



THE FEDERATION FOR
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROFILE

SABIN MAGNET DUAL LANGUAGE SCHOOL

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sabin Magnet Dual Language School, part of Chicago Public Schools, is located in Chicago's Wicker Park community. The K-8 school serves a diverse group of students and families, the majority of whom are either Spanish-speaking or bilingual. The school offers dual immersion and Spanish-language instruction at all grade levels. Sabin has operated as a community school for eleven years through its partnership with Columbia College Center for Community Arts Partnerships (CCAP). Sabin also partners with Luna Negra Dance Theater and Girls on the Run. Through their community school work, Sabin and its partners provide out-of-school time activities for approximately 180 students.



MAINTAINING A COMMUNITY SCHOOL VISION DESPITE LEADERSHIP AND FUNDING CHANGES

Sabin has experienced a number of significant changes over the past few years. Two years ago, Sabin's primary community school funding through the Federal Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) grant program ended. PIRC¹ funding allowed Sabin to staff a full-time RC and, as a result of this change, the school has transitioned through three full- and part-time RCs in the past two years. Onikoyi, the school's current RC, holds a part-time position. Sabin also came under new leadership in 2010 when Gwen Kasper-Couty became the principal.

Highlights of community school work

- Maintaining a community school vision despite leadership and funding changes
- Encouraging collaboration to support classroom learning
- Monitoring and problem-solving around student engagement
- Bridging the school day and out-of-school time

Resource Coordinator (RC):

Jeneca Onikoyi

Principal: Gwen Kasper-Couty

Lead Partner: Columbia College Center for Community Arts Partnerships (CCAP).

Student opportunities: Arts and crafts; drama; photography; theater; storytelling; sports including soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, cheerleading, and track; Taratibu; Artology; Math Blast; and statistic-infused sports classes. ISAT Academy is also being developed.

Parent and family

opportunities: Zumba; Parent Café; and monthly family events. GED classes, English/Spanish conversation meetings, and an ISAT class for parents are starting soon.

Columbia College Community Arts Partnerships (CCAP)

Sabin's community school lead partner is Columbia College's Community Arts Partnerships (CCAP). CCAP has been a lead partner at the school for eleven years and provides Sabin's after-school arts and enrichment classes. Each after-school class is taught by a Teaching Artist and a Teaching Assistant, most of whom are CCAP employees and either Columbia College students or alumni.

Taratibu

Taratibu is a form of African dance that incorporates military drill movements. Through Taratibu, students are encouraged to develop self-respect, discipline, and a sense of community amongst dancers. Sabin's class is taught by Teaching Artist Meghan Kyle, who has trained with the Taratibu Dance Association for eight years and is a certified Taratibu instructor.

Parent Café

As part of Parent Café, Sabin's parents and guardians are invited to meet with school staff and discuss issues, challenges, or topics they would like to know more about. Based on these discussions, Onikoyi arranges specialists to come speak to parents regarding the issues identified at the Parent Café.

While these transitions initially posed some challenges to the school, Onikoyi explains that they have actually provided the opportunity to cultivate a shared vision for what the community school implementation process should look like at Sabin. Because Onikoyi and Kasper-Couty assumed their roles within a year of each other, they have been able to go through the process of getting to know Sabin's students and families together. Throughout this process, the two have worked to formulate ideas on activities that support the needs of student and the community. The stress that came with these changes was further alleviated because many of Sabin's Teaching Artists had worked at the school for several years and served as a consistent presence at the school.

"Students have the opportunity to express rather than just produce."

-Resource Coordinator Jeneca Onikoyi on how opportunities provided through Sabin's community school model have impacted students

ENCOURAGING COLLABORATION TO SUPPORT CLASSROOM LEARNING

Like schools across the state, Sabin is in the process of adopting the Common Core standards. One of Common Core's Anchor Standards is that students will use and present knowledge in diverse formats. Onikoyi plans to utilize Teaching Artists' expertise in expressive arts to support teachers' classroom planning around this standard. Onikoyi is planning a collaborative professional development meeting to foster a conversation about the skills that teachers and Teaching Artists have and how they can work together to address any challenges either may be facing.

MONITORING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING AROUND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Onikoyi gets feedback from administrators, students, parents, and Teaching Artists on how they are experiencing the school and its programs. Bi-weekly reports from Teaching Artists gather information on student behavior, including any improvements or challenges Teaching Artists have observed in the classes. The Teaching Artists' reflections are used to inform how lesson plans can be reworked to encourage student engagement, as well as to identify students who may face consistent challenges in a specific class. Based on these reports, Onikoyi can work with Teaching Artists to determine if individual students may need additional resources or referrals.



Photo courtesy of <https://sabin.cps.k12.il.us/mcdex.html>

BRIDGING THE SCHOOL DAY AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

Sabin has developed a number of strategies that help bridge out-of-school time activities with the regular school day. The Community Spotlight Board features students who participate in out-of-school-time activities who have been recognized by school staff and faculty for doing something outstanding during the school day. An after-school-wide incentive program promotes model behavior from students across all activities by allowing Teaching Artists and Teaching Assistants to recognize exceptional behavior with decorative buttons. Students often pin their buttons on their shirts or backpacks, and thus are able to share their accomplishment with students and teachers during the regular school day. Furthermore, many of Sabin's teachers are also sports coaches. In addition to providing teachers the opportunity to reinforce classroom learning in out-of-school time activities, teachers' presence helps reinforce the full-day culture that has been cultivated at Sabin.



KEY LESSONS

- Structure opportunities that are sensitive to the diverse backgrounds of students and families, including language, interests, and needs. Develop activities that maximize the number of students and families who can and will want to participate. **As parent and community representatives, your advisory board can provide guidance on scheduling and activities that will meet the needs of families.**
- When funding challenges lead to changes in available programming and resources, targeted relationship building can ease the transitions experienced by students and families. **One-on-one conversations with parents and guardians lend perspective to how families are experiencing these changes, as well as resources they deem essential to their students' well-being. These conversations can help inform how priorities are established when funding is limited.**
- Develop ways to create cohesion between out-of-school time activities and the rest of the school day. **Setting up a Community Spotlight Board is a great way to promote and reinforce positive out-of-school time behavior during the regular school day.**
- Connect your out-of-school time staff with the school's teachers by **building bridges between the special skills of your instructors and classroom needs.**

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The Federation for Community Schools would like to thank:

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