Board of Education Informational Report

Board Meeting/Work Session Date: April 15, 2019
Senior Lead: Luis Valentino, Chief Academic Officer
Department Lead: Sarah Davis, Senior Director of STEAM/HPE Education
Staff Lead: Kristen Brayson, Program Administrator for Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA),
Carolyn Drake, TOSA Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)

SUBJECT

This Informational Board Report will focus on two elements. One is the PPS State of Arts Education report, including mandatory metrics for the Arts Education & Access Fund (Arts Tax) as per our Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Portland. The second focus is on leveraging district capacity created by the Arts Tax, and aligning with the Visioning Process, to create a Master Arts Education Plan (MAEP) for Portland Public Schools. Specifically, the VAPA department will produce an outline of the phases of PPS's MAEP and a review of the process for collecting, studying, and assessing data and making recommendations for a five-year implementation plan for arts education.

BACKGROUND

The successful 2012 adoption of City of Portland Ballot Measure 26-146 created the Arts Education and Access Fund (Arts Tax) to restore visual and performing arts education in six districts, including PPS. This agreement states that the District shall provide arts and/or music education through certified arts and/or music teachers to all K-5 students in each of its elementary schools.

Owing to the Arts Tax we have seen an increase from 15 K-5 arts teaching positions in the District to 63 K-5 arts teaching positions, and our student/teacher ratio fell from 1528/1 to 375/1, allowing us to serve 21,738 students across all elementary schools.

Building on the successful instructional foundation of all elementary students participating in visual and performing arts for the 18-19 school year, PPS has been able to establish a VAPA Department, with, for the first time, a dedicated administrator. The Program Administrator for VAPA is Kristen Brayson. Ms. Brayson served at the VAPA Teacher On Special Assignment (TOSA) from 2013-2018 before her promotion. Carolyn Drake has joined the team as the new VAPA TOSA. Ms. Drake comes to us from Centennial School District, where she was previously an instructional coach and a visual arts and language arts teacher.

The VAPA team has embarked upon a three-phase process to craft a Master Arts Education Plan for the District. Phase I started this year in January 2019, Phase II will take place in 2019-20 and the implementation plan (Phase III) is slated for 2020-21.

RELATED POLICIES/BEST PRACTICES

The purpose of the MAEP is to set a vision for quality arts instruction in PPS, to establish what equity and access to the arts looks like, and to identify through data what changes we need to make to ensure our system is in alignment with research and best practices. Two key resources have informed this work: Harvard's *Qualities of Quality: Excellence in Arts Education,* the *National Core Arts Standards Framework.*

Additionally, we reviewed research about the impact of arts education on overall academic achievement in Rice University's *Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative.*

The VAPA department currently serves 78% of all students in PPS through classroom instruction with a highly qualified, certified arts specialist. Three of our eight clusters, Jefferson, Madison, and Roosevelt, however, have significantly fewer K-12 pathways to experience sequential arts learning when compared with our other neighborhood clusters. The 22% of students that we are not currently reaching often reside in these three clusters. As we build on the investment of the city's arts tax, the MAEP will help us to address these inequities through systems and processes to support sequential arts learning.

Our MAEP will bring about systems change, build teacher capacity, and deepen partnerships with arts organizations with the end goal of better serving PPS's K-12 students. Most specifically, we are prioritizing our work around serving and supporting our historically underserved population.

ANALYSIS OF SITUATION

The best type of access to arts education combines an exploration of many art forms alongside consistent study in areas of greater depth. An analysis of access to arts led the VAPA department to identify that in certain PPS neighborhood clusters, our students experience fragmentation in their course of study. For example, in one of our clusters, only 2 of the 7 K-5 schools are able to offer music education. However, the middle schools to which all K-5s feed, do offer music programs. The unintended consequence of this fragmentation is that students enter middle school with significant variability in their readiness to participate -- undercutting the potential successes of both student groups.

In researching district data, the Key Stakeholder Teacher Group has uncovered this and other inconsistent arts pathways. The pathways data illuminates one aspect of inconsistency in access to arts at PPS.

FISCAL IMPACT

The arts tax brings approximately $4.5 million dollars a year to support arts teachers. As we continue to see the impact of the arts tax K-5, we have identified areas to target investments to deepen equitable opportunities for access to the arts 6-12.

When we move into Phase III of the MAEP, we will have a much clearer sense of the fiscal implications associated with implementation. The below overarching questions will help structure fiscal investments in the near future:

1. *How can we establish materials and supplies as centrally-supported instructional resources?*

2. *How can we establish curricular & instructional supports for equitable student access?*
3. *How can we ensure centrally defined K-12 arts pathways for all students?*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
The HeART of Portland is an annual showcase of visual & performing arts in partnership with, and on site at, the Portland Art Museum. The museum sponsors the event with in-kind donations and the student exhibit and performance is an opportunity to share back with the city the impact of the local arts tax ($35/per household). Owing to this increase in funding, PPS is able to serve 78% of all students in the district through arts programming with a highly-qualified arts specialist.

During 2018-2019, the VAPA department began the work of developing a strategic framework for Phase I of the MAEP. This work is being done in collaboration with a group of 20 teachers called the Key Stakeholder Teacher Group. This group has members that include all four arts disciplines, all grade bands, school clusters, and a diverse demographic. These key stakeholders will continue with the project and lead Phase II, which includes listening sessions with community partners.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION/EVALUATION
During the 18-19 school year, Phase 1 of the Master Arts Education Plan has engaged with the Key Stakeholder Teacher Group to do the following:
- investigate best-practice research
- in-depth, data-driven look at existing arts opportunities in PPS
  - The types of data we are collecting and examining include:
    - K-12 sequential pathways by arts discipline
    - minutes of instruction for the entire population, including students served by ELL and SPED departments
    - disaggregation by race of secondary students served by each arts discipline

During the 19-20 school year, Phase II will expand the participant group to include external arts partners, community-based organizations, families, and students. This work will include:
- three learning journeys -- collaborate with districts that are well into implementation of their own MAEPs
- four listening tours -- with stakeholder groups
- generating the Phase I report, including data visualization & digitization/ public dissemination
- regional cluster PD

The final phase, which will commence during the 2020-2021 school year, will use what is learned through Phase II of our MAEP process. Phase II will become a roadmap for setting priorities and strategic goals as we move forward into implementation. It is crucial that we have the resources to work deeply with our school and community partners during this time so that the plan does what it is intended to do: increase access to quality arts education for our underserved student populations. PPS is contending with a legacy of inequitable access, not only in the arts, and, as the district makes meaningful strides to remedy these inequities, the VAPA department must follow suit in reconsidering how to best meet the needs of all students.

ATTACHMENTS

- *Strategic Planning Model for PPS Master Arts Education Plan*
  - *Pages 1-6*
- *Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education*
  - *Pages 7-142*
- *National Core Arts Standards Framework*
  - *Pages 143-169*
- *Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative*
  - *Pages 170-201*
- *PPS Visual & Performing Arts Pathways Data (Lincoln & Jefferson)*
  - *Pages 202-203*
- *PPS Visual & Performing Arts FTE K-5 by School 2018-19 Student-Teacher Ratio*
  - *Page 204*
- *PPS Visual & Performing Arts Past, Present, Future State*
  - *Pages 205-206*

PPS District Priorities FY 2018-19
1. *Set a clear Vision and Strategic Plan*

2. *Create equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students*

3. *Build management and accountability systems and structures*

4. *Allocate budget, funding and resources focused on improving outcomes for students*

State of the Arts:
2018-2019

Kristen Brayson, Visual & Performing Arts Program Administrator
Carolyn Hazel Drake, Visual & Performing Arts TOSA

AGENDA

- *Arts @ PPS*
- *Master Arts Education Plan Overview*
- *Arts Tax Report*
- *Future Program of Study*

K-12 Study of the Arts: A Journey to Mastery

Scholarship • Technical Skill • Critical and Creative Thinking • Culture • Citizenry

Learning in the arts requires the ABILITY and a WILLINGNESS to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds.

The arts make VIVID the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can KNOW. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our COGNITION.

The arts teach students to think through and within a material. All art forms employ some means through which IMAGES become REAL.

Learning in the Arts

-Elliot Eisner

Tomorrow's Creators

Research continues to show that art education is closely linked to the things we most want for our children & desire for our schools: academic achievement, social and emotional development, civic engagement and equitable opportunity.

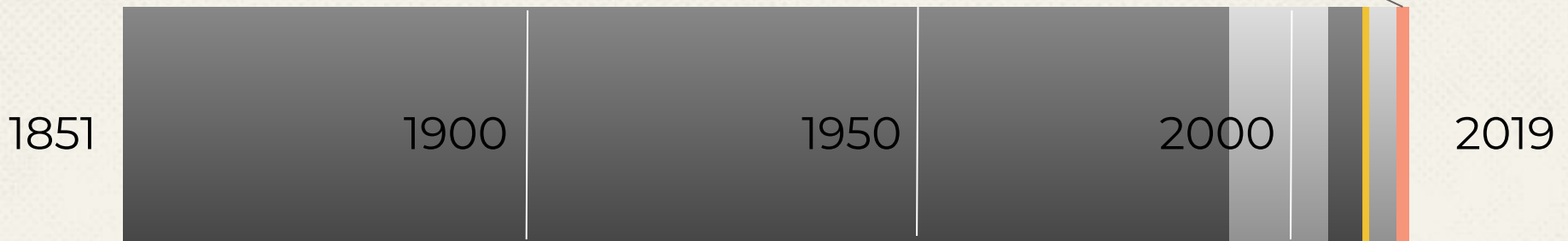*--Robert L. Lynch, Americans for the Arts*

Arts @ PPS

Our Department, Then & Now

PPS Central Office Arts Support

2018-2019:
Supt. Guerrero **Establishes VAPA Dept**
100% Increase in Size
(from 1 to 2 FTE)

1851   1900   1950   2000   2019

ca.1995-2009:
Dedicated Arts TOSA

2013:
Arts Tax Established:
Arts TOSA Re-established

Visual & Performing Arts Department

Key Metrics & Organization

1 FTE Program Administrator, Kristen Brayson
1 FTE TOSA, Carolyn Hazel Drake

We serve 200 teachers across *all schools* in the district.

We are proud to serve & support over 40,000 students in our K-12 arts programs.

Our students have demonstrated their learning in 300+ events, exhibits & performances during the 2018-19 school year.
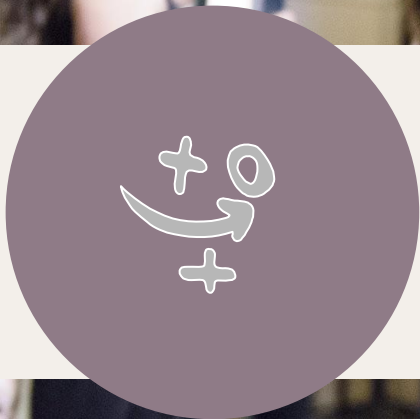
Professional Development

Advocacy

Master Arts Education Plan

Partnerships

Arts Tax

Department Priorities

New Directions:
Our Bold Steps toward the Future

MAEP At-a-Glance

PPS Master Arts Education Plan
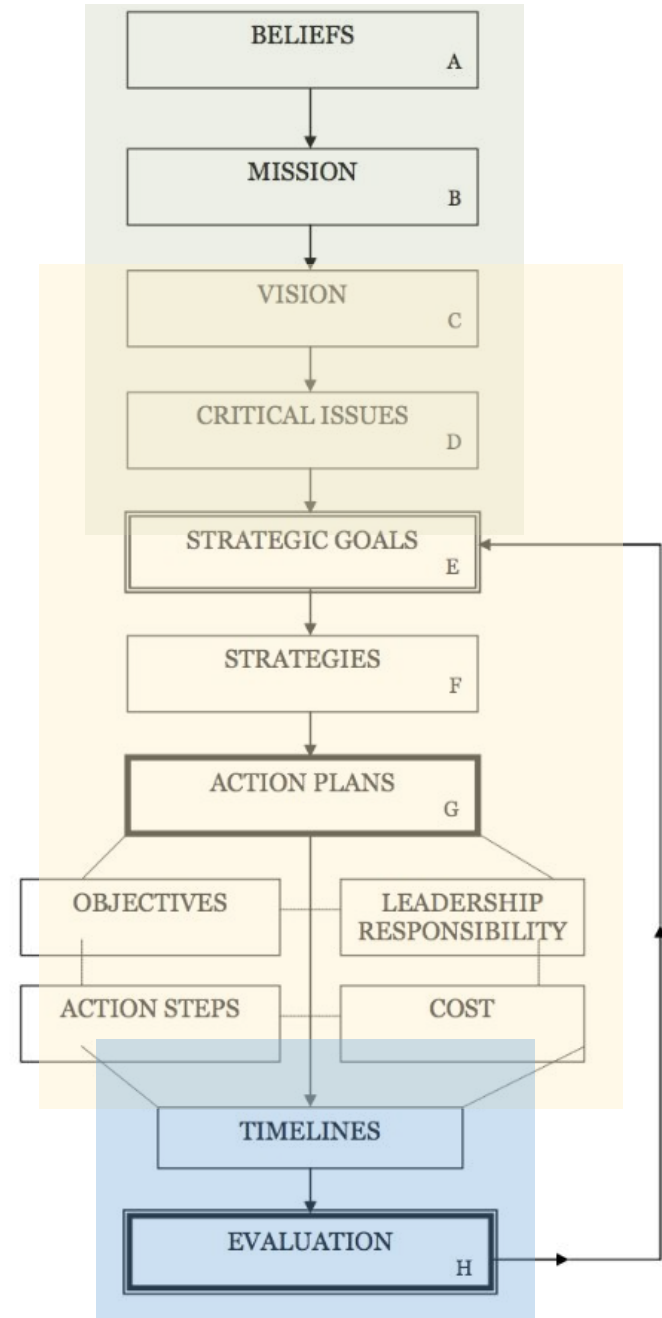
Phases I-III

MASTER ARTS EDUCATION PLAN

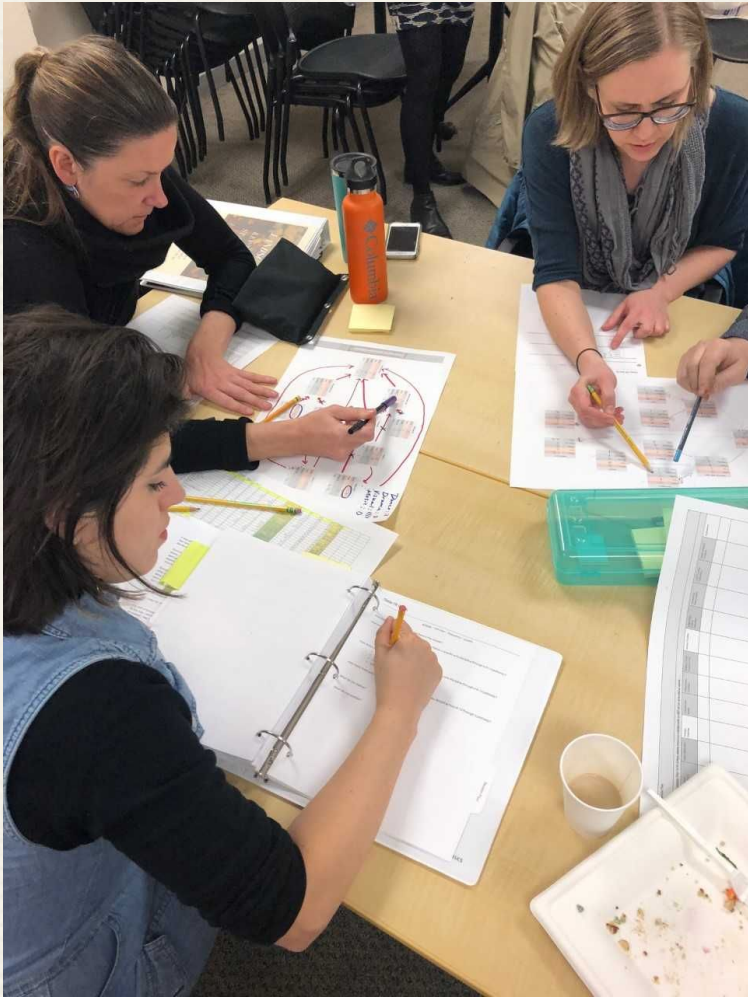Our Strategic Planning Framework:

Phase I (2018-19)

Phase II (2019-20)

Phase III (2020-21)

Strategic Arts Education Planning Model

Our Teacher Stakeholder Group: the "MAEPers"

20 teachers by:

- 4 disciplines
- Grade bands
- Clusters
- Demographics
- Range in tenure
- School-site leaders
- Rooted in equity work

Our Teacher Stakeholder Group: Scope & Goals

SCOPE

5 full day sessions, January-May

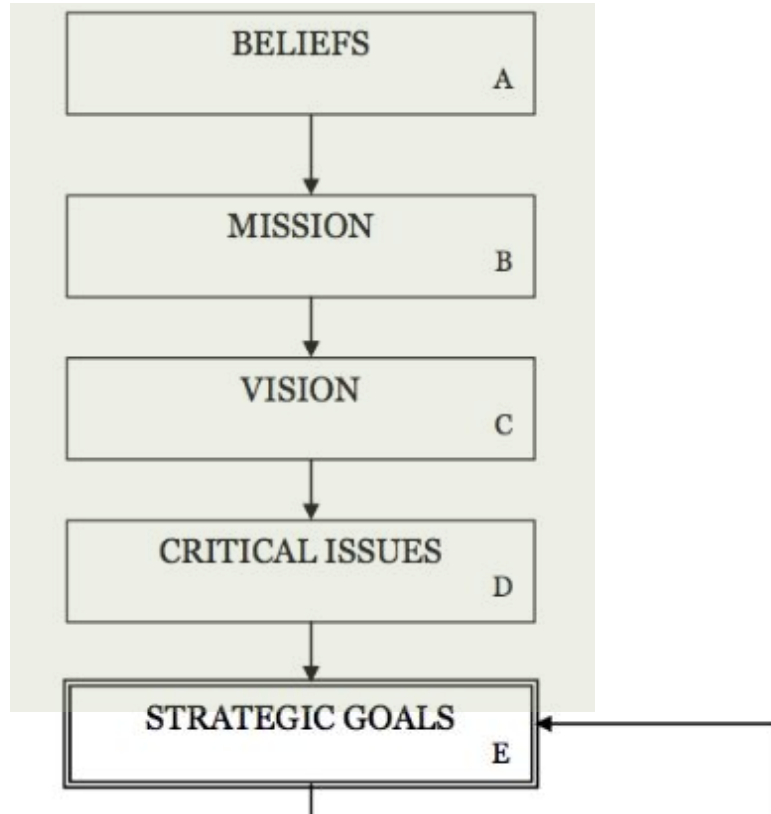**GOALS**

- Build knowledge & shared understanding
- draft recommendations based on data
- act as ambassadors for Phase II

MAEP:
Phase I (2018-19)

Strategic Arts Education Planning Model

BELIEFS — A

↓

MISSION — B

↓

VISION — C

↓

CRITICAL ISSUES — D

↓

STRATEGIC GOALS — E

The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education

7 Purposes

4 Lenses

Research-Based Practice

NATIONALCORE ARTSSTANDARDS

Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre And Visual Arts

What Are The Standards?

A process that guides educators in providing a unified quality arts education for students in Pre-K through high school.

Read more →

Creating

- Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard #2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard #3. Refine and complete artistic work.

Performing/ Presenting/ Producing

- Anchor Standard #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard #6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Responding

- Anchor Standard #7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Anchor Standard #8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Anchor Standard #9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Connecting

- Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Cross-Discipline Foundation

Analysis of Arts Education Plans
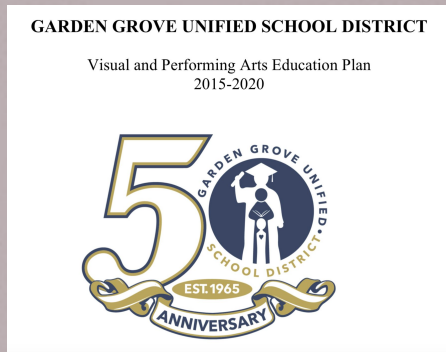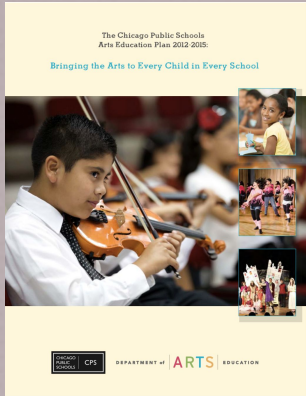
Chicago Public

Garden Grove Unified

Guilford County
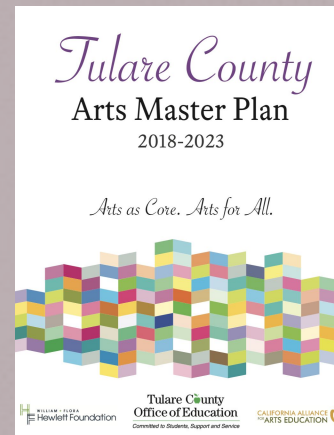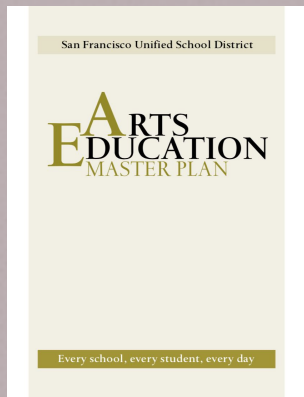
San Francisco Unified

Santa Barbara

Tulare County

Baseline Analysis

Critical Issues: *Assets & Limitations*

The Arts Tax

Our Metrics on Access K-5

YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK
ARTS TAX

...and now we introduce:

*George Middle
School Strings*

HAPPY TAX DAY

Thank you for your continued support!

ARTS TAX DATA REPORT:
K-5 Metrics & Impact
2012-19
*Arts Tax implemented in 2013-14

K-5 Arts Teacher FTE by Year

2012-2013 15 FTE	2013-2014 50 FTE	2014-2015 56 FTE	2015-2016 64 FTE	2016-2017 67 FTE	2017-2018 63 FTE	2018-2019 63 FTE
15	50	56	64	67	63	63
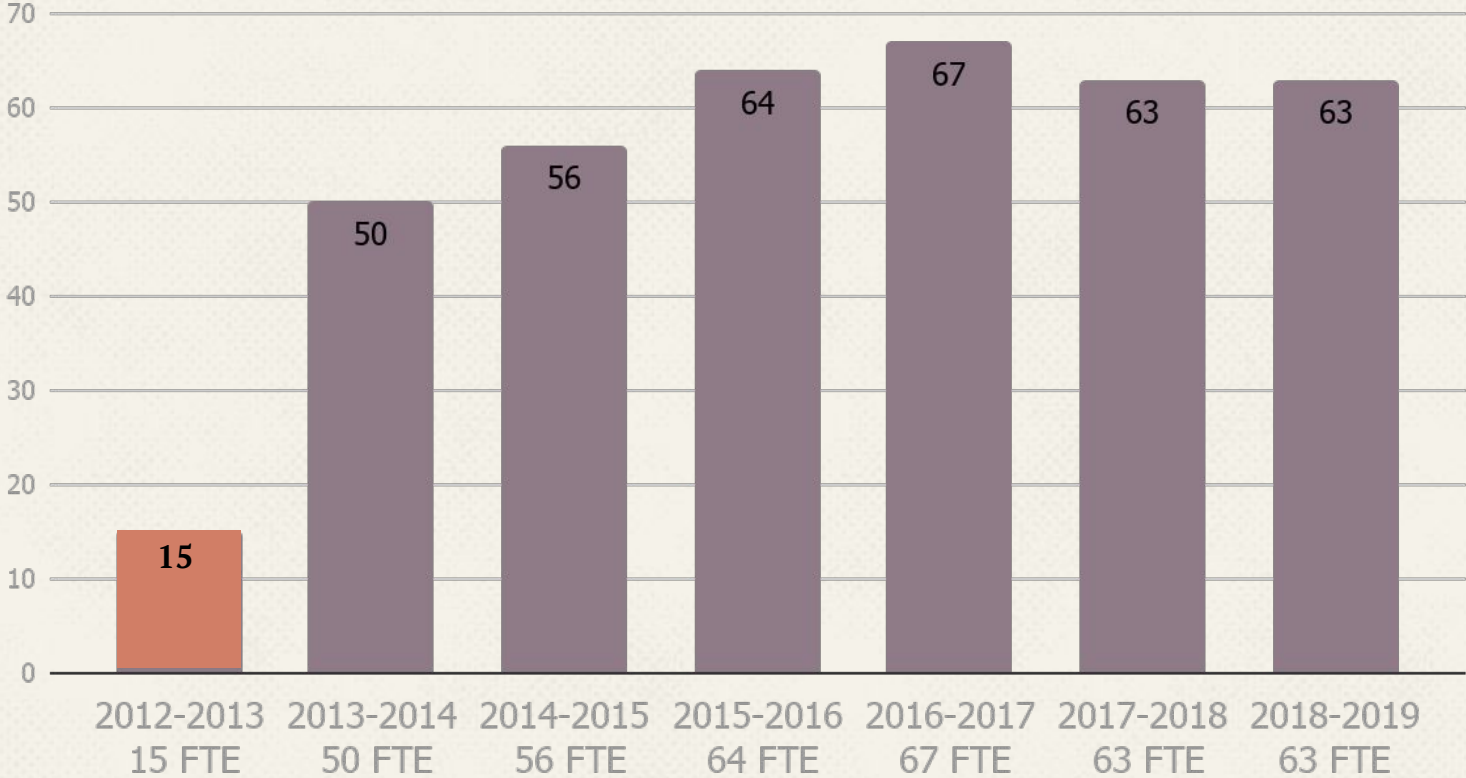
57 TOTAL SCHOOLS SERVING K-5

ARTS TAX DATA REPORT:
K-5 Metrics & Impact
2018-19 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

30.7 @
38 schools

1.1 @
2 schools

32.1 @
44 schools

5.8 @
7 schools
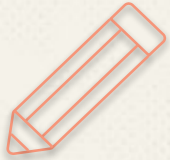
Total K-5 Arts Teacher FTE

