students’ vocabulary, comprehension, and language and writing skills. This helps students make real-world connections beyond the pages of books and build the 4 C’s—creativity, critical thinking, commun-
A Common Core and 21st Century Skills Toolkit

To grapple with the complex challenges of the 21st century, students need more than just the “3 R’s”—core academic subjects of reading, writing, and ‘rithmetic. They also need the “4 C’s”—creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

A handy guide from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills explores the intersection of the R’s and C’s. The comprehensive P21 Common Core Toolkit: A Guide to Aligning the Common Core State Standards with the Framework for 21st Century Skills provides:

• An overview of how the Partnership for 21st Century Skills’ framework and the Common Core State Standards support each other.
• Lesson vignettes demonstrating how to align instructional practices with both the Common Core and 21st century skills.
• Useful Common Core implementation resources for states and districts.
• Foundational background reading on 21st century skills and assessment.


Visit NAESP’s Common Core Resource Page to access a wealth of information and resources that will help you implement Common Core State Standards, including articles from the special theme issue of Principal magazine. The page features resources for principals, teachers, and parents, and includes articles, videos, fact sheets, and webinars. www.naesp.org/common-core-state-standards-resources

A Common Core and 21st Century Skills Toolkit

To grapple with the complex challenges of the 21st century, students need more than just the “3 R’s”—core academic subjects of reading, writing, and ‘rithmetic. They also need the “4 C’s”—creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

A handy guide from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills explores the intersection of the R’s and C’s. The comprehensive P21 Common Core Toolkit: A Guide to Aligning the Common Core State Standards with the Framework for 21st Century Skills provides:

• An overview of how the Partnership for 21st Century Skills’ framework and the Common Core State Standards support each other.
• Lesson vignettes demonstrating how to align instructional practices with both the Common Core and 21st century skills.
• Useful Common Core implementation resources for states and districts.
• Foundational background reading on 21st century skills and assessment.


Visit NAESP’s Common Core Resource Page to access a wealth of information and resources that will help you implement Common Core State Standards, including articles from the special theme issue of Principal magazine. The page features resources for principals, teachers, and parents, and includes articles, videos, fact sheets, and webinars. www.naesp.org/common-core-state-standards-resources

lines, and fractions; geometric shapes and forms; and scale, proportion, and perspective.

Public School (PS) 245 in Brooklyn, New York, offers a variety of in-school and after-school arts experiences such as the visual arts, chorus, drama, film, ballroom dancing, and Mexican and African-American cultural dance styles. Last year, with the Common Core State Standards on the horizon, the school focused more purposefully on using the arts to support math learning.

“One of the things our children struggle with in the upper grades is understanding symmetry,” said principal Patricia Kannengieser, who also is a math specialist. “It’s a very hard concept to understand if you’re not a person who easily relates spatially. When I see the third-grade tests and fourth-grade tests and the questions that the children struggle on, I see we’ve got to start so much earlier teaching them about symmetry.”

So this year, in a simple but powerful lesson, kindergartners dropped colorful paint on white paper, folded and pressed it, and opened it to discover, “Oh, it’s a butterfly!” Kannengieser relates. “That’s symmetry.”

So is making stained-glass snowflakes and origami shapes, and asking first graders, after they’ve seen half of a piece of artwork, to create the other half by duplicating it exactly. In dance, chorus, or percussion classes, students tap out rhythms, which helps them understand not just musical rhythm, but also fractions in math (and syllabification in literacy).

“In the arts you rarely have to convince to get it to align itself to math,” said Kannengieser. “It’s a very natural
DREAM Results: Visual Arts and Theater Build Reading and Language Arts Skills

Third graders in 10 school districts in California are consistently excelling on end-of-year tests in reading comprehension and language arts, a direct result of an innovative arts integration program called DREAM (Developing Reading Education with Arts Methods).

The four-year program, which is funded through the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Innovation and Improvement, trains teachers to use the visual arts and theater activities to build literacy in their classrooms. DREAM is a partnership of the San Diego County Office of Education, the North County Professional Development Federation, and Center ARTES at California State University San Marcos.

Teachers in participating schools, all of which have at least 35 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, attend a one-week summer institute to learn arts methods from professional artist/educators. Some teachers also receive instructional coaching during the school year.

