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Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



INTRODUCTION

This project leverages two significant resources:

- The Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education (KCAAE) Community Audit for Arts Education: Better Schools, Better Skills, Better Communities, as an evaluation model and
- Florida's Arts Achieve! Model Schools (AAMS) as the subject of the study. (The AAMS program was developed under a 2001 Florida Department of State/Division of Cultural Affairs grant. It was modeled on the Kennedy Center Creative Ticket (now Schools of Distinction) program.)

This study captured in-depth information to supplement and update information about the current cohort of 20 AAMS and three Kennedy Center Schools of Distinction. The information was analyzed and compiled to identify Critical Success Factors – characteristics common to all AAMS.

Like Justice Potter Stewart defining obscenity, "...I know it when I see it." the challenge of this study was to quantify and isolate critical success factors that can be useful guidelines to schools wishing to improve their arts education programs. Unfortunately, this may also become the roadmap for re-introducing arts education programs that have been eliminated due to budget cuts.

A large, semi-transparent watermark of the Florida Alliance for Arts Education logo is positioned in the lower half of the page. It features the text "Florida Alliance for Arts Education" in a large, yellow, sans-serif font, with the stylized starburst graphic to its right.

Florida Alliance
for Arts Education

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



PROJECT ACTIVITIES

2009

- September 8 Board President, Coolidge presents at Volusia County School board
- Sept. 24 Burke, Rosoff and Palmer meet to outline plan for AAMS study and review budget
- Sept. 30 Palmer and Rosoff create first draft of survey
- October 2 Rosoff sends sample survey to Balistreri (evaluator) and four area principals: Brenda Cunningham, Drew Hawkins, Raul Iribarren and Rahim Jones,
- October 31 Rosoff and Palmer receive feedback on survey criteria from Balistreri
- November 1 Burke creates user friendly format for survey
- November 3 Burke presents at Sarasota County School Board
- November 4 Rosoff/Palmer meet to incorporate evaluator comments into survey
- November 9 Rosoff, Palmer and Burke review changes in survey before sending to Balistreri
- November 10 Rosoff sends new draft of survey to Balistreri
- November 11 Rosoff and Palmer draft questions to ask on school visits (for consistency)
- November 17 Burke presents at Brevard County School board
- November 18 Rosoff and Palmer visit Davenport School of the Arts
- December 3 Rosoff visits Robert Louis Stevenson, McNair Middle School
Palmer visits Booker Middle School, Booker High School
- December 4 Palmer visits Riverview High School, North Port High School
- December 14 Rosoff visits Lake Mary High School
- December 17 Pearson sends surveys to schools

2010

- January 5 Rosoff visits Cypress Elementary
- January 8 Rosoff visits Ridge Community School
- January 11 Rosoff visits Silver Sands Middle School
Palmer visits Gocio Elementary
- January 12 Palmer visits Cypress Lakes High School Center for the Arts, North Fort Myers Academy for the Arts
- January 13 Palmer visits U.B. Kinsey/Palmview Elementary School
- January 14 Palmer visits Egret Lake Elementary School
- January 20 Burke drafts and sends reminder email to schools about survey deadline
- January 26 Rosoff visits West Port High School
- January 27 Rosoff visits Harrison School of the Arts

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PROJECT ACTIVITIES (continued)

- February 1 Rosoff visits South Miami Middle School and Hialeah High School
- February 2 Rosoff visits Taravella High School
- February 4 Rosoff visits Bak Middle School of the Arts
- February 17 Rosoff visits Diplomat Middle School
- March Rosoff and Palmer write school reports
- March 10 Rosoff and Palmer meet with Burke and Pearson to develop reporting mechanism for survey
- March 17 Rosoff and Palmer meet with Burke and Pearson to review data included on grid
- April 6 Rosoff sent school reports to Balistreri
- April 7 Rosoff and Palmer meet to review survey information and school reports
- April 13 Rosoff receives comments from Balistreri
- April 21-May 7 Rosoff and Palmer gather missing survey information
- May 12 Palmer/Burke present at Central Florida Arts Integration Symposium, Orlando
- May 15 Palmer/Burke present at South Florida Arts Integration Symposium, West Palm Beach
- May 19 Rosoff/Palmer meet to evaluate trends
- May 22 Palmer/Burke present at Bay Area Arts Integration Symposium, Tampa
- May 25 Palmer/Burke present at Lee County Arts Integration Symposium, San Carlos Elementary
- June 11 Palmer/Burke/Rosoff present at Panhandle Arts Integration Symposium, Panama City
- June 18 Burke shares report shared at FAAE conference
- June 29 Final report filed