63.1

ARTS TAX DATA REPORT:
K-5 Metrics & Impact
2018-19
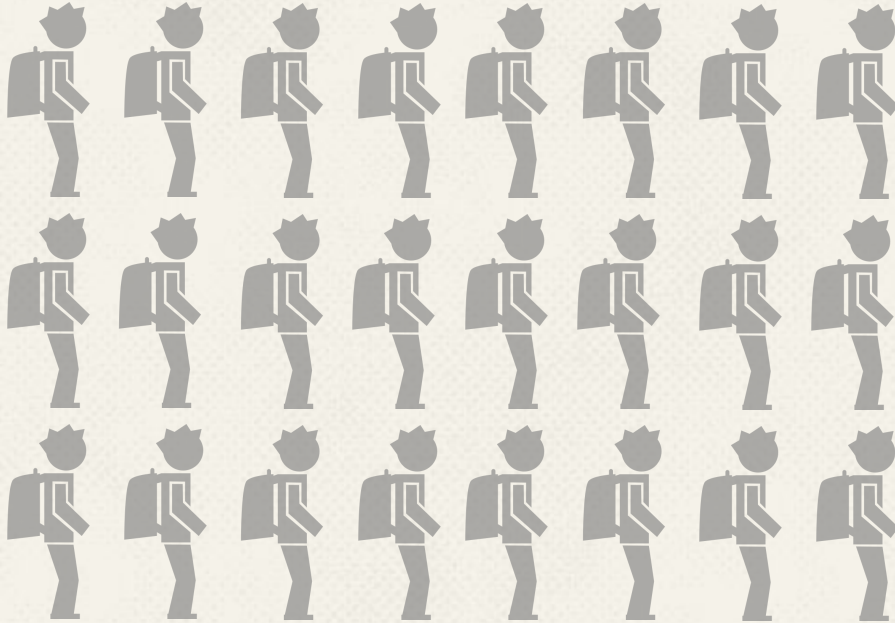
Number of K-5 Students Served

21,738

44% of all students

375/1

Student/Teacher Ratio

Baseline Analysis

Critical Issues: Assets & Limitations

- *K-12 Pathways*
- *Minutes of Instruction*

LINCOLN CLUSTER

2018-19

Lincoln High School

Dance	0
Music	1.5
Theatre	.5
Visual Arts	3.8
Total	5.8

West Sylvan Middle School

Dance	1.0
Music	.5
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	2.0
Total	2.5

Skyline K-8

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Ainsworth K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	.5
Total	1.5

Bridlemile K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Chapman K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Forest Park K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

JEFFERSON CLUSTER

2018-19

Faubion Pre K-8

Dance	1.0
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	2.0

Chief Joseph K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Ockley Green Middle School

Dance	1.0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	3.0

Woodlawn K-5

Dance	0
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	.8
Total	.8

Jefferson High School

Dance	3.9
Music	0
Theatre	1.7
Visual Arts	3
Total	7.07

Tubman Middle School

Dance	1.0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	3.0

Boise-Eliot/Humboldt K-5

Dance	0
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	1.0

Vernon K-8

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	2.0

King K-5

Dance	.5
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	.5

5th Grade Baseline
Minutes of Instruction:

MAEPers
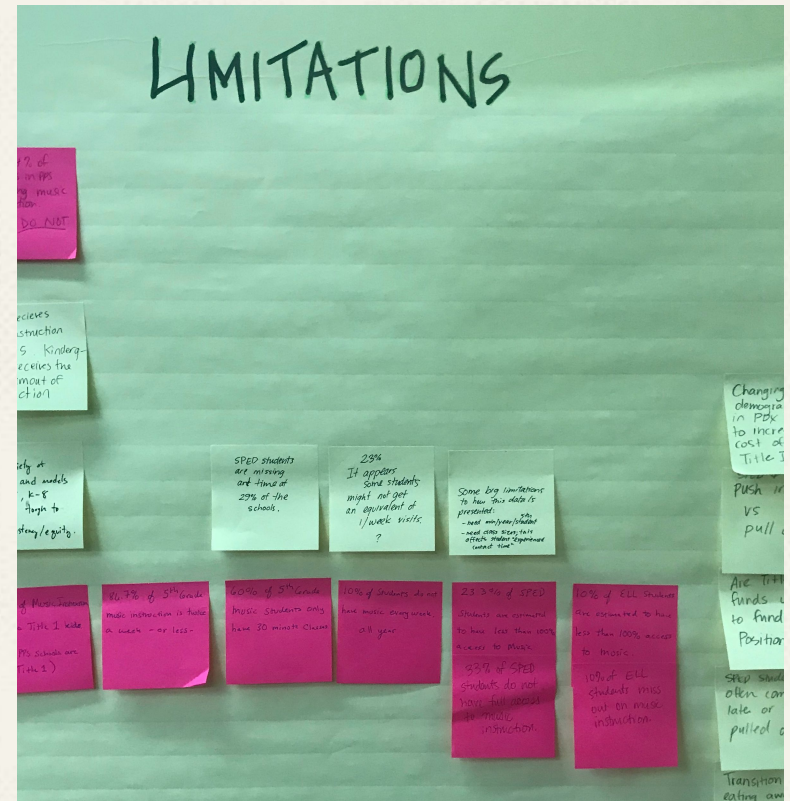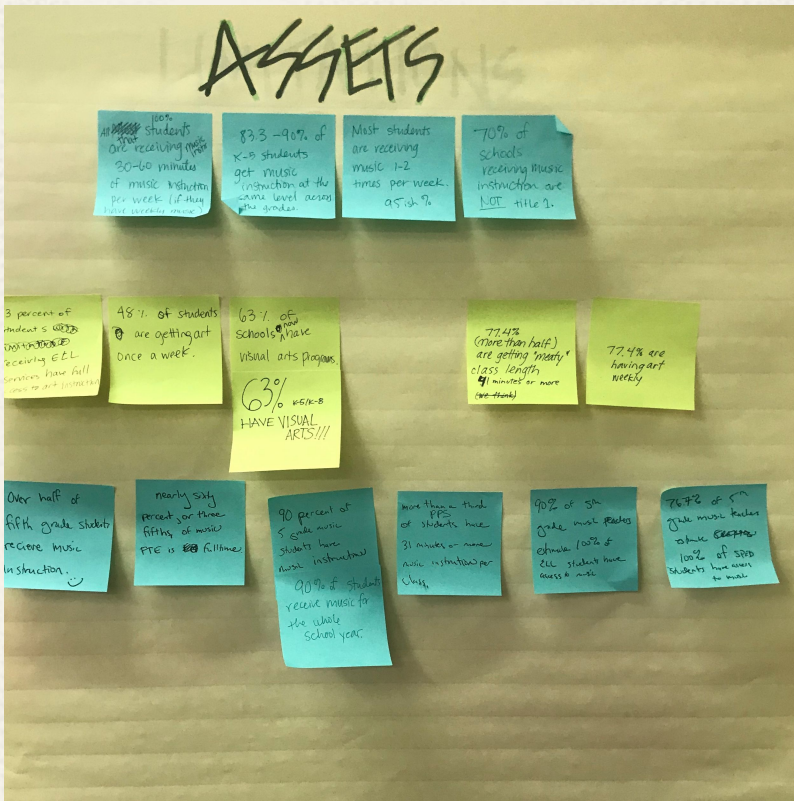
BRIGHT SPOTS

BRIGHT SPOTS:
K-12 Pathways

Music:

Total Pathways: 32/58

At least 1 Pathway in
7 out of 8 Clusters

8/9 Cleveland

5/6 Roosevelt

8/10 Franklin

5/5 Lincoln

Visual Arts:

Total Pathways: 34/58

At least 1 Pathway in
All Clusters

5/7 Jefferson

6/6 Wilson

6/7 Madison

6/8 Grant

BRIGHT SPOTS:
K-12 Pathways

Music: 5th Grade Access

In K-5 schools where there is a music program, **90%** of 5th Graders receive instruction all year, and **90%** meet at least weekly.

77% of students receiving SPED services have access to music class **100% of the time**.

90% of students receiving ELL services have access to music class **100% of the time**.

BRIGHT SPOTS: K-12 Pathways

Visual Arts: 5th Grade Access

63% of all K-5 schools have a visual arts program, and **78%** of these programs offer weekly access.

71% of students receiving SPED services have access to visual arts class **100% of the time**.

93% of students receiving ELL services have access to music class **100% of the time**.

Key Opportunities

How can we establish materials and supplies as centrally-supported instructional resources?

How can we establish curricular & instructional supports for equitable student access?

How can we ensure centrally defined K-12 pathways for all students?

LOOKING AHEAD

MAEP Phases II & III

MAEP: Phase II (2019-2020)

- Finalize Mission & Vision
- Site Visits
- Community Listening Sessions
- Arts Partners
- Strategic Goals

Arts Orgs

VAPA Teachers

Teacher
Stakeholders

Students
& Families

CBOs

School Communities
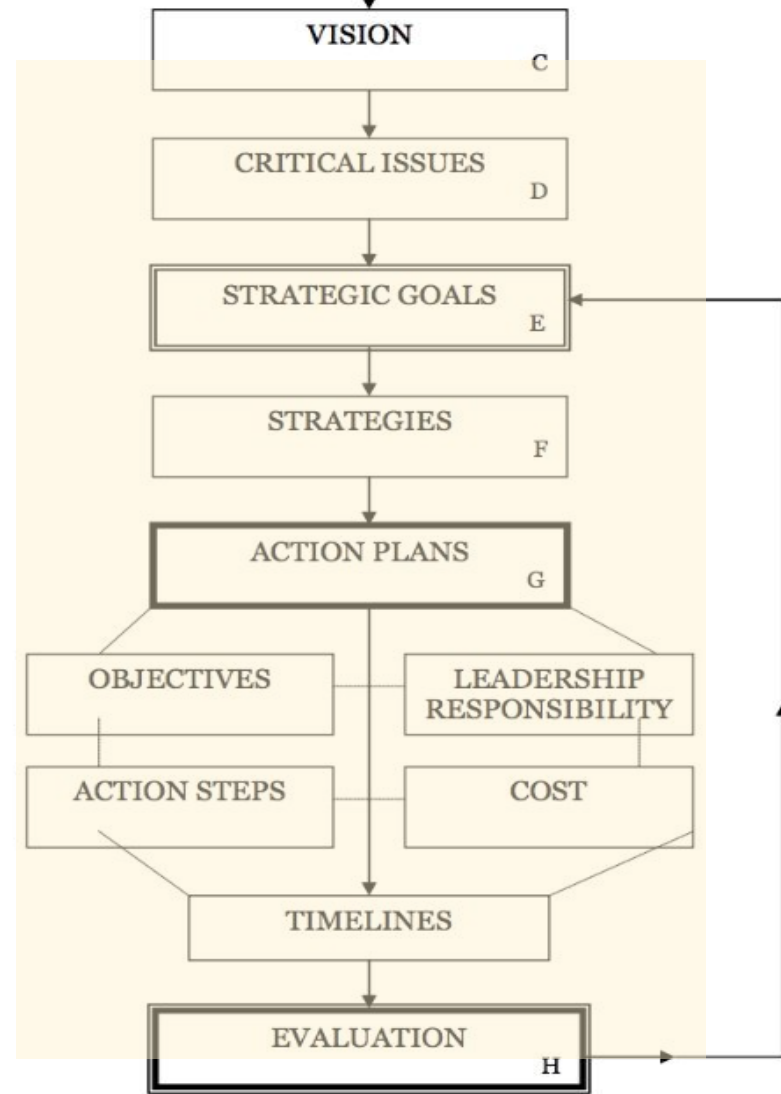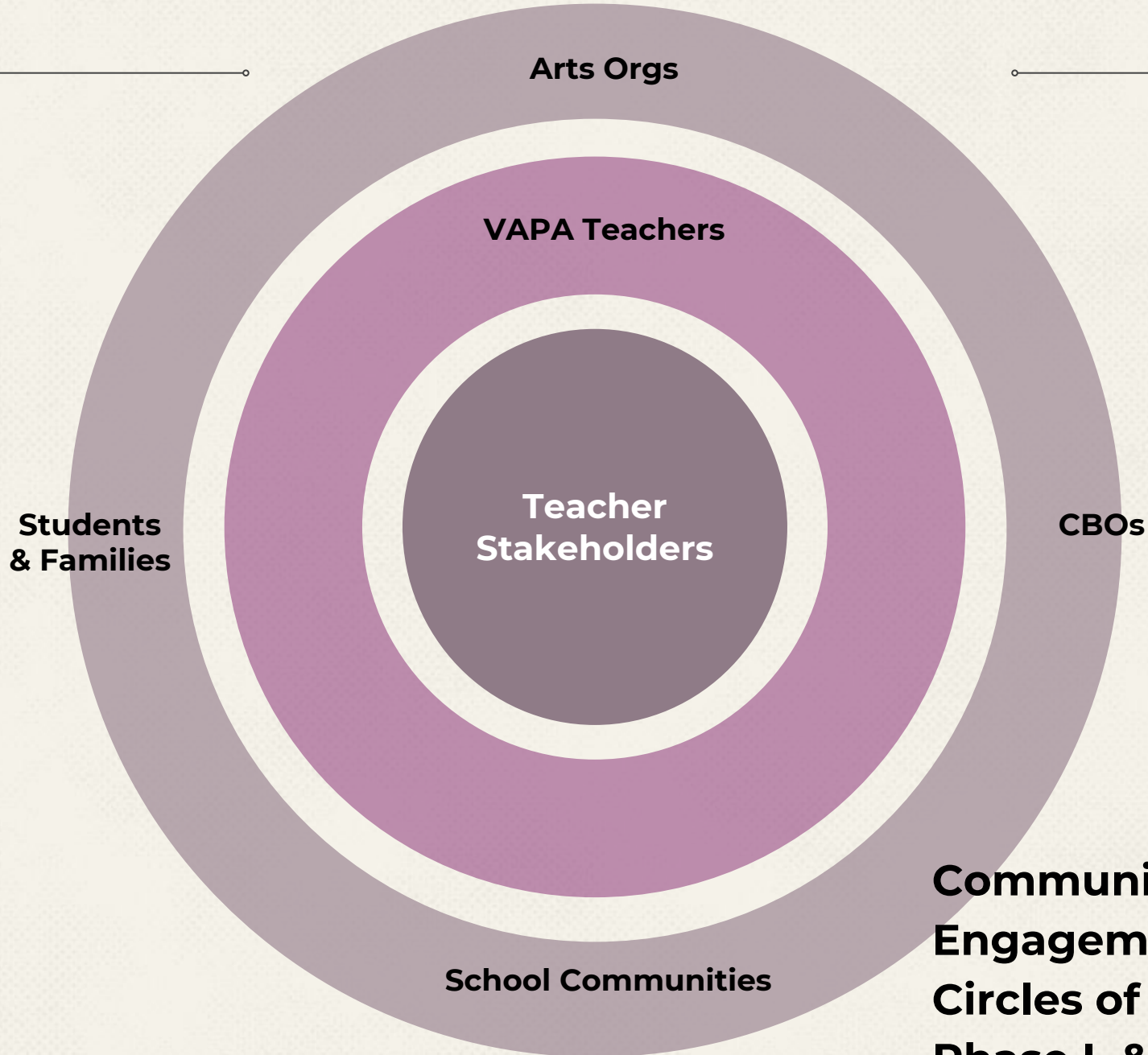
Community
Engagement
Circles of Influence:
Phase I & Phase II

Circles of Impact:
MAEP Phase III
Implementation

PPS Arts:
A Vision of the Future

PORTLAND MADE
ORE · USA

A Vision of the Future

Program of Study	K - 12	Sequential Arts Learning & Partnerships

OFFERINGS:

Dance
Music
Theatre
Visual Arts &
Literary Arts

THEMES:

*Scholarship
Technical Skill
Creative Process
Social & Emotional Learning
Career & Technical
Education
Social Justice & Citizenry*

K-12 cluster pathways in all schools in at least two disciplines

Summer Arts Academy & After-school arts offerings

Embedded Literary Arts integration through partnerships & professional development.

Embedded grade-band specific arts partnership experiences in each arts discipline

PD for teachers with partnership organization

Grounding students in agency, leadership and creative thinking

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ORE · USA

Acknowledgements

The OTL Team, Including Senior Director, STEAM Education Sarah Davis

Arts Teachers & Arts Partners in Attendance

Roosevelt HS Jazz Band & Jason Margolis

George MS Strings & Emmett McCutchenne

Q & A

Board of Education
Meeting Materials Cover Sheet   April 11, 2019

A. Strategic Planning Model for PPS Master Arts Education Plan
   a. **Pages 1-6**

B. Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education
   a. **Pages 7-142**

C. National Core Arts Standards Framework
   a. **Pages 143-169**

D. Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative
   a. **Pages 170-201**

E. PPS Visual & Performing Arts Pathways Data (Lincoln & Jefferson)
   a. **Pages 202-203**

F. PPS Visual & Performing Arts FTE K-5 by School 2018-19 Student-Teacher Ratio
   a. **Page 204**

G. PPS Visual & Performing Arts Past, Present, Future State
   a. **Pages 205-206**

ABC PROJECT

Arts in Basic Curriculum

SC Arts Commission | SC Dept of Education | Winthrop University

Arts Education
Strategic Planning Manual

This document is meant to serve as a resource for current and prospective ABC sites in the strategic planning process. Please contact ABC Project Director Christine Fisher **before** beginning the strategic planning process.

This edition developed for

Arts Education Leadership Institute 2014

--Modified from Original Document--

INTRODUCTION

In his book titled Strategic Planning for America's Schools (1988), Bill Cook describes strategic planning as "an effective combination of both process and discipline which, if faithfully adhered to, produces a plan characterized by originality, vision, and realism." He continues as follows:

> The discipline includes the vital ingredients of the plan itself; the process is the organizational dynamic through which the vital ingredients are derived. Both the discipline and the process are aimed at total concentration of the organization's resources on mutually predetermined measurable outcomes.

It is from this perspective that Arts Education Strategic Planning Team will approach the planning process. A strategic arts education plan should serve as a guide toward the development and implementation of a quality arts education program, which offers the promise of meeting the needs of all students at all levels of the instructional process.

The plan should be grounded in the overall educational philosophy and should be consistent with the primary mission of the district or school. The manual is designed to support the strategic planning process model displayed on the next page. A series of worksheets will guide participants through the planning process. The manual is structured to serve as the basis of planning team deliberations and to facilitate attainment of consensus on major plan components. Specifically, agreement must be reached with regard to the following:

- The significant challenges facing arts education in the district or school
- The arts education philosophy of the district or school
- The district's or the school's mission with regard to arts education
- The district's or school's vision for arts education
- The district's or school's long-term arts education goals
- The specific strategies by which the district or school will work toward the designated goals

These five features, each of which is defined on the page following the process model, will form the basic structure of the plan. Comprehensive action plans, to be developed in the latter stages of the process, will address key issues related to priority activities, schedules/timelines, leadership responsibilities, and associated costs. An outline of procedures/methods by which progress will be evaluated will complete the strategic arts education plan.

Crucial to a successful planning effort is the strategic planning team. This group should include broad-based representation, not only from the educational community, but from the larger, external community as well. It is recommended that planning team composition include district and school administrators, district- and school-level arts educators, parents, students, community leaders, community arts representatives, and business/industry leaders.
Planning team participants must understand the responsibility demanded by the process, must be willing to devote significant time and energy to the effort, and must have as their primary focus an interest in moving the district or the school forward in the area of arts education.

Strategic Planning Leaders
Making Strategic Planning Work*

1. Understanding Context – Leaders need to appreciate the social, political, and economic history and recognize how best to balance these forces in a given context. They must also have an intimate knowledge of their organization in order to make sense of it in relation to broader context.

2. Understanding the people involved – Leaders should understand the people who are involved in strategic planning AND implementation, including themselves. They should develop and appreciation of the rich diversity of these people as well as their commonality for this is the heart of leadership. Such strength enables people to focus on what matters to them, balance competing demands, maintain a sense of humor, and find courage to take risk, explore difficult issues and new strategies, and pursue what might be unpopular causes.

3. Sponsoring and championing the process – Leaders should have enough prestige, power and authority to commit the organization to strategic planning and hold people accountable. They model the kind of behavior they hope to get: reasoned, diligent, committed, enthusiastic, good spirited pursuit of the common good. They keep the process on track and push, encourage, and cajole the strategic planning team through any difficulties.

4. Fostering Collective Leadership – When strategic planning is successful, it is a collective achievement. Many people contribute to its success, sometimes leading, other times following.

*From "Leadership Roles in Making the Strategic Planning Work." (Chapter 11) Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: By John M. Bryson and Barbara C. Crosby. (1995) Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Strategic Arts Education Planning Model

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  BELIEFS                │
                    │                    A    │
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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  MISSION                │
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                    │                    C    │
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                    │  CRITICAL ISSUES        │
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                    │  STRATEGIC GOALS        │◄──────┐
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                    │  ACTION PLANS           │       │
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                    └─────────────────────────┘       │
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OBJECTIVES		LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY
ACTION STEPS		COST

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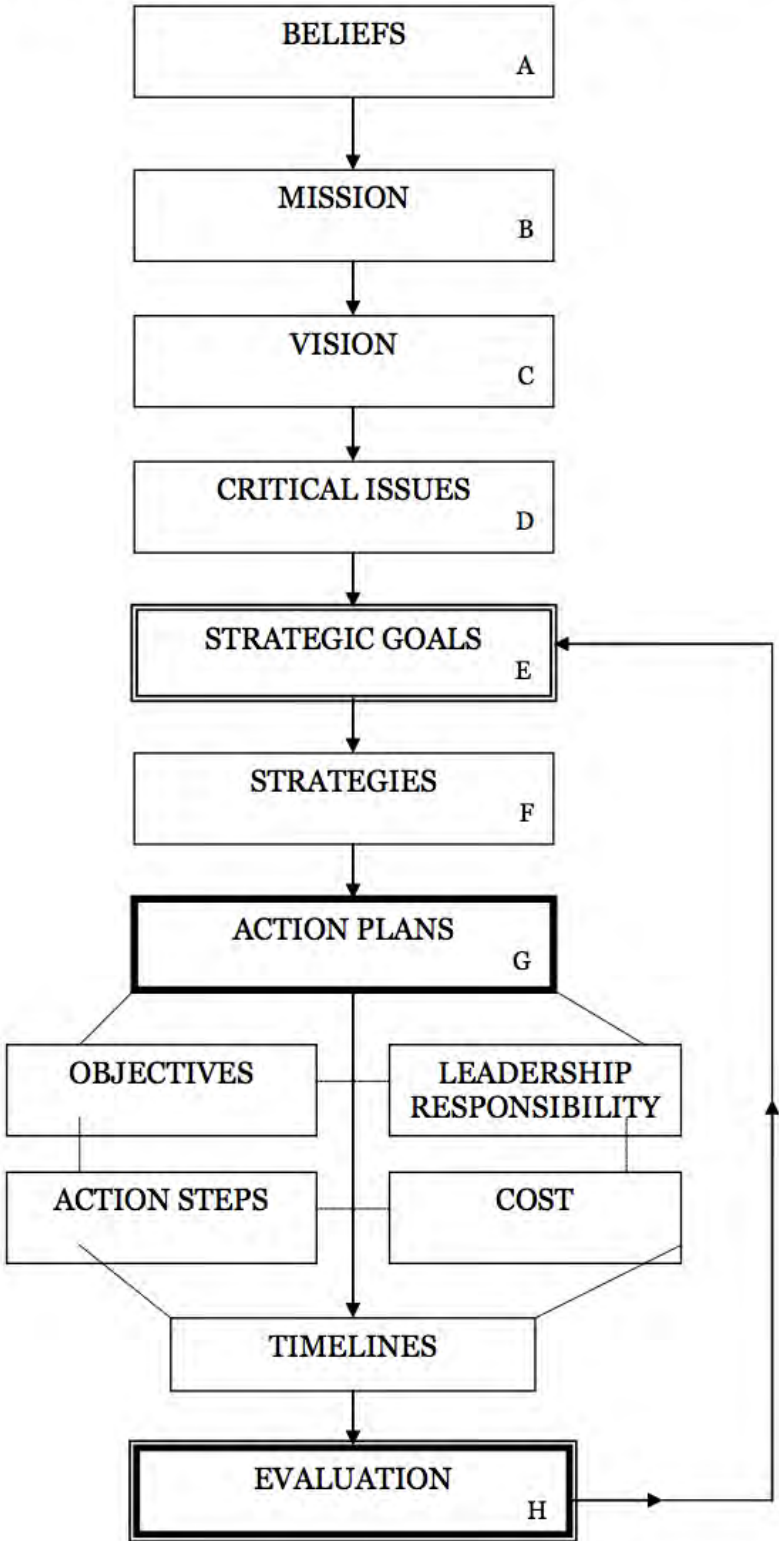
Strategic Arts Education Plan: Definitions and Features

A.   Arts Education Beliefs (Philosophy): Formal expressions of the district's or school's beliefs and values regarding arts education
        --and--
 Arts Education Purposes:

Arts programs have a variety of purposes that are closely linked to the communities and contexts in which they operate. Not all of these purposes are directly related to learning, and a distinction can be drawn between an arts program's learning purposes and its programmatic purposes. A learning purpose has to do with the specific skills, dispositions, and understandings a program aims to teach. Programmatic purposes are often more general in nature and emerge in response to community and political needs and realities that include but can also extend beyond the arts per se. (Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland, & Palmer, 2009, p. 17)

B.   Mission: A description of the purpose of the district's or school's arts education program stated in results-oriented terms

C.   Vision: A description of what the district's or school's arts education program should look like in 2009 and beyond. Vision statements should address instructional objectives, quality, and delivery systems as well as the relationship of the arts to other curricula areas and the community

D.   Critical Issues: The collection, organization, and synthesis of critical data regarding the strengths, weaknesses, problems, and opportunities related to arts education and to the factors which are likely to affect arts education efforts

E.   Strategic Goals: Statements of the district's or school's long-term (3-5 years) arts education goals for students stated in results-oriented terms

F.   Strategies: Statements of the initiatives through which the district or school strategic goals will be met stated in "concrete" language and in measurable terms

G.   Action Plans: Detailed descriptions of the actions required to implement respective strategies, including priority activities, schedules/timelines, leadership responsibilities, and associated cost

H.   Evaluation: A description of the procedures and methods by which progress toward strategic goals and action plan objectives will be regularly assessed and monitored

