II: Building the Partnership

Remember: keeping the children at the center is key for minimizing conflict.

All members of a public school–CSA partnership share a primary motivation: producing positive changes in children's attitudes and behavior. They may also have their own distinct interests. For example, a CSA may hope to increase its visibility and enrollment, while a local symphony also involved in the partnership may be interested in increasing audience numbers. All share a stake in the success of the partnership, but for very different reasons.

The following two sections present the perspectives of the CSA and of the public school. We strongly suggest that you review this material carefully before beginning to plan. The "Self-Assessment" and "Resources" worksheets on pages 24 and 26 will identify the CSA's organizational needs and desires and help you assess its resources and limitations objectively. The "Arts Education Partnership Readiness Quiz" on page 35 will enable public school administrators to develop a more accurate idea of their school's readiness to make a partnership commitment.

The Community School Perspective

As you contemplate beginning a partnership, you will naturally think about the ways that partnering can improve teaching and learning. But at the same time, you must not lose sight of your organization's uniqueness and its particular vision and mission for

arts education. Any partnership should help advance the CSA's mission, reflect its philosophy and standards, enhance its existing strengths, and address the daily obstacles it faces. Thus you should clearly enumerate what commitments you expect from a partner. In addition, every CSA has both assets that help it and constraints that hinder it in fulfilling its mission. You will need to carefully evaluate both of these.

What Assets Do We Bring?

Some of the assets that a CSA brings to a partnership arise from its nature as an arts *education* organization, rather than a performing or visual arts institution. At a CSA, professional artists teach all aspects of their disciplines to a wide variety of people of all ages. Often the CSA stages performances and exhibits by student as well as professional artists. In some communities, the CSA is a link to an entire network of professional arts organizations, while in others it is the only local provider of high-quality arts experiences. CSAs have the same primary goal as public schools: to educate. Therefore they are used to dealing with family issues, scheduling difficulties, transportation challenges, and other roadblocks to creating an ideal learning environment. Indeed, a CSA may understand the frustrations faced by its public school partner better than other potential collaborators.

Because the CSA structure allows students to progress at their own pace, community schools are equipped to offer the most basic education in an art form as well as advanced training for those who are gifted or more experienced. With their experience in constructing sequential curricula, CSAs are adept at developing new methods for of meeting public school learning standards. Exposure to a CSA can make children more aware of possible arts-related careers. And since their entire focus is on the arts, CSAs often have performance, exhibition, and studio space available, as

well as specialized equipment or technology to which public school students and teachers would otherwise not have access.

What Benefits Can We Expect?

Once you recognize the wealth of skills and resources you bring to a potential partnership, you're ready to consider what your CSA might gain from the effort. Benefits can range from increased visibility and reputation in the wider community to access to the professional expertise of public school teachers and administrators, which will inform ongoing CSA programming and faculty development. In fact, partnerships offer CSA faculty tremendous opportunities, including learning to work with larger or new groups of students and deepening their understanding of stages of cognitive and social development.

What Do We Need from a Partner?

Understanding what your CSA needs from its partner and being able to articulate those requirements are extremely important. In discussions during the initiative, CSA administrators listed generic requirements that any CSA must expect a partner to fulfill. Otherwise, the CSA could find itself surrendering its vision and mission—not to mention its human and financial resources—to an unworkable relationship. The list that follows applies to any partnership between a CSA and a K–12 public school. Your circumstances may dictate other specific items.

- A clear statement from each partner of its internal goals for the partnership
- Goals shared by both partners for the partnership itself
- Shared responsibility for obtaining funding

- Buy-in from public school administrators

- Sufficient access to the children

- Broader connections to the community: parents and civic and business leaders

- Good assessment tools (particularly useful for reporting to both schools' boards)

What Limits Us?

Once needs are outlined, the next step is to identify constraints on your resources that will affect the partnership. The same group of administrators cited some that you will probably recognize:

- Limits on the time available to plan, manage, and conduct the partnership activities

- Insufficient human resources

- Public school scheduling constraints

- Transportation problems

Most likely, you will have to accept some of the constraints imposed by the public school, which has its own mandates and needs. You may be able to overcome other limitations, but realistically, you will often need to compromise.

Remember that the process of developing a sustainable partnership cannot be rushed. Be prepared to allocate time generously. Like any successful relationship, a partnership needs lifelong nurturing and cultivation. Understand, too, that an in-depth partnership will affect your organization's processes, procedures, and culture. But if the partnership is well planned and executed, those changes can strengthen your school both internally and externally.