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



Partners and Participants

Partners

Bak Middle School
Booker High School
Booker Middle School
Cypress Elementary School
Cypress Lake High School for the Arts
Davenport School of the Arts
Diplomat Middle School
Egret Lake Elementary
Gocio Elementary School
Harrison High School
Hialeah High School
Lake Mary High School
N. Ft. Myers Academy for the Arts
North Port High School
Ridge Community High School
Riverview High School
Robert Louis Stevenson Elementary
Ronald McNair Magnet Middle School
Silver Sands Middle School
South Miami Middle School
Taravella Senior High
U.B. Kinsey/Palmview Elementary
West Port High School

Florida Department of Education, Linda Lovins, Fine Arts Specialist followed the development of this study. Findings and guidelines from Arts Achieve! Model Schools: Critical Success Factors shaped projects funded by the FL DOE in the 2010/11 Arts for a Complete Education grant.

Participants

Investigators

Dr. Susan Rosoff, curator and arts educator, is the project consultant, conducting site visits, data collection, and analysis. Susan has developed numerous interdisciplinary curriculum materials to support Museum collections and exhibitions in her former role as Curator of Education at Orlando Museum of Art. She was the Project Director of "*Learning Florida History Through the Murals of Christopher Still*," and "*Exploring Uncle Monday and Other Florida Tales*" projects coordinated through Florida Department of Education and FAAE. She is a frequent presenter for both teachers and museum educators. She has received the Briarcliff College Alumnae Award as well as awards from United Arts of Central Florida, the Florida Art Education Association, and the Florida Alliance for Arts Education (FAAE.)

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Dr. Mary Palmer, Professor Emerita of University of Central Florida – Orlando, former Dean of the UCF College of Education, has developed numerous arts education programs. Her innovative work with teachers, school administrators, community agencies, and university faculty has led her across the country and around the world. For her work in Arts Education she has received numerous awards, including a special commendation from three of Florida's Governors; the prestigious Arts Recognition Award from the Florida Department of State; ACE of Hearts; and Pi Delta Kappa Educator of the Year. Her client schools have received prestigious awards including the Kennedy Center Arts Education School of Distinction, Florida Department of Education Music Demonstration School, and Magnet Schools of America School of Distinction.

Rosoff and Palmer designed the questionnaire, evaluated the data, conducted site visits and summarized the findings. The number of schools, the depth and type of data collected, and geographic dispersion were compounding factors that made this project a significant challenge. The original design assumed that data in the Kennedy Center Community Audit and the AAMS application were similar and would not require significant additional data collection or analysis. Preliminary study of the Orange County Community Audit and data from several sample AAMS showed that additional data was required. Schools response to the self-study questionnaire that was the initial data collection tool varied widely in quantity and quality of input. Much of the data collected was subjective and required qualitative review. Thus, analyzing and summarizing these findings was a more significant part of the study than anticipated.

Site visits are critical to understanding what is really going on at a school. Direct observation of classes, focus groups with students, teachers, parents, and community members shade the schedules, policies and data submitted in the questionnaire. Rosoff and Palmer conducted the first site visits together and then worked independently in order to cover the number of schools and geography required.

Evaluator

Cindy Balistreri retired in 2009 after a career as a music teacher and fine arts specialist in the Sarasota County School district. Balistreri reviewed the data collection tools, compiled data, school reports and summary analysis. Her direct experience working within a school district and working with teachers and school-based administrators offered a valuable perspective at each step of the study. Her insights in translating between general public understanding and educators' point of view was valuable as we developed tools and findings are accessible to all of the involved stakeholders.

Project Administration

Susan Burke, Executive Director, FAAE, helped to coordinate the project, analyze the data and reporting requirements, designed the data grid and supported logistics. Burke made numerous presentations to school boards, professional organizations, on webinars and at the Arts Integration Symposia. She coordinated the public awareness and media development.

Rebekah Pearson provided data entry and logistics support including: follow-up calls to schools, mailing announcements and reminders, email follow-up, preparing materials for school site visits, scheduling visits, and ancillary data collection.

Summary of Findings

Leadership

District Level Leadership for Arts Education

Policies:

Very few Florida School Districts have policies related to arts education. When policies are in place, arts education programs generally are more stable. Policies regarding time for instruction, equity in access to high quality arts education programs, staffing with fully arts certified teachers, and funding provide a firm foundation upon which to build strong programs. The development, implementation, and monitoring of policies is a critical role for School Boards.