Naming Our Beliefs:
Beliefs & Purposes of Arts Education
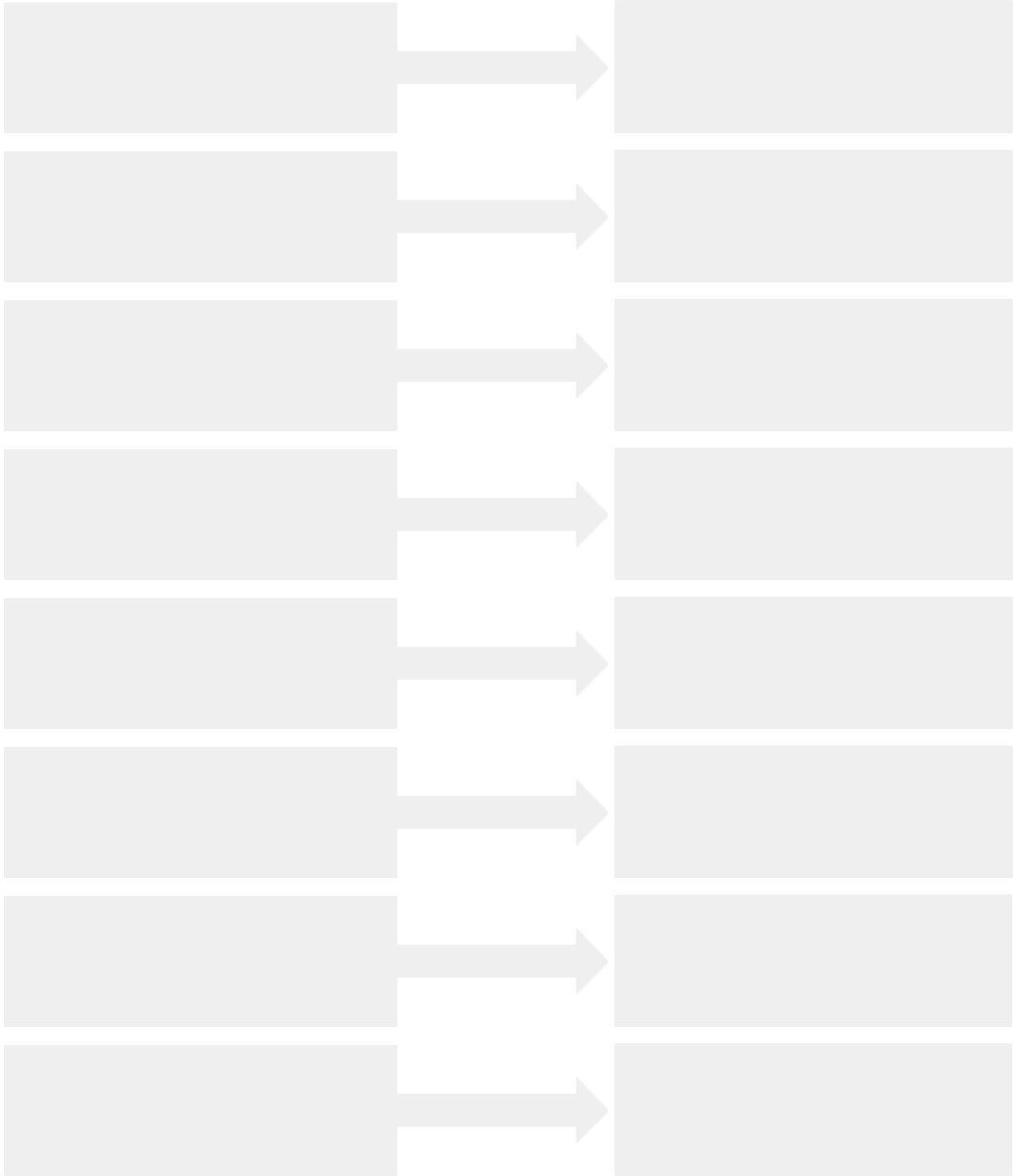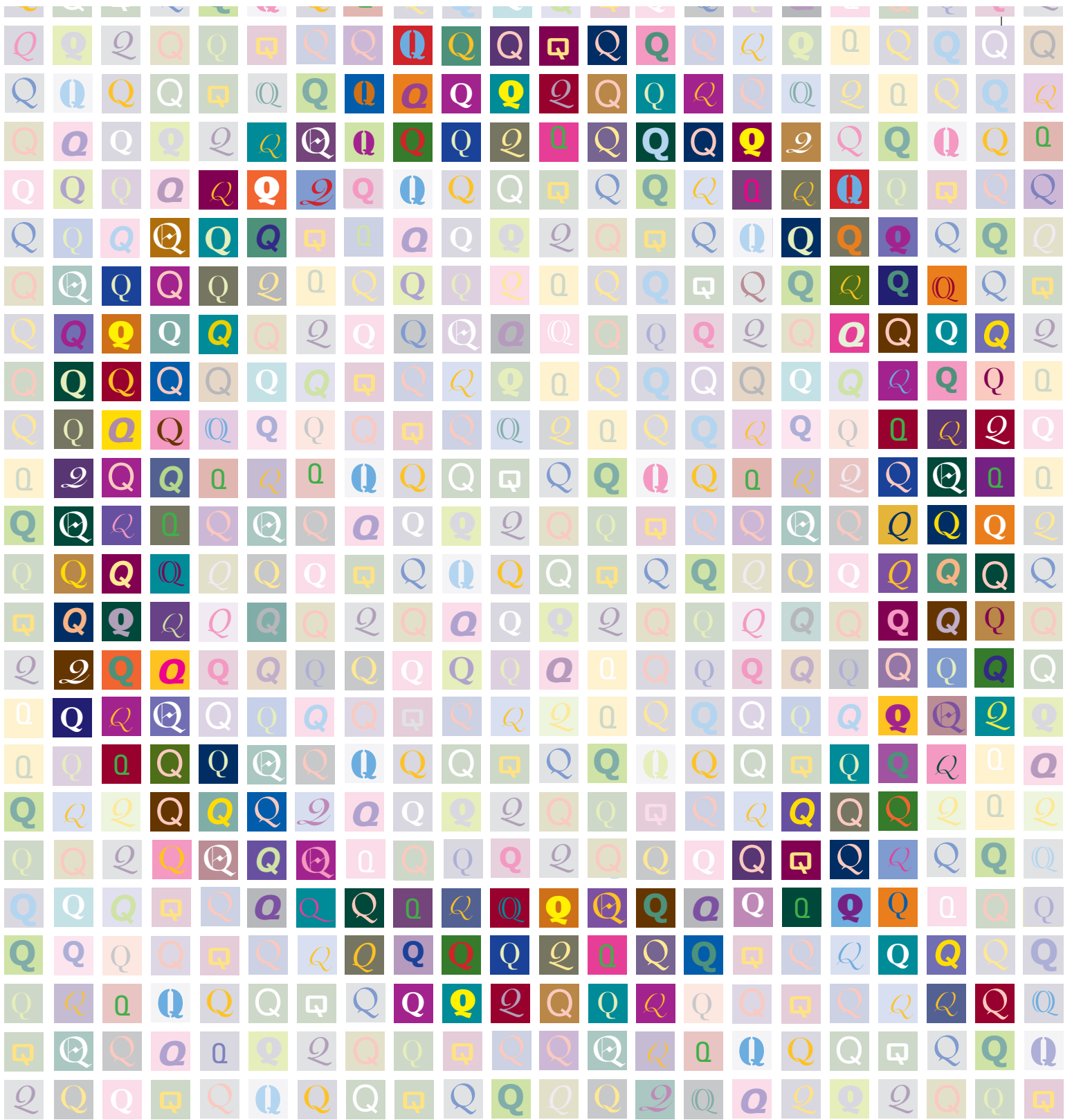
The Qualities of Quality

Understanding Excellence in Arts Education

Steve Seidel | Shari Tishman | Ellen Winner | Lois Hetland | Patricia Palmer

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Understanding Excellence in Arts Education

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A CLARION CALL SHOULD GO OUT TO ALL who care about teaching the arts to read this remarkable report. It is a stunning and groundbreaking exploration into the complex factors, actors, and settings that must be aligned to achieve quality in arts education.

I read with awe and gratitude the researchers' extraordinarily comprehensive, generous, and balanced embrace of the array of theories, debates, and opinions about quality that abound in the field of arts education, giving each the honor of respect and asking that their proponents join a common quest that makes quality experiences of learners the central goal and ultimate, though surely not the lone, criterion of success.

Steve Seidel, who led this Harvard Project Zero research effort, used routine examples with audiences in the early phases of the study to indicate the distinction between encounters with a work of art that is itself of the highest quality and a quality experience of that work. For instance, a master chef has prepared an exquisite meal and invited a group of friends to share it at her restaurant on a lovely summer evening. Unfortunately the air conditioning isn't working at the restaurant, the waiters are surly, and two of the friends have had a nasty argument on the way to the restaurant that dominates the dinner conversation. The meal itself is of the highest quality but the experiences of the diners are not.

Seidel and his team focused their energies on exploring this second dimension of quality: that of the learners experiencing the arts in an educational setting.

They give priority to the understandings of quality expressed by those educators "in the room" where the learning experience occurs. What do the teachers and artists believe constitute the qualities of arts learning? Why do they believe it important that students experience those qualities? What outcomes of the experiences do they deem most important?

No single answer emerges from these questions, but the researchers found central features of the visions, values, and purposes expressed by those directly engaged in teaching and learning that they consider the touchstones of quality. Those visions, values, and purposes were shaped by the personal experiences of the artists and teachers in learning and practicing an art. They have a passion and commitment to shape comparable quality experiences for students. And from their personal experiences they know that quality is a constant and persistent quest and not an end game, a quest for ever richer personal experiences, for higher perfection in the art works they make, and for a deeper understanding of the qualities in their own art and that of others.

How do those "outside the room" – administrators, policy makers, theorists, researchers – contribute to creating the opportunities for such learning to occur? This report urges them to derive their views, decisions, and actions from frequent and active discussions with those working "in the room" so that all parties determine how the quality of the conditions for learning time, materials, personnel and resources, are consonant with the aim of quality experiences of learning.

Reading the report is being in the presence of a community of learners who have labored with openness and generosity of spirit to find in their research data – gathered by literature reviews, expert interviews, and site visits – the fundamental questions, concepts, themes, and conditions that define and make quality possible. They distill their conversations into beautiful and clear prose in the central chapters of Parts I and II and into the set of "tools" in Part III to help others gather similar data and have the same conversations.

Indeed they frequently and modestly invite readers to consider this report a conversation starter that they hope will engage and assist others in the quest for the thoughts and actions that will create more and deeper arts learning experiences for those "in and out of the room."

This report itself is of the highest quality and it is a quality experience to read it.

Richard J. Deasy
Former Director, Arts Education Partnership

The Richard J. Deasy Award for Arts and Education was recently established to honor Mr. Deasy's career for its contributions to the arts in education. The award will be given annually to an outstanding arts educator by the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

Executive Summary

MANY CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES have little or no opportunity for formal arts instruction, and access to arts learning experiences remains a critical national challenge. In addition, the *quality* of arts learning opportunities that are available to young people is a serious concern. Understanding this second challenge – the challenge of creating and sustaining high quality formal arts learning experiences for K-12 youth, inside and outside of school – is the focus of our recent research initiative, *The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education*, commissioned by The Wallace Foundation and conducted by Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The study focuses on the character of excellence itself and asks three core questions:

(1) How do arts educators in the United States – including leading practitioners, theorists, and administrators – conceive of and define high quality arts learning and teaching?

(2) What markers of excellence do educators and administrators look for in the actual activities of arts learning and teaching as they unfold in the classroom?

(3) How do a program's foundational decisions, as well as its ongoing day-to-day decisions, affect the pursuit and achievement of quality?

These questions were investigated through three strands of research: Interviews with leading arts practitioners, theorists and administrators; site visits to exemplary arts programs across a range of settings; and a review of published literature. Sources in each of these areas were selected through an extensive nomination process in which several hundred arts educators and administrators across the country, working in a wide variety of contexts and art forms, nominated candidates in each area. This report presents our findings and offers a set of tools to help arts educators and their associates reflect on and discuss the character of high quality arts learning and teaching in their own settings.

Some of the major themes and findings of the study include the following:

The drive for quality is personal, passionate, and persistent. For most of the people surveyed in this study, ideas about what constitutes quality in arts education are inextricably tied to their values and to fundamental issues of identity and meaning. Though people differ in their specific visions and concerns, a commonality among almost all with whom we spoke is that the drive for quality is persistent and far-reaching. This drive is ever-present in all aspects of their educational work and shapes their goals for young people. For example, most educators we interviewed wanted young people to have experience *with* quality – with excellent materials, outstanding works of art, passionate and accomplished artist-teachers modeling their artistic processes – and experiences *of* quality – powerful group interactions and ensemble work, performances that make them feel proud, rewarding practice sessions, technical excellence, and successful expressivity.

Quality arts education serves multiple purposes simultaneously. The question of what constitutes high quality arts education is deeply linked to the question of why we should be teaching the arts. It is not surprising that when arts educators talk about excellence they also express ideas about the fundamental purposes of arts education – ideas about what students ought to learn through the arts and why these outcomes are important. Our informants mentioned many purposes, and most of them cluster into a handful of broad areas. For example,

many arts educators believe that one of the important purposes of arts education is to foster broad dispositions and habits of mind, especially the capacity to think creatively , and the capacity to make connections. Many also believe that arts education should help students develop aesthetic awareness and visual observation skills and provide venues for self-expression and self-exploration. It is notable that most of the people with whom we spoke believe that good arts programs tend to serve several purposes simultaneously. Though arts programs differ widely in their contexts, goals, art forms, and constituencies, a hallmark sign of high quality arts learning in any program is that the learning experiences are rich and complex for all learners, engaging them on many levels and helping them learn and grow in a variety of ways.

Quality reveals itself "in the room" through four different lenses. When you ask arts educators what they take to be the signs of high quality arts education, they are as likely to point to features of the experience in the setting itself as they are to broad purposes and outcomes. These experiential elements are what you would expect to observe or infer if you opened the door onto a classroom, studio, or rehearsal hall and looked for markers of quality.

There are multiple kinds of markers, and one way to look for them is to examine the experience through four different but overlapping lenses: *learning, pedagogy, community dynamics*, and *environment*. These lenses all focus on the same experience, but each one brings a different dimension into view. The *learning* lens focuses on what students are actually doing in the classroom – the kinds of projects and tasks in which they are involved and the character of their engagement. The *pedagogy* lens focuses on how teachers conceive of and practice their craft – how they conceptualize the teacher-student relationship, and how they design and implement instruction. The *community dynamics* lens reveals the nature of the social relationships in the classroom, including relationships among the students themselves, between students and teachers, and among the teachers and other adults who are present. The *environment* lens focuses on concrete

elements such as the physical space of the classroom, the materials and physical resources available, and the kind of time students are given – hours as well as years – to engage in arts learning.

Foundational decisions matter. Foundational, program-defining decisions that give a program its identity and provide the parameters within which quality is pursued. These decisions include (1) *Who teaches the arts?* (2) *Where are the arts taught?* (3) *What is taught and how?* and (4) *How is arts learning assessed?* Scholars have written extensively about these decisions, and they often take sharply opposing positions. In practice, however, the ways in which high quality programs answer these questions tend to be nuanced and contextualized, often embodying high principles and pragmatic concerns at the same time.

Decisions and decision makers at all levels affect quality. Many decision makers play a critical role in the quality of arts learning experiences. These include people quite distant from the classroom (e.g., administrators, funders, policy makers), those just outside the room – notably program staff and parents, and those who are "in the room" (students, teachers, artists). Decisions made by those "in the room" have tremendous power to support as well as undermine the quality of the learning experience. This is especially true of students, and it is important for students to be as aware as possible of the potential impact of their choices on their own and others' learning experiences. This may seem obvious, but the role of student choice is often overlooked in discussions of quality, and it invites greater attention.

Reflection and dialogue is important at all levels. An overarching theme across many of the findings of this study is that continuous reflection and discussion about what constitutes quality and how to achieve it is not only a catalyst *for* quality but also a sign *of* quality. In other words, thinking deeply about quality – talking about it, worrying about it, continually revisiting ideas about its characteristics and its indicators – is essential both to the pursuit of excellence in arts education and

to its achievement. Another overarching theme is that a misalignment of ideas among decision-makers about what constitutes quality often complicates a program's pursuit of quality. Alignment is easy to ignore, and achieving alignment among decision-makers at all levels often requires far more basic investigation, dialogue, and negotiation than is given.

In what follows, we offer several tools to help decision makers address the twin challenges of reflection and alignment. The tools are designed to be used by individuals or by groups in workshops or other collegial settings. Their purpose is to help arts educators and their associates build and clarify their visions of high quality arts education, identify elements of quality in their own programs, reflect on the relationship between quality and a program's foundational decisions, seek alignment between a program's beliefs about quality and its practices, and seek alignment across decision makers at all levels who help to shape a program's pursuit of quality.

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Acknowledgements

We thank The Wallace Foundation for commissioning this study and for their recognition of the importance of the issue of quality in arts education.

This has been a complex study and many people have provided insight, support, critique, expertise, and perspective. Hundreds of people were interviewed and observed in the course of this study. We are tremendously grateful to all of them. Their honesty, integrity, wisdom, and generosity were inspiring. A list of all of the sites we visited and the people we interviewed in our interview strand appears in the appendix of the report. We are unable to list the names of everyone we interviewed at the sites – students, parents, teachers, administrators, and many more – but we are indebted to all who took the time to sit and talk with us about quality in arts education.

In addition, many people responded to our call for nominations of programs, experts, and literature, and over 120 sites applied to be part of the study. We thank all those who took our call for nominations and applications so seriously.

Amy Baione and Jen Ryan were invaluable research assistants on the project and dedicated members of the core research team. Our team also included wonderful students in or associated with the Arts in Education program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education: Megan Brown, Edward Clapp, Marit Dewhurst, Regan Doody, Martina Hinojosa, Shira Katz, Dorothea Lasky, Marguerite Nicoll, Barbara Palley, Ashley Rybowiak, Rachel Schiller, and Anna Tirovalas.

Kimberly Sheridan, assistant Professor in Educational Psychology and Art Education at George Mason University, was an invaluable member of the literature review research team. We thank Dr. Dan Serig and Rachel Nelson, from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, who also contributed to the literature review. In addition, Paddy Bowman, Tina Curran, and Mark Borchelt, were generous advisors. We thank Luna Kids Dance in Oakland, CA for opening their resource library to us.

All of our colleagues at Project Zero inspire us. For their help on this project, we thank Veronica Boix-Mansilla, Howard Gardner, Stephanie Kacoyanis, David Perkins, Cindy Quense, Damari Rosado, Denise Simon, Tom Trapnell, Terri Turner, and Daniel Wilson.

We thank Bob Fogel, Jack Jennings, and Helen Page at the Harvard Graduate School of Education for their wise counsel at key moments in this process.

Along with many of the people listed above, Barbara Andrews and Elisa Callow provided extensive feedback on drafts of this report and we are grateful for their insights. Fernando Hernández and Myran Parker-Brass provided generous counsel early in the development of the project. Sarah Cunningham and Jane Polin provided important support along the way. Cyrus Driver of The Ford Foundation was also especially helpful at key points in this work.

We have had the opportunity to present reports on this work at a number of conferences and symposia. We thank the organizers of all of those events and the many people who spoke with us during and after those sessions, sharing their perspectives on the design and progress of our study and directly on the question of quality in arts education.

We thank Andrea Tishman for her design of this report.

We are deeply grateful to Dick Deasy and Sandra Ruppert of the Arts Education Partnership for their faith, counsel, and support for this work.

Contents

Introduction

Quality: *1. An inherent feature; a characteristic.*
2. A judgment of excellence; a feature of value.

FOR THOSE WHO CARE deeply about excellence in education, the pursuit of quality is as enigmatic as it is essential. At their best, educational programs are complex: They involve dynamic relationships among people, among communities, and among bodies of knowledge. Quality is often a moving target – what counts as high quality in one context or at a particular moment in time may seem quite inadequate at another time or place – and identifying the signs of quality can be challenging, especially in an enterprise as complex and context-specific as teaching and learning. At what – and where – should we look? Do test scores reflect the quality of an education? An arts education? Is the measure of quality in arts education in the works of art produced by students? In the processes by which those works were produced? In an amalgam of process and product? Conceptualizing excellence in arts education, let alone achieving and sustaining it, is full

of profound challenges. Yet the very nature of the arts – in particular, the way that striving for quality is at the core of artistry – may actually suggest that arts education is a fertile place to explore the meaning of quality in education more generally.

The title of this study is "The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education." As the title suggests, the word "quality" has a double meaning. On the one hand, a quality is a characteristic or feature of something. On the other, quality suggests excellence. This double meaning provides the contours of the research described in this report: Through interviews, case studies, and literature reviews, the Project Zero research team tried to discern how many U.S. arts educators in 2006-2007 were thinking about and trying to achieve the characteristics of excellence – the "qualities of quality" – in arts teaching and learning. The following chart identifies our major research questions and summarizes what we did to pursue them. A detailed description of our research activities is provided in Appendix A.

The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education	
3 Broad Research Questions	1. How do arts educators in the United States – including leading practitioners, theorists, and administrators – conceive of and define high quality arts learning and teaching? 2. What markers of excellence do educators and administrators look for in the actual activities of art learning and teaching as they unfold in the classroom? 3. How does a program's foundational decisions, as well as its ongoing day-to-day decisions, affect the pursuit and achievement of quality?
Scope of Research	*Ages:* Grades K-12. *Locations:* In school and out of school; urban, suburban, and rural sites. *Art Forms:* Dance, music, theater, visual arts, and some emerging forms, such as spoken word.
Three Research Strands	Literature review. Interviews with 16 recognized theorists and practitioners in the field. Site visits to 12 notable programs yielding interviews with over 250 people.
Nomination Process for Each Research Strand	Nominations solicited by email from several hundred arts education professionals in a wide range of roles across the United States.

Why study quality in arts education now?

Access and excellence

The infrastructure for in-school arts learning opportunities in the U.S. has been seriously weakened over the past century. This trend toward devaluing the arts as a core element in the curriculum appeared to reverse with the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (One Hundred Third Congress of the United States, 1994). Goals 2000 forged a beachhead for the arts by establishing arts as required subjects. As a result, the National Standards for Arts Education (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994) were developed, laying out what every student should know in the visual arts, music, theater, and dance. Largely because of this achievement, the arts were included as a core subject in the ensuing No Child Left Behind Act (US Department of Education, 2001). However, despite inclusion of arts in this law as part of the core curriculum, the No Child Left Behind Act has not strengthened arts education. With its focus on the "basics" of literacy and numeracy and the pressure for students to demonstrate competency through standardized tests in mathematics and English, many districts have continued the trend toward reduction or even elimination of arts offerings.

For children in economically affluent communities, opportunities to study the arts throughout their K-12 years generally remain available both in- and out-of-school and are often of high quality. These students see art in museums, theaters, and concert halls and often have the chance to study with serious and accomplished art teachers and artists. But for students living in or near poverty, access to formal arts learning experiences is nearly absent.

Our research has revealed that the field of arts education has great vitality. Many arts educators and their collaborators care deeply about the lives of our young citizens, with special concern for those most often denied access to excellent arts education. They work with intense commitment to provide access to quality arts learning for all. A close look at the field reveals exciting activity, some of it familiar and some quite innovative. As resources for in-school arts education diminish, enterprising arts educators have sought alternative ways of providing arts learning opportunities. Increasingly, this activity occurs outside of school walls and beyond the limits of the school day.

Of course, both in and out of schools, most arts educators and their collaborators struggle for funding to survive, let alone thrive. Nevertheless, a close look at the field reveals that important ideas about what constitutes excellence in arts education are embedded in efforts to secure existence and provide access. In this study, we sought to uncover these tacit views.

25 Years of Work on the Challenge of Quality

The challenges of access and excellence in arts education are hardly new; neither is the field's awareness of them. Significant efforts have been made for decades through research, theoretical debates, and, most importantly, through innovations in practice (see, for example, Performing Arts Workshop, 2006). Since the crippling legacy of Sputnik on arts education became clear in the 1960s, there have been waves of innovation, including the artist-in-residence movement, arts integrated curricula, and the creation of countless organizations outside the schools devoted to providing arts learning experiences to young people.

Throughout the many other developments of the past fifty years, efforts to address the challenges of achieving both access and quality in arts education have been on-going. The past 25 years, coinciding with the era of broad school reform efforts intiated by the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, have been especially rich in wide-reaching efforts to address the question of how to achieve and sustain quality arts education, even as creating access has become seriously challenging.

The school reform movement heralded unprecedented efforts to address the issue of quality across all academic areas. National, state, and local initiatives to establish high standards in the core academic areas, as well as curriculum frameworks that clarify what should be taught at each grade level, were significant efforts to insure that all children receive serious instruction across the curriculum and at every level. While the arts were only sometimes included in these initiatives, arts educators have lobbied for the arts as core curriculum and have established standards and frameworks for arts education.

At the same time, during these past 25 years, arts educators have been active in initiating reforms and innovations in the assessment of student learning, program evaluation, and professional development. Each of these areas was seen as a locus for leverage on the issue of quality. Assessment of student learning has remained quite authentic in relation to long-standing practices in the arts, with the use of portfolios, critiques, and performance assessments (Council of Arts Accrediting Organizations, 2007). Similarly, there have been extensive efforts to reconsider the terms and mechanisms through which to judge the quality and effectiveness of a particular arts education program. As with the assessment of student learning, program evaluation poses profound questions about how and when the results or outcomes of a particular learning experience can be perceived, let alone measured. Few in the field have not grappled with this challenge in the last 25 years; virtually every program has struggled to find appropriate, authentic, and responsive ways of capturing what is actually happening with their students and the effects of these learning experiences in their lives.

The past quarter-century has also been a rich period in the literature on arts education. Considerable writing has been published reporting on research studies, but there have also been lively debates over critical, even foundational, questions related to what constitutes quality in arts education – what we aspire to offer our students. As is so often the nature of the literature in many fields, writing on arts education has been framed in terms of arguments and debates. Many of these debates have been carried out, as well, in the efforts to create standards, frameworks, and assessments. Four critical questions thread through the arts education literature of the past 25 years:

– *Who* should teach the arts?
– *Where* should the arts be taught?
– *What* should be taught and *how*?
– *How* should the arts be assessed?

Foundational questions such as these always provoke strong opinions in education, broadly construed, and these questions continue to generate debate in the literature on arts education. We discuss some of this literature throughout the forthcoming chapters, and focus specifically on these foundational questions in Chapter 4. As we reveal, the conceptual, even philosophical, nature of these questions points to both the variety of answers offered and the passion with which they have been debated. And they will almost certainly continue to be debated. These questions confront not only scholars and researchers, but are actively engaged by policy makers and practitioners at every level, and across a wide variety of settings and contexts.

Yet the Challenge of Quality Persists

What actually takes place in arts programs – in or out of school – despite the presence of countless excellent teachers and programs, is all too often uninspired. Woefully inadequate materials, inauthentic tasks (coloring book-style worksheets; cut-out pumpkins, and other "seasonal" activities for the windows of the classroom or the halls of the school), and inadequate time (now not only squeezed, but often entirely replaced, by test preparation sessions) still characterize arts education in many of our schools (Efland, 1976, 1983).

And yet, as we have hinted, there are many ways in which arts education is vital and thriving. New ideas and practices, new art forms and practitioners, innovative programs, and creative partnerships are emerging in response to the threats to arts education in our public schools. Serious thinking is ongoing – though we feel it is too little noted or documented – on the issue of what constitutes quality in arts learning and teaching and how it can be achieved and sustained. Our effort in this study has been to examine these efforts and report on what we learned.

