

The Value of Choral Education in Elementary School



Arts Education Is Important for a Complete Education

- ▶ America's manufacturing-driven economy is being replaced by a creative economy or "economy of ideas"
- ▶ School choruses are important to a complete education that will prepare students for the global economy

Singing in a Choir Helps Students Succeed in School, in Work, and in Life

Documented in research and in statements from:

- ▶ US Department of Education
- ▶ National Endowment for the Arts
- ▶ Chorus America
- ▶ Arts Education Partnership
- ▶ and others...



Opportunities to Participate in a School Choir are Declining

Chorus America's *Chorus Impact Study* reports:

- ▶ More than 1 in 4 educators say there is no choral program in their schools
- ▶ Of those who said that their school has no choir program today, 31% said their school used to have choirs

The Nation's Report Card on Music & Visual Arts reports only 17% of eighth graders sing in choir.

Those Who Could Benefit the Most

Get the Least

- ▶ Teachers that report a decrease in instruction time for arts education are more likely to be at schools needing improvement, and at schools with higher percentages of minority students.
- ▶ And yet, 90% of educators surveyed believe choral singing can keep some students engaged who might otherwise be lost—particularly true of those (94%) who describe the ethnicity of their schools as diverse.

The Case for Choral Music Education: Academic Achievement

Singing in choir promotes academic achievement. The benefits of student learning experiences in the arts are:

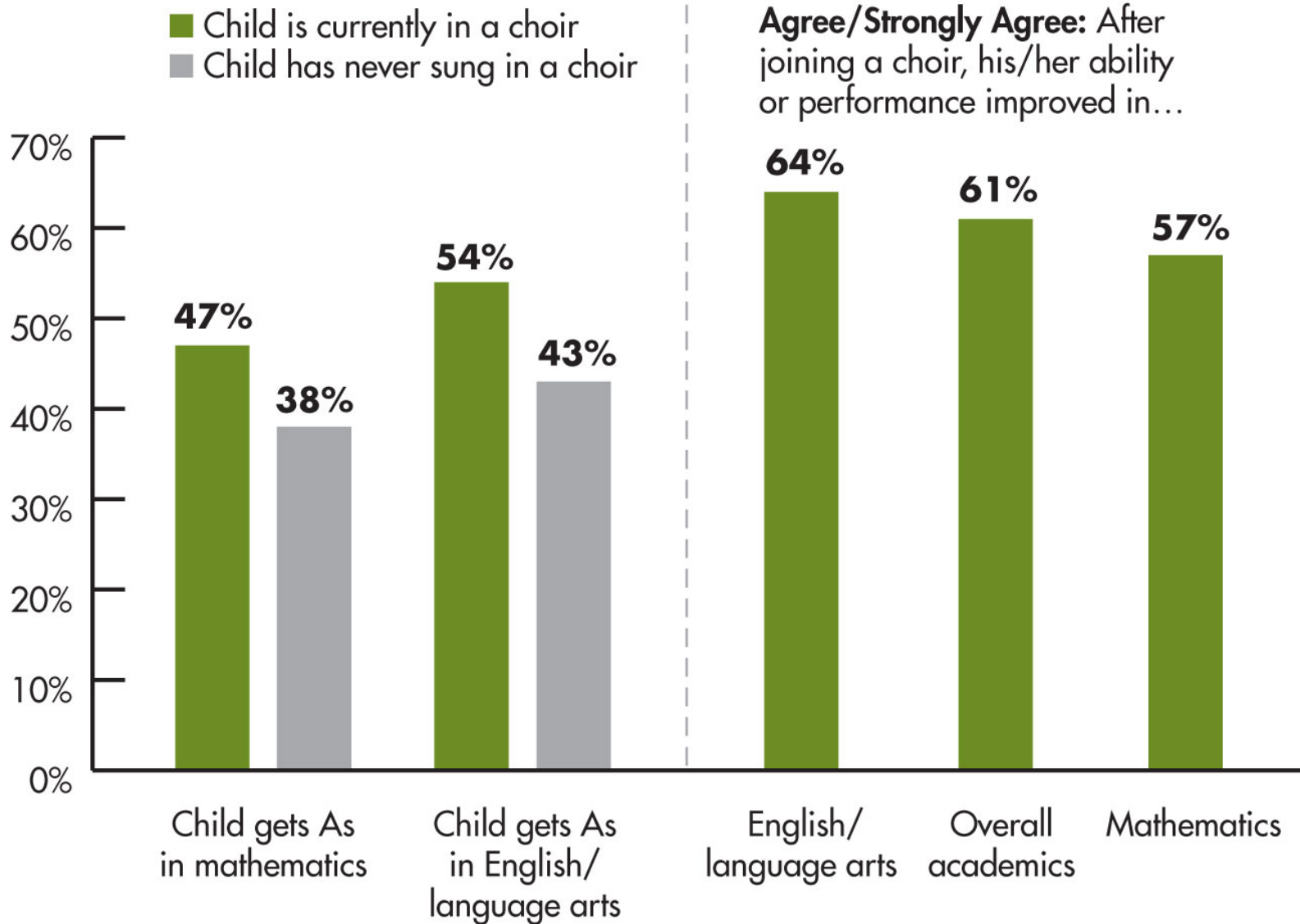
- ▶ Academic—improved reading/language and mathematics skills
- ▶ Comprehensive—help to create a learning environment conducive to teacher and student success that fosters:
 - ▶ teacher innovation
 - ▶ a positive professional culture
 - ▶ community engagement
 - ▶ increased student attendance
 - ▶ effective instructional practice
 - ▶ school identity

