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Through the Schoolhouse Door

Folklore, Community,
Curriculum

Paddy Bowman
Lynne Hamer
editors

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The creative traditions and expressive culture of students' families, neighborhoods, towns, religious communities, and peer groups provide opportunities to extend classrooms, sustain learning beyond school buildings, and better connect students and schools with their communities. Folklorists and educators have long worked together to expand curricula through engagement with local knowledge and informal cultural arts—folk arts in education is a familiar rubric for these programs—but the unrealized potential here, for both the folklore scholar and the teacher, is large. The value folklorists place on the local, the vernacular, and the aesthetics of daily life does not reverberate throughout public education, even though, in the words of Paddy Bowman and Lynne Hamer, “connecting young people to family and community members and helping them to develop self-identity are vital to civic well-being and to school success.”

Through the Schoolhouse Door offers a collection of experiences from exemplary school programs and the analysis of an expert group of folklorists and educators who are dedicated not only to getting students out the door and into their communities to learn about the folk culture all around them but also to honoring the culture teachers and students bring in to the classroom.



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