Worksheet 3: Self-Assessment for Community Schools

What is your "big idea?" What might you do better with a partner than on your own?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Who might/did you select as a partner(s)? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What factors motivate you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What resources or expertise can you bring to a partnership? (explored in depth in the Further Exploration of Your Resources worksheet that follows)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What do you need and want in order to be a willing partner—for yourself, your organization (or boss or board), for your constituents and community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What limits or constraints will affect your ability to participate in a partnership?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Worksheet 4: Further Exploration of Your Resources

You may want to fill out this worksheet with a colleague or group in order to get a broader perspective. The questions in the left-hand column are to get you started. Feel free to consider others. Potential partners might wish to complete this form as well.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Administrative Human resources Financial resources Other administrative resources		

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Programmatic Adaptability of curriculum to a public school		
Flexibility in pedagogy and scheduling		
Familiarity with learning "through" the arts		
Familiarity with national arts education standards		
Willingness to share artistic control, including selection of teaching artists		

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Faculty Interest in partnering		
Experience in a public school environment		
Ability to articulate how they create art		
Ability to work with children in large groups		

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Other Physical plant Communications technologies		

The Public School Perspective

Any collaboration with a public school must begin by accepting the fact that public schools are constrained by their accountability under a series of mandates imposed by government and by current social realities. The national focus on student achievement, as measured by standardized tests and assessment methods, subjects public school administrators and teachers to intense scrutiny.

This academic mandate is compounded by the requirement that schools pay attention to student psychological and social development. Public education today is not only about teaching and learning. It must also encompass socialization issues, character building, violence prevention, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and nutrition—issues that in the past were not its primary concern. While teachers and administrators may feel hampered by having to address these issues within the seven-hour school day, they are accountable for doing so to public school boards, state departments of education, parents, and the community as a whole.

Sparking Public School Interest

It is easy to assume that, despite federal and state curriculum content standards, public schools are not interested in the arts. The truth is, however, that among teachers, administrators, school boards, and parents you can find every possible view along the arts education spectrum, from complete exclusion to total immersion. In any case, whatever their perspective on the arts, the great majority of teachers and school administrators have a personal mission to help children become successful, productive adults. When shown how the arts can contribute to achieving this goal, public administrators understand the importance of giving students the chance to engage in the arts.

In Tucson, Arizona, the local university presenting organization, UAPresents, invited area public school principals to a Principals Forum to brainstorm about their arts education needs. They also saw performances and visited other schools. Over lunch and dinner, the principals were presented with the latest research regarding the role of the arts in overall learning. The result: not only did UAPresents achieve greater recognition, but the public school budget was increased to provide more arts teachers. This example suggests a constructive way for a CSA to convince public school administrators of the value and importance of the arts for their students.

Using the Arts to Address Nonacademic Issues

A strong arts partnership is also a particularly effective way to address the myriad nonacademic issues that public schools face. In addition to providing core instruction in the processes of an art form, arts programs give K–12 public schools additional tools to teach, nurture, and understand their students.

One good example is the partnership between the Paul Robeson School and the Institute for Arts and Humanities Education (IAHE) in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The 1995 Oklahoma City bombing had left many of the students distraught and fearful. IAHE developed a project that addressed their responses at all grade levels. First, the IAHE artists discussed the historic role of the arts in ritual and healing around the world. Then the students created their own ceremony. At the end of the project they planted a tree, which remains today as a monument. "IAHE and its vision helped show how the arts can translate and transfer any given experience into another form," commented Principal Charles Collins. Since that time, the artists, teachers, children, and administrators have worked together on building a risk-taking culture—one in which they can go out on an artistic or academic limb without fear of failure. They share the successes and difficulties of each project.

Overcoming Public School Challenges

CSA faculty are artists, not social workers, counselors, or assessment experts. However, a little creative thinking can reveal many ways to combine their expertise in teaching the artistic process with the skills of professional educators in order to meet some of the challenges public schools face. Here are just a few suggestions:

Problem	Solutions
Unfunded mandates regarding such issues as substance abuse, violence prevention, fire safety, poor nutrition, and teen pregnancy	Integrate some of these mandates into your program so they are part of the curriculum rather than an add-on. Examples: teens create an opera or dance around issues of substance abuse and consequent violence; younger children write a group poem about staying safe; all ages participate in visual arts projects that enable them to express a range of emotions.
Lack of planning time and lack of funding to pay for such time	Use existing planning time when possible. Build professional development into the public school's existing in-service workshop schedule. Build funds for planning time, including teacher honoraria, into grant proposals. Communicate by e-mail when appropriate.
Scheduling difficulties; competition for space	Learn the structure of the public school day. Be as flexible as possible and ready to compromise or alternate when space issues arise.
Children (and parents) who think they "can't do" art	Present lessons that allow children to enter the program at various skill levels. Find ways to integrate students that do not require innate talent (behind-the-scenes jobs, PR, videotaping, etc.). Offer parent or family education programs.

