



PARTNERS for Public Education

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PARTNERING TO HELP OUR STUDENTS

Inspiring a life-long love of music and the arts

Arts and music are a vibrant, vital, and necessary part of the curriculum for Pennsylvania's students, schools, and communities. The lessons learned in the classroom, the theater, the art museum, the concert hall, and the world beyond are helping to produce the next generation of critical and creative thinkers.

Teachers and parents can partner to inspire a lifelong love of music and the creative arts. We asked art, music, and theater teachers from across Pennsylvania to offer their tips for encouraging children to think creatively and appreciate art in all its forms — painting, sculpture, theater, dance, music, and more.

Unlock the inner artist in your children



Drawing is the precursor to reading: When children make a connection between visual images and marks on a page, they are laying the foundation for lifelong learning. Give your child time to draw and ask your child to explain the drawing. This builds confidence in young children and encourages literacy.

Keep art supplies on hand: A box of crayons and some blank paper can unlock a lot of creative potential in children. For children who need more direction, provide challenges. Ask them: What patterns or shapes can you create? What shapes can you combine to make a portrait of your favorite person or animal?

Embrace a good mess: Don't be afraid to send your child outside in old clothes to get down and dirty with paints, sidewalk chalk, or other messy materials.

Introduce your child to art: Take your child to the museum or check out online art galleries. Ask questions such as "What do you think the artist was trying to say?" or "What does this art work make you think about?"

Name (please print): _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Email Address (Required): _____

Are you or were you previously employed in the field of education? YES NO

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Help your children become creative thinkers

- **Nurture creative thinking:** Encourage storytelling and creative imagination. Play charades — it's fun.
- **Create a movie:** Children love to see themselves on TV. Keep the story simple and fun. Practice each shot once then record your movie. Share it with friends and family.
- **Encourage free play with open-ended toys:** Turn off the TV and power down the Wii. Break out the building blocks. Open a bucket of Legos. It is amazing what children will do with toys that encourage creativity.
- **Engage in a creative activity yourself:** Invite your child to join you in your favorite creative activity. It could be scrapbooking, knitting, carpentry, or landscaping.
- **Mistakes are good:** Let your child see you flounder and have them help you problem solve your way out of it.

5 things parents should know about art education:

1. Students who study art are four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement and three times more likely to have good school attendance.
2. "Learning to read music and understand concepts like time, rhythm, and pitch have a direct effect on a child's ability to comprehend math skills," writes blogger Jessica Velasco at Scientific Learning.
3. "Studying the lyrics of music can teach students about syllabification, phonics, vocabulary, imagery, history, myths, folktales, geography, and culture," Velasco writes.
4. Children exposed to drama, music, and dance are more likely to be proficient in reading, writing, and math.
5. Students who master a musical instrument learn about hard work, practice, and discipline.

Sources: *The Arts Education Partnership; Stanford University and Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; Scientific Learning*

Introduce your children to all kinds of music

- **Play music at home:** Music can have a lasting impact on a child's life and future goals. Play music at home for your children. There is no better way to build a love for music than by encouraging children to listen to music.
- **Take your children to live performances:** Local bands and orchestras often play in summer concerts at community parks or town squares. Bring some lawn chairs and take the kids. Or go see a high school musical theater performance.
- **Encourage your children to be musical:** School music programs like the band, orchestra, chorus, or theater help kids to grow creatively, emotionally, and socially — and to develop self-confidence, perseverance, dedication, and teamwork.

Learn more about Partners for Public Education

Special thanks to arts educators from the Curwensville Education Association, Danville Education Association, Fox Chapel Education Association, Mechanicsburg Education Association, Seneca Valley Education Association, and Upper Merion Education Association for contributing ideas. To learn more about Partners for Public Education, go to www.partnersforpubliced.org.



ENROLLMENT FORM

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