Superintendent Leadership:

When the District School Superintendent “takes a positive stand” for arts education, programs typically are stronger. For instance, in 2006, the Volusia County Superintendent required every middle and high school to offer both band and chorus; this ruling had a strong impact on school-based decisions. In the height of state budget cuts to education (2010), the Miami-Dade Superintendent publically stated that “the arts are important and should remain in the curriculum.” Although surrounding Districts cut their arts programs, programs remained strong in the Miami-Dade schools. In 2009, the Brevard County Superintendent indicated his desire that *all* Brevard schools should apply for the Florida Department of Education Music Demonstration School designation. This mandate has resulted in Brevard County having the highest number of Music Demonstration Schools in the state. Since this mandate was not made into a policy, when the new Superintendent was appointed in 2010, music programs were uncertain about the status of this mandate. A new Superintendent was appointed in Osceola County in 2009. Before his arrival the position of the District level arts resource teacher had been eliminated. Within two weeks, he re-instated that position and has subsequently continued to strengthen and provide increased funding for arts education in Osceola County.

Superintendents show support for arts education programs by attending performances and exhibitions. Some superintendents also make a point of attending community arts events in order to link the arts programs of the schools and the community.

School arts programs are often encouraged to perform and exhibit in their communities, but usually are not supported financially for these efforts. Costs for transportation most often are the responsibility of the school. The arts are often used to “sell” education and to pass referenda regarding funding for education.

School-based Leadership

School Principals:

School principals are often cited as the single most important factor in the success of the arts education program. While principals with strong personal backgrounds in the arts seem to have an innate understanding of program needs, those without a personal background in the arts can be equally successful. In most cases, the principals of Arts Achieve! Model Schools believe that the arts program is critical to their school's identity, has a positive impact on student achievement in all areas, and links the school to the parents and community.

It is interesting to consider the ways in which AAMS principals continue to develop their own understandings of high quality arts education. Most are members of a professional organization, e.g. Florida Network of Arts Administrators, which brings together administrators who seek to provide high quality arts education for their students. One principal is himself a member of the four major Florida arts education professional organizations. Several indicate that they learn more about what constitutes a strong program through their professional readings and from the arts teachers at their schools.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



Many AAMS Principals are actively involved in the arts in their community; several serve on Boards of Directors of community arts organizations. One principal has invited representatives of arts organizations and other community leaders to serve his school as a Board of Community Advisors. These principals take an active role in ensuring continued professional development for their arts teachers. Some encourage strong reflective practices. Most provide at least minimal funding for teachers to attend professional conferences. Some have provided ongoing arts professional development programs for *all* teachers within their schools. Some provide time during the school day for arts teachers to meet together for planning. These planning sessions have led to various results, including development of an arts integration professional development program for all teachers within the school, "shared" public performances, peer coaching and reflective teaching practices. AAMS principals tend to encourage teacher leadership for their arts education programs.

Funding for Arts Education Programs

Most School Districts have a small per pupil allocation for arts education. Obtaining specific figures is difficult.

In funding, again, the principal is a key factor in the success of a school. Even when a District "cuts" arts programs, committed principals find ways to maintain a high quality arts education program. However, most recognize that they alone can't maintain their programs without sufficient support from the District. Regarding funding for arts education, teachers often state that principals must be creative problem solvers. Most AAMS principals undertake special "advocacy" efforts with their District leadership in order to maintain arts faculty as well as funding for arts programs.

Several of these schools have designated not-for-profit (501(c) 3) organizations which provide additional funding for the school arts program. Most often these organizations are parent-driven with some community leaders included as well. One school has a large endowment for its arts program; this provides an ongoing source of additional funding to support guest artists, etc. One school offers a community concert series of professional artists; the "profits" from this series are earmarked for the school's arts program. Most of these schools utilize funds from arts event ticket sales to provide additional program support. Unfortunately, some AAMS continue to rely on bake sales and car washes for necessary funding.

Underutilized Opportunities:

The world-wide web seems to be underutilized as a vehicle for informing the public about arts education programs, both at the District and school level. Only one AAMS reported providing monthly "updates" about arts education to their School Advisory Committee (SAC).

Although all AAMS are committed to arts education, few have school-based policies or statements regarding arts education.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools

Critical Success Factors



Arts Teachers

Personal Characteristics:

As principals describe their ideals for arts teachers, these words are most often used:

- Collaborative (cooperates and works effectively with arts team as well as other teachers, parents, arts community)
- Student-oriented (cares about students and is willing to work with *all* students.)
- Passionate about the arts
- Creative
- Willing to grow
- Leader
- Motivated, self-starter

Preparation to Teach:

The vast majority of arts teachers in AAMS hold Florida Certification in the discipline in which they teach. Although complete credentials were not available for all teachers, most of those provided indicate that these teachers were trained in top quality colleges and universities. Some matriculated from teacher education programs and others, from professional arts programs.