Problem	Solutions
Fear of change	Engage in dialogue with the superintendent and the community.
	Develop reciprocal peer support and personal relationships among artists, classroom teachers, and administrators.
	Invite the public school teachers and staff to hear your shared students perform.
Lack of funds	Plan your fundraising strategy together. Think creatively! For example, one partnership funded over thirty artists with a "Donate an Instructor" campaign.

Assets the Public School Brings

Asked what they would do differently if they could start a partnership over, some arts education organization leaders said they would spend time just "hanging out" at the public school, looking and listening more closely, in order to identify the resources there. As Arts Connection's Carol Morgan put it, they didn't know how rich the possibilities were at their public school partner at the beginning, so they were busy designing and offering individual lessons rather than working with the school faculty and staff to develop and implement a schoolwide education strategy.

Remember that partnerships are about each partner helping the other— not one providing a service for the other. Despite the challenges public schools face, many are enthusiastic about including the arts in their curriculum—and they have much to offer. Here are just some of their potential assets:

■ An understanding of child behavior and age-appropriate activities

■ Knowledge of the school curriculum as a whole

■ Knowledge of and experience with classroom management techniques

■ Established connections to the children and their parents

■ The ability to advocate from inside the school system

■ Connections to municipal and state officials who have significant advocacy potential

The public school may also possess performance and exhibit space and communications technology that a smaller CSA lacks. Combining technological resources such as computer hardware and software or video equipment can benefit both partners. As you continue to explore and develop the partnership, you will discover additional public school resources.

Identifying a Suitable Partner

When approaching a prospective public school partner, strive to connect with a key administrator, curriculum specialist, art teacher, or parent whose enthusiasm is matched by a willingness to work collaboratively. This person can help launch and, possibly, guide the partnership development process inside the public school.

It is critical that the public school be prepared to enter into the partnership and able to identify its own assets and limitations. To this end the Center for Arts Education (CAE) in New York City has devised an "Arts Education Partnership Readiness Quiz" (see page 35) for public schools that are considering a partnership with an arts organization. If the school works through the quiz and finds itself in what the CAE calls the "better stop and think" category, this school may not be the best partner, at least not right now. Of course, the quiz is not infallible. If, after serious thought, both partners still wish to proceed, at least they will be aware of each other's limitations. Conversely, a score in the "you're already on your way" category is not a guarantee of success. But it does indicate a positive organizational mindset.

Occasionally a public school excludes the arts completely. The Partners in Excellence Initiative found that, unless a primary goal of your CSA is reaching out, *and* you are an experienced collaborator, such a public school is probably not a good site to try to interest in a partnership.

Worksheet 5: Arts Education Partnership Readiness Quiz

A tool for public schools considering arts partnerships,

adapted from the Center for Arts Education, New York

Answering these questions will help you decide whether your school is ready to collaborate with cultural organizations to promote student achievement and school improvement in and through the arts. (See scoring sheet on page 39.)

1. How many people will be involved in designing your arts partnership program?

 (a) 1–2

 (b) 3–6

 (c) 7–10

2. Which statement best describes your school's experience with partnerships?

 (a) We have none.

 (b) We collaborate regularly with community groups, other schools, and cultural organizations.

 (c) We have collaborated on a few projects.

3. Which statement best describes your current relationship with (a) cultural partner(s)?

 (a) We do not have any partners.

 (b) We have been looking for ways to expand our relationship with our current cultural partner(s).

 (c) We are considering several cultural partners, based on favorable staff and student reactions to residencies, workshops, performances, and/or museum visits.

4. If your school has developed an overall educational vision statement, which of the following applies best?

 (a) It makes no mention of the arts.

 (b) It makes explicit our commitment to the arts as part of the core curriculum.

 (c) It refers to the arts as enrichment.

 (d) We have no written statement.

5. What is the current status of arts staff in your school?

   (a) We have 0–2 arts positions.

   (b) We have arts specialists in more than one discipline (e.g., dance, music, visual arts, theater), offering sequential skill-based instruction, who collaborate with general education teachers and cultural partners.