How this report is organized

The report is divided into three sections. Here we provide a brief preview of each of the chapters that follows this introduction.

Part 1: Envisioning and Experiencing Quality

Chapter 1: Visions of Quality. For most arts educators, ideas about what constitutes quality in arts education are deeply tied to fundamental issues of identity and meaning,

and embodied in their values as artists, educators, and citizens in the world. Chapter 1 examines the role of these influences on educators' visions of quality and how they provide a compass for navigating the many decisions they make.

Chapter 2: The Multiple Purposes of Arts Education. The question of what constitutes high quality arts education is inextricably linked to the question of *why* the arts are taught. So it is no surprise that when arts educators talk about excellence they also express ideas about the fundamental purposes of arts education – ideas about what students ought to learn through the arts and why these outcomes are important. Though many purposes were mentioned by our informants, the great majority of them cluster into seven broad categories. Chapter 2 characterizes the central ideas we heard in each of the seven categories and offers them as a backdrop for readers' own reflections about the purposes of arts education.

Chapter 3: The Elements of Quality Arts Learning As Seen Through Four Lenses. Visions and purposes come to life in the actual moments of teaching and learning. When you ask arts educators what they take to be the signs of high quality arts education, they are as likely to point to features of the experience in the setting itself as they are to broad purposes and outcomes. These experiential elements are what you'd expect to observe if you opened the door onto a classroom, studio, or rehearsal hall, and looked for markers of quality. One way to bring these markers into focus is to examine the arts-learning experience through four different but overlapping lenses: *Student learning, pedagogy, community dynamics,* and *environment*. Chapter 3 discusses the various elements of quality that come into view through each of these lenses.

Part II: Achieving and Sustaining Quality

Chapter 4: Foundational Questions. Arts education programs make foundational, program-defining decisions that give a program its identity and provide the parameters within which quality is pursued. Four critical questions programs must confront are: *Who teaches the arts? Where are the arts taught? What is taught and how?* and *How is arts learning assessed?* Scholars have written extensively about these questions, and the literature often takes the

form of debate, with arguments made for one side or another. Chapter 4 examines the major debates concerning each of these questions and reveals how foundational programmatic decisions that influence quality tend to be nuanced and contextualized, often embodying high principles and pragmatic concerns at the same time.

Chapter 5: Decision Makers, Decisions, and Decision Making. Beyond programs' foundational decisions there are myriad decisions made in the life of a program, and people at all levels make decisions that have critical influence on the quality of arts learning experiences. These include people quite far away from the classroom (e.g., administrators, funders, policy makers), those just outside the room – notably program staff and parents, and those who are "in the room" (students, teachers, artists). Chapter 5 examines the kinds of decisions made at each of these levels, and discusses the twin issues of alignment among decisions, and communication among decision makers.

Part III: Quality in Practice

Chapter 6: Tools for Achieving and Sustaining Quality in Arts Education. Chapter 6 provides tools to analyze ideas about what constitutes quality in arts education. These thought and dialogue tools encourage decision makers to consider the main themes of each of the chapters of this report within their own settings. The tools are designed for individuals or groups in schools and arts education organizations and programs.

Chapter 7: Implications of This Study. In our final chapter, we consider what the field of arts education may gain from this study, and what its implications are for various audiences. We consider how thinking about quality can have implications for practice that affect students, teachers, teaching artists, and classroom teachers. This chapter also considers implications for people "outside the room," including administrators, funders, and board members. We conclude by considering next steps for investigating the issue of quality in arts education.

Who We Are and What We Hope for

A word about the Project Zero perspective. The research reported here was conducted by a team of researchers at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Project Zero has a 40-year history of conducting research into the nature of learning in the arts (Gardner, 1982; Gardner & Perkins, 1989; Goodman, 1976; Grotzer, Howick, Tishman, & Wise, 2002; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007; Perkins, 1994; Project MUSE, 1995; Project Zero and Reggio Children, 2001; Seidel, Eppel, & Mariniello, 2001; Tishman & Palmer, 2007; Winner, 1993; Winner & Hetland, 2000). At Project Zero, we believe that an education without the arts is an incomplete education that fails to develop the full potential of individuals, communities, and societies. We also believe that the arts have a powerful cognitive dimension and are an important way of understanding the world, different from, but just as valuable as, the sciences. While the research team conducting this study agrees on these major points, our own perspectives also sometimes differ. Our goal in this report is to represent the views we discovered in the field rather than our own views. At the same time, we recognize that our deep beliefs and assumptions influence how we have understood and interpreted what we saw and heard. We hope the differences in perspective represented on the team, including both seasoned and new researchers, and the range of sources captured by the three strands of the study have provided adequate checks on the bias we brought to our process.

Our hopes for this report. Not unexpectedly, over the course of this research we raised more questions than we answered, and we offer this report with the acknowledgment that it marks the beginning of an inquiry rather than its conclusion. If there is one overarching theme to our findings, it is that continuous reflection and discussion about what constitutes quality and how to achieve it is both a catalyst *for* and a sign *of* quality. In other words, thinking deeply about quality – talking about it, worrying about it, continually revisiting ideas about its characteristics and its indicators – is essential both to the pursuit and achievement of excellence in arts education. Our fondest hope for this report is that it sparks discussion. We most definitely do *not* offer here a recipe for arts education. Rather, we hope that this report will energize and inform a national conversation and encourage policy makers and practitioners to engage in open and critical dialogue about what counts as quality in arts education and about how they can make decisions at all levels of policy, administration, and teaching to support such quality.

Envisioning and Experiencing Quality

CHAPTER 1: VISIONS OF QUALITY

OUR INTERVIEWEES HAD powerful visions about what constitutes quality arts education – about what its large purposes are, and about what it looks like "in the room" in the moments of learning and teaching as they unfold. While there was much alignment in their visions, there were also significant differences in emphases, priorities, and details. And, as our interviews and site visits repeatedly made clear, these powerful visions provide arts educators with a compass for decision making across all aspects of their work.

In Part II of this report we will take a close look at the kinds of decisions that affect quality. But first, in this chapter, we ask: Where do arts educators' ideas about quality come from? What influences these visions of quality and how do these influences provide a frame for the way people see and approach their work?

A Compass for Decision Making

Consider the response of Morgan Cousins, a program coordinator at Urban Word, an in- and out-of-school program for high school students in New York City focusing on spoken word, combining both the literary and performing arts. We asked Morgan, as we often asked on our site visits, to introduce herself, share a bit about her background, and offer any initial thoughts about what constitutes quality in arts learning experiences. She explained that as a high school and college student, she had worked with Youth Speaks, a program that evolved into Urban Word in New York City. She did other work for a while and had just recently come back as a program coordinator.

> As an artist, what has helped my growing has been that I was a part of a collective, Sister to Sister, out of Bushwick. We would do arts work with youth to get them involved in shifting their communities. For me, using art is central to a person's development, especially for young people. Art is a tangible way to see where you are and to envision what you want to create in this world, what sort of energy you want to put out there.
>
> So just as I feel everyone is a living person, we're all educators. And I believe "each one, teach one." So, [for] me, being an artist and being an educator, those are being human – it's very much being one thing. Quality work is working from that place. I feel like it's working from a

healthy place, how we communicate with people, how… at the core, believing that you should live these things that you believe. The work is not just from the hours of workshops here, but how you're living your life, how you're impacting these young people's lives on a daily basis, with the principles that you walk with daily. For me, it's like you are always working. The work is 24 hours and, you know, it's like your personal growth. You have to keep growing in order to keep that work progressing. That's where I feel like quality is always remembering that it's necessary to keep growing, it's completely necessary – whether it's paid or unpaid.

Over the course of our interviews, especially as we probed the sources of an individual's ideas about what constitutes quality, we were struck by the deeply personal nature of the responses. Ideas about what constitutes quality in arts education were, for most of these people, inextricably tied to fundamental issues of identity, purpose, and values as an artist, an educator, a citizen in the world. This deep subjectivity was the source of strength at the core of these visions of quality. This was the compass that guided the many aspects of the countless decisions these educators make, defining in so many ways why they do what they do in the way they do it.

In some cases, we heard personal stories of early experiences with remarkable teachers (arts and other kinds of teachers, including parents or other family members) as well as horrible teachers, whose example, even many years later, still had a profound influence on visions of quality. We heard other stories as well – stories both from in and outside of arts experiences – where a sense of and taste for high quality was first experienced, the memory of which was so powerful and so attractive that the hunger for that taste has essentially never been fully satisfied.

A Healthy Obsession with Quality

In his study of craft and crafts people, Richard Sennett considers the "obsessional energy" that is at the core of the drive to achieve quality.

> In a way signaled by the second word in the phrase "quality-driven," *driven* means the obsessional energy invested in making a concrete object or forming a skill. Obsessional energy marks the characters of great workmen like Christopher Wren but is also and more elementally a trait of actions small as well as large. Rewriting a sentence again and again

31

to get its imagery or rhythm just right requires a certain obsessional energy. In love, obsession risks deforming the character; in action, obsession risks fixation and rigidity. These dangers the individual craftsman also has to address, as so does the well-crafted organization. The pursuit of quality entails learning how to use obsessional energy well. (Sennett, 2008, italics in the original)

We met many people during this study for whom this taste for quality in arts learning experiences – a rather specialized area of connoisseurship – appears to be a profound need. Indeed, for these people, creating high quality experiences for others has become a value that informs virtually all of the decisions they make in relation to what will happen "in the room." Perhaps because it could seem tautological, this rather obvious connection between valuing quality (excellence) as a part of a quality (excellent) arts learning experience was not explicitly named as often as it might have been in our interviews. In a sense, it seems too obvious to state. But it is a value that informs people's notions of what constitutes quality.

To that end, the educators we interviewed wanted young people to have experiences *with* quality – for example, excellent materials, outstanding works of art, passionate and accomplished artist-teachers modeling their artistic processes – and experiences *of* quality – powerful group interactions and ensemble work, performances that make them feel proud, rewarding practice sessions, and so on. In addition, they wanted them to have experiences with the work of striving for and achieving high quality – technical excellence and successful expressivity – in making art.

"Healthy" Obsessions?

Many of the programs and people we spoke to seemed to be, in Sennett's terms, "quality-driven." Indeed, they seemed obsessed with quality. This obsession not only guided their thoughts, but their actions, decisions, and conversations with their colleagues and students. Whatever term they used – quality, excellence, continual improvement – the drive was essentially the same. This hunger seems rarely satisfied with an internal monologue; it must become a dialogue with others. Like so many obsessions, it pulls others into its pursuit.

If you push this image further, it is easy to see why "obsession" has a bad reputation; it becomes associated with a kind of unhealthiness. But, in this context, given the respon-

sibility of arts educators for such a potentially important aspect of young people's life experience, this obsession begins to feel quite justified, necessary, and, in the end, rewarded in profound ways – seeing young people build deep and long-lasting relationships with the arts and seeing all that the arts can do to enrich their intellectual, aesthetic, social, political, and moral lives.

Yet the line between a healthy and unhealthy obsession with quality in arts education can be thin. Sennett warns of an obsession's capacity to "deform" and the risk of "rigidity and fixation." We were told that working in a "quality-driven" organization was both thrilling and exhausting. The drive to achieve ever-higher levels of quality in an arts program must be continual *and* must accommodate the energy and developmental levels of the teachers and staff. While some people in an organization may well see important room for improvement of practices "in the room," all teachers and artists may not be able to achieve those visions as quickly as the visions themselves can be articulated. The need for support and encouragement that children feel as they strive to get better is also a need of artists and teachers as they work to improve their practice. Calibrating the "drive" for quality with the capacities of those involved in the effort to achieve it seems to be critical to keeping the obsession "healthy." At the same time, a commitment to increasing those capacities links professional development to the pursuit of quality.

Internal Monologues and Collective Dialogues

Almost by definition, though, thoughtful, reflective arts educators ask themselves daily why they are doing what they do in the way that they do it. Why do I choose to work with these young people in this program? Do these choices help me achieve my larger work and personal goals? Am I doing my work as well as I possibly can and with the greatest possible impact?

If that is the nature of a constant internal monologue, these same people are also engaged in an ongoing actual dialogue of a similar nature with their colleagues. Why do *we* go about our work in the *ways* we do? How could we better achieve our goals? Should our goals be reconsidered? Are our practices aligned with our purposes and our values? These discussions often take place within established structures like staff meetings, supervision sessions, and planning processes,

some of which we were invited to observe during our site visits.

But few groups have enough time for these conversations in formal settings. Most continue these conversations in the spaces between teaching, meetings, cleaning up a studio, or dealing with art supplies and materials. Often these conversations occur while driving from one school to another, getting from a community center to a program's office, or walking from one end of a building to another. Sometimes these conversations are congratulatory; often they are self-critical; in some cases, real disagreements surface about what constitutes quality and whether it was achieved in today's dance class or trip to the museum.

Continuous Examination of What Constitutes Quality

This examination of quality – as we witnessed it and had it described to us by our interviewees – was most often carried out over time and through continuous dialogues about specific instances (a particular class session, a course that has just ended, a performance or a new exhibit of visual art, and so on). While the grounding of these dialogues was in specifics, the conversations seem actually to be extended examinations of core beliefs and values, purposes, and best understandings of basic issues like the nature of learning, teaching, community, and art. This close analysis of what, in a specific context, constitutes quality seems to be one way that people do, implicitly and explicitly, develop a philosophy of practice. That philosophy then functions as a compass for all subsequent dialogue about what constitutes quality and decision making done with quality in mind.

While our site visits were rarely more than two days, it was clear to us that in most places the exploration of basic questions about purposes and practices as well as inquiries into effectiveness and possible improvements is a way of life and work. Over and over, we heard, in response to our questions, that the staff had recently had a discussion of just this issue or that the program's evaluators, a funder's questions, or an incident in a classroom had provoked a dialogue on a similar question just a few weeks earlier.

At the same time, we were frequently told how much our interviewees appreciated the opportunity to stop, reflect, and consider questions that were often asked in a new way as an opportunity to re-engage with the challenges of quality. Indeed, even the use of particular language – like the term *quality* or the focus on 'experiences' – was often felt as a provocation to enter into this set of issues from a different angle. In a sense, we heard that, simultaneously, the people we were talking with were both deeply involved in deliberations about issues of quality in a variety of settings and under various banners, and also desirous of more and deeper explorations of this basic issue. The ability to think, discuss, and analyze on both philosophical and practical levels seemed to be a characteristic of the organizations we visited, as was the feeling that quality is both a process and a conversation that never ends.

Subjectivity and Consensus

As deeply personal and subjective as ideas about quality may be, there seemed to be broad areas of consensus about what does and does not constitute a quality arts learning experience "in the room." The typical low-quality arts activity for children most frequently cited was the activity of coloring cut-out turkey shapes at Thanksgiving using broken crayons. Activities that trivialize artistic processes such as filling in outlined shapes or working with materials of limited quality such as old and broken crayons or ripped and dirty costumes were seen as failing to respect children's capabilities and interests and not recognizing art's deep power and possibilities. Such activities were considered inadequate opportunities for significant arts learning.

Of course, an artist who works with iconic images (e.g., cut-out turkeys) and invents innovative and unusual approaches to old materials (like broken crayons!) may do provocative work and might also, working with teachers, design rich learning experiences for children on such topics as gratitude and what it means to give thanks, iconic images of Thanksgiving, and/or the animal we know as the turkey. (In short, the turkey is not the "turkey," it's what we do with it as an arts learning experience.) Perhaps a distinction between an *activity* and a *learning experi-*

ence is useful here. An *activity* is something we might do to keep us occupied, for the purpose of simply keeping busy, or to pass time; a *learning experience* is shaped and defined by intentionality, challenge, performance, and growth.

Similarly, there seemed to be consensus about some broad characteristics of quality in arts learning experiences. The most commonly cited is engagement – focused, total, all-encompassing. Other characteristics that were named frequently and around which there seemed to be some broad consensus, though not everyone addressed all of these explicitly or equally, included:

- An involvement with authentic artistic processes and materials.
- An exploration of "big ideas" about art and human experience.
- Direct experiences with works of art made or in the making.

While this kind of broad consensus does seem to exist, it does not mean that there is agreement on an absolute "objective" set of criteria for determining what counts as quality arts education. None of the people we spoke with wanted to escape the task of figuring out what constitutes quality and how to achieve it. Instead, they told us that they want to create and sustain a dialogue about quality that includes as many of the participants and stakeholders as possible. We return to this issue of dialogue and decision making later in this report in Chapter 5.

Quality-Driven and Mission-Driven

Perhaps the central element of this dialogue about what constitutes quality is an examination and clarification of the purposes of any particular arts education program and individuals' experiences within them.

While many of the people we spoke with were explicitly quality-driven in their work as arts educators, regularly asking themselves and others how to improve the experiences their students were having, they were also deeply mission-driven. Ideas about quality did not seem to exist independently of articulations of purposes. Though driven to create the best arts programs possible at that moment with available resources, including the human resources of program design, administrative, and pedagogical knowledge, quality was not an abstraction,

a thing in itself, or an objective reality. Instead, quality seemed to be inextricably tied to the mission and goals of each individual program.

That quality and purposes are wedded seems, on the surface, to be an obviously true statement. It is hard to conceptualize how any learning experience could be considered high quality if it does not achieve its purposes. Beneath the surface of this statement about quality and mission, however, there is a complex relationship between highly interconnected moving parts.

As we will discuss in Chapter 2, our study revealed that arts educators hold multiple purposes for programs, courses, or projects. At any moment, the priority and relationship of those purposes may shift or evolve. With one group of students, there may well be a primary emphasis on developing certain technical skills. With others, creating a powerful experience of ensemble work might feel like the critical task at that moment. And with another, working on discipline and responsibility might be the essential starting point. None of these goals diminishes the importance of others, but an assessment of particular groups at particular moments may well suggest new and appropriate ways of prioritizing purposes.

In addition, as one's understanding of how to achieve purposes deepens over time, ideas about sequence and emphasis will likely evolve as well. In other words, knowledge of how to achieve a complex set of goals should inform how one approaches achieving it. As one learns what is possible to teach and how to do that teaching well, the very framing of those goals evolves.

As we have noted, achieving quality and fulfilling a mission are processes rarely completed. As one level of achievement is accomplished, new goals, often both broader and deeper, are conceptualized. Ambitious arts educators constantly seek new understandings of both quality and mission and how to achieve them. The nature and multiplicity of the purposes discussed in Chapter 2 reminds us of the incredible complexity of the arts education enterprise and the challenges of coming to a vision of quality, let alone achieving that vision.

CHAPTER 2: THE MULTIPLE PURPOSES OF ARTS EDUCATION

AS DISCUSSED IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER, the question of what constitutes high quality arts education is inextricably linked to the question of why we should be teaching the arts in the first place. Over the course of our research, we conducted many interviews, from phone calls with experts in this field to the many formal and informal conversations at our site visits. Almost everyone we spoke with linked their quest for quality to the purposes they were striving to achieve in their programs or policies. What they perceived the arts to be and to do for individuals and groups strongly influenced their ideas about what they wanted students to learn through their education in the arts. Accordingly, achieving quality to a large extent means achieving these purposes. So it is no surprise that when arts educators talk about excellence they also express ideas about the fundamental purposes of arts education – ideas about what students ought to learn through the arts and why these outcomes are important.

We noted two distinct but interrelated beliefs held by the great majority of those we interviewed.

- **There are multiple legitimate purposes of arts education.** As a field, arts education seems to be in an expansive mood these days. Theorists and practitioners are aware of the multiplicity of purposes their colleagues pursue and regard this multiplicity as healthy. Though of course there are disagreements about specific theories and approaches, when people referred to points of view other than their own, they did so in a spirit of open-mindedness and respect, rather than debate or divisiveness.
- **High quality arts programs tend to serve several purposes simultaneously.** As a group, arts educators conceive of high quality arts education as complex in its outcomes, serving multiple pupeses for each student. Though arts programs differ widely in their contexts, goals, art forms and constituencies, a hallmark sign of high quality arts learning in any program is that the experience is rich and complex for all learners, engaging them on many levels and helping them learn and grow in a variety of ways.

When our phone interviewees articulated what students ought to *learn* from high quality arts education, what we heard fell into seven broad goals. Most people referred to several of these learning outcomes as desirable, not just one or two. These seven goals were also ones mentioned by our site interviewees when they told us what they were striving to achieve, and they are echoed in the literature. We heard that arts education should:

- Foster broad dispositions and skills, especially the capacity to think creatively and the capacity to make connections.
- Teach artistic skills and techniques without making them primary.
- Develop aesthetic awareness.
- Provide ways of pursuing understanding of the world.
- Help students engage with community, civic, and social issues.
- Provide a venue for students to express themselves.
- Help students develop as individuals.

This chapter characterizes the central ideas discussed in each of these areas. We offer first a few words of clarification about what these seven categories are meant to represent and how they might be useful to readers of this report.

A Focus on Learning Purposes

Arts programs have a variety of purposes that are closely linked to the communities and contexts in which they operate. Not all of these purposes are directly related to learning, and a distinction can be drawn between an arts program's learning purposes and its programmatic purposes. A learning purpose has to do with the specific skills, dispositions, and understandings a program aims to teach. Programmatic purposes are often more general in nature and emerge in response to community and political needs and realities that include but can also extend beyond the arts per se. For example, programs have been developed in response to a community's need to keep young people off the streets after school hours and to provide them with positive adult mentors from the community. Many pro-

grams have been developed with youth and community development as their initial purposes. For example, the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild in Pittsburgh arose out of community activism and a passionate commitment of the founder, Bill Strickland, to provide access to arts education to all. Similarly, a fundamental purpose for founding the Seattle-based Arts Corps, for example, was to bring free arts classes to low-income youth. But these programmatic purposes do not specifically imply what arts educators believe students should learn as the result of these arts experiences. Arts programs can and often do serve many purposes and play many roles in a community.

Who and What these Seven Categories Represent

The seven clusters of purposes described in this chapter emerged as a way of organizing the learning purposes that were mentioned by the people we spoke with in phone and site interviews during this research. Many of these same purposes are mentioned in the literature we reviewed, and wherever relevant, we point out the alignment between what our interviewees said and the arguments in the published literature.

The seven purposes we write about here are by no means intended as an exhaustive typology of all the possible purposes of arts education, or all the purposes that arts education scholars have written about. Rather, it is an attempt to cluster the purposes that were most often articulated to us. Certainly, there are other ways to organize the countless articulations of purposes and outcomes we heard, and there are certainly legitimate purposes of arts education other than those we describe. We hope that those with whom we spoke, as well as the readers of this report, will find represented here at least some of the purposes of arts education that they hold as most essential.

Seven Broad Purposes of Arts Education

1. Arts education should foster broad dispositions and skills, especially the capacity to think creatively and the capacity to make connections.

When speaking about the important purposes of arts education, one of the outcomes people mentioned most often is the development of key habits of mind: the

capacity to think creatively and the capacity to make unusual connections. When people speak of these capacities, they often call them "dispositions," or general "habits of mind," consistent with a growing movement in the literature to refer to the habits of mind taught by the arts (Grotzer, Howick, Tishman, & Wise 2002; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan 2007; Perkins, 1994).

Acknowledging that nuances may be missed by attempting to group arts-related habits of mind into a few broad categories (and here we nod to Eric Booth, who speaks eloquently of 19 artistic habits of mind), we feel it is most useful to focus on the two themes most often mentioned – creative thinking and connection making. **<u>The capacity to think creatively.</u>** An analysis of the nature of creativity in the arts and in general has been central to the work of many psychologists (e.g., Amabile, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Feldman, Csikszentmihalyi, & Gardner, 1994; Gardner, 1982, 1993; Getzels & Csikszentmihalyi, 1965; Greene, 2001; Perkins, 1981; Robinson, 2001; Sternberg, Grigorenko, & Singer, 2004). When arts educators talk about developing students' capacity to think creatively, they generally conceive of creativity as an extended process involving many steps, rather than a single "aha" moment of insight. Creativity is full of starts and stops and turns and improvisations and leaps and bounds. Janice Fournier, an evaluation consultant at Arts Corps, the largest nonprofit arts educator in the Seattle area, believes creativity "involves generating ideas, digging deeper into ideas, encouraging openness to exploring new ideas, and listening to your inner voice." Creativity moves forward through a process of generating questions, exploring problems, and seeking multiple options, and as it unfolds it includes cycles of critique, revision, and reflection. The process is "very complex" and intense, notes Arts Corps founder/director Lisa Fitzhugh, but it is observable. Four indicators of creativity that she believes her students and teaching artists demonstrate across art forms, age groups, and contexts are persistence and discipline, tolerance for ambiguity, reflection, and metaphorical thinking.

To be sure, the creative process often includes flashes of insight and intuition – the famous "aha" moments – and these moments can be its most visible signs. But the

process of developing creative ideas and carrying them through to fruition also typically includes prolonged periods of purposeful ideation, exploration, and critical reflection (Perkins, 1981). It is this longer process, along with an understanding of its value, that our respondents seem to have in mind when they talk about developing students' capacity to think creatively. Adam Neal, a master's student in composition interning at *Sound Learning*, comments: "It's about getting kids to think about and go through the steps of the creative process – thinking and doing, focusing not just on the product, but the process, with the idea that maybe the kids will be able to do this later on, on their own."

Many people we spoke with echoed a view also found in the literature, that the capacity to think creatively is an outcome of arts education that is widely valued by society (Levy & Murnane, 2004; Pink, 2005). Eric Booth, founder of the *Teaching Artist* journal, believes that creativity [is seen] as a priority in the field, one thing the rest of the world wants from the arts. This thought was also reflected in our interviews with members of the Tucson Unified School District fine arts administrative staff (partners with the program, Opening Minds through the Arts, or OMA), "Businesses and the workforce look for creative problem-solvers that can think outside of the box. The arts teach you how to do that." This is an empirically testable claim, and evidence that creativity learned in the arts transfers to creativity in non-art business and workforce settings is exceedingly difficult to obtain, and the body of cumulative research has not yet demonstrated such transfer. (Winner & Hetland, 2000). Still, it is hardly surprising to find an assumed link between arts and creative thinking, and much has been written about the potential of arts education to cultivate a broad capacity for creativity.