Many of the arts teachers in AAMS have earned master's degrees in their arts disciplines and in arts education disciplines. A few have earned master's degrees in Educational Leadership. Several have earned advanced degrees in disciplines outside of the arts, often, in order to expand their teaching possibilities as well as their knowledge and skill.

While most AAMS do not provide on-site professional development opportunities in the arts, all encourage their arts teachers to participate in conferences and other in-service programs offered by professional arts education associations. Most schools provide financial support to teachers who take advantage of these opportunities. One of the schools made a concerted effort to have all arts teachers certified in "Reading in the Content Area" in order to ensure authentic linkages between arts and literacy education. Arts teachers in another school designed their own comprehensive Professional Learning Community around the topic of arts integration. This successful teacher-led PLC effort took place over the course of the entire past year. For the most part, arts teachers in AAMS have significant teaching experience, ranging from two to thirty-eight years. Experienced arts teachers within a school make a concerted and conscious effort to mentor "new" teachers joining their arts faculty. Several AAMS principals indicated that they actively seek and recruit outstanding arts teachers to fill vacancies that occasionally occur. Frequently, arts teachers are included in the identification of "new" faculty and participate meaningfully in the interview and final selection process.

Typically, AAMS arts teachers have spent many years teaching in their schools. This longevity allows the teachers to "build" and sustain strong arts programs. Many of the arts teachers were viewed as an important part of the "identity" of the school and were considered to be "an institution." Most keep in touch with their graduates and take pride in their continued accomplishments in the arts and other areas of endeavor.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



Arts Program Delivery and Development

The Student Body

Schools across Florida have diverse student populations. In many, the majority of students are from minority populations, and the economic status of many qualified them for free and reduced price lunches. Special needs, gifted, and at risk students are among those enrolled in arts classes.

Some students travel great distances to attend schools where the arts are strong. Students in some densely populated areas ride public transportation to and from school. In more rural areas, students ride buses for up to two hours to attend arts magnet programs. The percentage of students making this kind of commute affects scheduling of after school rehearsals and other activities.

Facilities

All the model schools have designated classrooms for arts instruction. The age of school campuses varies from buildings that are fifty years old to schools that have been completed in the last year. Schools with older facilities generally lack storage space, but have been skillfully adapted to program needs. The primary challenges seem to be in school dance studios, which may have mirrors and barres, but not sprung floors or dressing areas. Theater space in older high schools suffers from limited (or no) wings, flyspace or inadequate lighting. Elementary schools largely have "cafeteriums" (a combination cafeteria and auditorium). Newer high schools often have black box theaters with flexible space that can be sub-divided and excellent lighting and sound systems that provide good school-to-work experience. Stagecraft classes generally take place in the rear of the auditorium.

State-of-the art schools provide aesthetically appealing environments, and generally have more up-to-date technology such as Smartboards, or advanced lighting and sound systems in the auditorium. No matter what the age of the school, however, classrooms are generally equipped with a computer, projector and document camera so that art students may watch teacher demonstrations, review performance tapes for assessment purposes, or learn about art history.

Many schools physically "group" arts classrooms together to facilitate sharing, planning, and discussion amongst the arts faculty. At middle and high schools this also helps the arts students interact.

The "look" of the school often indicates an arts culture. All schools display artwork or photographs of productions in the main office, the media center and throughout the school hallways. Others hang photographs of students who make "All State" band, orchestra or chorus. These points of pride indicate that the arts are part of the school's central focus. Some schools proclaim they are a model arts school with a banner outside their building.

Time for Instruction and Scheduling

Scheduling

In elementary schools, arts classes in magnet and choice schools usually meet daily. Regular elementary school arts classes have the visual art, music, dance or drama once time each week.

On the secondary level, in model arts programs classes meet every day or have a block schedule with longer class periods where students meet four out of five days. With the severe budget cuts across the state and districts have instructed schools to drop the 80-minute block schedule and move to a seven period day with classes that last 55 minutes because it is less expensive. Administrators note that this daily

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practice is an advantage to music students, who do better with classes every day for shorter periods. However, in visual art, drama and dance classes, the seven period day does not let students work in-depth as much they can with a block schedule, and instructors worry that the “lab” time students are missing will lessen their ability to develop high level skills. However, shorter periods increase the number of classes than can be offered, and therefore accommodates more students. Administrators, teachers and students previously not able to take art classes consider broader access an advantage. One K-8 magnet school extended the day by 15 minutes to create an eight period day, thereby increasing the number of arts classes in which students can participate. Some Florida school districts still have a six period day. One high school operating on a six period schedule instituted a “zero” period before school for band rehearsals.

