



Photo Source: Manolo Brides

Arts education is not icing on the cake. It's the sugar inside it.

Our attitudes and behavior are out of sync: we believe in the power of the arts, but we underfund, limit, or completely cut arts education, despite its many benefits in three major areas: social and behavioral skills, motivation and engagement, and brain development, all of which leads to improved academic performance.

Arts education has a positive impact on social and emotional development and reduces risky and problematic behavior.

- **Emotional development:** Students who participated in a visual and theater arts program had fewer behavioral and emotional problems. (Wright et al. 2006)
- **Social development:** Dance lessons for 35 minutes twice a week for eight weeks improved social skills and reduced behavior problems in Head Start preschoolers. (Lobo & Winsler 2006)
- **Behavioral benefits:**
 - Risks of violence, delinquency, and risky behavior diminished among 9-15-year olds participating in a nine-month visual and media arts theater after-school program. (Respress & Lufti 2006).
 - Artistically talented but academically at-risk 4th, 5th, and 6th grade urban students used more self-regulatory behaviors (paying attention, persevering, problem-solving, self-initiating, asking questions, taking positive risks, cooperating, using feedback, and being prepared) during classes in which the arts were integrated into the lesson. (Critical Links 2002).
- **Dropout prevention:** Mariachi instruction in a large Los Angeles high school has led to lower attrition and improved attendance and grades (Rumberger & Larson 1992).

Arts education increases student (and teacher) engagement and motivation, retention, and performance.

- **Attendance:** Middle school students receiving drama instruction had better attendance. (Walker et al. 2011)
- **Participation:** In an arts integration study, reluctant students were more likely to participate (Ingram & Meath 2007).
- **Motivation:** Arts-integrated classes enhance intrinsic motivation, continued learning in other environments (e.g., the traditional classroom), and more persistence, including the ability to find opportunities in challenges (DeMoss & Morris 2002).
- **Perseverance:** Preschoolers in Suzuki-method violin lessons showed greater attention and perseverance. (Scott, in ArtsEd Search)
- **Confidence:** “A group of boys, ages 8 to 19, living in residential homes and juvenile detention centers for at-risk youth, discovered that learning to play guitar and performing for their peers boosted their confidence and self-esteem.” (Kennedy 2002)
- **Writing skills:** Children who drew about a writing prompt about Ancient Egypt first had better organized and more detailed written responses, especially those with limited English proficiency. (*Neuroeducation: Executive Summary*).
- **Reading skills:** After a nine-week course of ‘visualization training,’ boys with learning disabilities took a more active role in reading and began to interpret text rather than passively reading it” (Wilhelm 2002).



Photo Source: *Otago Daily Times*: “Two New Mozart Works Unveiled”—likely composed at age 7 or 8

The impacts of arts programs:

- **Hip-hop and entrepreneurship:** In 2011, a program offered to 488 students incorporating real-world entrepreneurial and hip hop and pop culture-based arts-integrated curriculum resulted in greater than 80% gains in academics, student attendance, participation in class work, student morale, and vigor towards learning and an: 87% increase in academic improvement in certain classes – mostly language arts and reading, an 85% decrease in absenteeism, and an 85% decrease in disciplinary problems. (Education through Entertainment and Arts Partnership)
- **Cathedral Arts in Duval County:** Locally, the Cathedral Arts Project serves at-risk elementary school students and provides four times the music instruction time the district provides to non arts magnet schools (72 hours vs. 18 annually), 72 hours of dance and drama (vs. 0 hours from the district), and eight times the art instruction (144 hours vs. 18 from the district). Cathedral Arts' results include: an 8 percent increase (compared to district averages) in those scoring 3 or higher on the reading portion of the FCAT, increased classroom participation, improved task completion, improved (appropriate) conflict response, improved communication with peers and adults, and better cooperation. Additionally, 98% of the students in the program were promoted to the next grade level; 93% of the students received A's, B's, or C's, in reading; and 92% of the students received A's, B's, or C's in math. (Cathedral Arts Project Community Report 2012)

The arts train the brain, improve academic performance, and prepare students for college:



