

**Blues In the Schools After-School Enrichment Program**  
**Final Report**

**THE REPORT**

## Post-Project Evaluation

1. Accomplishments and how grant funds were utilized during the grant period: A successful 6-week after-school program was implemented at Wiley Elementary School in Urbana between April 4-May 9, 2012. The program was “kicked off on March 30 with an all-school assembly at Wiley by the local Blues group, The Painkillers. The after-school program met on Wednesdays from 3:15-4:45 in the school library, and there were 15 participants from the 3<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Blues History instruction was provided by UI graduate student, Ashley Howard, and Harmonica instruction was provided by Doug Schroer, a well-respected harmonica player from the local community. On June 30, 2012, these students and families were invited to attend a special follow-up session at the Urbana Blues, Brews, and Barbeque Festival which, this year, took place in downtown Champaign. This session was held to describe and promote the “Blues in the Schools” program that day at the Orpheum Childrens’ Museum.

2. The impact that the grant funds had on your artistic or organizational development. This, being our organization’s first attempt at an after-school program, helped us to gain experience and re-think the operation of similar after-school programs for the future. Specifically, we determined that it would be best to not work with students younger than the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and that it would be better to limit the after-school sessions to 45-60 minutes and have more sessions than fewer sessions of 75-90 minutes. However, the scope of the instructional content, both in terms of what was planned for Blues history and for harmonica instruction, seemed very appropriate.

3. The number of hours spent in completing the project:

Planning:	Pre (8) + During (24) =	32
Administration	Pre (4) + Post (4) =	8
Promotion	Pre (3) + During (2)=	5
Production	During (9) + Post (1) =	10
Presentation	(Included above in “Production”)	
<u>TOTAL</u>		55 hours

4. The number of participants in events or activities related to your grant project:

PCBS Planning meetings: 10 x 3 sessions= 30  
Planning meetings with School Staff and Community members = 5 x 4 sessions = 20  
School assembly: 6 band members + 4 PCBS members + 330 students + 35 staff = 375  
After school activities: 15 students + 6 adults = 21 x 6 sessions = 126  
Blues in the Schools review at Orpheum Childrens’ Center: 10 adults + 35 participants = 45  
TOTAL: 596

5. Description of experience working with collaborating partners: This was an excellent opportunity to develop a collaborative partnership between the Parairie Crossroads Blues Society and the local school community. Participants from the Blues Society and School Staff understood the variety of roles that needed to be played and responsibilities to be undertaken, and everyone shared these responsibilities appropriately. The Fine Arts staff members provide a great subset of staff members in planning this type of activity. Some discussion is already underway in considering another after-school program in Urbana, and possibly one in the Champaign Schools as well (discussions with Garden hills School).

6. Additional comments: From our perspective, this was a very successful project and a big step toward enriching the Arts Education n Urbana schools. The collaboration between the school staff and the Blues Society was made possible by the Urbana Arts Council grant, and we are very appreciative of your efforts The City of Urbana’s commitments to the Arts and local artists.

## The elementary-school blues



Heather Coif/The News-Gazette  
Fifth-grader Shawndrell Taylor tries out his harmonica for the first time Wednesday as he joins third-through fifth-graders at Wiley Elementary School in an introduction to the blues in the school's library in Urbana. The new project, funded in part by the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society, is a six-week program done in collaboration with Krannert Center for the Performing Arts; Ashley Howard, a University of Illinois doctoral candidate in African-American history; and Samuel Music, which donated the harmonicas.

# Wiley Elementary School

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## "Blues in Schools" Program Comes to Wiley Elementary

Posted on April 2, 2012 by Wiley Elementary

Students at Wiley Elementary received a special treat last Friday when local blues band, the *Painkillers*, performed at an all-school assembly. The performance was an introduction to Wiley's after-school program, Blues in Schools, that begins this week.

Blues in Schools is a program created and sponsored by the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society. Their mission is to bring blues education to students in the area. At Wiley, in addition to the kickoff concert with the *Painkillers*, they are providing an after-school harmonica program to 15 students in grades 3, 4 and 5. During the program, students will learn how to play the instrument, learn about blues structure, and learn the history of the blues.



This is just one way the Blues Society is bringing the blues to schools. This summer, they are collaborating with the Blues, Brews and BBQs festival and will be offering sessions at the Orpheum Theatre on Blues in Schools.

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### Upcoming Events

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Thu, April 5th  | Wiley PTA Meeting   |
| Tue, April 24th | Wiley Science Night |
| Thu, May 3rd    | Wiley PTA Meeting   |
| Fri, May 4th    | Wiley Walk-A-Thon   |
| Fri, May 11th   | Wiley Fun and Run   |

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# Prairie Crossroads Blues Society



sponsors

a Blues in the Schools event



The Painkillers  
at  
Wiley School

Friday, March 30 9:30