As with all high schools throughout the state, many high schools report that they need a “mastermind” to work out how to fit in all the arts courses students want to take, especially when students want to take honors or advanced placement classes in academic subjects. The result sometimes is that arts classes have “blended” levels. For example, a Drawing IV class and an AP Drawing class may meet at the same time (which also capitalizes on teacher time). Although differentiated instruction is evident in all classes, classes with blended levels necessitate a higher level of differentiation. Most schools try to plug arts classes into a student’s schedule first, and then schedule academic area classes.

Before and After School

The make-up of the student body affects after school rehearsals. In some middle and high schools in rural areas where students ride the bus for long periods of time, there is no “late bus” to take home. Students in schools where there is a high percentage of students from homes where parents are hourly workers also have trouble staying after school because no parent can pick them up in the middle of the afternoon. There are two strategies to deal with this. Middle and high schools that hold after school rehearsals and activities make sure they conclude at 5:00 pm when parents can then pick up their students. One elementary school with a high percentage of single parents and/or hourly wage earners sets “club time” aside once a week during the regular school day for arts enhancement activities.

Students uniformly report that the arts program provides them with a sense of family, and they tend to socialize together both before and after school. Even if there is no official instruction before school, many band directors reported that students come to school as early as 6:20 am to “hang out” in the band room. Informal learning takes place when students play for each other, and share tips and strategies.

Maximizing the Arts Courses

In order for students to maximize the number art classes they can take, some middle schools routinely ask parents to sign a waiver exempting a qualifying student from mandated physical education classes. (This is not allowed at elementary or high school level.) Other schools allow students with high FCAT scores (4 or 5) to opt out of reading classes, as they have already proved their proficiency.

Remediation

In many schools in the state students there is an unwritten policy that students needing academic remediation may be pulled out of arts classes. These model schools, however, find other strategies and times for remediation. Some offer tutoring after school or on Saturdays. There are no pull-outs from arts classes, which are considered essential to educating the whole child. Repeatedly administrators noted that students needing remediation often were “stars” in the arts. Principals reiterated how they discipline

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needed in the arts and the rewards students felt in the success they achieved in arts classes translated to higher achievement in academic areas, as they translated the concept of “practice” and perseverance to academic areas.

Arts Course Offerings

All the model schools offer arts courses that meet the Sunshine State Standards and build sequentially. It is interesting to note that most of the elementary schools classified as models are “choice” or magnet schools, indicating the challenges in offering an arts program with three or more arts disciplines in a school without this designation.

At elementary schools, the arts courses build foundational skills and vocabulary. Students in visual art work with a broad variety of media while learning the elements of art and principles of design. In music, students sing and play pitched and unpitched instruments. In drama, students first focus on creative drama working on basic techniques such as communicating character through facial expression and tone of voice. Then they work with a script. In dance classes, students build kinesthetic awareness; they learn to move in patterns and learn the traditions and techniques of various dances.

At the middle and high school levels, arts classes are more differentiated and the choices of what course of study to take abound. Most schools are offering courses in all four arts forms, but students often focus in one discipline. Some middle schools require this focus, while others are more open to experimentation. Upper level courses in high school often have pre-requisites. Planning a sequential program of arts classes is a scheduling challenge. Advanced placement level courses are growing across the state, in part because when more students achieve a grade of three or better in these courses, the school’s FCAT school grade is improved.

With the increased emphasis on testing, emphasis on vocabulary building and writing is evident in the arts classrooms. Students often write reflectively about arts experiences, or engage in research on the history of their art form, for example.

Assessment and Accountability

Teachers are accountable for an arts program that meets the (Florida) Sunshine State Standards and county guidelines. Principals are clear that the program must have serious goals with clear objectives and the expectation that a high level of learning will ensue.

Teachers often use rubrics for assessment. There is paper and pencil testing on vocabulary terms and technical terms, but most assessment is performance or product oriented. Portfolio assessment is commonly used in the visual arts. Students are often involved in reflective thinking about their work. They often compare an assessment of themselves with the teacher’s assessment.