In the program’s second year, third graders in classrooms with art coaches who began the school year as the lowest performing of all treatment and comparison groups ended the year as the highest performing group, increasing their test scores by 87 points on average in the project’s first two years. They scored higher on reading comprehension, inference, and detail, which are topics on the state test.
build a creative leadership team

Take a unified approach to fostering arts education in your school.

John Grieco Elementary, Englewood, New Jersey
If you are the only person in your school responsible for arts education, it simply won’t happen. Becoming a champion of arts education means establishing a culture that embraces a team approach toward integrating the arts. Here is some practical guidance for developing a creative leadership team—and cultivating creativity in your whole school.

Facilitate communication. You’re trained to be a leader and a decision-maker. With the arts, however, you’ll create a much richer program if you let go of the reins a bit and bring in fresh perspectives from your staff.

“Facilitative leadership means starting the conversation and letting other people take it over,” said Michelle Burrows, director of the A+ Schools Program in North Carolina, a proven whole-school reform model that uses arts integration, pure arts education, and arts exposure for engaged, effective learning. “The principal might share a need, allow the staff to talk about it, think about it, process it, break it down and figure out some strategies for resolving it or creating a solution.” When staff members’ ideas are valued, they take ownership and make things happen.

That’s how Art Lauzon, principal of Greenville Elementary in Jacksonville, Florida, approached the school’s Crayola grant project. “As a principal, basically what I did was talk to teachers and brainstormed what we would do and how we would put it in practice,” he said. “Then I turned them loose. I had staff members that I had a lot of faith in and that I would support. My role was to get rid of any roadblocks. If an arts organization had to have a formal invitation from the principal, I can do that.

If teachers needed school to be open on a Saturday, my job was to make that happen for them.”

Share creative leadership. A creative leadership team can champion the arts in your school, develop a vision, and craft and steward a plan for arts education. As the instructional leader, your role at the helm of the creative leadership team is “non-negotiable,” Burrows explained.

Most schools round out their teams with an arts specialist, classroom teachers across grade bands and with different subject-matter expertise, and nonclassroom educators such as the curriculum coordinator or support staff for English-language learners or special-need students. Some include a parent or community representative. Forward-thinking schools also include an arts voice on school improvement teams and committees to make sure the arts are represented in all initiatives.

Cultivate and hire creative people. Leading an arts-infused school means mining your staff for hidden creative and leadership talents.

“Principals shouldn’t just look to their arts teacher for new ideas and methods,” said Mark Terry, president of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. “Innovation can come from anyone on your staff, so seek out their feedback and take advantage of the skills they bring to the classroom beyond the subject they happen to be teaching.”

Hiring priorities will be different in an arts-focused school as well. “Principals are going to be seeking folks who are flexible and creative and have a divergent range of talents,” Burrows said. “You will be looking for someone who can do more than just teach a strong fourth-grade curriculum. You need someone who is a team player, collaborator, [and] creative; who can think out of the box; [and] who might have some background or interest in the arts. It really shifts your thinking to the 4 C’s—creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration.”

Jean Hendrickson, executive director of Oklahoma A+ Schools and a former principal, offers three more pieces of advice:

Join a “tribe” of educators who are doing the arts right and learn from them;

Replenish your own creative resources;

Be bold and creative in telling your story.
Ideas from winners of 2011-2012 Champion Creatively Alive Children grants

Anderson Elementary, Dixon, CA
Amy Blakey, Principal
A team of student leaders, parents, paraprofessionals, and teachers partnered to design an arts education program to open students’ imaginations and change students’ perceptions of school.

Creein Elementary, Oakland, MD
Dana McCauley, Principal
Through “Operation Conservation,” teachers used the arts to awaken students’ curiosity about environmental studies. At a culminating Energy Exposition, students taught parents arts-enriched conservation lessons.

Dr. John Grieco Elementary, Englewood, NJ
Jeff White, Principal
Working with community leaders, students researched the environment and constructed art installations of natural habitats fashioned from recycled materials.

