

ARTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Arts Education Partnership Forum, October 3 – 4, 2004 in Philadelphia, PA

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is a national coalition of arts, education, business, philanthropic and government organizations that demonstrate and promote the essential role of the arts in the learning and development of every child and in the improvement of America's schools.

<http://aep-arts.org>

AEP annually identifies priorities for collective action by Partnering Organizations, Associate Partnerships and State Teams. The Partnership holds three national forums per year for all participating organizations to report on the progress in the annual action agenda.

Participating organizations send representatives to Partnership forums and share information and resources through their state affiliates and other communications systems to advance arts education in states and local communities.

The October 3 – 4, 2004 Forum in Philadelphia at the University of the Arts was focused on: **Effective Professional Development for Arts Education**. AEP Forums include facilitated breakout sessions, in which AEP members investigate specific issues relating to the theme of each Forum.

The following are notes from two breakout sessions on **Partnerships in Arts Education with Higher Education**, facilitated by Martha McKenna, Provost, Lesley University, on October 3 and 4, 2004, at the AEP meeting in Philadelphia.

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Partnerships in Arts Education with Higher Education

Breakout subject: Whether a general educator, special education specialist, arts specialist, or artist, our professionalism begins with and is nurtured by higher education. Any K-12 / higher education partnership revolves around professional development. This discussion will focus on successful strategies in facilitating these partnerships through professional development: What are the strengths and limitations of the role of higher education? What role do higher education institutions play in content focus? How are they effectively aligned with reform agendas? What is the role of program and teacher accreditation? How are higher education institutions involved in alternative certification? The Arts Education Partnership has been addressing this issue over the past few years and released the report *Teaching Partnerships* (see <http://www.aep-arts.org/Publications.htm>) that will yield further discussion.

The breakout sessions began on both days by directing the participants to move beyond the many frustrations and obstacles to professional development partnerships with higher education, and to explore successful strategies for facilitating these partnerships. Martha McKenna called our attention to the Action Recommendations in the document *Teaching Partnerships Report of a National Forum on Partnerships Improving Teaching of the Arts Convened at Lincoln Center, New York, NY November 18 – 19, 2001*

These are the action recommendations featured in that document, and used to stimulate discussion in Philadelphia:

1. Create a comprehensive system that links arts teacher pre-service and professional development, as these are interdependent.
 - Build a cooperating community of those who prepare teachers for arts education
 - Establish responsibility in universities for the lifelong learning of their teacher graduates.
 - Involve K-12 teachers as partners in teacher preparation programs.
2. Improve the understanding and use of evaluation and research methods and findings by arts teaching partnerships.
3. Align teacher certification, higher education and graduation requirements with best practices in arts education and the K-12 curriculum frameworks to which teachers will be held accountable.
4. Help teacher candidates, teachers, and teaching artists understand and develop the full set of skills required today of arts educators.
5. Integrate artists, creativity, and cultural institutions into arts teaching.
6. Forge relationships with education journalists regarding arts teacher preparation.

Lively and engaged discussion revealed a high level of interest, enthusiasm, and complexity in resolving the issues of higher education partnerships with practice. AEP has made a commitment to investigating this issue in-depth. The following themes emerged in the brainstorming breakout sessions that were convened in Philadelphia:

Session I:

- 1) Strategies for successful partnerships between higher education and arts education
 - a. Examine differences between pre-service and professional development
 - i. Critique notion that pre-service is limited to the university setting and professional development is limited to the school/career setting
 - b. Role of communication in higher education setting
 - i. Examine inter and intra-institutional communication and coordination
 - c. Leveraging the nexus of: Higher Education / | K-12 | Community
 - i. Develop collaborative grant proposals
 - ii. Offering higher education the opportunity to expand education for life-long learning
 1. Develop incentives for faculty to expand the community service role of their job
 - iii. View K-12 teachers as partners in planning professional development programs, and not just consumers of professional development programs
2. Strengths (+) and limitations (-) of professional development created in partnership with higher education
 - a. (+) presence of higher education validates training
 - i. (+) Academic theoretical knowledge and university resources add value to sessions
 1. (-) Critique absence of practitioners' voices in higher education's offerings
 2. (-) Critique gap between arts specialists and arts practitioners
 - b. (+) Improve higher education as a resource to schools
 - c. (+) Engaging pre-service teachers together with in-service teachers through arts education professional development helps re-engage veteran teachers as mentors
 - d. (+) Cross-fertilization of team projects
 - i. Configure multiple roles on a project team, with higher education filling one "slot" on the team. The higher education partners get exposure to other ways of working with and thinking about improving education
 - e. (-) Variation in quality of higher education arts education offerings.