   (c) We have some arts specialists, and we purchase services from visual, literary, and performing arts organizations.

6. What is the role of the arts in the general curriculum at your school?

   (a) The need to raise test scores in reading and math limits our capacity to integrate the arts.

   (b) We provide frequent, integrated, team-taught units of study, which are developed by arts specialists, classroom teachers, teaching artists, and cultural organizations.

   (c) Some teachers collaborate with arts specialists, cultural organizations, and/or artists on performances and special projects.

7. Which statement best describes the professional development in your school?

   (a) We attend mandated district workshops.

   (b) Our staff members frequently attend and provide a variety of workshops based on student needs and staff interest and expertise.

   (c) A small, but committed, number of our staff elect to participate in externally provided offerings of interest to them.

8. Characterize scheduling at your school.

   (a) A regular fixed schedule allows us to support student achievement in reading and math and comply with district mandates.

   (b) Flexible scheduling allows us to provide opportunities for team teaching, small group work, off-site learning, and links with extended-day (afterschool) programs.

   (c) From time to time we have been able to accommodate early release time and/or sub-coverage to allow students/teachers to participate in special projects.

9. Characterize parent/community engagement in your school.

   (a) We have had limited success in engaging parents and community organizations.

   (b) Parents and community members come and go regularly from our building as participants in and leaders of a variety of activities.

   (c) A small but committed group of parents provide funding for enrichment activities and volunteer at the building.

10. How does your school leadership team support the arts?

   (a) Our principal takes responsibility for most aspects.

   (b) Our entire team is active: parents, general classroom teachers, arts specialists, and cultural partners participate on committees to align curriculum and instruction.

   (c) Although we have some parent participation, it does not fully reflect the student population, and we rely on one or two team members to advocate for the arts.

11. Characterize your school's current investment in arts education.

   (a) We do not have an arts program currently due to budget constraints, but we recognize its importance.

   (b) In addition to our school-based arts specialists, we have invested some of our incentive, tax levy, and/or other funding to underwrite the cost of work with cultural organizations.

   (c) We have been able to maintain our arts specialists positions, but unable to afford the services of cultural partners.

12. Characterize your school's readiness for change.

   (a) No need for change; our arts (and academic) programs are up and running well.

   (b) Our teachers are supportive of the arts and are ready to collaborate more actively with artists and cultural organizations.

   (c) Some of our staff is eager to learn more about the arts, while others are not convinced at all.

13. How do things get done in your building?

   (a) Three or four of us generally take the lead on getting things done (e.g., bringing in grants, planning school events, attending off-site gatherings).

   (b) With our principal's support, decision making and responsibility follow-through are handled by a flexible mix of staff, parents, and administrators, and, when appropriate, students.

   (c) Assignments are made by the principal based on her/his vision for the school and sense of staff aptitude and interests.

14. Which statement best describes your current staff's attitude toward change and collaboration?

   (a) Our staff generally prefers to work in their classrooms on their own.

   (b) Our staff members frequently collaborate across classrooms, work with visiting artists, and welcome opportunities for off-site experiences.

   (c) Some of our teachers prefer to work in their classrooms and on their own, but a growing number seem open to collaboration and off-site learning.

15. Which statement best describes collaborative relationships as they exist at your school?

(a) We don't have any currently.

(b) We have a number of successful, longstanding collaborations with external organizations, cultural or otherwise.

(c) Collaboration is new to us, but we have had positive experiences and good results to date.

Partnership Readiness Quiz Scoring Sheet

1. A=2, B=0, C=1   _____

2. A=2, B=0, C=1   _____

3. A=2, B=0, C=0   _____

4. A=2, B=0, C=1, D=2   _____

5. A=1, B=0, C=1   _____

6. A=2, B=0, C=1   _____

7. A=2, B=0, C=1   _____

8. A=1, B=0, C=1   _____

9. A=2, B=0, C=0   _____

10. A=1, B=0, C=1   _____

11. A=1, B=0, C=1   _____

12. A=1, B=0, C=1   _____

13. A=1, B=0, C=1   _____

14. A=2, B=0, C=1   _____

15. A=2, B=0, C=1   _____

Total: _____

15 POINTS OR MORE:

better stop and think…

7-14 POINTS:

you may be ready…

6 POINTS OR FEWER:

you're already on your way!

▶ Look for intersections
between the agendas
of the CSA and of the
public school.

▶ A group of creative
people produces big-
ger ideas than any
one person can.

▶ Keep everyone's con-
straints in mind, and
be aware that new
ones may arise.

