

CREATIVITY CONNECTS US

CREATIVITY CONNECTS SCHOOLS WITH FAMILIES

Leveraging creative experiences to engage parents and caregivers

- Educators and parents can serve as champions of students and programs that help children reach their full potential.
- Creative experiences can help break down real or perceived barriers, and inspire communication and collaboration, between educators and parents.
- The arts offer powerful ways for schools to connect with families and support student success.
- “Parents become strong champions for arts programs and are some of the best advocates for arts-infused education when they see the impact the arts have on student learning. Engage parents in a variety of ways—as volunteers in school art expos and as key decision makers helping to influence the school board in seeing art as a priority.”

—Deborah Reeve, Executive Director
National Art Education Association

What the Research Says About the Arts and Family Involvement

Millions of students go through elementary, middle and high school without any arts experiences whatsoever.

Source: *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999–2000 and 2009–10* (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012)

The very students who have no exposure to the great artists of civilization—and no instruction in painting or design, singing or playing a musical instrument, dramatic performance or dance—are the ones for whom the arts yield the greatest benefits. In-depth involvement in the arts yields better grades, higher test scores, higher GPAs, higher graduation rates, more civic engagement and better labor market outcomes.

Source: *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies* (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012)

Parent–school relations have improved and parent involvement has increased over the past 25 years—but they remain a challenge for many schools. Yet teachers in schools with high parent engagement have the highest job satisfaction. And parents in schools with high parent engagement are more likely to be optimistic that student achievement will get better in five years. They’re also more likely to agree that they work together with their child’s teachers to help their child succeed in school.

Source: *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Teachers, Parents and the Economy*, March 2012



4 Cs of CREATIVE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

CHAMPION

- Educators and parents share the goals and responsibilities of helping each child succeed.
- Adults serve as champions of children and advocates of arts programs.
- Educators and parents work together to expand opportunities for all children to reach their potential.

CONDUCTIVE

- Educators create an inspiring environment that fosters creative expression.
- School culture is a welcoming environment for family engagement.

CO-EDUCATE

- Educators and parents are partners in educating children.
- Educators help families make home–school connections and creative experiences for children.

COMMITMENT

- Educators are strongly committed to engaging families.
- Schools plan ways to sustain family engagement throughout the school year, with opportunities that fit various interests and lifestyles.
- Schools use the arts to engage families.



TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

Create an Inspiring, Welcoming Environment

- Provide families with many opportunities to participate in school experiences and creatively express themselves.
- Showcase student artwork in entryways, hallways and classrooms where parents can see it.
- Use creative experiences to draw parents into school for parent–teacher conferences, family nights and other activities.

Work Together to Champion Creatively Alive Children

- Help parents understand the value of the arts to student learning.
- Strengthen home-to-school and school-to-home communications that encourage arts-infused home activities and provide tips for parents to support classroom learning.
- Serve as co-educators with parents to foster student success.

Commit to Working with Families

- Forge partnerships with parents to champion children’s success and advocate for arts programs in schools and communities.
- Develop a Family Engagement Plan that uses the arts strategically to improve family involvement.

