



## **WHY EDUCATION AND THE ARTS?**

- Schools integrating the arts into the curriculum as part of a comprehensive education reform strategy are documenting positive changes in the school environment and improved student performance.<sup>1</sup>
- The American public, by an overwhelming margin, believes the arts are vital to a well-rounded education; more than half rate the importance of arts education a “ten” on a scale of one to ten.<sup>2</sup>
- 86% of Americans agree an arts education encourages and assists in the improvement of a child’s attitudes toward school.<sup>3</sup> – *H.E.L.P. for Youth’s core reasoning behind using a theatre arts program to foster a positive relationship with science.*
- 79% of Americans agree incorporating the arts into education is the first step in adding back what is missing in public education today.<sup>4</sup>
- One of the most common approaches to teaching reading is to have a teacher read a story to students. The use of drama in the classroom can provide a beneficial supplemental approach. A recent study found that the development of literacy skills among pre-kindergartners was fostered when the children were allowed to act out their favorite stories. Dramatic play also helped motivate them to learn.<sup>5</sup> - *H.E.L.P. for Youth believes the use of performing arts skits with audience participation will help science not appear as daunting to students as they see in action how it is used in everyday life.*
- The Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) public schools brought local artists and teachers into partnerships so that they could develop curricular units in which an art was integrated with an academic subject. In a comparative study with other Chicago public elementary schools, students from the CAPE schools performed better on standardized tests than the students who attended schools that did not integrate the arts with academics.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Deasy, Richard J. (editor) (2002), *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Achievement and Social Development*, Washington, DC: AEP.

<sup>2</sup> Americans for the Arts (2005), “New Harris Poll Reveals that 93% Americans Believe That the Arts are Vital to Providing a Well-Rounded Education,” News Release, <http://www.artusa.org>.

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<sup>5</sup> Goodman, Jennifer Ross (2002), “A Naturalistic Study of the Relationship between Literacy Development and Dramatic Play in Five-Year-Old Children.” In R. Deasy (Ed) *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Achievement and Social Development*, Washington, DC: AEP

<sup>6</sup> Catterall, James S. and Lynn Waldorf (2002), “Chicago Arts Partnership in Education (CAPE): Evaluation Summary.” In R. Deasy (Ed.), *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Achievement and Social Development*, Washington, DC: AEP.