▶ Do your homework.
Find out the public
school's needs and
come in with an idea
for meeting them.

▶ Having a clear mission
for the partnership is
crucial.

▶ You may have to scale
a big idea down to a
pilot project. Don't be
afraid to start small.

▶ Working on goals
together builds own-
ership.

The Art of Planning

Thoughtful, thorough planning is the backbone of a program that is both effective and sustainable. Expect planning to take a significant amount of time. Making sure your planning process is comprehensive at the outset is the best way to avoid difficulties later. For example, planning that does not include all the relevant people could require time-consuming retracing of steps to rethink and redesign.

Before sitting down with the entire group, the leadership should be as clear as possible about the following issues.

■ Who are the partners? What will each partner get out of partnering? Who are the leaders?

■ What is the partnership's purpose? What problem or opportunity is/was the catalyst for the partnership? Do the partners share this view of the purpose?

■ How will decisions be made? Consensus, vote, top down, bottom up? Who will implement the decisions? How will execution of tasks be monitored?

■ How will the partners communicate? Meetings, e-mail, telephone? How often? Who will initiate the communications?

■ Is there a written contract? Does it stipulate who pays for what? Is there a written budget? How will deficits/surpluses be handled?

■ What is the evaluation plan?

Use the "Planning Process Checklist" on page 43 to guide you through the initial planning process.

Planning for Sustainability

Planning is not limited to the initial stages of a partnership; it continues throughout. This is particularly true when the partnership is intended to last over time and produce new ideas, approaches, and

activities. Therefore it's important to build planning time into all work plans, timelines, and budgets. Artists and educators with experience in partnering suggest incorporating the following strategies into planning to ensure sustainability.

- **Base the partnership on a recognized need.** To clarify what this need is and help develop a unified vision, it's useful to obtain a needs assessment. This can take the form of interviews, focus groups, or surveys of potential stakeholders.

- **Work with the willing.** Experienced partners have learned to focus their efforts on those teachers and administrators who are interested in and enthusiastic about the project. In time, the success of the partnership will attract others. The Trident Regional Arts Collaborative Endeavor in Moncks Corner, South Carolina, grew in less than a decade from 15 to 23 public schools, just by word of mouth. One person called this a "contagion model."

- **Invest in training for artists and teachers.** that focuses on both arts and educational achievement. Provide time and financial compensation for training.

- **Build a community of artists and teachers.** Ask them to become reflective practitioners, to understand the expertise that the other brings to the table, and to understand resistance by trying to imagine walking in the other's shoes. Find the common ground. Become part of the life of the public school: create spaces for public discussion, have lots of conversations, share ideas, and question your own assumptions.

- **Nurture an adaptable culture.** Flexibility is crucial, for organizations and for individuals. Key personnel leave, funders change priorities, and government programs dry up. Be prepared to roll with the punches.

- **Make it easy for the public school.** Rigidity on the CSA's part regarding curriculum content and scheduling could prove to be an insurmountable obstacle for your partner school.

Planning Pointers Continued

- ▸ Trust issues arise frequently, so be prepared to deal with them.

- ▸ Again: keep the kids at the center.

- ▸ Always evaluate your progress.

- ▸ Since planning is time-consuming, be sure to build funds for planning time into grant proposals.

- ▸ Don't forget food!

- **Communicate effectively, both internally and externally.** Internally, develop communication networks between the CSA and public school communities. Externally, develop strong marketing materials in the form of newsletters, photographs, videotapes, and public appearances. Be able to "tell your story" effectively and succinctly. (For further suggestions on effective communication, see chapter 3.)

- **Tap into local and national arts resources.** While the CSA artist-teachers and public school arts faculty may be the core arts resource for a public school or district, this should not preclude inviting touring performing or visual artists to visit. Properly planned, their presentations can be tied to the partnership curriculum. Even if this is logistically not possible, just hearing and meeting a special guest artist can be an inspiration to all.

- **Tap into a local university,** which may be able to assist with evaluation and assessment and provide training for teachers.

- **Designate "dedicated" staff,** whose highest or only priority is the partnership. This investment will relieve the partners of much of the administrative, communication, and fundraising work—the jobs that make partnerships seem overwhelming. At the very least, there should be a specific contact person at each organization. If this person is not the principal or CSA director, she or he should be someone with decision-making authority.

- **Recognize excellence.** Some partnerships hold annual events that showcase achievements. Teachers and artists are rewarded, sometimes financially, but always publicly.