The capacity to make connections. Many people we interviewed also believe that high quality arts education fosters the disposition to make connections across diverse themes, topics, and experiences. As Kristin Congdon puts it, the basic idea of connection-making is that "students form links beyond the time and space of the classroom." The kinds of connections people value are varied. Some arts educators emphasize making arts-re-

lated connections across disciplines and the curriculum; some emphasize making connections to everyday life and popular culture. Some emphasize making connections to history and culture writ large; some emphasize making connections to controversial issues within communities and across nations. But regardless of the connections people favor, there is general agreement that rich connection-making is more than just a nicety: it is a central outcome of high quality arts learning and teaching. For Elliot Eisner, quality means that art has to "function in [students'] lives, outside of the context of schooling, and [teachers make that happen] by creating bridges between what they are studying in school and the life that they're going to be leading outside of school." This point is also emphasized by educators at many of the sites we visited, where the importance of offering opportunities for connection-making is not only of cognitive value but allows students a "way in" so that their learning is accessible and relevant.

There is a controversy in the arts education literature about whether to *justify* arts education because of its potential to connect to and improve academic learning. We touch on this controversy in Chapter 4 when we discuss "foundational decisions," and caution against justifying arts education because of its instrumental, or "add-on" value in boosting achievement in other academic areas (an argument often made but as yet unproven). However, the capacity to make connections as discussed here is not viewed as an "add-on" to arts education, but rather a deep and essential part of what learning in the arts is about.

There are two strands of thinking that contribute to this view, and they have been written about in the literature as well as discussed by those we interviewed. The first has to do with the connection-rich nature of art's content. Because the arts take life and the world as their subject, they connect directly to many aspects of human culture and experience, and exploring these connections provides fertile ground for developing students' capacity for connection-making (Efland, 2004; Perkins, 1994).

A second reason people see connection-making as a key purpose of arts education has to do with the cultivation of imagination. Jerome Bruner (1979), John Dewey (1934), Nelson Goodman (1976), Susanne Langer

(1942, 1953), and Israel Scheffler (1991) are just five examples of scholars who see the arts as ways of knowing, understanding, thinking, and interpreting the world. The arts involve not only emotion, but also complex thinking and imagination (Eisner, 2004; Greene, 2000, 2001). Efland (2002) writes about the *unique* contributions of the arts in developing students' imaginations: Imagination develops when students interpret complex information. Complex information must be interpreted as students think about themselves, their dreams, aspirations and fears, in relation to the art works they create. The construction of one's own "lifeworld" in a work of art is a product of the imagination; the art works created must represent this undivided lifeworld.

Developing students' capacity for connection making may be a key purpose of arts education, but it is important to recognize that this does not always happen as a matter of course. Developing connection making requires encouragement, and many arts educators believe that high quality arts instruction should provide explicit opportunities for connection making. This view has also been articulated by Salomon and Perkins (1989). In the words of Jane Remer, author, teacher, and arts education consultant, teachers need to help students seek "authentic connection between art forms and with other disciplines" and help them "connect art to everyday life."

2. Arts education should teach artistic skills and techniques without making these primary.

The learning of artistic methods and techniques is often cited as a central purpose of quality in traditional arts education, and this is born out in what is assessed by the College Board's Advanced Placement program (The College Board, 2006 a, b). Though most people we talked with acknowledge the legitimacy of this purpose, we heard no arguments for the extreme ends of the continuum. No one claimed that the teaching of technique should dominate arts learning experiences. However, there are varying views about the importance of technique, both within and across art forms, including strong views – and often concerns – about the relationship between students' technical development and their artistic development and about the balance between technique and expression. There are also serious concerns about

privileging technical training over meaning-making, and about the relationship between technical proficiency and assessment.

We often heard that the teaching of technique is important because it allows students to gain entry into and participate in the practices of an art form in which sequential learning is required. Many said that students must be taught the "fundamentals" of each art form in order to move to higher levels of skill, and in order to express oneself in the art form. Acknowledging the sequential nature of skill development, several people we spoke with (e.g., Remer, Music, Cardona, and Weiss) mentioned the importance of "standards-based, sequential arts instruction in all four disciplines" as a part of quality teaching and learning in the arts. But all also insisted that technique should never be a goal in and of itself, without other goals to be achieved. Many arts educators – including those who believe in the importance of sequential arts instruction – voiced concern that the teaching of technique can limit as well as enable. Dance educator Sara Lee Gibb, wary that an overemphasis on teaching technique limits how students explore the movement of their body states, "Little ideas and techniques can be introduced but, again, that's where the gifted teacher comes in that can help them expand their range of possibilities without limiting what they're doing." Gibb calls for teaching dance in a way that does not ignore the cognitive and affective aspects of learning to move one's body. Without that, students are just like "trained puppies." Even among professional dancers, she says, one can find examples of dynamic performers who are not necessarily expert technicians.

Not surprisingly, many arts educators have raised questions about what counts as technique and whether teaching traditional skills and techniques serves contemporary forms of expression. This question has been discussed frequently in the literature (Diamond & Hamlin, 2003; Freedman, 2003; Hamlin, 2005; Hamlin & Donnan, 2007; Levine, 2001). Shifting global, economic, and cultural forces, the development of new digital media and new art forms, and the growth of new forms of communication are all factors contributing to a radical change in what counts as art and who participates in making and consuming it. While acknowledging and often cel-

ebrating these changes, the majority of our interviewees rejected the radical view that traditional techniques are wholly irrelevant to contemporary forms of expression. For example, Weiss believes that "to say categorically that teach[ing] the formal and modernist elements and principles of the arts is dead is to deny students the tools and techniques that will help them express their views in the contemporary world. It is to throw out a whole set of approaches, tools, and frameworks that could be used for so many purposes, including critiquing society, understanding the beauty of form and observing really closely our world." But Doug Boughton sounds a cautionary note. He worries that too much attention to form and tradition can prevent students from paying attention to the content of a painting or work. In describing the visual culture approach to which he ascribes, he explains: "The visual culture approach holds that meaning is more important than form and this means that what a good art program could do is to help students understand why the art is made and what the meaning is, what type of meaning is attributed within the cultural context." He emphatically foregrounds meaning-making over form, and argues that an approach to arts education should "start with meaning and move to elements rather than starting with elements and moving to the meaning."

Regardless of the specific role of technique in an arts education program, issues of assessment are complex. This is because it is relatively easy to observe technical proficiency according to objectively established criteria. Unfortunately, the development of technical proficiency is often taken as a proxy for other forms of development, and, following the educational truism that what's assessed usually ends up being what's taught (Resnick & Wirt, 1996), many arts educators voice concern that programs and approaches that over emphasize technical assessment often end up impoverishing instruction. This does not mean that technical skills should not be assessed at all. Several people we spoke with recognize the importance of assessing students' artistic skills nationally (as reviewed in Chapter 4) as a sort of pulse-taking exercise. But many argued for assessments that do a better job of evaluating outcomes besides technique – e.g., assessing the impact of an arts experience on students' personal development.

This tension around assessment and the development of artistic skills and techniques underscores the complexity of assessing student learning in programs with multiple purposes, especially in partnership organizations where there are several different educators assessing from different perspectives. For example, LCI's director of education development, Madeline Holzer told us of an instance in which her own assessment of a high school theater practice session focused on individual growth, collaboration, and student "ownership," while the classroom teacher focused solely on technical theater skills.

In summary, most of our interviewees believe that technique may sometimes be an important goal but should never be the only one, and indeed might best be thought of as an instrumental goal – important only insofar as it serves a larger goal of helping students understand or express ideas and feelings. Perhaps not surprisingly, the view that technique can and sometimes should be assessed but should never be the sole criterion for assessment of student learning in the arts is strongly echoed in the literature as well (Boughton, 2004; Burnaford, 2007; Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994; Council of Arts Accrediting Organizations, 2007; Eisner, 1996; International Baccalaureate Organization, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2005; Kimbell & Stables, 2007; Marshall, 2006; McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, & Brooks, 2004; Myford & Sims-Gunzenhauser, 2004; National Center for Educational Statistics, 1998; Persky, Sandene, & Askew, 1998; Persky, 2004; Reimer, 1992, 2002).

3. Arts education should develop aesthetic awareness.

Many believe that an important purpose of arts education is to develop students' capacity to see things from an aesthetic perspective. This includes learning to recognize the aesthetic dimensions of the world around them, learning to make qualitative discernments and judgments, and learning to actively shape their own aesthetic environments. This theme is consistent with those of prominent arts education theorists (e.g., Dobbs, 1998, 2004; Eisner, 2004; Greene, 2000; Reimer, 2003; Smith, 2004, 2006; Smith & Simpson, 1991).

It might be argued that aesthetic awareness is simply a special kind of artistic skill and should thus be included in the foregoing "artistic skills and techniques" category.

But the people we spoke with emphasized its special importance, as do many theorists, and we thus consider it as a distinct category. There is a pleasant symmetry to reporting our findings in this section, because arts educators' rationale for the importance of developing students' aesthetic awareness is closely linked to the reason that we chose the phrase "the qualities of quality" as the banner for this research project. As noted elsewhere in this report, there are two meanings to "quality" – a characteristic or feature of something, and a judgment of excellence. This double discernment – seeing features, and seeing excellence – is how many of the educators we spoke with characterized aesthetic awareness. Developing students' aesthetic awareness helps them "see" the world more fully and in more detail, and thus be able to make more nuanced judgments about value.

Linking the two meanings of quality, Elliot Eisner recalls his experiences as a very young man working in a shoe store where he learned to discern varying levels of quality. "I began to notice differences between the shoes and how the heels were stacked, what the quality of the leather was like, the construction, whether it had a steel shank in it, etcetera, etcetera. And what I found was the closer I paid attention to the qualities of the shoes or the shirts or the pants, the more I saw, the more I noticed, and the more satisfaction I received from those that were of very high quality. So this was a learning process that I was in charge of. I learned that you could look in order to see and that was a real revelation to me and something that made it possible for me to do that anytime I wanted to." In his writings, Eisner (2002) also argues that arts education teaches us to frame the world from an aesthetic perspective.

Developing discerning aesthetic awareness can lead to the understanding of relationships. Karen Fields at Opening Minds through the Arts (OMA) refers to it as "activating discernment" and sees aesthetic discrimination as an important outcome of participation and observation in the arts. During our site visit to OMA we sat in on a class that embodies this purpose. In a class that integrated language arts and opera, students were learning about different values associated with words (for example the difference between "happy" and "elated") and two

professional opera singers were using facial expression, body language, and opera to demonstrate these differences, challenging the students to decide which word better described the character's feeling in a particular passage from Schumann's *Death and the Maiden*.

Lissa Soep of Youth Radio aims for high production values in the work she does with youth, and she emphasizes the link between the pursuit of aesthetic excellence and intrinsic motivation. Working alongside professionals on projects that involve a high level of aesthetic and professional standards sustains student engagement. It "creates a lot of energy behind the work and elevates the standards of the work that is generated." At the Lincoln Center Institute (LCI) in New York, executive director Scott Noppe-Brandon discussed the importance of using high quality material as a departure point for an aesthetic experience: "The reason to start with high quality of works of art is that there are multiple layers of complexity that are built in so that study repays itself." Engaging with quality art work, students at LCI can then build multiple "capacities" such as noticing deeply, asking questions, making connection, seeing patterns, creating meaning, reflecting, and assessing.

Like Eisner, independent scholar Laura Chapman recognizes that aesthetic awareness extends beyond formal arts learning experiences. "In the traditional venues for encountering 'high quality,' such as museums or galleries, concert halls, theaters, it is easy to forget how experiences in these sanctuaries are enriched or inhibited by impressions from a larger surround of mass-produced cultural fare, mass-circulated imagery, so many aesthetically designed environments. I think it is a mistake to think that 'high quality' is only and inevitably at a distance from everyday experiences." Chapman would like arts education to help students discern the aesthetic qualities of the informal environments that surround them, understand their messages and cultural influence, and feel empowered to judge and shape them. "If you walk by the cosmetic counter, you have the opportunity to see someone's 'lessons' about the aesthetics of self-presentation for women. There are different lessons in other 'departments' whether it is children's clothing or home goods."

Kristin Congdon warns against a monolithic con-

ception of aesthetic excellence that is dominated by one cultural perspective, a perspective echoed throughout the literature on the importance of bringing folk arts into arts education (Bowman, 1993-2003, 2006; Bowman & Zeitlin, 1993; Cleveland, 2000; Green, 2001; Hamer, 2000; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1983; Mesa-Baines, 1990; Museum of American Folk Art, 1998), and the importance of considering learning in "outsider art" (Rubin, 2004; Sellen & Johanson, 1999).

Recalling her early efforts to study folklore, Congdon recounts that several universities "thought it was lower, it wasn't really aesthetic, and people were saying we have to bring the students up to us and what we know. But it was really important to me to start looking at the aesthetics of different cultural groups and the functions of arts in different cultural groups and how people within these different communities see what art is supposed to do and how it communicates their own values instead of only trying to say these are the great works that you need to understand in order to become a cultured individual."

Just as cultivating aesthetic appreciation needn't be rooted in an objective definition of aesthetic value that privileges the values of certain cultures over others, excellence in arts education need not be "one recipe for all." Rather, in both cases, making discerning judgments about excellence depends on a fine-grained understanding of the relationship between the purposes of something, its varied features, and the context in which it is used and valued.

4. Arts practices should provide ways of pursuing understanding of the world.

Many of our interviewees told us that an important purpose of arts education is to help students understand that the arts are themselves a mode of understanding. Echoing the philosopher Nelson Goodman (1976), Eric Booth explains: "Art makes worlds; it is a way that human beings most understand things. The arts help us ask questions, explore ideas, and make meaning in ways that other disciplines do not. They also provide ways for us to share our understandings with others – share our worlds – in potent and productive ways."

The development of understandings that are specifically cultural in nature is especially important to many people we spoke with. As Susan Sollins, executive producer of Art:21, put it, one purpose of arts education is to help students understand that the "arts provide us with opportunities to have much broader discussions about our lives, our culture, and our politics." Louise Music wants students "to understand the arts as they represent cultures… [to understand] how we see, understand, express and connect through the arts."

Not surprisingly, arts educators see the pursuit of cultural understanding through art as an active rather than passive process. For example, City Lore's in-school residency program partners with grades K-8 in New York City to pair local fine arts and folk arts teaching artists with social studies classes. Students are encouraged to explore and come to appreciate their own culture and community in rich ways by using local, primary resources such as community members, folk artists, authentic local documents, and community sites. By engaging with their community through the arts, students participate in the process of exploring, documenting, and preserving their city's cultural heritage. Similarly, at Expanding the Walls: Studio Museum of Harlem, students use the museum collection as a lens through which to explore Harlem's culture and history. Students are activated through the museum experience to investigate local social issues and take their experience to the street, engaging in intergenerational dialogue and interviews about African-American culture.

There is much in the literature that is resonant with arts educators' belief that a purpose of arts education is to provide a lens onto human culture. For example, Suzanne Lacy describes powerful contributions to society by art in non-traditional, public sites, a new genre in the early 1990s that united the political and aesthetic (1995). These big understandings about art and culture sound benign and hard to argue with – who wouldn't want students to gain such understandings? But there is a difference between students holding these understandings intellectually and *living* these understandings by personally engaging with historical and contemporary cultural issues via the arts. It is these active understandings that were most prized by the arts educators with whom we spoke.

The view that the arts provide a way of understand-

ing the world connects to a relatively new movement in contemporary art and art theory called "art practice as research" (McLeod & Holdridge, 2006; Serig, 2007; Sullivan, 2005). In this movement, the purpose of art-making is to think through problems to achieve understanding. Such a purpose foregrounds discovery, learning, and the integration of disciplines, with art as a tool for inquiry, synthesis, and representation. In the literature, inquiry as a purpose for arts education is seen as growing from two sources: the practices of design, in which the discovery process is a route to adaptive innovation (Gray & Malins, 2004; Kimbell & Stables, 2007), and the practices of contemporary arts, in which meaning-making predominates over artistic technique. Some theorists argue that viewing arts practice as inquiry suggests a "radical rethinking of the premises for making art" such that "knowledge construction replaces personal expression, object-making, and aesthetic pleasure as the primary goal of art practice" (Marshall, 2006). This in turn suggests a qualitatively different set of criteria for judging excellence in arts learning experiences. When art works are valued for the ways that they advance and reveal thought more than as aesthetic objects, the art-making process is esteemed over product, and process becomes evidence of learning.

5. Arts education should provide a way for students to engage with community, civic, and social issues.

Many people we spoke with told us that one important purpose of arts education is to empower students to understand and affect their role in community and society. This theme is also well-represented in recent literature on arts education. (e.g., Adams & Goldard, 2001, 2002; Birch, 1990; Boal, 1995, 2000; Boal & Jackson, 2006; Bowman & Zeitlin, 1993; Feldman, Csikszentmihalyi, & Gardner, 1994; Goldbard, 2006; Gude, 1999, 2000; Gullotta, 2000; Mesa-Baines, 1990; Stokes Brown, Ayers, & Quinn, 2002).

There are milder and stronger conceptions of what it means to achieve this outcome. On the milder side – and connected with the idea of personal development – some see achieving this outcome as a matter of helping students recognize the interconnectedness of their lives. For example, Booth and Eisner highlighted how arts learning experiences enable students to recognize

how they enrich the lives of others. The arts are a way to "empathetically… engage in the worlds of others" which Booth sees as so important in a democratic society.

A stronger conception of civic engagement as an important outcome of arts education emphasizes helping students understand that they each have the power and responsibility to affect the community and society at large through the arts. For example, Chapman, Music, and Soep stressed that the arts can be used by students as "powerful agents of change." Chapman asserts that schools must recognize that "the arts are consequential, not always benign, cute, pretty, take it or leave it activities." Arts in schools should address the civic dimensions of the arts – and show students that they can make a difference in their own communities.

In Lissa Soep's view, arts learning experiences become more powerful when they aim to "frame a debate or to help people to see the world differently." In her own work at Youth Radio, this takes the form of students creating radio broadcasts that explore issues of social justice. She described a Youth Radio project in which teenagers from Oakland, California created a piece on the community's rising homicide rates. Soep attributes the popularity of the piece, listened to by over 27 million people, to the power of the slam poetry interspersed between interviews the students had conducted in the community, written by I-Slice, a 19-year-old poet, based on *Romeo and Juliet*, but set in present-day Oakland. Although Soep's example demonstrates how students can take on social justice issues through innovative art-making, she also believes that more traditional art forms and topics can be used by students to help reframe their world views.

Many of the sites we visited identified community and civic engagement as an explicit purpose of arts education, and provided opportunities for students to exercise their voice and engage with their communities. For example, Teens Rock the Mic, Urban Word, Will Power to Youth, East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, and Appalachian Media Institute all work to provide students with opportunities to use the arts to initiate community dialogue about socially and culturally relevant local issues. By using the arts as a tool to examine and challenge unjust social dynamics, these student activists build a

sense of individual and community identity while working to effect change.

Often, arts organizations that emphasize community and civic engagement are born from communities in which social unrest and injustice has been a reality for participating students and teachers. These realities are often the inspiration for identifying programmatic arts learning purposes. At East Bay, for example, artistic director Jordan Simmons notes that "the conditions that allowed us to come together and cook our program and our thoughts belong to the historical period and the geography of the Bay Area." This context gave rise to East Bay's conviction that the arts can be used "as a vehicle for reconciliation and social change" in efforts to heal the bitterness and conflict that emerged across many sections of their community following Martin Luther King's assassination. They continue to hold to this goal of reconciliation, though the idea has evolved from the 1960s fight for civil rights into a broader and contemporary struggle for social justice and human rights.

Louise Music, Elliot Eisner, Eric Booth, and Johnny Saldaña all spoke to us at length about how arts experiences change individuals as interdependent members of the world – how they can help students make connections between themselves and others, and how they can engender compassion for others. Being exposed to multiple perspectives allows students to broaden their understanding of themselves in relation to others and provides them the opportunity to empathize with others.

Interviewees also stressed the potential of arts experiences to develop students' sense of personal empowerment. "I am interested in provoking each person with experiences in the arts to really think independently and to be able to feel that they can in turn create something themselves that has value or validity or is recognized" (Sollins). This empowerment extends into the development of youth agency. Encouraging students to find and value their voice and their contributions is emphasized at many civic/community engagement organizations.

Our interviewees also cited the capacity of the arts to develop leadership skills. In many site visits we heard people talk about how students learn to become leaders through arts-related engagement with their immedi-

ate and broad community. In fact, it is often by taking a leadership role that students are able to forge strong and meaningful relationships with their community: They become more comfortable provoking or engaging in public dialogue and develop a confidence that allows them to communicate and collaborate with people across roles and contexts.

Louise Music connects learning in the arts to what she sees as the broad purpose of all education, which is "to create a healthy and equitable society." She believes "that the practice and participation in the arts is essential for students to develop skills necessary to be able to participate in that." Quoting Deborah Meier, Music emphasizes that many youth often don't realize that "in a democracy, we are all rulers."

6. Arts education should provide a venue for students to express themselves.

We encountered wide agreement that one of the central purposes of arts education is to provide all learners with tools and opportunities to engage in and appreciate expressive experiences across the arts disciplines. Many people we spoke with stressed that the arts provide a unique opportunity for students to express themselves beyond verbal language. Elliot Eisner told us that it "has to do with the symbolic character of art, to be able to convey to others meanings that will not take the impress of literal language." Speaking of the nature of musical experiences, writer and arts educator David Myers says, "What drives musicians as musicians? What we believe is that it's that intrinsic, expressive phenomenon… We can't get to it in words and kids need that kind of experience."

Expression is also important because it makes personal development possible by providing individual students with multiple ways to "be themselves" that they may not be able to access otherwise. In our interview, Bennett Reimer described how the expressive nature of the arts enables self-discovery: "You could say that in the arts you express yourself. Heck no. You're finding yourself out! What you're creating is yourself. You can create in one way and realize it's not right and then do it differently." Similarly, interviewees Sara Lee Gibb and Cynthia Weiss emphasize that the expressive nature of the arts enables students to fulfill the purpose of connecting

with others, to "cultivate" and "express humanity." Numerous scholars have noted in their writings how expression helps students to find a personal voice, something that is seen as particularly critical to develop in populations of under-served and disenfranchised youth (Adams & Goldbard, 2001,2002; Birch, 1990; Boal, 1995, 2000; Boal & Jackson, 2006; Chávez & Soep, 2005; Lacy, 1995; Mesa-Baines, 1990).

In her interview, Lissa Soep called attention to the importance of casting a wide net when thinking about the purposes and forms of the expressive arts. It's not simply about celebrating the release of emotion, but about "maximizing opportunities for young people to contribute and participate in their own expressive vernaculars and to link them to larger histories that they feel included in that perhaps have been excluded in the past." Engaging in the arts allows students to represent and mold their own lives. Soep continues, "Nurturing expressive culture in its various forms is, should be, a crucial purpose within arts education… whether that's spoken word poetry, painting on an easel, telling stories or posting blogs." "The more that [the scope of expressive culture] shrinks and gets shut out of learning experiences… the fewer recourses [students] have to intervene in their own lives, impact on their communities, and feel like they are contributing in an active way as citizens in the world."

7. Arts education should help students develop as individuals.

Our interviewees frequently placed special emphasis on the role that engaging in the arts plays in students' developing sense of themselves as individuals and the role the arts play in students' relation to others. Several of the outcomes we've discussed thus far could be considered forms of personal development. The significant role the arts can play in helping students see that they have something to offer – that they have voice and the ability and credibility to contribute to society – has already been discussed in the purpose of artistic expression. In many sites that emphasize youth development, a space is provided for students to find and exercise their voice and effect change. This connection between developing youth agency and encouraging students to act upon their agency is also related to the civic/community engagement purpose.

But in addition to the particular need for youth to develop an expressive voice, an important outcome of arts education is to help all children grow as individuals. From developing students' imagination and self-esteem to encouraging their self-awareness, engaging with the arts can affect how youth see themselves. Many interviewees, including Cardona, Music, Congdon, and others, believe that when arts experiences connect to learners' own experiences, culture, and heritage, they gain the power to change individuals' views of themselves. Yet another aspect of personal development has to do with the arts' capacity to shape and sometimes transform students' outlooks on life. Museum educator Rika Burnham explains, "I think that although I feel it's an unrealistic goal, it's an always hoped for goal, that the work of art will somehow alter your life. The work of art will, that incredibly complicated word, *transform* one's life." She continues: "James Cuno has this wonderful phrase. He says that, 'when you leave a work of art you should walk away at a different angle on the world.'"

Many interviewees also noted that arts education helps build students' intrinsic motivation, that engaging in arts experiences develops students' capacity for reflection and self-assessment and increases their intrinsic motivation to learn and to pursue excellence – both in and outside of the arts. This belief was evident at many sites we visited. Teaching artist Ladzekpo at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, for example, talks about instilling in his students a desire to be excellent, which he hopes will transfer to all areas of their lives. "I want them to develop a culture of excellence as a habit. I just don't want them to be excellent in dancing, or when they're in front of me, and when they go to another teacher they're not doing that. There is a habit of doing that."

An important outcome of arts education is to help students grow as individuals by teaching in ways that are sensitive to each student's needs and interests. As dance educator Sara Lee Gibb puts it, students "are so different in their personalities and their desires and the things that make them happy, and the arts allow you to [serve] that. It does not homogenize, everybody has to look the same, do the same, be the same…" As an arts educator, "you

can be working on good and valuable things and things that are positive in [people's] lives but they are different [for each person]... That's why I think the arts are so valuable in an educational setting. They honor the individual child, or the individual person."

In the world of education, official outcomes are often officially assessed, and many people stress the importance of keeping personal development in mind when it comes to assessment. Honoring the individual child and being sensitive to each child's needs reinforces the idea that assessments should be based on individual growth and not a set standard or benchmark, which is the position of the Council of Arts Accrediting Organizations (2007). Saldaña, for example, argues that more of assessment should be "about the students and what they say drama has done for them as artists, as individuals, as part of a community." Weiss explains: "I'm really interested in how we create, how we define *quality as a continuum* within an individual student's progress, not as a universal bar that everyone's trying to reach – [not as] an external definition of quality. How do we make room and create room for a continuum of learning [for individuals]?"

For Bill Strickland, personal development and betterment is the hallmark purpose of arts education. "To improve the quality of life of human beings... to people who are disadvantaged economically or socially – who are educationally challenged... the arts experience in an educational setting is a portal through which a lot of kids have learned to walk to open up life possibilities that might not have existed prior to that experience." Bill Strickland documents the ways in which his students seize more opportunities after leaving the Guild, from obtaining jobs and attending college, to founding community arts centers. "I'm looking for what happens to the kid that is fundamentally different from what happens with the peer group that they hang out around that's not involved with our program. And the evidence is pretty dramatic." For Strickland, arts learning experiences open doors for all learners.

