

Workshop 7

Making the Most of Community Resources

Almost every community has local artists and cultural institutions. Successful arts teachers find many ways to work with these resources. They take students on field trips, invite artists into the school, and ask students to draw inspiration from the voices of their community.

Connections with community resources give students:

- New ideas and challenges
- Motivation and inspiration
- Ideas for career choices

Learning Goals

The goals of this workshop session are for you to:

- Identify the barriers, benefits, and risks of working with community partners
- Identify areas of your curriculum that might be enhanced by working with a guest artist
- Identify local organizations that can help your students extend their learning beyond the walls of the school

Workshop Session (On Site)

Getting Ready (15 minutes)

This program shows arts teachers putting their students in regular, ongoing interaction with guest artists and local cultural organizations over an extended period of time. These are true collaborations for the teachers, the community partners, and the students. They can be challenging to arrange. This kind of learning has many benefits, as well as some risks.

Divide into three groups, and brainstorm barriers, risks, and benefits of collaboration.

Group One: List reasons why teachers might not typically work with guest/resident artists, or community organizations.

Group Two: List benefits that might follow from working with guest/resident artists or community organizations, and attending cultural events.

Group Three: List risks that might be entailed in working with guest/resident artists or community organizations, and attending cultural events.

Revisit these lists after watching the program.

Watching the Program (60 minutes)

The information sheets found at the end of this chapter provide helpful background on the schools, arts programs, and individual classes featured in each segment.

Consider the following questions as you watch the program. You may stop the video after each segment to discuss the questions with your colleagues.

Dance: Michael O'Banion and Hannah Kahn [Guest Choreographer]

- How did Hannah Kahn contribute to the students' artistic development?
- What opportunities do you provide for students to work with professional artists?

Theatre: Stephen DiMenna and Clare Bauman [Community Voices]

- How were students affected by the artists and community members involved in this project?
- What resources can you find in your community to give your students fresh ideas?

Visual Art: Jan Wilson and Brooke Barrie [Sculpture Garden]

- How did Jan involve community members in the sculpture garden project?
- How do you acquaint students with career opportunities in the arts?

Music: Carmen Laboy [Alumni and Professional Musicians]

- How does Carmen share her life as a professional musician with her students?
- How do you take advantage of community resources to inspire and motivate your students?

Workshop Session (On Site), cont'd.

Activities and Discussion (45 minutes)

Part I: Risks and Benefits of Community Collaboration, Revisited (20 minutes)

Revisit the lists of barriers, benefits, and risks you generated while getting ready to watch the program. Discuss these questions:

- What evidence of the things on your lists did you see in the program?
- Is there anything that can be crossed off or added to your lists after seeing the program?
- What new ideas for community partnerships did the program generate for you?

Planning and time are often seen as obstacles to utilizing community resources. How can *planning* reduce the risks and obstacles and increase the benefits for teachers, students, and community members? How can *time* be used wisely so that everyone has a positive experience? As a group, share examples from your own experiences.

Part II: Extending the Learning Community (25 minutes)

Michael O'Banion, the dance teacher at the Denver School of the Arts, described his philosophy of community involvement as a series of concentric circles with the students at the center, and then expanding to include teachers, guest artists, parents, and the community at large.

What educational opportunities are there for you and your students to go out into the community, and when do community members come into the school?

On the worksheet titled *Possible Extensions of Your Learning Community* on the following page, identify *two* opportunities for curricular extensions—one you have experience with and would like to share with others; and one you have not experienced but would like to. Fill in other ideas for extensions in the spaces provided. The worksheet is organized by the stages of the artistic process: creating, performing, and responding.

Possible Extensions of Your Learning Community

Identify *two* opportunities for curricular extensions—one you have experience with and would like to share with others; and one you have not experienced but would like to.