- f. (-) Higher education is not necessarily the expert – they do not have the answers all the time
 - i. Need to build partnership so higher education offerings are more connected to effective on-the-ground-practice
- 3. Teaching artists
 - a. Have very different professional needs
 - b. Have very different assets and strengths
 - c. Have different limitations and gaps
- 4. One strategy – to use action research as a means to evaluate work in higher education
 - a. Use the art infused classroom as an observation lesson for in-service (and pre-service) teachers
 - i. Assignment: pre-service or in-service teacher must record, observe, and reflect on what is happening in an arts infused classroom
 - b. Teacher as researcher model is a win-win situation for arts education
 - i. Interesting avenue for entry into the field of arts education (using action research pre-service and in-service teachers)
 - 1. Valuable learning experience for young teacher, and helps the field as well
 - 2. Collecting data, validating work, advancing field, building partnerships, enabling research in arts education
 - ii. Limitations of action research
 - 1. Some consider action research weak research – i.e. lacks “rigor”
 - 2. While popular, it is a new research method and therefore not completely accepted by the “academy” (i.e. peer reviewed journals), which tends to view action research as valuable as professional development, but not as research
- 5. Federal grants are structured to require multiple partners on proposal
 - a. Higher education, K-12 setting, and community/cultural organization
 - b. Increases the likelihood that meaningful and sustainable relations will be created
 - c. Helps with “capacity building” in the community
 - d. Important to involve other voices/perspectives in the planning and implementation of a grant
- 6. Need to create locally based consortium of thinkers from a region with a high density of universities – address need for better communication and coordination between and inside universities.
 - a. Get people to talk to each other
 - b. Periodic conversations around common planning agendas and research agendas
 - c. Examples:
 - i. DaVinci Institute in Oklahoma <http://www.charityadvantage.com/davinciinstitute/HOME.asp>
 - ii. Lincoln Center university network http://www.lcinstitute.org/ep_tec_components.asp
 - iii. Music in Education National Consortium www.music-in-education.org
- 7. Creating more formalized mechanisms for instituting changes to teacher certification
 - a. State departments of education requiring arts integrated teaching in new teachers
 - i. Notion of changing the needs of the “consumer” – universities (producer) will change their teacher preparation program if the expectations of the hiring

institutions change.

- ii. Some states have standards that include the arts and yet have a teaching certification program that does not include the arts (MA), so the arts are not being included in the training and preparation of teachers.
- iii. Sharing innovative teacher education syllabi
 1. “Artist as Teacher” and “Teacher as Partner with Artist” courses- identify concrete examples
8. Administrators in higher education are the ones who carry on collaborative projects in higher education – fulltime faculty cannot because coordination is too time consuming
9. External change agents to convene discussions to circumvent “turf” issues
 - a. Need to identify change agents (those faculty who know how to both work within and outside the system).
 - b. Confirms the notion of a local collaborative as an effective strategy for convening multiple institutions
10. Better attention to educational journalism
 - a. We need to document what we are doing – need to WRITE
 - b. We need to bring media attention to what is working – NEED TO SPREAD THE WORD
 - c. Need to brainstorm emergent work - areas for opportunity and high growth potential
11. AEP - responding to Dick Deasy’s challenge to name AEP actions in the area of higher ed/arts ed practice partnerships
 - a. Develop more strategies for members to engage with higher education
 - b. What are some lines of practical action that can be implemented?
 - i. “Think tank” – 2-day session, to brainstorm, record session and proceedings, building on the “Teaching Partnership” report.
 - ii. Writing session – 2 days – article writing for publication
 - iii. Get Deans of Education and the Arts involved – generate new energy
 - iv. Investigate where there is the professional reward for advocating for increases in art education.
 - v. Tying adult learning theories to effective professional development in the arts
 - vi. “Communicating our worth” (linked to writing workshop)
 1. The arts have demonstrated their contribution to general learning – important to “get the word out”
 - vii. Creative economy – educating for ways of *thinking* and *working*
 1. We have already documented that arts help students learn better
 2. We need to go beyond these arguments to show how arts create better students who are better prepared to get better jobs.
 - a. High potential for innovative partnerships around this idea
 - b. Bring people from outside the Partnership for this Forum
 - viii. The future and the unknown
 1. Technology is destabilizing systems of learning
 - a. Frequent changes in technological media
 - b. Technology is changing what is art and creating a high demand for visual communication
 - c. Information technology education needs arts content in order to provide rich, engaged instruction.
 - d. Young people are the experts, adults playing catch up
 - ix. Need to “stay on point” in our messaging
 1. Need a uniform and frequent message, and then work on increasing the political will behind it
 - x. Need a taxonomy of communication strategies that work

Session II:

1. Getting departments to think outside the box – getting higher education beyond a culture averse to risk-taking
2. Develop a community of learners
 - a. Consortium of higher education representatives to investigate innovative and effective approaches to arts education assessment
3. Develop action research skills, and identify professional development practices that produce effective action research.
4. Collect a taxonomy of programs that partner with higher education, understand the variety, and share with funders how they can help sustain the conversation
5. “Can’t wait for utopia”
 - a. On one hand, there is the need to understand the internal barriers of higher education
 - b. On the other, there is the need to identify the proper levers and agents for change
 - i. Who is effective and ineffective to work with in higher education?
 - ii. Develop case studies of effective change catalyzed by small numbers of pivotal innovators
6. It is in the work that you create community; it is in the work that you create value
 - a. Develop case studies demonstrating that “The way is the means”
7. Realities of higher education – driven by very specific mechanisms:
 - a. Accreditation
 - b. Rankings
 - c. Teacher certification
 - d. Teaching-scholarship-service = how professors are evaluated
8. Recommendations for AEP members
 - a. Create forums for conversation with local universities to talk to each other
 - b. Investigate idea of professional development schools – “lab schools”
 - i. Create 2 year cohorts of interdisciplinary teams of pre-service teachers who learn/work at the lab school.
 - ii. Incubator for new ideas about effective arts education
 - iii. Do case studies on university based lab schools (such as the school at UNC-Greensboro)
 - c. Getting corporate community on board
 - i. Define arts on their own ground – creative economy
 1. Need to communicate graphically
 2. Critique ideas
9. Explore university provosts as an important avenue for access to higher education