In the literature on arts education, we found the goal of personal development stressed particularly often, though certainly not exclusively, by those who write about out-of-school arts programs. (Adams & Goldbard,

2001; Burnham & Durland, 1998; Burnham & Kai-Kee, 2005; Chavez & Soep, 2005; Cleveland, 2000; Davis, Soep, Maira, Remba, & Putnoi, 1993; Goldbard, 2006; Gullotta, 2000; Heath, 1999; Michaelson & Nakamura, 2001; President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 1996). Out-of-school arts programs are not regulated by any state or district educational system and seem to emerge in response to the needs to particular communities. These programs often stress the goal of "youth development" and the creation of healthy, well-rounded citizens. Typically this means developing leadership skills, positive dispositions, and self image, social and life skills, and communication skills (Heath, 1999; Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1998).

Multiple Purposes of Arts Education: Revisiting the Relationship Between Purposes and Quality

A central argument of this report is that achieving high quality arts education is not simply a matter of adopting a research-proven set of "best practices" and leaving it at that. Rather, quality lives in the ongoing dynamic between the multiple and sometimes shifting purposes of arts education and the choices educators and administrators are constantly making to achieve them. If there is a core message to our findings about purposes, it is that successfully striving for, and achieving, multiple purposes is not only a hallmark of quality but also one of its most difficult challenges.

A quick look at the purposes discussed in this chapter easily reveals the complexity of simultaneously achieving several of them consistently and reliably. Fulfilling any one of them is a major accomplishment; achieving three or more of them over and over and with limited resources and in challenging and changing contexts is nearly miraculous. Interviewees at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts in Richmond, California, for example, told us that they strive to teach rigorous and sequential arts technique, to promote youth development and leadership, and to help students examine social issues through the arts and thereby effect change. Their staff is constantly considering how to select the right repertoire and arts teachers, how to elicit a desire to be excellent from all

participating students, and how to engage with the community to promote civic dialogue and inspire action. While one purpose may take priority at any given moment, it is important that other purposes are not jeopardized in the decision making process. Recognizing the complexities involved in working with simultaneous purposes can affect programmatic as well as in-the-moment teaching decisions.

Is there a secret to managing the complexity of multiple purposes? We can't answer that question definitively, but we can report that throughout our conversations and site visits, it seemed quite clear to us that successfully achieving multiple purposes is an ongoing responsibility shared by many, rather than a static outcome achieved by a few. It is a process that requires decision makers at all levels – from those in the classroom to those in the board-room – to reflect together continually about the learning purposes they wish their programs to serve and how these purposes come to life in students' learning experiences. Our hope is that this chapter can foster such reflections. In Chapter 6, we offer a tool designed to help guide reflection and discussions around issues of quality.

A clear message of our research is that people who think deeply about the quality of arts learning experiences also think deeply about the multiple purposes they are trying to achieve. They reflect on these purposes frequently, and their passion for achieving them is coupled with a clear-eyed sense of how the underlying purposes of a program or approach connect to all the decisions that are made, from administrative decisions to in-the-moment teaching decisions.

CHAPTER 3: THE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY ARTS LEARNING AS SEEN THROUGH FOUR LENSES

What constitutes quality in arts education? So far in this report we've mainly talked about backdrop. We began by describing how anyone's frame of reference for this question is inextricably linked to their fundamental ideas about identity, meaning, and value – as artists and as educators. We've also talked about the rich array of purposes that give meaning and direction to the pursuit of quality arts education, noting that the specific constellation of a program's purposes and goals are deeply linked to local contexts, communities, conditions, interests, and needs. But visions and purposes come to life in the actual moments of teaching and learning. We turn now to these experiential elements that can be seen when visiting a classroom, studio, rehearsal hall or other setting for arts learning.

What are these elements? Drawing on our extensive interviews, particularly responses to our questions about what quality looks like when one is "in the room," we compiled hundreds of comments about elements of quality that are observable. As we pored over the list looking for patterns and themes, it gradually became clear that one helpful way to make sense of these various elements was to look at the list in its entirety through different lenses, with each lens capturing a specific facet, or dimension, of the list as a whole. Four lenses emerged as most useful: *student learning, pedagogy, community dynamics*, and *environment*. Imagine, then, opening the door onto a room where students and teachers are engaged in a powerful arts learning experience. What might each of these lenses bring into focus?

Looking through the lens of **student learning**, you'll see what students are actually doing in the classroom – the kinds of projects and tasks they're involved in, the focus and character of their engagement, the attitudes and mindsets they bring to the learning experience.

Looking through the lens of **pedagogy**, you'll see how teachers conceive of and practice their craft – how they conceptualize their role in the classroom and how they design and implement instruction.

The lens of **community dynamics** affords a view of the social dimension of the relationships in the classroom or other arts learning setting – relationships among the students themselves, between students and teachers, and among the teachers and other adults who interact with students in the classroom.

Finally, the lens of **the environment** focuses on tangible and concrete elements, including the physical space of the classroom, the material resources available, as well as the time students are given – hours as well as years – to engage in arts learning.

Each lens provides a way to help us focus on a number of particular, observable elements that indicate quality arts learning experiences. The elements discussed here are only a fraction of those named by our interviewees, but they do represent many of the elements most commonly noted. Our discussion of these elements is necessarily brief, but it suggests the richness of an arts learning experience. In the classroom, the quality of any of these elements does not stand alone; on the contrary, an inviting rehearsal space inspires and prepares students to work seriously, just as does an experienced artist-teacher who is passionate about the play to be rehearsed. The social dimension of the ensemble that has been nurtured further encourages everyone not only to work hard but to exceed their previous accomplishments. In short, all of the elements contribute to the quality of the learning experience. Yet, as noted, these elements are not a checklist. They might better be thought of as a provocation to think both broadly and deeply about the elements that might matter most in a particular arts education setting early in the process of creating that learning experience.

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Student Learning

The following elements emerged as important indicators of a quality arts learning experience as seen through the lens of student learning. Not all of these, of course, must be present at any one time. But when a number are evident, it suggests that students are more likely to be having a high quality arts learning experience. Many of the elements made visible by the other three lenses contribute to the likelihood that student learning has the positive attributes of the following elements:

- Engagement
- Purposeful experiences creating or engaging with works of art
- Emotional openness and honesty
- Experimentation, exploration, and inquiry
- Ownership

1. Engagement

Examining the quality of a classroom experience through the lens of student learning, the first thing arts educators look for is whether students are *engaged* in their learning. At our sites and in most of our interviews, arts educators described engagement as both a necessary condition for and a strong indicator of a high quality arts learning experience.

As Bill Strickland, president and CEO of Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, put it, when you walk into a high quality arts learning setting, "you see a good environment that's engaging and stimulating. You feel excitement "in the room" and you see engagement on the part of the faculty and the kids." Many others spoke of feeling a hum or a buzz of energy and focused engagement, an immediate sense that everyone is genuinely absorbed in, and focused on, the work at hand. A number of people we spoke with referred to Csikszentmihalyi's notion of *flow* (1990). To experience flow, to become absorbed in the task at hand, to lose oneself in a creative experience, is for these arts educators an irreducible part of what constitutes quality arts learning.

The roots of engagement are varied, though focus and absorption are its abiding characteristics. When works of art and the materials are intentionally compelling and aesthetically attractive, they draw students toward them and their possibilities. They invite learners to pay attention and wonder about them. For many students, once engaged, the intrinsic pleasure of making or experiencing art becomes truly joyful. Students described such experience as 'serious fun' – both incredibly demanding and truly exhilarating.

Artistic processes themselves, such as improvising, interpreting, and composing, are also deeply engaging. Grappling with a challenging problem, painstakingly revising a work, giving and receiving critique, exploring difficult issues, reaching deeply to express what one really feels, searching widely for ideas, developing a rhythm of working collaboratively within a classroom community of learners all can create engagement when learners' whole focus and soul is invested in the work.

Often engagement has a visible intensity and immediacy to it. Students might be intently involved in their work, raptly attentive to a performance or demonstration, eagerly asking questions, or actively collaborating. But engagement can be quiet and prolonged as well. For example, as museum educator Rika Burnham explains, in a museum setting, "it's about a sort of sustained engagement with a work of art, a deep focus." Burnham sees this as central to the mission of museum education. "I believe that if we could propose or posit that the engagement between the person and the real work of art is at the center of museum education, then museum teaching would move into the center of museum education where it should be."

2. Purposeful Experiences Creating or Engaging with Works of Art

In our discussion of foundational questions in Chapter 4, we take note of a long-standing dichotomy between *making* (creating art objects, performing works by others, or creating original performances) and *looking* (engaging with works of visual or performed art) in arts education. The debate associated with this dichotomizing is discussed in Chapter 4. While the settings we visited did not all place the same relative emphasis on making and looking, most embraced both activities as essential to broad and deep learning in the arts and to artistic development in the young. Some of our sites (e.g., the Find Yourself at the Met program for teens at New York's Metropolitan Mu-

seum of Art) focus exclusively on engaging with works of art and providing powerful arts learning experiences through close observation and rich interpretive explorations of those artworks. Walking into most high quality arts education settings reveals students deeply engaged in looking, making or – as is often the case, given the organic relationship between the two activities – engaged in both at once.

Making art involves a complex set of processes. As described by senior staff at Studio in a School in New York City, these involve experimenting, drawing on many experiences from a multiplicity of angles, demonstrating, discussing, reflecting, exploring, discovering, and, finally, exhibiting or performing. A full discussion of these phases and micro-processes of making art is beyond the scope of this report. It is important to note, however, that many of those we interviewed were able to discern quickly the processes and phases of a given art-making experience; they could readily see how the immediate moment of work fit into the longer arc of making a work of art.

In this way, the experience of making art in a formal arts learning setting has many of the characteristics of project-based learning. Project-based learning has had a long history in American educational practice with its roots in John Dewey's educational ideas and the theory and practice of William Heard Kilpatrick. Beattie (2006) refers to authentic open-ended project-based tasks as "rich" complex problems with historical, contemporary, and personal relevance, ones that typically require integrating understanding from several perspectives. These projects result in a wide range of outcomes, rather than in a template product. Such projects address problems that are messy and ambiguous and that often call for exploration and just plain "mucking around." Projects build over time, involving many drafts and revisions (these are not one-shot activities), and they usually culminate in a significant presentation, performance, or exhibition.

Thomas Cahill, President of Studio in the School, told us that the best art-making projects make students act and feel like artists. He suggested that this is made possible when students "have such a high quality problem, question, or prompt that they don't even know that they're working on something that you gave them." It is

this caliber of assignment that draws students into full engagement with their work. Project-based learning at Studio in a School, as at so many of the other sites we visited, provides the opportunity for students to spend time with a problem, to work directly with materials in an attempt to explore the problem, and to value their own sense of discovery and pursuit of answers in the process. The element of time is noted as a quality in our discussion of the environment lens, but it is highly relevant here as well. Projects take time for sustained and in-depth exploration – time that is difficult to protect in most school settings.

3. Emotional Openness and Honesty

A frequent characteristic noted for a high quality setting was that it is a "safe space." Safety, as we will further explore in discussing respect and trust in the lens of community dynamics, is considered basic to arts learning. But why? Is there danger implicit in arts learning experiences?

Obviously, when working with power tools, toxic chemicals, or extreme physical movements, physical safety is a *sine qua non* of a high quality arts setting. But most of these educators were also clearly talking more about the emotional demands and opportunities of arts learning. They want their students to feel "safe" with their feelings of embarrassment, frustration, vulnerability, or joy in the work, as well as to have their own powerful emotional responses to the works of others.

Both activities – looking and making – engage students in the emotional and intellectual dimensions of artistic experience. Indeed, there was little attention given to dichotomizing thought and feeling during our site visits. Rather, our interviewees seemed simply to acknowledge and embrace as a given that serious, intentional engagement in making or experiencing works of art would likely have both strong emotional *and* intellectual dimensions. Indeed, when discussing what quality looks like "in the room," many people talked about the centrality of 'big' ideas, ideas that felt important to students and teachers alike, that everyone came to care about and to see as highly relevant to them and to the world, at the same time that they acknowledged the emotional intensity of much of the work in which students were engaged.

To enter the room and immediately sense the emo-

tional intensity of the work going on was considered by many as an indicator of the quality of the experience. This emotional dimension had at least two sources. First, the challenges of developing an adequate level of technique for performance that is demanded by any art form generates strong feelings, whether in the visual arts studio or the rehearsal room. The second source of powerful emotional experiences is the subject matter of so many works of art. The intention of so much art is to provoke strong feelings. A class engaged with works of art in which nobody had significant emotional reactions would not be high in quality. Given the likelihood and centrality of strong emotions in a high quality arts experience, it is no surprise that so many of those we interviewed spoke about the importance of emotional safety in these settings.

4. Experimentation, Exploration, and Inquiry

Many of our interviewees spoke of the intensity of arts learning as inquiry and exploration and of how many arts settings have almost a laboratory atmosphere, and we observed these qualities in a number of sites. An evening dance rehearsal in St. Louis provided a provocative look at this element of arts learning. A group of teen dancers at COCA, a multi-arts organization that works both in schools and in its own facility, was rehearsing a new dance choreographed by Antonio Douthit, an alumnus of that program. Since leaving St. Louis just after high school, Antonio became a member of the Alvin Ailey Dance Company in 2004. When he decided to try choreographing his own works, he chose to come back to COCA to create his first piece.

The intensity of the work of these 15 dancers was electric. In each corner, dancers were practicing steps and sequences of movement; some worked with Antonio's assistant, another dancer from the Ailey company, and others were being taught new moves by Antonio. The dancers were trying to master the moves, but also to understand the feeling Antonio was hoping for, looking for the meaning of the piece. It was an intense individual and collective exploration of the possibilities of movement for expressing and communicating feeling and meaning – among the dancers, between the dancers and choreographer, and between the dancers and an audience. But there was a constant shifting back and forth, from work-

ing toward mastery to exploring new possibilities and experimenting with different approaches. Antonio was constantly trying out new moves, both to find what these dancers could do and to discover what would satisfy his artistic intentions.

This rehearsal was like a giant laboratory of artistic investigators. The nature of the inquiry was complex and multi-dimensional, and included physical, emotional, intellectual, personal, social, and aesthetic aspects. The dancers were all working beyond their previous realms of experience and had ventured into new dimensions as dancers and as people. They were deeply engaged, thoroughly committed, and more than a little off-balance due to the novelty of this work and the learning demands being made on them.

These young dancers were having a thoroughly authentic and high quality arts learning experience; they were engaged in the making of a dance as part of their arts education. We saw scenes of similar intensity in each of the sites we visited. Our observations revealed students engaged in real work (authentic problems and assignments) and real learning (ventures into new realms of experience and the development of capacities to engage with ever-broader aspects of the world).

5. Ownership

Part of the character of deep engagement in learning is a personal investment in the work at hand. But especially in schools or other settings of mandatory learning, it can be difficult (especially as children get older and/or learning becomes more challenging) to get young people to "own" their learning – to invest in it with energy and commitment and to take responsibility for the relative success of their efforts. This is what educators refer to as student-driven or student-centered learning. Working on a project of one's own or as part of an ensemble or team provides a basic situation which has the promise of rewarding a sense of ownership, commitment, and responsibility. But how do students come to make that commitment? What encourages them to decide to invest themselves in the challenging work of arts learning?

"I always look for a quality of invitation over instruction, not dragging someone to do it," Aline Hill-Reiss, director of programs for Studio in a School, told us about

observing teaching-artists in their programs. "Inviting students to come along because it's going to be a wonderful journey. You see the kids going at it enthusiastically, making their own discoveries… the artist circulating, being a coach. Not telling them what to do, not making suggestions, but helping them to see possibilities and guiding them in the making of decisions." This kind of guidance, like many forms of mentorship, encourages students to move beyond just "doing the assignment" and toward taking full responsibility for – owning – their work.

Elizabeth Barrett, Tom Hansell, and Herb E. Smith, all veteran documentary filmmakers, members of the Appalshop collective, in Whitesburg, Kentucky, and mentors to young artists at the Appalachian Media Institute, Appalshop's youth program, have given extensive thought to their roles and responsibilities as mentors. Like the Studio in a School teaching-artists, these artist-mentors are very clear about their belief that their students are artists working on their own projects. As mentors, they may share technical experience and try to be available to discuss the issues and challenges that the younger filmmakers are encountering, but they do not interfere in their artistic decisions. They treat these young people as they do any fellow artist – with complete respect for their artistic process and the critical importance of owning one's work. Rebecca O'Doherty, AMI program director, underscores the importance of mentoring the interns through difficult moments in the creative process – as an alternative to adults intervening to create a more "finished" product. According to O'Doherty, focusing on more finished products would interfere with real rigor and the authentic development of the intern's ownership of his or her own understanding, technique, skills, and agency.

Rhonda Thacker, former intern and now a trainer at AMI, spoke movingly of the significance of meeting the senior artists at Appalshop when she began as an intern almost ten years ago. She was amazed by the seriousness with which she was treated by them. "They were all just instant role models, life changing. They were all just bigger than life to all of us. So many of the kids came out of the program wanting to be filmmakers… Just having the filmmakers come down and give critiques on the work and show interest and take time from their day and all of that just added to this whole positive experience, I think. And just feeling welcomed at Appalshop, not feeling like a token program or something."

When engaged in this way, students develop a great deal of authority over their work and bring much more of their own thought and experience to it. As a result they make many personal connections, have to make decisions, and accept responsibilty for their artistic choices. Since their work will likely be shared publicly, the burden of this responsibility is very real, exacting a kind of rigor that is extremely demanding. When students are experiencing a strong sense of ownership of their work, the risks may be significant, but the rewards make them worth it.

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Pedagogy

For many people who walk into a classroom, studio, or rehearsal hall, it is the teacher who captures their immediate attention. This may not be surprising, since teachers are often trying to capture students' attention. But just as often, a teacher's deep work is neither flashy and attention-grabbing or even very visible at all. Of course, much of what teachers do is in the design of a lesson, the preparation of the room, or the gathering of materials – all activities that take place before students ever come through the door. Yet all aspects of teaching – planning, the moments of classroom interaction, and assessment – are part of what the lens of pedagogy reveals, whether these aspects are immediately visible in the classroom or are felt more than seen in the fluid activity, ongoing actions and comments, and rich engagement of students.

Each of these four lenses reveals enormous variations in what the elements actually look like, given different ages of the students and different art forms. Making learning relevant for first graders is different from relevancy for high school students. The list we propose here includes the characteristics of quality most often named by our interviewees. Again, none of these lists are meant to be taken as complete or absolute. It is certainly possible to imagine high quality arts teaching that has few of these qualities but that demonstrates other great strengths not captured here at all. That said, the following five elements represent a sample of the qualities of teaching we heard discussed most frequently:

- Authenticity
- Modeling artistic processes, inquiry, and habits
- Participation in the learning experience
- Making learning relevant and connected to prior knowledge
- Intentionality, flexibility, and transparency

1. Authenticity

Across virtually all of the comments we collected about the nature of high quality teaching in the arts were statements about the authenticity of excellent arts teach-

ing. When asked to describe what this actually looks like – how you know it when you see it – we were told that it was teaching that involved the learners in actual artistic processes (rehearsal, improvisation, and critique, for example) or the kind of serious study of works of art that historians, critics, and curators do. In a program for high school students at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, for example, students in the Museum Studies class not only meet with and learn from professionals in virtually every department of the museum, but are given responsibility for curating and mounting an exhibition of student art work. In other words, authentic arts learning looks like artists and arts professionals doing what they do in their work (as opposed to students doing "school art").

Our interviewees also felt that students are more likely to engage in arts learning experiences when there are real reasons for doing so, including real payoffs and real risks. Lissa Soep, education director of Youth Radio, sees authenticity of purpose as fundamental. She collaborates with young people to make radio shows about issues that are meaningful for them – shows that are aired publicly and often nationally. "Students are more able to fully invest themselves in arts experiences when the work has an authentic purpose," she explains, "and when they themselves have been involved in shaping the patterns or purposes of their work. Having a purpose for making art gives it a sense of urgency that drives the work, making learning more intense and engaged, more real."

Authentic arts education for kindergarten students would differ in many ways, but some of the basic characteristics are similar – e.g., the importance of showing one's work through performances and exhibits, the importance of expressing personal meanings, and the need for responses to one's work in order to keep growing and developing as an artist.

Finally, some of the discussion we heard about authenticity embraced not only the authenticity of the artistic processes and purposes, but also the honesty of the myriad ways in which the teacher is a person in the classroom. Michael Cirelli, executive director of Urban Word NYC, told us of one of the messages he tries to communicate to the program's teaching-artists, "I tell teachers, 'Do

you first.' In other words, teachers must be authentic in how and what they teach." Considering the importance of the authenticity of a teacher as a person, that what they do is consistent with their values and their integrity, with 'who they are' as a person, Cirelli noted the ability of young people to detect inauthenticity. "Kids can sniff it out."

2. Modeling Artistic Processes, Inquiry, and Habits

How important is it to expose students to models of artistic inquiry? To what degree is artistic inquiry an authentic dimension of artistic work? Some, like Susan Sollins, executive producer of Art:21, think it is vitally important.

> …one of the astounding things is how the artists in the [Art:21 television] series are invested and involved and knowledgeable and are investigating so many different fields… They are reading, and using the computer, [and] bringing [together] all this information… I don't think by and large what artists really do is recognized or transmitted by our teachers… The whole issue of artists being information eaters and experimenters is brought forward [in our series] and that's really very important.

In this sense, artists and arts educators serve as model artists, social role models, and model learners. Laura Chapman states that quality teachers also model a passionate and inquiry-based approach to art making, "Good teachers leave students with a desire to learn more and some skills to continue that learning. They model and instill a certain passion for asking questions and exploring ideas in the absence of rewards for doing so."

According to Cynthia Weiss, visual artist and school partnerships manager at Columbia College Chicago, the work of other artists can also serve as models for students. "A really strong work of art can scaffold children's learning and move them really far along… 'Look at what other artists have done.' Aim high. There *are* standards that you can name and put out there and show models of and have students try to reach."

At Arts Corps in Seattle, a break dance class is taught to middle school students by a local professional, Jerome Aparis. As a teacher, Jerome is patient and generous, yet demanding. As an artist, he pushes himself hard and, at 23, his discipline has been rewarded with impressive successes. He travels extensively for his work as a member of the Massive Monkees crew, performing and competing in

break dancing events around the world. While he tries to schedule his teaching around his professional responsibilities, this isn't always possible. But he and the Arts Corps staff feel that his professional work – and the seriousness with which he treats his commitments and his own training and preparation – is an important aspect of what Aparis 'teaches' his middle school students, who are at an age at which models of discipline, rigor, and success for young men in the arts is especially important.

3. Participation in the Learning Experience

When we asked about student learning, we heard about the importance of students being engaged in inquiry – active investigation of ideas, issues, feelings, aesthetics, and aspects of human experience. We heard also about the importance of teachers actively participating in inquiry as a characteristic of high quality.

When both students and teachers are engaged in inquiry, their experiences become aligned and they learn side-by-side. For example, as a museum educator in the Find Yourself at the Met program, Rika Burnham believes that educators can and should "engage in the practice of contemplating art both as a teacher and as a student. I think that when you teach in the galleries with a work of art you're being taught by the work of art and by the students at the same time that you're making possible their experience."

It can also mean making art along with students. Lissa Soep uses the term *collegial pedagogy* to describe students and arts professionals collaboratively creating works of art: "It's interdependent where neither party could finish the work independently; it adds a different kind of ingredient than an apprenticeship model." In this sense, Soep sees the educator/arts professional facilitating learning through instruction, but also "entering the creative space with kids, putting their own creativity on the line alongside the young person's."

Todd Snead, a site coordinator for the Sound Learning program in Atlanta, addressed the deep interconnections between teachers' and students' ways of participating in authentic arts practices. "Someone once told me that when teaching, your job is not to be a band director, but to love music and to show your kids how much you love it and how you love it. And I think when kids are

engaged in a great musical experience... when the artist is basically baring her soul and giving all her energy to the performance, kids see it, and I think kids feel it. And that's why they come to it."

Amanda Dargan, education director at City Lore in New York City, suggested that she can recognize a high quality residency when she spends time in the room and "everyone is learning." Dargan adds that "everyone" included not only students, but their teachers, too, including the classroom teacher and the teaching artist, as well as parents and herself.

4. Making Learning Relevant and Connected to Prior Knowledge

Many arts educators believe that a mark of excellence in arts teaching is the ability to create links between arts learning and students' own lives – their social and cultural contexts, their needs, their expressive languages, their background knowledge, their interests and activities. Our interviewees stated that students are more likely to be engaged when the arts experience is relevant to their lives and when it connects to things they care about. In part this is simply common sense: people tend to engage with things that they find personally meaningful. But engagement isn't only created by tapping into students' existing interests and contexts, though this can be crucially important. As Kristin Congdon points out, "good teachers know how to draw students in – to make content relevant to students' lives." Making work relevant to students' lives can take many forms, from designing projects that respect students varied approaches to learning and cultural experiences, to choosing culturally relevant problems and tasks, to helping students make connections to their own background knowledge.

Our conversations with interviewees led us to believe that there are a couple of points to keep in mind when thinking about relevancy. The first is to avoid a narrow conception of relevance – the idea that making something relevant to students is simply a matter of finding out what students are interested in, like, soccer or basketball or hip-hop, and then matching it to a topic or activity. Though this can be a good thing to do, the arts can play a significant role in helping students *expand* their interests and see beyond their own contexts. Indeed, this

is one of the key purposes of arts education mentioned in the previous chapter. One way to do this is to provide high quality tasks that invite sustained engagement.

Another way is to look for links or to think creatively and metaphorically about links between things students know about and things they don't. Often new ideas challenge students' prior understandings; while sometimes they build on them neatly. But connecting something new to an existing thread of knowledge isn't always easy or straightforward for students, and a teachers' role in helping students make these links can be crucial. For example, elementary classroom teacher Kristin Poteet describes how she helps students make connections with visiting musicians from the Sound Learning program in Atlanta: "I want to be there. I want to be the scaffolding between what students are hearing and experiencing and what I know they know, because I think that's where you truly can take things to the next level – where you can say, 'Remember when we talked about this? That's how it connects with this.' Because sometimes children can't make those connections on their own. When you spend so much time… with a child, you really understand their background knowledge."

5. Intentionality, Flexibility, and Transparency

In Chapter 5 we discuss the many decisions teachers make before entering 'the room' to teach – notably issues of goals, design, materials, and works of art to feature – and then the many decisions made once in 'the room' and facing the reality of a particular group of young people on a particular day. Once a class has started, lightning-speed choices are made, often overturning much of the plan that had been so well worked out in advance. This dynamic is hardly unique to arts education, but the richness and complexity of art works and artistic processes present so many possibilities for exploration that it can often be impossible to predict the best path for a particular group in advance.