Fill in other ideas for extensions in the spaces provided.

| | In the Community | In the School |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Creating | Students attend open rehearsals | Alumni visit and participate in classes |
| | Students participate in internships and apprenticeships | Guest artists, choreographers, conductors, and directors work with the students |
| | Students take private lessons | Teaching artists assume residency |
| | Students participate in clinics and workshops | Guest artists conduct clinics, sectionals, and workshops |
| | Students attend summer camps | |
| | <i>Other ideas:</i> | |
| Performing | Students participate in master classes | Guest artists conduct master classes |
| | Students perform in regional honor bands and choirs | The public attends dance, music, and theatre performances |
| | Students and teachers exhibit their artwork | The public attends exhibits |
| | Students and teachers participate in community dance, music, and theatre performances | Guest artists perform in concerts and productions |
| | Students and teachers put their work up on a Web site | Students use the Web to see the work of other students |
| | <i>Other ideas:</i> | |
| Responding | Students attend and reflect on dance, music, and theatre performances and art exhibitions | Guest clinicians and critics assess student work |
| | Students take virtual tours on the Web of museums around the world | |
| | <i>Other ideas:</i> | |

Workshop Session (On Site), cont'd.

As a group, share the opportunities you have identified. Be sure to recommend local resources—both people and organizations—you know about. Take notes on some of the following that your colleagues recommend:

- Guest artists
- Residencies
- Internships
- Museums
- Theatre companies
- Dance companies
- Bands and orchestras

If you can, share specific collaboration experiences that were successful. Describe and/or take notes on:

- Learning goals for students
- Skills that students needed to be taught
- Planning and preparation that had to be done
- Relationships that had to be cultivated
- Outcomes that were important
- Ways of sharing work/presenting to school or outside community

Between Sessions (On Your Own)

Homework

In your journal, reflect on the artistic outlets you have outside of teaching. Describe a cultural event or artistic collaboration you recently took part in that was especially meaningful to you.

- Why did you choose to take part?
- What elements made it meaningful and sparked insight or growth?
- How do you think your students might have responded in the same circumstance?
- What does the experience suggest about opportunities you might create for your students to present their work and perform for the community?

The Art of **TEACHING** the Arts

Program 7: Making the Most of Community Resources **Dance**

SEGMENT 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Michael O'Banion
20 years teaching

Hannah Kahn
Guest Choreographer

About the **School**

Denver School of the Arts
Denver, CO

Type:
Urban/Arts-focused

Grades:
6-12

Students:
900
Very mixed socio-economic status

Majors:
Creative Writing, Dance, Theatre,
Instrumental Music, Stagecraft & Design,
Video & Cinema Arts, Visual Art, and
Vocal Music

About the **Dance Program**

Faculty:
2 full-time + resident and guest artists

Students:
115

Facilities:
Above Average in the Area
• 3 large dance studios
• 2 theatres (178 seats, 550 seats)
• Full light grid
• Dressing rooms

Required Courses:
Modern, Ballet, Jazz, African & Spanish,
Improvisation, Composition, Repertory,
Performance Technique, Partnering, and
Senior Seminar

Elective Courses:
Tap, Hip Hop, and Pointe

Audition:
Technique Master Class, individual
choreography showings, and interview

About the **Featured Class**

Repertory Class:

Advanced dance students learn from professional choreographers who select work from their professional repertory (works previously created and periodically performed) and teach or “set” the repertory on these advanced students. This course is the highest level of repertory offered.

Preparations/Prerequisites:
Intermediate Dance Class or equivalent

Student Motivation:
High

Student Level:
Advanced

Paying for Guest Artists:

Funding for guest choreographers comes from several sources: a non-profit organization called Friends of the Denver School of the Arts; fundraising by parents; and in-kind donations and trades with the guest artists. For example, the school creates costumes for student use that Hannah Kahn's company then borrows; in exchange she gives the school free time and use of her repertory. With another choreographer, the school trades performance space for the choreographer's time. Michael finds that these exchanges strengthen the bond between the school and the guest artists.

In the Teacher's Words

What are your criteria for selecting guest artists?

Michael O'Banion: We make sure that the guest artists are capable of working within the structure of a school. But first and foremost they have to like kids. They need to understand that students are emotionally volatile. Some students are always ready to go, others need more coaching, more time. Since guest artists are coming from the professional idiom, I like to make sure that they can translate their work and their personality to the level of working with kids.