- **Build connections.** Martin Luther King Jr. High School in New York City invited a member of the partnering New York City Opera to sit on the school board. NYCO, in turn, honored the MLK principal at the opera house. Exchanging school board and CSA board members from time to time can help educate each about the culture of the other.

Worksheet 6: Planning Process Checklist

Craig Dreeszen's *Learning Partnerships Planning Workbook*, sponsored by the Arts Extension Service (AES) at the University of Massachusetts, is very useful for step-by-step planning. This checklist, condensed from that workbook, will help you project the sequence and timing of your planning process. For the complete version, see the AES website: www.umass.edu/aes/learning-partners. You may want to download and print the entire workbook; it is well laid out and will keep all partners on a single track.

GET READY...

Prepare for the Partnership, 2 hours

Who: Key leaders from each organization, with respective staff members

What: Hold a separate exploratory meeting at each partnering organization

When: Before the first joint planning meeting

___   Target organization staff who might be involved in the partnership; identify the skills and abilities they might contribute.

___   Identify (with staff) why you wish to collaborate.

___   Identify (with staff) what you want from the partnership

___   Identify (with staff) what you can contribute and what may limit your participation.

___   Determine what you want and need to be a willing partner.

___   Determine your own organizational limits and constraints (personnel; facilities; financial, policy, or legal restrictions) and inform your partner about them.

Explore a Shared Need: Decide to Collaborate, 2–3 hours

Who: Key leaders from both organizations

What: Collectively explore whether you have shared interests; develop first-draft plans.

When: Shortly after the separate meetings, when ideas and enthusiasm are fresh

___   Present, compare, and discuss motivation, potential roles, needs, constraints, and expertise. Identify potential planning committee members (from each partner's perspective).

___   Collaboratively develop a shared problem statement. (Why is this initiative planned? To what specific need, problem, or opportunity is the partnership responding?)

___   Create a tentative project idea. What would you like to do together? This will evolve as you plan. If you are expanding an existing program: What works? What needs improvement?

___ Target the beneficiaries of your project:

- Direct beneficiaries (e.g., students, teachers, artists)

- Indirect beneficiaries (e.g., administration, families, arts staff)

___ Identify the core decision-making partners and appoint a planning committee. Committee members should represent all key stakeholders in the project or bring to it specific expertise: e.g., principal, teachers, parents, CSA administrators, artists, outside consultants and experts, and, in some cases, students. The team's responsibilities will include planning, implementation, evaluation, and fundraising.

___ Commit to planning a collaborative venture.

GET SET…

First Planning Meeting: Set Goals and Objectives, 3–4 hours*

Who: Planning committee and facilitator, if one is being used

What: Begin designing the structure of the partnership

When: As soon as feasible, to maintain momentum; schedule three more planning meetings at this time

___ Target your advisory partners—a steering committee that will advise, provide funds, and implement specific programs. These advisors may include, for example, the public school superintendent, CSA executive director, PTA president, and an arts council representative.

___ Confirm the project idea.

___ Discuss/document your mutual expectations: what the educators expect from the artists and vice versa. Expectations will translate into roles and responsibilities.

___ Discuss your goals. What long-term results do you expect to achieve? Goals describe long-term intentions and are often based on shared values. Using a facilitator to develop goals and objectives can help speed the process.

___ Ask, "If we are truly successful with this project, what will the results look like for the people we have served?"

___ List general goals. If you are building on an existing program, start with specific changes or activities and convert them into a goal.

___ List short-term objectives (anticipated outcomes) that will support each goal.

___ Target who, when, and where for each objective.

---

*Secret ingredient of planning meetings: a chance to chat over a meal. Establishing a warm rapport before getting down to business appeals to the mentoring sensibilities of teachers. It also allays fears by helping everyone to get to know each other and develop a sense of one another's expertise.

Second Planning Meeting: Describe your activities, 2–3 hours

Who: Planning committee

What: Continue designing the partnership

___   Review tasks and activities for each goal and objective. What activities will be carried out to achieve the objectives?

___   Continue the process of targeting who, when, and where for each task or activity.

___   Draft a final budget; determine who will act as fiscal agent. (Drafting a preliminary budget, or at least speculating on costs, should be done before the meeting, so the planning group can focus on refining the budget.)

- Calculate the costs for each part of the project.

- Estimate likely sources and amounts of revenue (identify partner contributions: cash, in-kind).

- Determine fundraising goal (gap between costs and partners' contributions).

