



## Where Excellence Is Tradition

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### **Studying the arts enhances student achievement**

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During the holidays, our students performed in a myriad of concerts, and their knowledge, skills and talent impressed me. They even performed some songs in Latin and Spanish!

A robust fine arts program is a critical component of a comprehensive education, and research reinforces the important role that the arts play in student achievement. Scientists have studied how the arts enhance skills that can improve achievement in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The following are a few examples of the research that supports adding arts to STEM to create STEAM:

- Studying the arts improves attention and engagement
  - The hands-on nature of the arts engages students in the lesson and encourages exploration beyond the lesson.
- Studying the arts enhances long-term memory
  - Consider what it takes to memorize the lead actor's lines in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" or to learn all the songs in a one-hour concert
- Studying the arts boosts persistence
  - Learning a new song or the choreography for a dance takes time and practice. Learning to have the persistence to see a project through to the end will benefit students in college and careers.
- Studying the arts enhances spatial skills
  - Typically, spatial skills are not taught in science, but they are a natural fit in drama, painting and music.
- Studying the arts encourages students to reflect
  - Students who analyze and rework their projects learn that success comes with persistence and rethinking the initial effort.

Also, consider these research findings:

- Students who study music, drama and dance are often more proficient at language arts and math
- Students enrolled in fine arts courses have an expanded capacity for empathy.
- Arts courses help students develop critical thinking skills, such as comparing, contrasting, hypothesizing and exploring multiple perspectives.
- Students who study the arts volunteer more, develop deeper social bonds and are more engaged in their community than other students.

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Our students' academic achievement is enhanced by the fine arts. Students who experience the arts foster better social bonds, become better thinkers, experience more joy and contribute to society in more meaningful ways. To get an idea of the impact of the arts, check out videos from our students' holiday performances at [facebook.com/GlenbardDistrict87](https://www.facebook.com/GlenbardDistrict87)

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