

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives

When you support Extension, youth are provided opportunities to identify personal interests and build necessary life skills through rehearsal and performance experiences.

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Student performances range from singing, playing musical instruments, dancing, and poetry reading.

Extension Sharpens Performance Skills Among Youth at Breakfast with the Arts

Breakfast with the Arts participants receive valuable feedback in after school rehearsals before performing in the monthly event so that they are set up to succeed.



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“Breakfast with the Arts has been an excellent feeder program for the Paramount Players. The Paramount Players is a state, regional and national award-winning community theatre serving the tri-state area. Students who participate in BWA learn more about performance and help them be ready to navigate through large-scale auditions at the Paramount [Arts Theatre]. We have seen a steady increase in students from McDowell Elementary since the BWA program was instituted.”

Melanie Cornelison-Janotta, Director of Education at Paramount Arts

The Breakfast with the Arts (BWA) program is now in its 10th year at Russell-McDowell Intermediate School in Greenup County. The Gifted and Talented Coordinator at the school recognized the need to provide students with the skills necessary to plan, rehearse, and perform for an audience. The coordinator reached out to Arts Agent Anne Stephens to facilitate the program. BWA allows for teamwork between the Arts and 4-H Extension programs and opens a path to encourage participation in the 4-H Communications and Expressive Arts program.

Each 4th and 5th grade student who performs for BWA is set up to succeed. The student applies to participate, and then commits to after school rehearsals facilitated by the Arts Agent, the Gifted and Talented Coordinator, and others. Students rehearse their performance and receive valuable feedback to ensure that they can deliver a successful performance. BWA performers receive a small gift (such as a pencil or water bottle) to demonstrate that their performance has value.

School administrators and central office staff routinely visit the school during breakfast on BWA days to support student performers and witness the audience etiquette demonstrated by the student audience made up of 4th and 5th graders and many parent visitors. The initial group of students who participated in BWA asked to have the program at their middle school (thus, another BWA program was created). A total of 160 student performers have presented to an audience (on average) of about 200 peers in the last ten years.

Several positive impacts of the BWA program are apparent. Veteran BWA performers have gone on to participate in high school band, choir, and orchestra, audition for community theater, win dance awards at competition, participate in talent shows, move



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A student-created poster to remind peers of the upcoming BWA performance and how to apply to perform.

up to District Communication Day events in 4-H, and show higher confidence in regular classroom experiences.