Photo Source: artsfuse.org

- **Engaging more brain:** A student making music experiences the "simultaneous engagement of senses, muscles, and intellect. Brain scans taken during musical performances show that virtually the entire cerebral cortex is active. . . ." (Weinberger 1998)
- **Abstract reasoning:** Vocal and instrumental music training has been shown to improve abstract reasoning. (Bilhartz et al. 1999) The more individualized the instruction, the greater the gains in spatial cognitive performance. (Hetland, 2000)
- **Math learning:** "Students consistently involved in orchestra or band during their middle and high school years performed better in math at grade 12. The results were even more pronounced when comparing students from low-income families. Those who were involved in orchestra or band were more than twice as likely to perform at the highest levels in math as their peers who were not involved in music" (Catterallet al. 2002).
- **Second language learning:** Second-language learners who receive arts training demonstrate improved fluency (Petitto 2008)
- **Drama & literacy:** Drama instruction is linked with greater reading comprehension, reading readiness, and enthusiasm for writing, independent of verbal ability (Williamson and Silvern 1992); Dramatic play is linked with increases in reading comprehension, recall, and engagement (Aram & Mor 2009).
- **Spatial-temporal reasoning:** Keyboard music instruction has been shown to improve spatial-temporal reasoning. (Rauscher & Zupan 2000; Rauscher et al. 1997)
- **Spatial intelligence:** After eight months of piano lessons and daily chorus instruction, three-year olds were expert puzzle masters, scoring 80% higher in spatial intelligence—the ability to visualize the world accurately, a skill that translates into complex mathematics and engineering skills. (The Arts and the Creative Workforce, National Assembly of State Art Agencies 29)
- **Academic and standardized test performance (language and math):**
 - In an Education Arts Team study, students in an arts-integrated program had a 77 percent likelihood of passing the state assessment for language arts and 42 percent greater likelihood for mathematics (Walker & Weltsek 2011).
 - "In a . . . national study . . . [of] 25,000 middle and high school students, researchers . . . found students with high arts involvement performed better on standardized achievement tests. . . . [T]he high arts-involved students also watched fewer hours of TV, participated in more community service and reported less boredom in school" (Catterall 2002).
 - "In 2005, students who took four years of arts coursework outperformed their peers who had a half-year or less of arts coursework by 58 points on the verbal portion and 38 points on the math portion of the SAT" (Toolkit, National Assembly of State Art Agencies).
 - First graders who received instruction in music listening for 40 minutes a day for 7 months learned to recognize melodic and rhythmic elements in folk songs. They scored in the 88th percentile for reading performance, but the non-instructed control group (who were similar in age, IQ and socioeconomic status) scored in the 72nd percentile. (Weinberger 1998).

When young people work in the arts for at least three hours on three days of each week throughout at least one full year, they show heightened academic standing, a strong capacity for self-assessment, and a secure sense of their own ability to plan and work for a positive future for themselves and their communities. --Shirley Brice Heath

Students in Heath’s nine-year study were five times as likely to live in a family recently involved with the welfare system and attending schools in which risks of violence were twice as high as the national average, yet they were four times as likely to win academic achievement awards, three times more likely to be elected to class office, four times as likely to participate in a math and science fair, three times more likely to win an attendance award, and four times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poetry. (“The Arts and the Creative Workforce”)

Despite these important benefits, recognized at the federal level, Florida’s policies—and Duval County’s—do not provide enough support for arts education.

The arts are forms of understanding and ways of knowing that are fundamentally important to education. --US Congress, 1994

Title I and Title II funds can and should be used to support arts education Despite the brutal budget climate in the states and in Washington, arts education must not just survive but thrive. A well-rounded education is simply too vital to our students' success to let the teaching of the arts and humanities erode. --Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education

Currently (in 2012), Florida incorporates only seven of the thirteen arts education policies adopted across the nation. Florida does not include the designation of arts education as a core academic subject. Furthermore, Florida does not require schools to provide or offer arts instruction in one or more arts discipline at the elementary nor the middle school level. (State of the Arts: Arts Education State Policy Summary 2012.)



Andy Warhol, “Fifteen One Dollar Bills,” 1962,
Photo Source: blogs.artinfo.com

The Duval County Public Schools mission statement recognizes the importance of providing arts education:

In support of all fine arts programs (music, visual arts, theatre, and dance) and teachers K-12, our mission is to provide high quality instruction in the fine arts to all students, with the knowledge that rigorous arts study enhances and enriches all aspects of education by providing for students’ cognitive development and creative expression. (Duval County Public Schools)

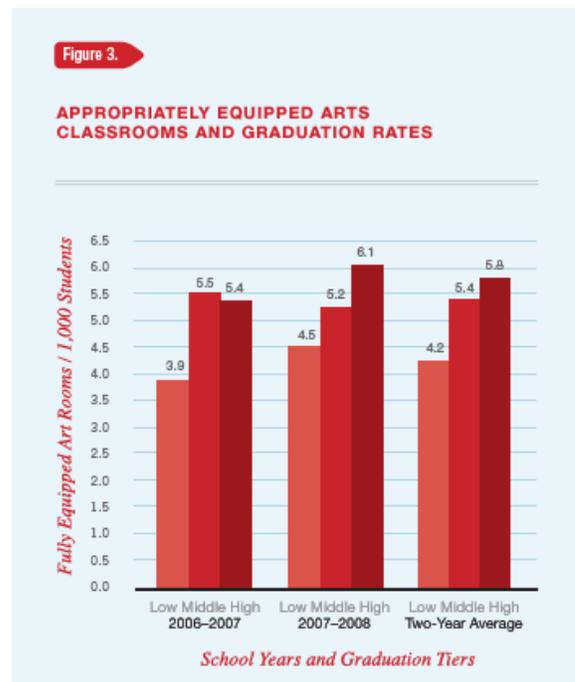


Photo Source: Center for Arts Education

However, policies require minimal arts instruction, budget cuts continue to diminish what schools can provide, and some schools fail to provide even the minimum:

