

CHORAL SINGING AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

In the 21st century, America's manufacturing-driven economy will be replaced by a creative economy or "economy of ideas." President Obama is calling for a "complete and competitive education" for our nation's students to ensure our place in the global economy. How do we prepare our students to meet these challenges, when today only 41% of high school students say they attend school because of what they learn, and 82% say they want more opportunities to be creative?

Arts education prepares students for success in school and in life.

Young people can be better prepared for the 21st century through quality learning experiences in and through the arts. According to Arne Duncan, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, "First, the arts significantly boost student achievement, reduce discipline problems, and increase the odds that students will go on to graduate from college. Second, arts education is essential to stimulating the creativity and innovation that will prove critical to young Americans competing in a global economy. And last, but not least, the arts are valuable for their own sake."

- High-arts, low-income students are **3X more likely** to earn BA and MA degrees than low-arts, low-income students.
- **78%** of English language learners (ELL) in arts-rich schools attend four-year colleges vs. **58%** of ELL students in arts-poor schools.
- The arts reach students who are not otherwise being reached.
- The arts provide new challenges for those students who are already considered successful.

Choral singing is an integral part of arts education.

The value of singing for children and youth is both wide-ranging and well documented. According to both parents and educators who participated in Chorus America's *Chorus Impact Study*, children who sing in choruses have more academic success and advanced social skills than students who don't participate in choir. Parents definitively date their child's improvements in a variety of areas to when their child joined a choir. That, and the breadth of benefits described by both parents and educators, argues for a unique "choir effect," one that isn't simply replicated by participation in other activities, according to the researchers.

- **54%** of students currently in choir earn A's in English/language arts vs. **43%** of students who have never sung in choir. **47%** of choir students earn A's in Math vs. **38%** of non-choir students.
- **61%** of parents stated their children's academic performance improved after joining choir.
- **90%** of educators agree that singing in choir enhances student creativity.
- **93%** of educators state that singing in choir makes students better participants in other groups.
- **94%** of educators in schools with ethnically diverse populations agree that choir can give some students a reason to stay engaged in school who might otherwise be lost.

Choral singing builds community.

In a time when society is becoming more fragmented and young people are feeling isolated despite the growing use of social and other media, choral music brings people together. With exceptionally low barriers to participation, singing in a choir has the power to meaningfully unite youth of different ages, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

- **91%** of educators agree that choir participation adds to a school's sense of community and school spirit.
- **43%** of children in choirs usually watch one hour or less of television per day vs. **29%** of non-choir children.
- **76%** of teachers believe singing in a choir can make students more likely to attend other classes.
- Students with intensive arts involvement volunteer more frequently and participate in more community service projects, and **67%** of teachers agree singing in choir makes students more likely to volunteer.
- **52%** of students engaged in afterschool activities were taking music, dance, or art lessons.

Sources cited: www.whitehouse.gov, www.ed.gov, *Champions of Change* (1999), *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art* (2009), *Chorus Impact Study* (2009), *Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18- Year-Olds* (2010), *Charting the Path from Engagement to Achievement: A Report on the 2009 HSSE* (2009), *All Work & No Play?* (2004), *America After 3pm* (2009).