Many schools participate in state festivals or assessments such as those sponsored by the Florida Music Education Association. Students receive ratings of superior, excellent, good and poor and are rated against a consistent scale. The same thing happens in theater. The Florida State Thespian Festival also chooses the best performances in various categories to be performed in the evening for other students. A similar program is just beginning in dance. In visual arts, student work is juried for inclusion at an exhibition at the State Fair.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools

Critical Success Factors



Relationship of Arts Education to Community

School Status

One of the clear critical success factors is the importance of the community, which in this study included parents (or families), the school community itself (administrators, teachers and students), the cultural community and the business community. Active support from all the communities helps sustain the arts and gives the school status.

Parent involvement

Parents are a vital force within schools; principals report that there are more parents involved in supporting the arts than with any other area in the school. Parents help chauffeur students to and from performances and outside events, they feed students involved in evening productions, and they help build sets, sew costumes, and do a myriad of tasks, small and large, that make arts programs vital. As one principal said, "What don't parents do?" The level of parental support given during school hours relates directly to the socio-economic level of the school. Schools with a high socio-economic level are more likely to have parental involvement. Schools with a lower socio-economic environment are likely to have less parental support. However, parents who cannot volunteer are passionate about attending student performances and bring their extended families and friends with them. Some "choice" schools require parents to donate a certain number of service hours.

Many of the schools have booster groups for the arts; some are incorporated as foundations or as non-profit organizations in order to facilitate fund raising. At one high school, for example, the parent-run booster groups are set up as 501(c)3 organizations that report to the school but operate independently. At almost all the schools, sales of candy, stadium seats, and wrapping paper, along with car washes, walkathons and gala dinners help fund the arts. Parents have raised money for uniforms, equipment, travel to arts festivals, artists-in-residence, and in some cases to offset the cost of adjunct teachers.

Parents also demand high quality arts programs and equitable access to those programs for their children. They are vocal not only at the school level, but also act as advocates for the arts with district leaders.

The School Community

Support for the arts inside the school community is another critical success factor. Respect between academic subject area and arts teachers is a key indicator of a strong program. Teachers often make the effort to connect what is happening in the arts classroom with what is studied in academic subject areas. For example, making connections between making music and the study of sound waves in science is a frequent connection, and vocabulary building is common.

Schools often invite artists to work with students. Artists-in-residence are frequently found in dance programs, where professional dancers teach ethnic styles in particular, in coaching music students on playing techniques, and working with visual arts students on murals or sculptures, or theater professionals help students learn stagecraft.

The degree to which the arts are featured within the school is another way that regard for the arts is demonstrated. At one school, sports tickets are honored at all arts programs. As indicated previously, the "look" of the school clearly communicates an arts culture. School websites often feature arts programs and student accomplishments in the arts. Recognition of the arts events and accomplishments in morning

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announcements also indicates that the school values the arts. Perhaps most important of all is the principal's attendance at arts functions at the school, as well as the principal's and articulate support of the arts.

The Cultural Community

Model schools are active in the cultural community, performing at local and statewide events, and exhibiting works of art in varied venues. These real-life experiences are important for students to experience what the arts are like outside the classroom. To that end, several schools have also formed partnerships with local arts organizations. A museum/school partnership enriches the curriculum and often gives students their first look at paintings or sculptures they study in the classroom. Where available, most students travel to hear their community symphony orchestra perform. Field trips such as these extend the learning experience.

Several schools have written grants to bring in an artist-in-residence. Artists have made murals at the schools, taught ethnic or specialized dance styles, and coached instrumental groups. The professional artists are valuable not only for their high level skills, but because they can talk with students about careers in the arts from a realistic perspective.

The arts often help give a school an identity in the community. Schools themselves often become performing arts centers (particularly in more rural areas). Some schools maintain mailing lists of community members who want to attend performances, and many schools have located a box office in an area accessible to the public. Most schools sell tickets to student performances. In some instances schools contract with outside agencies to produce a "season" of performances that are well attended by the community at large. Schools also rent their performance spaces to outside cultural groups. The revenue generated by ticket sales and rentals helps support the arts budget.

Arts teachers often practice their craft outside of school. Many teachers are performing with ensemble groups, acting in community theaters or performing with dance troupes. In the visual arts teachers tend to exhibit paintings in commercial galleries or to accept commissions.

The Business and Civic Community

Almost all of the schools have business partners in education who help the school primarily through in-kind donations. Some school principals actively work with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis and other community groups. Community groups that believe in the school mission are especially good advocates for the arts. Principals are aware of public relations with the civic community, which is influential in securing support and funding for them.