Third Planning Meeting: Check Up on the Partnership, 1–2 hours

Who: Planning committee

What: Keeping things on track

___   Reconfirm partnership roles and responsibilities as laid out in second planning meeting.

___   Discuss internal communication methods.

- How will we communicate? Meetings, e-mail, telephone, etc.

- How often?

- Who initiates the communications?

___   Develop a PR plan to publicize your partnership and its activities.

- Who will be responsible for writing external communications?

- Who will disseminate them?

- What other kinds of PR will be helpful? Who will plan and implement them?

___   Establish a project timeline and work plan. Create a month-by-month or even more detailed overview of the tasks/activities previously developed, plus other administrative tasks that arise. Break your tasks/activities into the following categories:

- Planning tasks

- Program management tasks

- Funding and financial tasks

- Partnership maintenance tasks

- Evaluation tasks

___ Discuss how to make decisions (by consensus, vote, delegating the decision making to a particular person or subcommittee). How are financial decisions made? Who implements them?

___ Compose a Letter of Agreement, outlining partner roles, responsibilities, leadership, decision-making process, work plan, timeline, money, etc.

___ Present Letter of Agreement to steering committee for signatures.

Fourth Planning Meeting: Plan Fundraising and Evaluation, 2–3 hours

Who: Planning committee

___ Review and confirm your funding goal as determined during budget process.

___ Identify prospects.

___ Decide who will ask whom for support, and by what means (personal call or visit, telephone, grant proposal, letter, etc.). (See "Ladder of Effective Communications," page 60.)

___ Identify matching funds for grants.

___ Develop an evaluation plan. Revisit your goals and objectives and determine:

- Why you will evaluate

- At what level you will evaluate, e.g.:

  ❏ Program: Were project objectives achieved?

  ❏ Partnership: How can the partnership be improved or sustained?

  ❏ Student learning: Assess learning outcomes of participating students

- When you will evaluate: formative (while in progress) or summative (at the conclusion)?

- Who will evaluate: team members, school district assessment experts, outside evaluator?

- To whom you will address the results

GO!

___ Implement the project.

- Develop the curriculum jointly.

- Field-test or pilot the project.

- Move to full implementation.

Continue to take the temperature of your partnership at predetermined intervals.

Worksheet 7: Budget

Adapted from the *Learning Partnerships Planning Workbook*

When preparing the budget, note any in-kind personnel and material resources that are needed, including those that can be supplied by each partner and those that must be purchased. Take note as well of any salaries and/or overhead expenses that will be paid out of partnership funds. After the budget process is completed, you may find either that additional fundraising is required, or that the partnership's objectives must be modified.

Some categories in the lists below may not apply to your partnership.

REVENUES	
Cash contributions from partners (specify amount from each)	
Fees or tuition	
Sales and/or advertising (e.g., a program book or catalogue)	
Grants/Sponsorships	
Municipal/County	
State	
Federal	
Foundation	
Corporate	
Local businesses	
Individual contributions	
Fundraising events (gross)	
TOTAL REVENUES	

EXPENSES	
Administrative salaries (proportion allocated to partnership)	
Administrative benefits (proportion allocated to partnership)	
Artist fees	
Other outsides fees and services (e.g., consultants)	
Facility	
Printing/copying	
Advertising	
Postage	
Telephone	
Travel	
Supplies/Equipment	
Fundraising expense	
Allocated overhead	
Other expenses	
TOTAL EXPENSES	
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	

Learning to Work Together

When partners get to know each other well, they can draw on each other's strengths and meet each other's challenges.

- Maureen Heffernan, Executive Director of the Institute for Arts and Humanities Education, observed, "At first, people don't want to challenge you because you are the guest. Over time, teachers move to a comfort level with the artists, who they know will not make them feel silly, or show off. The teacher can say, 'Those instructions weren't clear—my kids needed five steps.'"

- Thomas Cabaniss, Director of Education for the New York Philharmonic, described a lesson that "just didn't work as an integral element of the classroom agenda; it felt like something extra." Because the teacher and artist had been working together closely for the whole year, Tom could ask the teacher to help him understand the classroom goals and habits of mind. The lesson was modified accordingly.

In both situations, a level of trust enabled the teacher to explain a problem that the partners could address together. The key word in finding solutions is "together," but getting *to* togetherness takes time, thorough planning, and, sometimes, serious negotiating.

Resolving Conflict

Start by acknowledging that conflict is inevitable. Despite the best intentions and hard work of those involved, no partnership will be conflict-free. In most cases, the disagreements will be small, like those described above. But there are times, unfortunately, when partners come to a crossroads over philosophy or instructional

content. This is why conflict resolution is one of the most helpful partnering skills a leader or manager can possess.