In addition, we want artistic integrity and choreographers who have merit. I want to make sure that there's an artistic resonance in their work. I want to make sure that they are teaching the students the artistic aspect of being a choreographer, not just stringing choreography together and then drilling it.



Program 7: Making the Most of Community Resources

Theatre

SEGMENT 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Stephen DiMenna **Clare Bauman**
27 years teaching 13 years teaching

About the School

High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology
Brooklyn, NY

Type:
Urban/Comprehensive

Grades:
9-12
Students:
1,200
Low/Middle socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:
New York has a 1-credit art or music graduation requirement (180 minutes of instruction per week for one year)

About the Residency Program

Faculty:
2 (1 teacher and 1 teaching artist)

Organization:
Theatre Development Fund's Stage Doors program

About the Featured Class

Senior Playwriting:

Students are exposed to the art of playwriting through reading published plays, participating in acting/ writing exercises, and finally writing a one-act play of their own.

Students receive four teaching artist visits to prepare for, and follow up on, a trip to see the performance of a Broadway or Off-Broadway play. Students also experience four lessons related to the play, which their classroom teacher plans with the teaching artist.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Eligible students are seniors in the spring term who have passed the state's Board of Regents exam.

Student Motivation:

Mixed. Students are motivated by hearing their words performed.

Student Level:

Mixed. Most students have never written a play before.

In the Teacher's Words

How did the play influence the lessons used in the classroom?

Stephen DiMenna: Sarah Jones's one-woman show "Bridge & Tunnel" is a series of monologues based on real characters. We decided to have the students create monologues based on real people they meet in their community. They interviewed immigrant members of their community and from that source material wrote dramatic monologues.

What was the culmination of the monologue project? Were the monologues ever performed for a larger audience?

Clare Bauman: Students incorporated the monologues into their one-act plays. These plays were performed for the whole school in a Playwriting Festival.

Visual Art

SEGMENT 3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Jan Wilson
27 years teaching

Brooke Barrie
Curator, Grounds For Sculpture

About the School

Nottingham High School
Hamilton, NJ

Type:
Suburban/Comprehensive

Grades:
9-12

Students:
1,450
Very mixed socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:
New Jersey has a 5-credit (one full year) graduation requirement in Visual Art, Music, Dance, or Theatre

About the Visual Art Program

Faculty:
2 full-time

Students:
220

Facilities:
Below Average in Area
• 1 full-time art studio
• 1 shared studio space

Required Courses:
Art Fundamentals or Advanced Fundamentals (first-year students working at an accelerated pace)

Elective Courses:
Drawing & Painting I, Advanced Drawing & Painting II, Sculpture and Ceramics, Mixed Media, Commercial Design and Illustration, and Honors Studio

About the Featured Class

Sculpture Garden Project:

Students from the Sculpture class and the Advanced Architecture class worked cooperatively to design the garden. They established an ongoing relationship with Grounds For Sculpture, a local foundation featuring over 200 contemporary sculptures on beautiful landscaped grounds. Last year's students and this year's mix of students are installing the garden and beginning to create work to be displayed in it.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Each of these students is taking Sculpture, has taken Sculpture, or is enrolled in the Honors program.

Student Motivation:
High

Student Level:
Intermediate/Advanced

In the Teacher's Words

What is the "perpetual garden" your students are creating? What are the materials they are using?

Since much of the school year does not coincide with ideal "flowering" time, we thought about ways to keep the garden flowering all the time. The answer was to create 3-5' high flowers using copper and brazing techniques. One of the flowers is a cascade of stars, another a tennis racquet, another a caricature of Bob Marley.

Program 7: Making the Most of Community Resources
Music

SEGMENT 4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Carmen Laboy
 20 years teaching

About the School

Christopher Columbus H.S.
 Bronx, NY

Type:
 Urban/Comprehensive

Grades:
 9-12

Students:
 4,000
 Low/Middle socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:

New York has a 1-credit art or music requirement (180 minutes per week for one year)

About the Instrumental Music Program

Faculty:
 1 full-time

Students:
 175

Facilities:
 Above Average in the Area
 • Band room
 • Instrument room
 • Multipurpose auditorium

Required Courses:
 None

Elective Courses:
 Beginner Band, Intermediate Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Pep Band

About the Featured Classes

Concert Band:

Students who have been playing an instrument for several years and are ready for an advanced band set-up join this group. Students can remain in Concert Band and play in Jazz Band at the same time.