When discussing what high quality arts teaching looks like "in the room," this combination of intentionality and flexibility was frequently noted. Being well prepared with clear goals and intentions for a class was considered critical, but being able to know when to let go of one's plan and follow the interests and needs of the mo-

ment was equally important. Several people noted that this balance of preparedness and spontaneity is natural to many arts teachers, since it so clearly echoes what artists must do in their work. Indeed, we heard that you could actually see teachers "listening" to their students, both in how they took time to stop and pay attention to what students were saying and doing, but also in how they would sometimes then shift their next 'moves' as the teacher/facilitator of the work.

Being prepared was not only an issue of planning a specific session, but extended to include the full design of the course, workshop, or project. It even broadened out further. Johnny Saldaña, professor of theater at Arizona State University, spoke of excellent teachers "having a mental rolodex of diverse pedagogical/artistic philosophies at one's disposal." This requires a deep background in both the arts and education and is not easily or quickly developed. Sometimes co-teaching is so valuable because a team can bring together expertise from more domains, when each partner does not have deep experience in all of them. With Saldaña's 'mental rolodex,' teachers can at once be orderly and structured, yet responsive, spontaneous, and flexible to what students bring to the work.

In addition to paying close attention to students in order to read them as clearly as possible, the transparency of the teacher's intentions, actions, and responses was also noted as a sign of high quality teaching. Clear expectations, plans, goals, and standards were discussed as being especially helpful to learners. In order to give themselves over to a learning experience – to prepare for engagement – students need to know in a broad sense why they are doing what they are doing and what's expected of them. As dance educator Sara Lee Gibb points out, this is especially important for younger learners. "So often students don't perform as well because they think, 'well what does she want me to do, or what am I supposed to do?' An excellent teacher will provide [transparent purposes] and it will be so clear that the students will just go for it and really become engaged with the problem or the material or whatever is the context that day."

We heard this from students as well as adults. At COCA in St. Louis, one student we spoke with explained her deep commitment to her classes and her own ideas about what constitutes high quality arts teaching:

> The teachers have high expectations. They don't set it so high that you can't do it, but the teachers... if they know you can do it, they're not going to settle for less. They're taking an interest in your art so you can think about how to better yourself. You don't want to go lower; you want to go higher. You give because you get so much. I am getting so much from the teachers, and now I can give it to the next generation. I feel that's a good teacher.

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Community Dynamics

When asked to describe salient characteristics one might observe in a quality arts learning experience, many interviewees shared thoughts about the dynamics of the community in the learning setting – the ways in which people treat each other, learn with and from each other, and feel about being together. Most often, these ideas featured strongly in conversations about creating a safe learning space built on trust and respect and in which students are enabled to be creative and to experiment, both as artists and as people. and in which students are enabled to be creative and to experiment, both as artists and as people. The centrality of relationships in high quality arts learning was a theme resonant across many interviews on our site visits; the development of healthy relationships among all participants in the experience was also seen as critical to the quality of the learning experience. We heard, too, repeated references to arts learning communities as "a family" or as "a home away from home," both in relation to school programs, like the art department at New Trier High School, and in out-of-school programs, like Will Power to Youth, AMI, Marwen, and others.

From these discussions of relationships, safety, and community, we identified three elements that emerged with frequency and intensity:

- Respect and trust among all participants, along with a belief in student capacities
- Open communication
- Collaboration

While these elements by no means comprise a complete map for designing a positive social climate in a classroom or workshop, those we spoke to deemed these most critical – even foundational – to a quality arts learning experience. Certainly we can begin to appreciate the significant role that social interaction – and the awareness of the impact of the relational element in education – has on the quality of an arts learning experience.

At this point, though, the intersections of the various elements across lenses become more obvious. For example, discussions of mentorship are as visible through the lens of community dynamics as they are through the lenses of learning and teaching. It is also important to note that in naming this lens, we use *community* to refer to all of the various settings in which arts learning may occur – rehearsal halls, performance settings, art studios, museum galleries, community sites, and more.

1. Respect and Trust Among All Participants, Along With a Belief in Student Capacities.

Reading Shakespeare's plays is a challenge for just about everyone. Learning them well enough to perform them without a script is exponentially more challenging. For the teen actors participating in Will Power to Youth in Los Angeles, this is their job. They are employed by the program and get their paycheck for being actors. It doesn't seem to take them very long to realize that this may not be the easiest way to make a buck. What we saw, however, when we observed a rehearsal, was a group of teens who were exhibiting many of the signs of a highly functional team working under serious deadline pressures – their performance before 1,000 people at an education conference was only two rehearsals away. They were patient with each other, supportive, responsive to their director, disciplined, frustrated at moments, but committed to their work.

It seems the high stakes of this authentic learning experience were the catalyst of that all-too-rare phenomenon – the creation of a community. Many of the people we spoke with identified a palpable sense of community in the learning space as an important and observable element of a quality arts learning experience. But high functioning teams and supportive communities do not simply form; they have to be born in the heat of some shared commitment, challenge, and/or identity. The authenticity found in much high quality arts teaching and learning provides a powerful environment for forming communities. But respect for and trust in the capacities of young people is the bedrock of these experiences. If the directors of Will Power to Youth did not deeply and profoundly respect the capabilities of young people, they could never have made the commitment to perform at a conference many months prior to actually meeting the students with whom they would be working on the performance. They had to have confidence that these young people could handle the artistic challenges and the intense psychologi-

cal and social dynamics of performing in public.

The students, too, had to have confidence in their teacher-directors and in each other. When a young person new to artistic work loses confidence in him or herself (which happens with great regularity), they have to have some faith to fall back on. For many, this faith seems to be found in the group's support, kindness, high expectations, and confidence in them.

To engage fully in artistic work and learning – to express ideas freely, to innovate, to explore unreservedly, to receive and give honest critique – it is essential to believe that one's work and perspective will be respected and that the group is committed to one's success. As Kristin Congdon puts it, "Good teachers are people who really know how to respect students and to see them as knowledge-bearers and not as people who are empty vessels." Respectful teaching allows for mistakes and shows genuine interest in students' ideas, interests, and background knowledge. Many people we spoke with talked passionately about how the quality of students' arts learning experiences depends upon their being a member of a classroom community in which they are valued as artists, as students, and as human beings.

Many also noted respectful student-to-student interaction as being a hallmark of quality. Its signs, they say, include students working at being mindful and cooperative with one another, collaborating and supporting each other, and learning to appreciate each other in new ways. Further, trust and respect among adults in the classroom is also considered important. Many educators, particularly those involved in partnerships and collaborations, place great emphasis on the presence of mutually respectful adult-to-adult relationships. One such relationship, for example, is between a teaching artist and a classroom teacher. When visibly demonstrating respect for and interest in each others' work, they convey to students the sense that the artist, the artwork, and the teacher are all important, increasing the likelihood that students will value the experience.

In Minneapolis, as in Los Angeles and so many other sites, our observations revealed the beautiful dynamics of artistic communities of young people and adults. Teens Rock the Mic (TRTM), a small, community-based spoken word program that has closed since we conducted this study, provided opportunities for youth to work with peer and adult poets and space for them to perform their work. While poetic and performing arts skills and techniques were honed through TRTM, equally essential was the emphasis placed on empowering youth to develop and engage their self-awareness, their confidence, and their voice. This process began with a fundamental respect for a young person's contributions. "There has to be a trust in place and a belief in the assets in the room," explains former TRTM director Melissa Borgmann, "that there is intelligence, that there is promise, that there is magic."

Administrators, artists, and educators at TRTM placed a high premium on youth voice and contribution to the learning experience. Stacey, a teaching artist at TRTM, noted that "It's not 'I'll show you how to do this, here's how you write fiction, here's how you write poetry,' it's valuing what each student is bringing to the table, respecting the student as expert." When educators model this genuine trust, it is infectious. Students who feel respected by their adult mentors begin to trust and believe in each other – the foundation of a community of shared, open learning.

At Marwen in Chicago, former student Paulina Camacho recalls being inspired by the technical ability of her classmates and building relationships while sharing tips about technique and how to achieve certain effects. As those relationships developed and trust was built, students solicited each other's feedback on other qualities of their work, more often or as frequently as they asked for teacher feedback. Just as teachers serve as models in engaging arts learning experiences, so do students' classmates. Johnny Saldaña describes the relationships he envisions: "I'm seeing from the learners a collective – a community – that has been built."

2. Open Communication

In many ways, all work in the arts is, ultimately, about perception (seeing, hearing, sensing), recognition, and response. Arts education enjoys a beautiful alignment in this regard – creating/perceiving works of art and learning with and from other people are both activities utterly dependent on open communication. Engagement with art works provides a powerful focus for sharing im-

portant thoughts and feelings. Listening in this context is obviously as critical as speaking or sharing one's work. And the communication in high quality arts learning settings goes in all directions – among students, between teachers and students, among teachers, and between everyone and works of art. The themes of communication and dialogue emerged frequently in our interviews and the practice of careful listening was evident in our observations. In some cases communication was discussed as an integral part of behind-the-scenes work prior to or outside of a class or workshop – for instance, teachers collaborating on lessons in advance, coordinators staying in touch with logistical information. But dialogue in the classroom – often verbal, but sometimes communicated more visually, as in many dance classes – was considered a cornerstone of quality.

Ongoing and respectful dialogue – including raising questions, offering ideas, considering others' ideas, expressing feelings, sharing work, engaging in constructive critique, and reflection on processes and products – were all noted as visible in quality arts classrooms and indicators of the health of the classroom as a learning community. Sandra Jackson-Dumont, former director of the Expanding the Walls program at Studio Museum of Harlem and current education director at the Seattle Art Museum, discussed the cultivation of meaningful dialogue by and with the teens as critically important in the creation of a safe space where young men and women are treated as adults and learn to engage in conversation about art and life from their own perspective and personal history. Teachers in this program do not "teach down" to the teens, says Dumont. Rather they "embrace the challenging questions or problems that arise from the work and lives of the teens. Teachers move through and beyond challenges through dialogue."

At Will Power to Youth and Urban Word, as well as several other programs, we heard conversations about the responsibility of each member of the community to accept responsibility for his or her words and actions and to notice the effects she or he is having on others. At Will Power to Youth, we were told about specific moments in which the pressures of upcoming performances led to frustrations and words that hurt feelings, creating oppor-

tunities for both individuals and the group to address the issue of responsibility for one's actions. In those moments, the question of quality becomes particularly complex and delicate. What to do? Stop, potentially losing critical rehearsal time, and deal directly and openly with what was said and how it was heard? Or press on with rehearsal and hope that the fabric of the community won't be irreparably torn? While either choice may be legitimate and could work out perfectly well, the very fact of the choice poses a challenge to the group.

In any specific setting, the best choice in a situation like this depends on the core purposes, values, and principles of the program. Whatever the decision, creating and sustaining a community with open communication among all members and with explicit acknowledgement of the core values of honesty and respect was emphasized by most of our interviewees as essential to quality art education experiences.

3. Collaboration

Each art form has its own possibilities and requirements for both solo and group work. Whether in performing or visual arts, there are approaches that emphasize each in different ways. Musicians, dancers, and actors can perform solo or in ensembles. Visual artists can produce work alone or in collaboration. Murals, installations, and animations, for example, are often the work of a collective. But virtually all artistic enterprises, even the most solo, like most poetry writing, for example, involve the participation of others at some point. In arts learning experiences, the work always involves others.

Students spoke to us about the challenges and pleasures of collaboration. To be part of a group that is functioning well is exciting and satisfying, providing an opportunity to make or engage with works of art in ways that are, quite simply, beyond the capacities of any individual. The feeling of being part of something bigger than oneself offers an identity and sense of purpose to one's efforts that helps many young people sustain commitment to their own learning through their commitment to being a full contributor to the work of the group.

Teachers we spoke with emphasized the multiple values of collaboration. Louise Music, director of the Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership in Alameda County,

California, spoke about these values, citing "making connections between themselves and others, understanding about interdependence [and] the fostering of compassion. Those are life skills that we think all children, all of us, need to develop, need to cultivate." Others spoke of the authenticity of collaboration in doing artistic work and still others discussed the interesting dynamics around ownership in collaborative efforts. There was general agreement that in walking into an arts classroom, studio, or rehearsal hall, one of the most powerful indicators that a high quality arts learning experience was occurring was the nature of interaction among the students and the degree to which their work together was productive collaboration.

Others spoke about how collaboration must take place "outside the room," as well as "in the room." Steve Tennen, Executive Director of Arts Connection in New York City, reflecting on his early work directing arts education programs, noted the deep ways in which the nature of the collaboration between adults creating arts programs influences students' learning.

> It was really about how you create this conversation between the artists and the teachers and all of those who were in the program to make this thing work better… It was getting them to trust and getting them to talk openly about what their own concerns were in their classrooms, what their concerns were in the arts classroom, and what their goals were – what they wanted to get out of this… And so it was conversation and team building between the artist and the teachers, between the teaching artists and the other teaching artists, between myself and the principals, because if the principal didn't buy originally, it wasn't going to happen… The quality of the arts experience really depends on the quality of the relationship between the classroom teacher and the artist.

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Environment

The environments in which arts learning experiences take place have both physical and cultural aspects. Many elements of the social dimension of an arts learning experience are addressed in the sections above on student learning, pedagogy, and community dynamics. This environmental lens reveals elements of the physical environment, including the actual space in which the learning takes place, the materials that are available, and the visible display of artworks and art-making materials. In addition, we also include the temporal dimension as part of the environment for this work and learning – the time available for the learning experience, including the length of individual sessions and the full term of a course or workshop.

By and large, people in the interview strand did not speak extensively about the physical environment. This was not unexpected, as there were no interview questions that specifically asked about it, and people tended to talk about art education generally, not about a specific setting. However, there were some exceptions. Ana Cardona, arts education consultant to the Michigan State Department of Education, stated that quality arts learning experiences require a permanent art education space, rather than the proverbial "art on a cart." And Bill Strickland stressed the need for a first-rate facility for high quality arts education and his conviction that students should have access to materials, equipment, facilities, and instructors that would satisfy professional artists in their own work.

The physical environment and materials were much more prominent aspects of our site visits. While detailed descriptions of the often multiple settings for teaching at each of these sites is well beyond our capacity in this report, it is important to note that we saw classes in beautiful state of the art facilities, regular elementary school classrooms, gymnasiums in community centers, museums, and other wonderful and less-than-wonderful spaces. Everyone agreed that the physical environment is tremendously important, but the degree to which it is a central or featured aspect of the quality of the experience varies significantly.

At an elementary school in St. Louis that worked in partnership with COCA, we observed a lesson on African dance. The class took place on the stage at one end of an old auditorium which had been converted to the lunch room. The lunch room was being cleaned during this class; the larger room was essentially a hallway with students and adults going back and forth; and there was no curtain separating the stage (classroom) from the rest of the space. This was simply the only available space in the building open enough for dancing. While it could hardly qualify as a high quality physical environment, the lesson was highly engaging to these young students, taught by a highly skilled, deeply committed teaching artist who seemed absolutely unbothered by the various distractions of the lunch room.

The environment lens affords views of three primary elements of quality identified through our interviews and observations:

- Functional and aesthetic space and materials
- The arts occupy a central place in the physical environment
- Sufficient time for authentic artistic work

1. Functional and Aesthetic Space and Materials

As already mentioned, the quality of an arts learning experience was seen as strongly linked to the authenticity of the artistic processes in which students were engaged. Quality was also seen as linked to the authenticity of the spaces and materials of those experiences. Again, though the physical spaces we visited were quite varied, the concern for authenticity was common to all the sites we visited. Everyone wanted to create at least some of the aspects of an authentic work space for their young artists. This may be accomplished with various means, sometimes comprehensive (fully professional dance studios with mirrors, sprung floors, and ballet barres, for example, or high-tech photo studios with up-to-date software on high-end hardware and professional-level printers) and sometimes more minimalist (authentic and beautiful African drums, for example), but always with something that linked it closely to professional practice.

As noted earlier, physical safety is an issue in the arts and a basic dimension of quality – safe surfaces for dancing, adequate ventilation for working with paints and other materials with chemical bases, and so forth. Beyond safety, other dimensions of functionality were similarly considered essential, including issues of lighting, sound, space for

free movement, running water for cleaning brushes, and so on. Ric Waimer, a teaching artist with Opening Minds through the Arts (OMA) in Tucson, spoke about teaching in less than ideal spaces. While acknowledging the joy of excellent spaces, he suggested that, as a professional mime artist, he had learned to "creatively adapt" to challenging spaces. This, he said, had taught him and other artists how to "still rise to high quality within their work regardless of those physical constraints."

As noted, beyond functionality, a number of sites had their own buildings and considered space to be one of the most powerful pedagogical elements. In the preschools in Reggio Emilia, Italy, known all over the world for the striking quality of their children's art work and the aesthetic quality of their classrooms, teachers talk about space as "the third teacher." The architect of Marwen's new studio building, Dan Wheeler, said, "I want young people [to have] their first experience at Marwen, when they open the door, to be with good design." As with all of the museum-based education programs we observed, the aesthetic of the physical spaces (buildings, studios, performance spaces) were part of the invitation to and inspiration of students and their parents.

All of this was true, too, of materials. Considerable thought, effort, and money was dedicated to gathering excellent, high quality art supplies made available in safe, functional, and attractive ways. Indeed, as with so many of these elements, extensive study of the role of materials – brushes, paints, paper, recycled materials, as well as musical instruments, books, costumes, technology, and more – is warranted. Certainly, art is made from a wide range of various materials and with many different tools and instruments. The dynamics of the relationship between the learners and these materials, tools, and instruments is at the core of artistic work and learning; the aesthetic dimension of that relationship is like a powerful magnet in that core.

2. The Arts Occupy a Central Place in the Physical Environment

Cindy Jaskowiak, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction at New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois, explained that art is everywhere in their building:

Art needs to be visible in the school. It's exciting for me to know that the artwork in our halls came from our students. To me that's something our students need to see as they go from year to year… When I became principal five years ago, I worked with the art department to catalog everything hanging around this building. Then we looked at how to phase in and get rid of poster art and things that didn't have a connection with us as an institution. Every year we add pieces… We put it up and have some signage with their names and graduation dates. Over the years we see more art around the building… It really has come out of having the vision through the art department about what kind of feeling you are creating around the building… We had a retreat and we decided to have a day without art. They covered all the art and we realized how much was in the building.

While we discussed the functionality and aesthetics of these spaces in the last element, the presence of art in these settings was both easy to see and explicitly important to most of the people with whom we spoke. In some settings, like New Trier High School and Marwen, both visual arts programs, it was a central element of the learning experience. As Cindy Jaskowiak made clear, the centrality of art in the space served multiple functions for the students' learning experience.

The presence of student work displayed on the walls was a way of making the space welcoming and of sending a message that the arts and student work are valued in this place. At Marwen in Chicago, explicit attention is given to the first moments of contact students have with this after-school program when they walk in the building. Teens choose to come to Marwen; many travel considerable distances to get there. The space has to be inviting and compelling to make it a place these young people want to spend their out-of-school time. From the outside, Marwen looks like the old warehouse building that it is. But with the first step in the front doors, one is drawn into a large, open gallery space with student work that is well lit and beautifully displayed on the walls. The space has a wide, open staircase in the middle, and one feels visually pulled in. The feet follow the eyes. It is a world that draws you in.

At many of these programs, the first things you see and hear announce the identity of the program. This is not limited to the visual arts. David Myers, founder of Sound Learning in Atlanta, which focuses on music learning in elementary schools, noted that music "is just a part of the environment of the school." The same is true

of OMA schools. While acknowledging the difficulty of doing this in many public school settings, the presence of musicians coming and going as they perform and teach in the school, and the sights and sounds of students practicing in classrooms, hallways, the lunch room, and stairways provides parents and children with a compelling sense of what counts and what's cool to do at these schools. In these ways, the space – what you see and hear and the feeling you get from it as architecture and as a place of activity – is meant to inspire students with the pleasures and provocations of art. It also inspires parents to want their children to be learning in this exciting world and to think of their children as capable of serious work and significant accomplishment in the arts. Indeed, in Tucson, many parents have identified schools with the OMA program as the school of choice for their children.

The display of student work or pictures of children studying and practicing the arts is also a way many of these educators demonstrate their belief in the value and quality of what students do as young artists. It is, of course, affirming to display student work. But these displays also provide the opportunity for an open dialogue about what young artists can achieve, what the standards of excellence are in this setting, and, of course, about the subject matter of the works themselves and what they provoke us to think about. So, in entering these arts learning spaces, the arts suffuse the environment music may be playing or, alternately, there might be the intriguing silence of a group in focused, almost meditative work on a project. The walls may have student art works or the works of more experienced artists. There may also be quotations from artists, sheets of chart paper with notes from previous classes to remind the group of its earlier work, and bulletin boards with the posters and fliers for local performances, auditions, and other classes or workshops. Whatever the presence of the arts may be, the degree to which it is intentional, aesthetically presented, and representative of what happens in that setting will have a significant impact on the character and quality of the learning experience students have there.

3. Sufficient Time for Authentic Artistic Work

Arts learning experiences lasting more than one class have both "macro" and "micro" temporal dimen-

sions. The "macro" level captures the extent, length, and sequencing of classes. Documents like the New York City Blueprint for the Arts are powerful reminders of the potential scope and sequence of formal arts learning in schools and provide a wonderful macro view of what arts learning could be over 12 years.

In discussing the length and frequency of particular courses, interviewees across sites indicated multiple advantages of extended study in the arts, to afford opportunities both to study broadly across the arts and deeply within one art form. They noted that working over time allows for important dimensions of artistic development and learning, including the growth that comes from practice and repeated efforts and the richness of cycles of making work, sharing it, and reflecting on those experiences. In this way, time also allows teachers and students to consider the effectiveness of particular artistic choices and to make revisions. Adequate time also allows students' artistic ambitions to expand; extended time for projects means an opportunity to 'think big.'

In Dallas, an ambitious effort to address the artistic needs of the young people of the entire city is underway through the auspices of Big Thought, an organization dedicated to promoting creative learning in the lives of children. Recognizing that parents and children have diverse interests and needs related to learning in the arts, both in and out of school, Big Thought grapples with the breadth of these purposes and opportunities. In a sense, their work addresses the question of what real access to both broad and deep arts learning might look like if systematically undertaken across a city throughout childhood and adolescence. This very "macro" view of the time of arts learning for young people is, indeed, something big to think about. Given its ambitious purposes, Big Thought's perspective on quality arts learning experiences may only be fully achieved when children in the city of Dallas can have meaningful arts learning experiences throughout all of their young years.

Virtually all of the elements of student learning and teaching that we have discussed in this chapter (artistic exploration, emotional openness, the development of a sense of ownership, and reflective practices, for example) are dependent on adequate time. This is true, too, at the

micro level – the time available within a particular class session. The length of the session and the plan for how much to do within that time influence the speed and depth of the work, as well as the nature of the interactions. A number of our interviewees talked about the importance of slowing down and 'taking time.' The speed of so much regular classroom work in schools was noted as leading to superficial engagement with subject matter and consequent student boredom. On both the micro and macro levels, one of the lessons of participation in the arts as maker-perceivers may well be that the arts often don't yield up their greatest gifts to speed. Unlike some other enterprises in our contemporary lives, in the context of artistic experience, the fastest are not always the richest.

Time also allows deeper social experiences and stronger bonds to form among participants. Several interviewees spoke of the advantage time gave them in getting to know their students through watching them work and studying the work they produced and, thus, being able to better gauge their progress. Indeed, figuring out how to help a student takes considerable artistic and pedagogical experience, but it can also take time to figure out, though interactions and experiences together, how to approach and talk with young artists and what their interests, standards, and ambitions might be. Time is an essential ingredient in the soil in which artistic identity, sophistication, and accomplishment grow.

The Elements as Evidence of Quality

The elements of quality discussed in this chapter are meant to provide a useful reference point for arts educators to provoke investigations into the nature of high quality arts learning experiences in their own settings. Undertaking that task will quickly reveal the myriad limitations of the elements described here. Once more, we reiterate that we offer this articulation of these elements of quality both to report on what we heard in the course of this study and to suggest the richness and multi-dimensionality of the characteristics of excellence as described to us during this research.

As noted at the start of this chapter, to take these elements as a check-list on quality in arts education would be missing our point. Ideas about what constitutes quality can and should vary across settings, depending on the purposes and values of the program and its community. Further, these ideas about the nature of quality, as we heard reported in many of our site visits, are likely to change and evolve over time; this is probably a sign of the health of the program. Certainly, it is desirable for standards and expectations to be raised over time as a program's capacity to provide excellent arts learning opportunities increases. Evidence of the strengthening of that capacity is the development of a more nuanced conception of quality, a clearer articulation of the program's ideas about what constitutes quality in that setting, and a broader conversation among all members of the program's community about the question of quality.

We remind our readers that our lenses are intended as tools, like glasses, to help us see and focus on specific aspects of a very complex phenomenon – groups of young people and their teachers actively engaged in arts learning experiences. We offer the diagram below as one way to hold the idea of these lenses in mind when walking into an arts classroom or when opening dialogue with colleagues about the nature of quality arts learning; detailed suggestions on how to use this tool are provided in Chapter 6. The lenses help focus on elements of quality. To see and name observable elements of quality is to take an important step toward articulating what counts as evidence of powerful arts education. That is critical both in improving what is offered and in evaluating those offerings. In time, just as with new glasses, we hope these lenses prove more helpful than disorienting.

Diagram 1: Four Lenses on Quality

Environment

Student
Learning

Pedagogy

Community
Dynamics
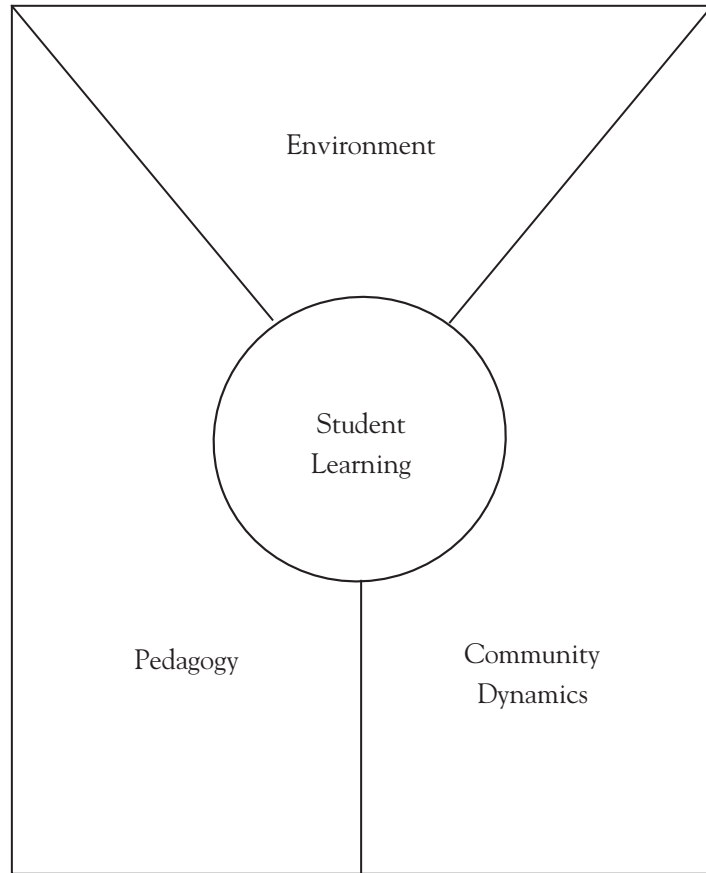
PART II:

Achieving and Sustaining Quality

CHAPTER 4: FOUNDATIONAL QUESTIONS

No Guarantees of Quality

EVERY TIME A CHILD WALKS into an arts workshop or classroom, there is the possibility that she will have a powerful learning experience. Certainly, this is what all arts educators hope for, yet it is a possibility only sometimes realized. The quality of any experience – educational or otherwise – depends on so many factors that excellence is impossible to guarantee. Yet tremendous effort goes into exactly that: attempts to guarantee a high quality learning experience. Attempts are made to identify the conditions that will set the mood or heighten the focus of the experience (the physical environment, social relations, a compelling focus, and so on). But the conditions can often be more challenging than ideal.