Leaders have a special responsibility: they must be willing to negotiate rather than simply dictate. Similarly, partners must be able to present their views to the rest of the team, including the leadership, without being either overly aggressive or too willing to concede. Following are some guidelines for resolving conflicts in a professional manner. The concepts are adapted from Paul Salipante's 1998 work at the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Case Western Reserve University.

SEEING CONFLICT AS USEFUL

In constructing a partnership, decisions must be made regarding goals, delegation of responsibility, curriculum development, and methods of implementation and evaluation. All these items are potential sources of conflict, and the negotiating skills of the leaders and/or facilitators will determine how smoothly the process proceeds. As you and your partner begin to make these decisions, remember that experts now see conflict as a *typical* trait of *effective* organizations, rather than something to avoid. Organizations that deal with conflict well can handle diverse opinions and benefit from their members' differing perspectives and creative ideas.

The challenge is that most people are uncomfortable with conflict and do their best to avoid it, even at the expense of leaving certain items unresolved. Few of us are instinctive negotiators; it is a learned skill. Using specific conflict-resolution techniques leads to satisfactory results.

DEFINING CONFLICT

How you handle conflict depends on how you define it. Do you see it as an adversarial relationship? Such conflict is destructive; it leads to a win-lose or even a lose-lose outcome. Do you see it as a difference in ideas? Such conflict is constructive; it can lead to a win-win outcome. If you think of conflict as something unpleasant

that should be avoided or suppressed, you will need to work on changing your attitude, so that you can see it as something useful that can strengthen professional relationships.

When the level of cooperation and collaboration is high, team members have confidence in each other and consequently are less fearful of introducing difficult issues. In this way conflict that is handled constructively increases a group's vitality and effectiveness.

NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCES

The best approach to negotiating conflict can be briefly described as "Be soft on the people but hard on the problem." Some of the specific suggestions below are based on Fisher and Ury's *Getting to Yes,* a good resource that presents principles of effective negotiations and details concrete steps you can take to reach a win-win outcome.

- Work on the climate and process for the discussions. Define ground rules that set a tone of problem solving rather than argument.

- Do not argue over people's fixed positions. Instead, identify your own and the other party's underlying interests and needs. Do not be soft and fail to stand up for your own interest, for you will regret this later on. In other words, think about why you have taken a position, rather than the position itself. Once you understand your own and the other party's interests, you can be creative and come up with new arrangements that will be mutually beneficial.

- Understand that there are some people who enjoy conflict and thrive on fighting. Do not allow this attitude to dominate the situation.

- When working in groups, it is always possible for personalities or relationships, rather than issues, to become the problem. If you find yourself in such a situation, avoid personalizing the conflict. Instead, define the professional issues as separate from the individuals. Respect the other party and try to understand the legiti-

macy of his or her views. An outside facilitator or disinterested observer may be able to help with this process.

- Remember that your own view of the situation is not the only correct one, no matter how passionately you feel about it. Understanding and accepting others' views will expand each member's own perspective and make the group's decisions and actions more effective.

- Look for an objective standard of fairness that you both accept, which can help you determine what is an acceptable outcome.

- Celebrate your joint successes in negotiating effectively.

- Develop a contingency plan that provides the best alternative to a negotiated agreement. This enables you to walk away from an exploitative negotiator.

Worksheet 8: Scenarios for Conflict Resolution

Based on the negotiation tactics described above, consider or discuss the following scenarios. What is your initial reaction? How would you negotiate a satisfactory solution?

Your music curriculum includes music theory as part of your instrumental lessons. You feel that omitting it will compromise the quality of the musical experience. Also, public school time periods are 40 minutes, as opposed to the hour-long lessons at the CSA. What kind of artistic and educational compromises can you structure that will meet your desire for a high level of music education within these constraints? Might state or national curriculum standards provide guidelines that allow both the public school and the CSA to achieve their respective educational goals?

A teacher is passionate and determined that his students need to learn to read at or above grade level. He does not want to lose precious reading time to an art lesson and is very vocal about his feelings. How might you handle this situation? How could his reading goals be accomplished without omitting his class from the project?

The scheduling proposed for the CSA artists at the public school is far different from what was sketched out during preliminary discussions. You find it unsatisfactory, both logistically and educationally. The public school principal has dug in her heels, possibly because of pressure from the district office. This conflict is a potential deal-breaker. How can the project be saved?