The Case for Choral Music Education: Academic Achievement

Benefits are even stronger for low-income students.

- ▶ Study showed that high-arts/low-income students are 3X more likely to have earned degrees than low-arts/low-income students.
- ▶ English Language Learners (ELL) from arts-rich schools are significantly more likely attend colleges than ELL students from arts-poor schools (78% vs. 58%).

Chart 7: Choir Participation and Academic Performance



The Case for Choral Music Education: Success Skills

Singing in choir builds success skills. According to multiple studies, the benefits of arts for students include:

- ▶ Thinking skills (reasoning, intuition, perception, imagination, creativity, problem-solving)
- ▶ Social skills (self-confidence, self-control, empathy, social tolerance)
- ▶ Motivation to learn (active engagement, sustained attention, persistence)

Chart 13: Educators on Student Choir Participation and Social Skills

Percent of educators who agree or strongly agree: Student choir participation...

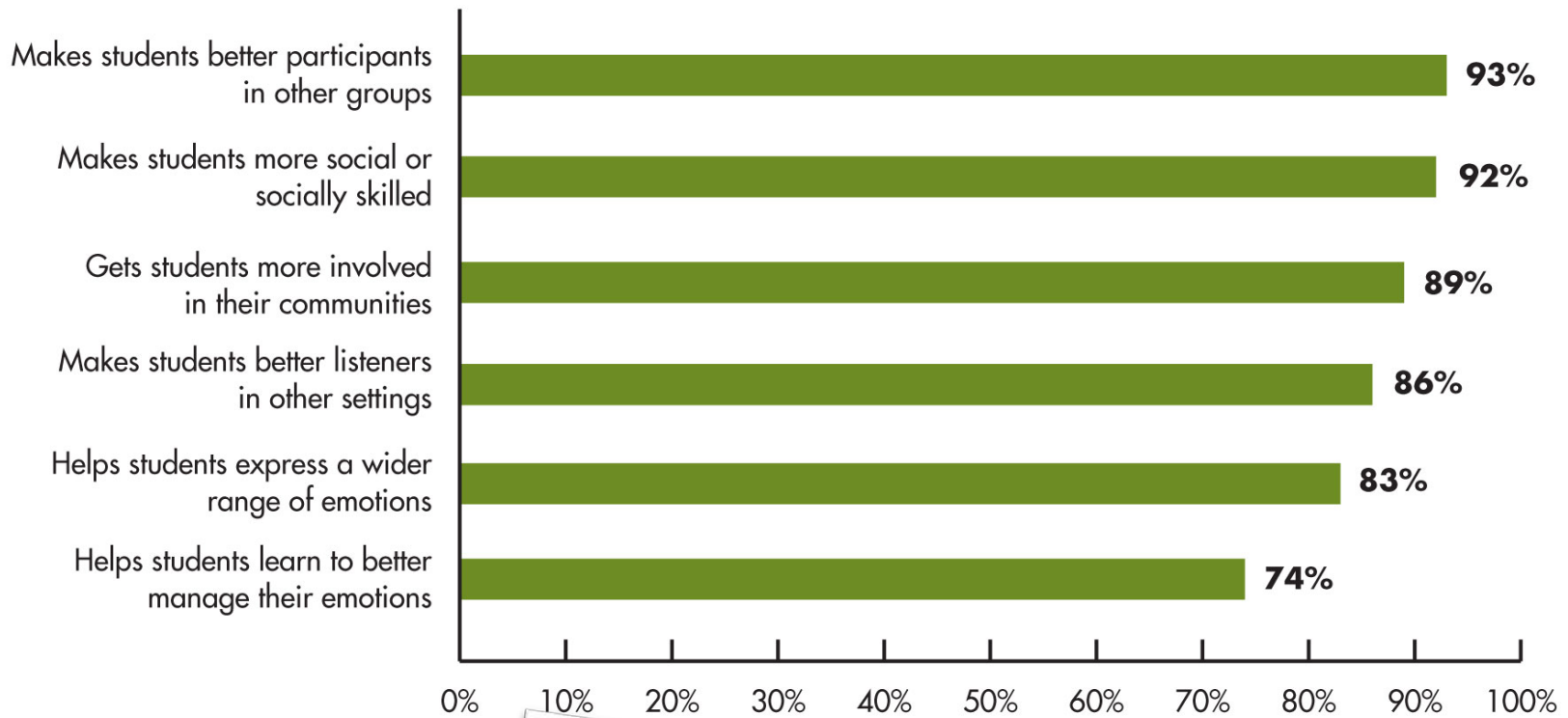
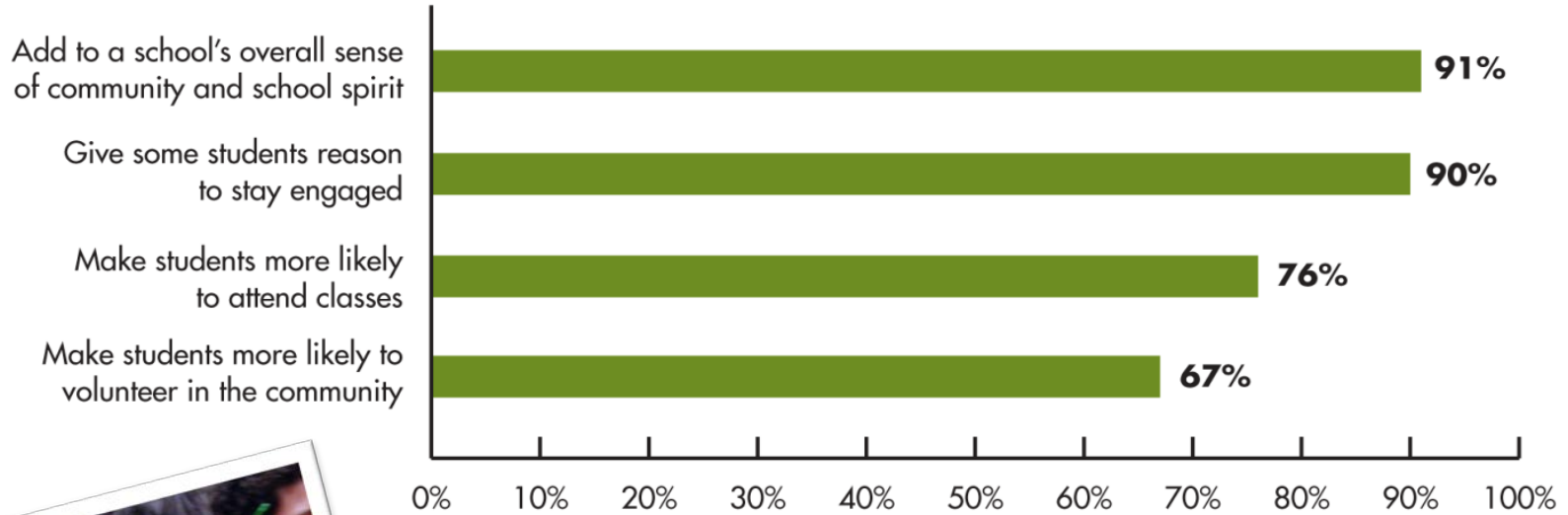


Chart 14: Choir Participation and School, Community Participation

Percent of educators who agree or strongly agree: Choir participation can...



The Comparative Advantages of Choruses

1. Everyone has a voice.
2. That voice comes free - no purchases necessary.
3. That voice is portable - no special travel requirements.
4. That voice is highly flexible - all music can be sung.
5. Choral music has rhythms *and* words. Reading, counting, comprehension, foreign languages, expression.
6. Choral music has messages and meaning. From discovering folk traditions and world music to singing about social justice and civil rights, choral music provides a powerful means of cultural and historical expression...people sing *about* something.
7. Choral singing is a collaborative endeavor...we sing together.
8. Choral singing can be taught in ways that work for all kinds of learners.
9. Choral singing is a very cost-effective form of arts education.
10. Choral singing is a lifelong activity.

The Value of School Choirs for Students

Singing in a choir helps
students succeed:

- In school
- In work
- In life