Eastridge Elementary, Lincoln, NE
Deb Dabbert, Principal
School staff integrated dance, theatre, music, and visual arts into schoolwide citizenship assemblies recognizing students’ interests in the arts. Visiting artists helped support the school’s “Three Goals for Life” behavior program.

Emma L. Arleth Elementary, Parlin, NJ
Timothy Byrne, Principal
Combining design, problem solving, and engineering, students created programmable robots and documented the process with videos and their own musical scores.

Gardens Elementary, Pasadena, TX
Celia Fleischman, Principal
Gardens Elementary School’s literacy program built literacy skills through an arts-integrated curriculum with movement, music, and art.

Greenfield Elementary, Jacksonville, FL
Art Lawton, Principal
Students used painter Georgia O’Keeffe’s work as a springboard to explore their community through a fully integrated art, science, and social studies experience.

Kate Bond Elementary, Memphis, TN
Lyfe Conley, Principal
Students used art projects showcased at “think shows” and permanent “creative thinking” displays to investigate the ways critical thinking propels science and art.

Lake Forest Elementary, Greenville, SC
Cynthia Coggins, Principal
Placing themselves in life-sized paintings based on literary works, students performed for their community using stories, props, and costumes of their own design and construction.

Manhattan Charter School, New York, NY
Genie DePolo, Principal
A visual arts program at this school took students “around the world in 180 days” with a cross-curricular exploration of the arts in five cultures: Italy, France, Poland, Puerto Rico, and China.

McIlvaine Early Childhood Center, Magnolia, DE
Sherry Kijowski, Principal
Monthly parent events featured “creation stations,” at which parents participated in hands-on art experiences with their children.

North Side Elementary, Harrisburg, PA
Mary Nardo, Principal
Teachers generated art lessons for students with multiple physical challenges, using new techniques to empower these students to express themselves in unique ways.

North Street School, Windsor Locks, CT
Jeffrey Ferreira, Principal
Students broadened their understanding of their families’ heritages, particularly the cultures of India and Pakistan, by creating animated original stories based on folklore.

PS 245, Brooklyn, NY
Patricia Kannengiesser, Principal
Students explored math in art museums, through collage, painting, bookmaking, and architecture, and then applied math concepts to create visual projects.

Renaissance Expeditionary Magnet School, Castle Rock, CO
Deborah Lemmer, Principal
Students explored the traditions of Pacific Northwest Coast Native Americans by creating clay totem poles imprinted with textures and symbols representing their individuality and community.

Roger Clap Innovation School, Dorchester, MA
Justin Vernon, Principal
Inspired by the architecture of their 115-year-old school building, students created books, collages, drawings, paintings, and creative writing pieces, deepening their understanding of how the past and present connect.

Sunnyside Elementary, Minot, ND
Cindy Cook, Principal
Sunnyside Elementary used creative activities to support families impacted by recent floods, bringing the community together and fostering collaboration between parents and children.

Twin Valley Elementary Center, Elverson, PA
Gail Porrazzo, Principal
Students created visual, musical, and kinesthetic works for a “Listen, Move, and Create” program, celebrating the intersection of arts with a “whole body, whole mind” education approach.

Umonhon Nation Public Elementary, Macy, NE
Broderick Steed, Principal
Partnering with cultural leaders, community elders, and visiting artists from the Lied Center for Performing Arts, students created projects that incorporated the “four hills of life” traditions of the Umonhon Nation Tribe.

Waverly Park School, East Rockaway, NY
Lucille McAssey, Principal
Through the arts, students researched their personal heritage and their diverse community. A series of lessons used the arts of multiple cultures to help students understand common roots.
Discover the Power of Arts-Infused Learning

Champion Creatively Alive Children™ is a free professional development program that uses arts-infused, hands-on learning to help children reach their full potential.

Everything principals need to lead hands-on workshops for parents or teachers

Free videos, facilitators’ guides, presentation slides and handouts. Download at Crayola.com/CreativelyAlive

• Creativity   • Critical Thinking
• Collaboration  • Communication
• Arts-Infused Education Advocacy

Coming this fall!
• Creativity Connects the World
• Creativity Connects Schools with Families

© 2012 Crayola
For bringing extra sunshine to the lives of students...

NAESP honors all principals who Champion Creatively Alive Children through creative leadership.

Celebrating the Power of the Principal