Disturbing Trends

Budget cuts

There have been severe budget cuts in all school districts over the past two years. While model schools continue to support arts education in spite of the budget cuts, there are major challenges for them, and many principals worry that the severity of upcoming cuts will seriously jeopardize arts programs. Already, positions for magnet coordinators often have been eliminated, and at the district level, arts positions for arts resource personnel often been eliminated or blended so that one person has responsibility for multiple disciplines. Allocations for teacher salary have been cut from what would employ a full time teacher to an

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allocation that covers a fractional portion of the full time salary (i.e. from fully funded at 1.0 to partial funding at .5 or .6 of the full-time salary). At one school, so that the school could create an eight period day, the teaching day was extended 15 minutes per day; the teachers receive no remuneration for this additional teaching time. Class size at several high schools grew from 25 to 35 students in visual arts, dance and drama classes as a way to compensate for teacher shortages brought about by budget cuts. (Band and chorus classes are immune from this situation, and instrumental classes are limited by the number of keyboards or guitars available.)

Money for instrument repair has all but disappeared, and money to bus students to arts organizations for field trips, performances and competitions has been cut severely or eliminated. Many middle and high schools that regularly have taken international and national trips are canceling them because they can no longer afford these programs. Counties rarely underwrite conference fees or travel for professional development, resulting in very little exposure to what is happening on a state or national level. There are few, if any workshops available to teachers, so arts professional development overall is at a low level.

The ripple effect of funding for teacher positions

In order to balance the budget there is a growing trend to limit the number of special area teachers a school can hire. Principals trying to retain experienced faculty are asking teachers to obtain certification in a non-arts area. There are several instances of teachers whose time is allocated 50 percent math and 50 percent visual art, for example. At one school, to preserve the dance program, the school assigned the dance teacher to supervise the locker room and a physical education teacher was eliminated.

There is growing evidence that a strategy of making dance part of the physical education program, which was implemented mid-year by one elementary school to preserve model school status, will be considered at other elementary schools in the district. (The state guidelines on physical education accept dance as a substitute.)

Certification

Schools increasingly are turning to people who have experience in an arts field, but are not certified to teach. A teacher might be extremely knowledgeable about dance or graphic arts, but not have know how to structure lessons to meet the standards, how to scaffold a lesson, or coach students to high levels of achievement in the arts.

Professional Development

As previously note, budget cuts have seriously eroded teacher participation professional development offered by state and national professional organizations. Much of the professional development now occurs in Professional Learning Communities, or in a patchwork of teacher workshops offered by community organizations. Professional development workshops offered by school districts are generally not focused on the arts. Teachers are generally select areas for in-service workshops on their own, and have little to no accountability for what they learn.

Lack of planning time

Teachers have less and less planning time because they are being asked to increase their teaching load. Faculty members who teach an academic subject area and an arts course often don't have a schedule that allows them to participate in arts planning meetings. Lack of planning time affects teachers' ability to plan lessons both vertically and horizontally, and endangers building lessons that have clear focus and imperils differentiated instruction.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



Fees for materials and technology

In almost every middle and high school students are charged a fee to participate in arts classes. A fee for instrument rental is often mandated by the district, but schools may set their own amount. The student fees range from four to 400 dollars to participate in band. At one school, students are expected to purchase their own digital cameras; the one that is recommended retails at \$600. At another school, students in visual arts are now sent home with a supply list of materials that they must bring to school because the school can no longer afford to provide them. District support for materials and repairs varies from year to year. While Volusia County had provided \$1,400 for instrument repair, in 2008-09 no funding for instrument repair was available. In 2009-10, \$200 was provided for instrument repair. Although every school finds a way for students who cannot pay to participate in arts classes, fees are necessary because there is inadequate funding from the district.

PTO fundraisers /Arts Booster Organizations

One of the chief jobs parents undertake is fundraising for arts programs, whether this takes the form of candy sales, gala dinners or silent auctions. District funding for the arts that is passed along to schools is inadequate to cover expenses. Some schools have supporters (usually parents, but sometimes community members or business partners) who promote funding for all the arts programs. Others have supporters for only one discipline. Schools are not applying for grants because they either unaware of potential funding sources, or because they feel they lack the time to work on grant applications.

Lack of written policy

It is rare that a school district has written policy about the arts. A policy that at the very least articulates a vision for arts education is the first step in creating a supportive framework for arts education. When there are district policies, such as in Volusia County, which specifies that every middle and school offer band and chorus, programs stay in place in spite of budgetary cuts.