- **An hour biweekly:** Duval County Public Schools’ policy requires 60 uninterrupted minutes of art every other week for grades 1-5 and a minimum of 45 minutes of music instruction every other week for kindergarteners and 30 minutes every week for grades K-5. (Duval County Public Schools: Operational Procedures)
- **Shaving time from the arts:** Data is not yet available but is currently being compiled to determine which schools are in compliance and which are not; some schools are turning in schedules showing instruction time falling 10 or even 15 minutes under the requirement for each class session.
- **Before: 18 hours annually:** In recent years, Duval elementary schools provided an average of 18 hours each per year of art, music, and physical education: 30 minutes for music and PE weekly and 60 minutes every other week for art. The formula was based on providing each school with one day of resource instruction for every nine teachers.
- **Now: 13.5 hours annually:** Recent budget cuts (2012) have required the elimination of \$1 million in each of the three resource areas, changing the formula to one “resource” day for every twelve teachers and reducing arts and physical education from 18 hours to 13.5.

- **Attempts to squeeze in the arts:** The Duval County School Board has suggested that in order to maintain 18 hours of contact time, some classes might need to be “pooled”. (Matthews 2012)
- **Potential return on investment:** A \$1 million arts education program that keeps six students in school equates to a 120% return on investment. (Bothell 2007)

Americans say we support arts education. In a 2005 Harris Poll, 93 percent agreed that “the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children” (cited by Ruppert in *Americans for the Arts*), and in an Imagine Nation poll, 91 percent of voters said “the arts are necessary to build imagination” (cited in *Neuroeducation: The Roundtable Discussions* 49). However, community support for the arts in education is also less than robust. The community does not rally for arts education as it does for extracurricular programs:

- **Mayoral and community support for JROTC:** When local JROTC programs were threatened in Duval County, students participated in fundraising carwashes, and Mayor Brown leveraged private partnerships to raise \$200,000 to save four JROTC programs (Sanders 2011).
- **Editorial support for sports:** When sports were facing cuts in 2011, Duval County School Board Chairman W.C. Gentry called it a “horrible situation” and “an ugly picture” (Carlyon 2011).
- **Community support for sports:** Our community raised \$120,000 for some of the sports programs that had been lost to education budget cuts (Murphy 2011).
- **Arts school fundraising:** Pine Forest School of the Arts, a Duval magnet elementary school, launched a fundraising campaign in June of 2012 to replenish the strings and drama positions that were reduced in the district budget cuts. (Cravey 2012)
Otherwise, there has not been a similar community outcry to save arts education or to insist on including arts integration in public school curriculum.

Arts education prepares students for success in a 21st Century economy.

We need people who think with the creative side of their brains—people who have played in a band, who have painted. . . . It enhances symbiotic thinking capabilities, . . . learning how to kick-start a new idea, or how to get a job done better, less expensively. --Annette Byrd, Manager, Healthy Work Environment, GlaxoSmithKline, *Are They Really Ready To Work*, 2006

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills...defines the four Cs—creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication—as the skills students need to succeed now and in their future lives as global citizen. . . . An approach to education that embraces creativity and inspires students is critical to the country’s economic competitiveness, says Timothy Magner, Executive Director of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. --Principal Magazine, 2011

- **Arts & careers:** Graphic designers outnumber chemical engineers by four to one, more Americans today work in arts, entertainment, and design than work as lawyers, accountants, and auditors, and since 1950 we have seen a 30% increase in people earning a living as writers since 1950 and a 50% increase in music composers or performers (Florida Alliance for Arts Education).
- **Creativity, a requisite job skill:**
 - “[L]ooking at painting and sculpture can improve medical students’ observational abilities. . . .The Mount Sinai School of Medicine began an art appreciation course for medical students, joining Yale, Stanford, [and others] . . . in adding humanities to the usual physiology, pathology and microbiology.”
 - The *Harvard Business Review* notes that corporate recruiters now look to the top arts grad schools for talent because the only way to differentiate . . . goods and services in today’s overstocked, materially abundant market-place is to make . . . offerings transcendent — physically beautiful and emotionally compelling.” (National Assembly of State Art Agencies)

Arts education is not merely an enhancement or enrichment, an extracurricular treat for students. Arts education engages students, motivates them to succeed in school, and truly reaches them for deeper learning and stronger performance, preparing them to be problem solvers and creative thinkers in a 21st Century economy. It is time for Duval County to demand that our schools fully support arts education.



Photo Source: naplesnews.com, “Fifth Grade Students Dancing Their Way to Better Grades”