Student Motivation:

High

Student Level:

Advanced

Jazz Band:

Students learn traditional Big Band and Latin jazz music, which is especially challenging rhythmically.

Professional jazz musicians who live in the neighborhood come in regularly as guest artists to play alongside the students, offering tips and coaching.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Students have been in Concert Band and are particularly gifted since there is only one instrument per part in Jazz Band.

Student Motivation:

High

Student Level:

Advanced

In the Teacher's Words

How do you prepare the professional musicians who sit in with your band? What do you ask them to do?

I talk to them about the kids before they come. These people have respect for my program and my students, and they are interested in helping young musicians – that's the continuation of the art form.

It's never about the professionals – it's about helping the kids. I don't have to point anything out – they notice the flaws and problems and what needs to be worked on. They work with their section on specific passages. They give specific pointers to the students.

Additional Resources

On the Web

General Sites

Career Center

<http://career.berkeley.edu/>

Search for: Arts

Useful resources for steering students toward careers, internships, employment, and graduate school provided by the University of California, Berkeley

Entrepreneurship Center for Music

<http://www.ec4music.com/>

A unique program for aspiring professional musicians that provides additional training in communication, business, and technical skills

Sarah Jones, writer and performer of *Bridge & Tunnel*

<http://www.sarahjonesonline.com/>

Sarah Jones's official Web site

Theatre Development Fund

<http://www.tdf.org/education/>

Select: *Open Doors*

Information about Theatre Development Fund's mentoring program for high school students

School and Teacher Sites

Denver School of the Arts—Dance Major

<http://dsa.dpsk12.org/>

Select: *Majors*, then *Performing Arts Department*

Web page for the dance program that Michael O'Banion chairs

Hannah Kahn

<http://www.wheelerjobin.com/clients/hannahkahn/>

Web site for Hannah Kahn Dance Company, including information on outreach to schools

High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology

<http://www.hstat.org/>

Web site for the school where Stephen DiMenna works with Clare Bauman and her class on playwriting

Stephen DiMenna

<http://www.stephendimenna.com/>

Stephen DiMenna's Web site, including information about his directing and teaching

Nottingham High School

<http://www.hamilton.k12.nj.us/secondary/north1/>

Web site for visual art teacher Jan Wilson's school

Watch Our School Sculpture Garden Grow

<http://www.sculpture.org/>

Select: *Education*, then *Watch Our Sculpture Garden Grow*

Includes the "How to Create a School Sculpture Garden" Manual by Jan Wilson

Christopher Columbus High School

<http://www.columbushs.org/index2.html>

Web site for band teacher Carmen Laboy's school

In Print

Jackman, Ian. *The Artist's Mentor: Inspiration from the World's Most Creative Minds*. Random House Reference, 2004. ISBN: 0375720634

Interviews and autobiographical writings of more than 100 famous painters, photographers, sculptors, and film and video artists

JIST Publishing (editors). *Creating Your High School Portfolio: An Interactive Guide for Documenting and Planning Your Education Career and Life*, 2nd edition. JIST Works, 2003. ISBN 1563709066

Worksheets and activities that take students through self-assessment, education and career planning, and portfolio development, including electronic portfolios

Sweitzer, H. Frederick, & King, Mary A. *The Successful Internship: Transformation and Empowerment in Experiential Learning*, 2nd edition. Wadsworth Publishing, 2003. ISBN: 0534558798

A book addressing the concerns, emotions, needs, and unique personal challenges that are the essence of an internship or field experience

Zachary, Lois J. *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*. Jossey-Bass, 2000. ISBN: 0787947423

Explores the critical process of mentoring and presents practical tools for facilitating the experience from beginning to end

Notes