Emerging Trends

Arts Integration

Several schools are working diligently on building an authentic arts integrated curriculum. This trend seems to be growing as administrators see the effectiveness of arts integration. A clear commitment to maintaining arts instruction taught by certified arts teachers was evident.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors



TRENDS Identified in AAMS

- The principal's vision for arts education and leadership within the school are critical to success. The principal is the "rock" of the school and provides not only leadership but also support, both financial and inspirational. Passionate principals are able to "find a way" to sustain and even strengthen their arts education programs in spite of budget cuts and other potentially negative factors. The principal's passion for arts education, teachers, and students drives the school to high quality and excellence.
- Highly qualified, fully certified, and dedicated arts teachers are essential to the success of the arts education program. When great teachers continue to teach at a school over a period of time, the program has time to be built in a sustainable manner. Many AAMS arts teachers assume leadership roles within the school; this tends to integrate the arts program into the "mainstream" in ways that strengthen the arts program and the school overall.
- The arts education curriculum that is goal-oriented, standards-based, and taught in a sequential manner is mandatory for success. Programs must be accountable for student learning and demonstrate achievement of significant learning outcomes through the use of appropriate assessment measures. The arts curriculum that is differentiated and provides opportunities for student "choice" offers the most potential for success.
- The AAMS arts programs reach into their communities, adding strength to the school and the program. When the arts program is a public part of the school's identity, the program is enhanced. Arts programs typically are a key link between parents and the school, bringing parental involvement in ways otherwise not possible.
- Many programs continue to rely on candy sales and car washes to raise additional operating funds. Innovative ways to provide supplemental funding for arts programs are employed more frequently. For example,
 - Fees for participation in arts classes, especially at the high school level, are emerging as a way to address significant budget cuts.
 - Development of 501 (c) 3 (not-for-profit) organizations to raise monies for the school arts program is emerging as a successful strategy in several AAMS.
 - Use of school arts facilities for community arts programming, e.g. a community concert series with professional artists, is emerging. This occurs most frequently in rural areas.
- Experimentation with scheduling and the use of waivers (e.g. PE waiver) to provide more time for arts courses is evident.
- To "save" arts teaching positions, teachers are seeking certification in academic areas so that they can teach English and Drama, for example.
- At least half of the schools cite arts integration as important in their programming, and several schools are working diligently on building an authentic arts integrated curriculum. This trend seems to be growing as administrators see the effectiveness of arts integration.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors Evaluation



- Evaluation data included:
 - On-site visits of each school; findings were reported in individual school reports.
 - Protocol questions for on-site interviews in Arts Achieve! Model Schools (AAMS).
 - AAMS program applications and annual "update" materials.
 - Grid for evidence collection.
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- The development of the protocol for school visits was based on the identification of critical success factors for arts education, as reported in various reports and research findings. On-site visits to each of the schools included meetings and interviews with school administrators, arts teachers, classroom/subject area teachers, students, and parents. At some schools, it was not possible to meet with all of these groups; administrators and arts teachers were interviewed at each school. In addition, a physical tour of the school's arts (and other) facilities was included. The protocol questions for on-site interviews guided these visits. Findings were reported in individual reports for each school.
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- FAAE developed its AAMS program application and "update" processes based on the design of the Kennedy Center Arts Education Network National Schools of Distinction in Arts Education program.
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- The Grid for evidence collection in this project provided a gathering point for the various points of evidence collected from these schools. This Grid provides an easy reference point for overall indications as well as individual school information.

Arts Achieve! Model Schools Critical Success Factors Next Steps



Findings from this study indicate inconsistencies in the initial selection and review processes for FAAE Arts Achieve! Model Schools. The organization will review its protocols for evaluating applicant schools. In addition, a more comprehensive preparation of reviewers who provide on-site visits to schools will be undertaken.

It is apparent that the AAMA application process needs clearer language to communicate with applicants to ensure understanding of meanings and expectations. The application process and related communications will be reviewed for clarity. The "Trends" report of findings from this study will be circulated in various ways. The report will be featured at the FAAE Leadership Summit in June 2010 as well as in professional arts education conferences during the coming year. In addition, the report will be presented, in person when possible, to School Boards throughout Florida. It is anticipated that this information will stimulate and inspire others to a high level of excellence in arts education.

The "Trends" report will provide a springboard for educating school principals about the components of a high quality program of arts education. Working with the Florida Association of School Administrators as well as the Florida Association of School Superintendents, FAAE will provide both presentations and print materials to share exemplars.

A focus on sharing more significant information about what makes a school "excellent" in arts education will be undertaken. The content of the FAAE website information related to the Arts Achieve! Model Schools will be strengthened. The "Trends" report will be featured on the FAAE website. It is anticipated that individual school reports also will be posted. The outcomes of this study will be featured in an FAAE- newsletter to constituents. This e-blast reaches over 3,000 individuals.