That's why decisions about how to create a high quality learning experience can be so difficult, revolving around a dizzying series of questions. Which conditions are most important? What resources can be put into preparing for this experience? Which elements can be controlled and which must we simply work with? Who can help? What should be the first thing that happens? What next? And on and on. Whether for a class, a workshop, or a rehearsal, countless decisions are made in preparing for the experiences students have.

As noted in Chapter 1, arts educators develop their visions of quality over time and from diverse experiences. As the capacities of an educator and the program in which he or she works become more sophisticated, so do the possibilities of "upping the ante" and increasing the ambition of the goals and mission adopted for a program. Simultaneously, then, the meaning of a high quality arts learning experience evolves and achieving quality becomes more demanding. As ideas about what constitutes quality in arts learning evolve, the decisions made about how to achieve that quality become increasingly important, complex, and nuanced.

We have explored what informs and influences people's ideas about what constitutes quality and examined two broad aspects of how people think about what constitutes quality in arts education: the purposes and the elements of an arts learning experience. The chapters in this section continue that examination and then explore how arts educators seek to achieve and sustain quality in their classes and programs through the decisions they make, addressing our second and third research questions:

- How do practitioners and policy makers achieve and sustain quality arts learning experiences for young people?
- Which decision makers and decision points may be critical to ensuring quality in arts education?

There are countless steps arts educators take to achieve their visions of quality arts learning. Given the natural limits of any study, we felt we had to choose one critical aspect of these many approaches that we thought could both reveal some of the real mechanisms of the process of pursuing quality and provide an entry point for those wishing to become more analytic in their efforts to improve the quality of their own programs. These research questions reveal our explicit choice to examine the role of decisions in the complex web of actors and actions that undergird quality arts learning experiences.

All too often, decision points are invisible – for example, administrators may perceive their response to a funding shortage as a necessity rather than a decision; students may not perceive engagement as a matter of choice. The power of a focus on decision making is at least two-fold: It brings into relief choice points that otherwise may be missed, and it underscores the power of decision makers at all levels to enhance the likelihood of a high quality learning experience for all students.

A complex set of conditions, influences, ideas, and dispositions, as well as decisions, decision makers, and decision making processes interact in the creation of quality arts education. In these chapters, we examine some persistent questions and challenges in efforts to achieve quality in arts education, as well as some of the key decisions influencing quality of arts learning experiences and who makes those decisions. Chapter 4 focuses on four questions that are addressed extensively in the arts education literature. These questions are so basic that, explicitly or implicitly, every program answers them early on in the life of the program. In some settings, these questions

are regularly revisited; in others, they may well be considered firmly established "givens" once answered early on. Chapter 5 explores the kinds of decisions that have an impact on quality, who makes these critical decisions, and some aspects of effective decision making.

Foundational Issues in the Literature

Our review of the published literature in the field of arts education revealed a series of issues that have been debated in recent decades by theorists and researchers, advocates, and practitioners. We came to think of these issues as foundational to the work of arts educators – issues that have to be addressed when providing arts learning experiences to young people. True to the nature of the literature of a field, much of what we read was framed in terms of debates and arguments with one writer challenging the assumptions and positions of earlier writers or defending those of others.

As noted in Chapter 2, we were surprised to encounter a far less argumentative tone in our interviews and site visits. The people we talked with also spoke with strong feelings and care about these same foundational questions, but they did so more in the context of their current thinking about the specific circumstances (the site visits) and/or in a generally expansive tone that embraced diverse perspectives on these complex issues (the theorist interviews). What was clear in all strands of the study is that everyone grapples with these four questions:

- *Who* should teach the arts?
- *Where* should the arts be taught?
- *What* should be taught and *how*?
- How should arts learning be *assessed*?

In the context of particular arts programs, answers to these questions and the establishment of basic purposes are essential elements of the identity of that program. As discussed in the previous section, visions of quality evolve in relation to the purposes and values adopted by a program. But "who we are" as a program – and, therefore, our purposes – is deeply informed by how these questions are answered. In other words, who we teach, where we teach, what we teach, and what we take as evidence of learning are, again, foundations of the identity of a program.

Other elements inform that identity – the "genesis story" of the program, for example – but answers to these questions are basic to the life of the program and the nature of the arts learning experiences that they provide.

In this chapter, we focus on the broad dimensions of these questions as discussed in the literature we reviewed. Obviously, this cannot be comprehensive. Our goal is to provide a short guide to the kinds of basic issues that arts educators have been grappling with in relation to each of these questions and the cases that are made for different answers to these questions. Later in this section, as we examine the kinds of decisions that influence the likelihood of quality in arts learning experiences, these four foundational questions become critical and defining decisions in the life of a program and to the process of deciding what constitutes quality in that setting.

Who Should Teach the Arts?

Some argue that the arts must be taught by arts specialists who deliver sequential, standards-based curricula. Others argue for teaching artists because of their greater domain expertise. Still others argue for generalist teachers because they can integrate the arts regularly into classroom instruction. Museums generally rely on volunteer docents, and many schools routinely place parents from their communities into instructional roles. Variations in the quality of these choices circle around priority, training, and emphasis, not exclusivity. For example, we know of no theorist or educator who argues that school children should *only* be taught by arts specialists and never by teaching artists, that the arts should *only* be taught in stand-alone classes and never integrated into other subjects, or that the arts should only be taught as integrated into the curriculum. From an international perspective, Bamford asserts in a UNESCO report (2006) that "quality arts education tends to be characterized by a strong partnership between the schools and outside arts and community organizations" (86). But in the US, there are real tensions in the field about which of these approaches should be foregrounded.

The Case for Arts Specialists

The Mandate

Many people believe that, like any subject taught in public schools, the arts should be taught by qualified teachers who have had appropriate training. The No Child Left Behind Act reflects this belief and mandates "highly qualified" teachers for all core subjects including the arts. The term *highly qualified* means that teachers must have a bachelor's degree, state certification, and subject matter competency for subjects they teach (Title IX, Part A, Section 9101). Some states (e.g., California, Massachusetts, Michigan) also require a year of instruction at the high school level by a certified specialist for graduation, advanced status, or admission to state colleges and universities (California Department of Education, 2007; Massachusetts Department of Education, 2008; MCL 380.1278a, 2006).

The Training of Arts Specialists

Preparation for arts teaching requires a foundation of general knowledge and expertise in both the art form to be taught and in pedagogy. Typically, state departments of education specify licensure requirements that establish course content and distributions for teacher certification, and national accrediting bodies for higher education in the arts also exert influence on criteria for arts education specialists (e.g., National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; Council of Arts Accrediting Associations). Typical requirements for the distribution of arts and pedagogical courses are fairly similar across institutions and states. A pre-service program for visual arts specialist teachers in Massachusetts, for example, requires around 130 hours of coursework, distributed among pedagogy courses (about 40 to 50 hours), including a two or three-term practicum sequence of observations and supervised internships; work in the art form itself (20 to 30 hours); history of the art form (20 to 30 hours); and "critical studies" (a liberal arts-like course distribution – about 20 hours).

Some states reach further. For example, New York City's *2004 Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts* (http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/blueprint.html) specifies that excellence requires arts specialists who understand how to work in conjunction with school and community resources: "An excellent arts program [is one] in which arts specialists are key players, the school community is actively involved, and the resources of the city's cultural community are maximized" (p. 1). For another example, some credentialing programs add a serious scholarly or research component, particularly at the master's level, which is required for permanent, professional certification by many states (e.g., New England Conservatory, http://mieatnec.org/blog/category/artist-teacher-scholar/; Massachusetts College of Art and Design, http://kate.massart.edu/at_massart/academic_prgms/graduate/art_ed/mse.html).

The Space and Material Needs of Arts Specialists

Highly qualified teaching is supported by appropriate physical conditions. All arts can be taught well in inadequate spaces, but many believe that a commitment to training arts specialists implies a commitment to providing teaching spaces that support the needs of the art form. For example, from sources such as New York City's 2004 *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts* (http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/blueprint.html) and the Los Angeles County regional blueprint for arts education (Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2002, http://www.lacountyarts.org/artsed/docs/artsedu_artsforall09-02.pdf) we can draw the following recommendations for ideal conditions:

- All arts classes should have networked computers loaded with appropriate software and projection capabilities. Dance should be taught on sprung floors and the studio should have mirrors and barres on at least one wall. The space should not be a gym facility, since athletes who wear shoes do not need the floor cushioning that barefoot dancers require.
- Theater needs a space with lighting and sound equipment, storage for properties, costumes, lights, and flats, shop facilities for building and displaying backdrops; dressing rooms with mirrors for actors, and modifiable stages.
- Music needs soundproof individual and ensemble practice spaces; storage for instruments, risers, music stands, and scores; and computer labs with

keyboard capability and composing software.

- Visual arts needs rooms with sinks and natural and adjustable lighting, storage for tools and materials, student portfolios of works in progress including both 2D and 3D works, and a gallery space for displaying work.

A Mandate Unfulfilled

Despite the No Child Left Behind Act, most schools do not have full-time arts teachers in all arts disciplines, and many do not have even one specialist arts teacher. On July 25, 2007, the Center on Education Policy released a survey of 349 school districts showing that 16% had cut elementary class time for art and music in the past five years. Arts specialists are less likely to be found in poorer districts and at elementary and middle school levels, and many existing arts specialists are under-qualified; in addition, parental volunteerism and supplementary funding is more likely (though not exclusively) found in wealthier districts (Carey et al., 2002; Woodworth et al., 2007). Moreover, the amount of time that specialists teach is at the most 90 minutes a week, and at the least, nonexistent.

The lack of qualified arts educators in the US can be traced back to the devaluing of arts in schools alluded to in the introduction of this report. For example, many districts in California eliminated arts specialists and their classes in the 1980s when tax relief legislation cut funds to schools. In response, arts advocates in the 1980s and 1990s promoted arts integration by classroom teachers and arts experiences both in and outside of schools taught by community artists and museum educators. As a result, schools could say that they did not need arts specialists because they had arts integration, or because they had brought in visiting specialists. And since it is only at the high school level that there is, in some states, an arts requirement for graduation, schools try to have art at the elementary school level taught by the classroom teacher. But, as Eisner states, "we are expecting teachers to teach what they do not know and often do not love" (1999, p. 17). Many arts educators agree that there is no substitute for qualified specialist arts teachers if the goal is high quality arts learning.

The Case for Teaching Artists

Another way students can get exposure to the arts in school is through teaching artists, individuals who are practicing artists and who come into the school and work with the students and/or with both students and teachers, to provide "authentic" arts experiences. Eric Booth, one of our interviewees and one of the leading teaching artists in the U.S. today, defines a teaching artist as "a practicing professional artist with the complementary skills and sensibilities of an educator, who engages people in learning experiences in, through, and about the arts" (http://www.greenvillearts.com/education/artists.aspx). In the *Teaching Artist Journal*, a journal dedicated to the practice of teaching artists, Booth defines the features of teaching artists and speaks for the value of teaching artists in high quality arts learning experiences, arguing that they can be "the solutions to many of the problems we describe" (2003).

Many of the people we spoke to believe that teaching artists provide the most authentic kind of arts experience possible for children, since they are working practitioners in contemporary art. But others are skeptical of artists who do not have a background in teaching (Lazarus, 2004; McKean, 2006). They note that in addition to their deep subject matter knowledge, teaching artists need a combination of pedagogical knowledge, local knowledge, and/or support that assists them with understanding and operating within school contexts. Most arts education theorists agree that partnerships with arts organizations and teaching artists can be beneficial. But many believe that visiting artists cannot and must not replace certified arts teachers. Sending in artists for various periods of residence is never enough to bring about fundamental educational change (Erikson, 2004; Smith, 1992). All too often, partnerships degenerate into one-time visits by artists, one-time master classes, or one-time trips to off-site performances.

This argument is summed up well by Ana Cardona: "[When] the emphasis… is more on out-of-school arts learning than in-school learning, it can be very dangerous, because it can give a message to educator/administrator types that we don't need to make an investment in sequential art education… That whole range is way

too hit and miss, not sequential, and it can't replace what art teachers do in the schools, or should be doing in the schools." Laura Chapman warned that "a local booking agency for artists and arts organizations has become a way for schools to have an ad hoc and token representation of the arts at school through occasional short-term programs." Ideally, teaching artists should not be a substitute for certified art teachers, but rather an additional unique resource to what schools can currently provide as instruction in the arts.

The Case for the Generalist Classroom Teacher Integrating the Arts into the Curriculum

Arts integration – integrating one or more of the arts into the academic curriculum – is a growing movement in U.S. schools, and the *Journal for Learning through the Arts* is a journal devoted to this practice. Arts integration is typically carried out by the classroom teacher at the elementary level and occurs within all of the arts disciplines (Burnaford, 2007; Burnaford, Aprill, & Weiss, 2001; Efland, 2002; Marshall, 2006; Rabkin & Redmond, 2004). The best of these programs bring classroom teachers together with teaching artists with the goal of developing the generalist teachers' arts education skills and attitudes, and developing the artists' pedagogical skills and attitudes.

Having classroom teachers integrate arts into classroom teaching has the potential of offering more regular arts experiences to students. But unfortunately arts integration rarely happens in a way that leads to more authentic arts experiences for children. Strict pacing guides for subjects evaluated on high-stakes tests often reduce the time that classroom teachers are willing to dedicate to arts integration. Furthermore, when classroom arts integration is substituted for sequential arts programs in systems strapped for funds, lower quality arts experiences result. Classroom teachers are not trained to be arts teachers, and elementary certification requirements have not included arts education expectations in many states since the 1980s.

Despite the existence of high quality arts integration programs such OMA, the A+ schools in North Carolina, Sound Learning, CAPE, AIM, Lincoln Center, CityLore

and others, we found not one arts educator (either in our interviews or in the literature) who believes that quality arts education can come *solely* from an arts integrated curriculum. Most believe that a strong scenario in the schools is to have both an arts integrated curriculum at least at the elementary level along with dedicated classes in discrete art forms taught by arts specialists (Greene, 2001; Weiss & Lichtenstein, 2008).

A Note About Volunteers

Volunteerism, especially in museum contexts but also in schools, is a widely-accepted way to supplement arts education in the U.S., particularly in museums' uses of volunteer docents (Bleick, 1980). Volunteers can be a tremendously rich resource in any educational setting, not just in arts education. Quality concerns, however, arise when volunteers are depended on to have the pedagogical skills and disciplinary understandings characteristic of trained professionals in the field but aren't given the opportunity to receive the requisite training. In response to this concern, art museums in recent years have become more aware of the need to provide volunteer docents with extensive training programs and with ongoing opportunities for professional development. Many museum professionals argue for putting rigor into such programs, and emphasize the importance of providing docents with training that focuses not just on content knowledge about a museum's collections and exhibits, but also on knowledge about teaching and learning (see for example, Sweeney, 2007).

There is no more – or less – of a case to be made for volunteers to teach the arts than for volunteers to teach science or history or any other discipline. But when any discipline relies on volunteers as mainstay professional educators, professional training is required. And indeed, when it is provided, volunteers become professionals and should be treated as such.

Where Should the Arts be Taught?

Many arts programs exist independently of schools – in after-school organizations, community arts organizations, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, artists' studios, art museums, symphonies, theater and dance companies, and

other neighborhood or cultural organizations. Many of the sites we studied were in such non-school sites. Highly successful community-based programs were studied by Heath, Soep, & Roach (1998). These programs involve a wide age range of youth working together as a team, with members playing multiple roles, including the role of fund raising.

We know of no arts educators who believe that the arts should *not* be taught in schools, and none who believe that the arts should also not be taught outside of school. In what follows we present the case for teaching the arts outside of schools (as an addition to teaching them in schools), and we discuss the potential drawbacks of depending too heavily on out-of-school programs.

The Case for Teaching the Arts Outside of Schools

We identify four main justifications for teaching the arts outside of schools rather than relying solely on schools to supply arts education. All of these arguments help to broaden arts educational opportunities for students in terms of time and access, contexts for working in the arts, opportunity to work with artists, and content of learning.

Access and time. Schools' arts programs are limited in two critical ways: access to works and time dedicated to art experiences. Museums and performing arts organizations are repositories of works, and their educational programs benefit from the access they can provide students. The limited time that schools dedicate to the arts severely limits the quality of arts experiences for many students. Out-of-school arts programs, even those without collections, are less constricted by school schedules. Experiences out-of-school can last for hours, and projects can therefore stretch out over long periods of time, which both requires and develops planning and persistence. For example, in a number of the sites we visited, students may take classes or work on projects several afternoons a week. In addition, after-school, weekend, and vacation programs offer learning experiences at times when many students would otherwise not be productively engaged.

Alternative, informal learning spaces. Many out-of-school arts experiences are taught in artists' studios, converted warehouses, outdoor sites, all more informal learn-ing spaces than those found in schools. When students work in these non-school spaces, many school rules do not apply: there are no dress codes, students call teaching artists by first names, arrival and departure may be more flexible. Students tend to be are treated more as younger colleagues than as students to be managed. Although such environments are possible and do exist in some schools, they are more the norm in out-of-school contexts.

Artists teaching. When the arts are taught outside of school walls, the teacher is often a practicing artist. While teachers in schools also (and ideally) may be practicing artists, again, that is more the norm in out-of-school sites. Many of the out-of-school sites are ones in which adult artists practice, and students can thus more easily see links between what they do and what professional artists do. Arts learning experiences are strengthened in quality when students see a connection between their own art activities and those of professional artists (Art:21 Advisory Council, 2001). Efland (1976, 1983) makes a distinction between school art and authentic art; clearly school art is far less likely to transpire in authentic cultural organizations where adults are making their own works.

Possibilities for expanded content. When the arts are taught outside of school, the content of what is taught is not constrained by the school system. Out-of-school sites routinely offer genuine connections to contemporary and personalized content that are unrestricted by school and state mandates. To be sure, many out-of-school programs align their offerings with state standards, some school programs emphasize student choice (e.g., Teaching for Artistic Behavior, http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/TAB-CHOICE.htm), and more resources are becoming available to support connections to contemporary practices that are useful to arts educators who work in schools (Art:21 videos and resources; visiting artists). But it is more the norm for out-of-school content to be responsive to student and teacher interests, including the contemporary art world. As a result, some projects are often more feasible in out-of-school contexts – e.g., murals and other site-specific installations or the opportunity to work regularly with artists in their studios.

What Should be Taught and How?

We identified two debates related to what should be taught in a quality arts education. First, many arts educators today argue that the curriculum must be diversified to include forms of art beyond the western canon, and that the curriculum must expose students to contemporary arts, non-western art, and folk and indigenous art forms (Bowman, 2006, Hamer, 2000). Here there is more consensus than disagreement. Second, we identified a heated debate about whether arts education should focus on the making of works of art, or whether as much or even more weight should be given to developing students' capacities to perceive, react to, and understand works of art. This debate is seen primarily in the literature. We did not hear arts educators on the ground debating this question: none seemed to feel that one particular approach should be privileged. Instead, the view was that both kinds of arts teaching are valuable when done well.

The Case for Diversifying the Curriculum

The role of the canon is debated across all art forms, but this debate is particularly prominent in the visual arts. Some argue for an approach that has come to be called the "visual culture" movement, which rejects the traditional canon of established works in visual art education as the prescribed content to be learned and learned from. Instead, the visual culture movement argues that the content should include visual imagery in all its forms in contemporary culture, especially imagery that is relevant to students' own lives. As an approach to arts education, it emphasizes meaning-making and an understanding of cultural context (Bowman, 2006; Freedman, 2003; Gude, 2004; Hamer, 2000). Making and learning about contemporary art is often important in a visual culture approach, both because contemporary art is culturally relevant to students' lives, and because engagement with contemporary art forms often promotes multiculturalism (Cahan and Kocur, 1996).

Many arts education programs, both in- and out-of-schools, fail to address the contemporary in any sense: they do not examine the practices and work of living artists. In this sense, they fall short of being high quality.

Music education theorist Bennett Reimer (2003) argues for diversifying the music curriculum and sees this as an indicator of quality. Why, he asks, should we teach only the music preferred by a tiny percentage of people – classical western music, songs from folk traditions, and jazz? Why not look at the list of the top 365 songs of the twentieth century and embrace the music of popular culture?

Music education theorist David Elliott (1995) agrees with the importance of teaching a wide range of music (see also Jorgensen, 1992). He argues that students should learn the music of several musical cultures very different from their own. This leads to musical risk taking. We need the shock of contact with alien musical traditions, which helps us to recognize and free ourselves from our musical assumptions. Because we cannot teach all of the world's music, Elliott votes for depth over breadth: students should first go deeply into one kind of music and then be exposed to music only distantly related to the music they know.

Drama and dance educators are also concerned with diversifying the curriculum (Gonzalez, 2006; Minton, 2000; Seitz, 2002). Taylor (1996) argues that a curriculum rooted in the Anglo-European tradition is narrow and "leads to a blindness of contemporary issues."

In short, an arts education program that focuses solely on classical forms of art is seen by some as problematic today.

Should Art Making Be Central?

Any reading of the theoretical literature on arts education will quickly reveal a debate about whether students should be taught primarily to create, or whether they should be taught primarily to be informed audience members. This debate is particularly heated in music and visual arts.

The music educators who determined the contents of the standards for music in the 1990s agreed unanimously that music education should be broadened beyond performance to include also listening, analyzing, evaluating, and understanding. Yet Reimer (2003) notes that most music classes still focus on singing or instrumental playing, and very few schools offer courses in music listening

or music appreciation. Reimer argues that listening is an essential part of all musical learning, and listening electives should be offered in a wide variety of music (e.g., early jazz, specific folk, madrigals, romantic opera, rap, computer music, minimalist music, Japanese music, and so forth – the list could go on and on). Such broadening has the potential, he suggests, to "hook" more students with a love of and an understanding of music.

Reimer's thinking is influenced by the philosopher Suzanne Langer (1953), who argued that music represents the structure of human feeling and thus provides us with an understanding of our emotional lives. The underlying purpose of music education for Reimer is to heighten students' emotional lives by helping students become engaged in the emotional dimension of music. We do this by gaining an understanding of the inherent meaning of music, by *knowing within*, a central concept in Reimer's philosophy of quality music education.

Whenever *knowing about* or *knowing why* start to lose contact with musical experience itself, music education becomes divorced from musical experience, students become bored, and music education has lost its way. Thus, when a music appreciation class focuses on learning of facts about music (dates, names, definitions of styles), the heart of music education has been forsaken and the quality of the experience is reduced. For Reimer, programs that support students' experiences of *knowing within* are high quality programs. Reimer believes that his concept of *knowing within*, and inherent meaning, applies to all art forms, and thus to all forms of arts education.

David Elliott (1995) argues against Reimer's call for more music appreciation courses, believing that performance must be the heart of all music education (developing the *knowing how*, in Reimer's terms). Elliott believes that we cannot listen well without *knowing how* to perform music. For Elliott, then, a quality program of music instruction must center on making in order to achieve the development of *knowing within*.

We see the same debate about the centrality of making versus perceiving in the visual arts. Proponents of Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), an arts education movement supported by the Getty Trust in the 1980s and '90s (Dobbs, 2004; Smith, 2004), recommends

that in addition to the creating of art, students should be exposed to three other professional roles in the arts: art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. Because students in DBAE classrooms receive equal time with all four of these roles, they spend less time on making than in traditional art classrooms. Directly counter to the DBAE approach is the Arts PROPEL approach developed by Project Zero, the Educational Testing Service, and the Pittsburgh public schools. In PROPEL classrooms, making art is the core activity. Perception and reflection are also important activities, but these are never taught separately, and they always grow out of and feed back into the making (Gardner & Perkins, 1989; Winner, 1993; Zessoules, Wolf, & Gardner, 1988). Thus, when a PROPEL student is working on an expressive self-portrait, the teacher may introduce self-portraits by expressionist artists, but the student in a PROPEL classroom would never study art history disconnected from projects in which they themselves were engaged.

How Should Arts Learning be Assessed?

Assessment and the arts might seem to be two things that don't mix. The push for assessing the arts comes primarily from arts advocates and arts policy makers who want the arts to be placed alongside core academic subject matters in their level of importance. Those on the ground teaching the arts think more about the quality of their programs than about the need to assess levels of student learning in some formal and accountable way.

But when pushed, many of the people we spoke to believed that assessment, when done well, does in fact put the arts on a par with academic disciplines as subjects where serious learning takes place and can be measured. In addition, they agreed that assessment helps teachers adjust their teaching for better learning outcomes.

As Jane Remer, Doug Boughton, and others have argued, because assessments prioritize what we value in arts education and exert force on curriculum design, it is essential that the arts be formally assessed (Boughton, 2004; Remer, 1990, 1996). High quality arts assessments can shape the arts curriculum beneficially, by ensuring that what matters in the arts is central to the curriculum, and by providing valuable insight into student learning.

Poor quality assessments distort the curriculum to focus on success on the test rather than high quality work in the arts domain. High quality assessments are authentic, formative, public, and carried out not only by the teachers but also by the students, who engage in self-assessment.

The presence of standards of learning in the arts, and the insistence on assessing whether these standards are met, are considered by policy makers to be the routes to quality and accountability in arts education (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994). However, most discussions of assessment in the arts acknowledge ambivalence toward standards and assessment. The arts are seen as personalized, process-oriented, complex, and holistic; standards and assessment are seen as uniform, product-oriented, reductive, and analytic. Eisner (1996) describes this ambivalence: "Testing aspires for all a set of common correct responses; in the arts, idiosyncratic responses are prized. Testing typically focuses on pieces or segments of information; artistic work emphasizes wholes and configurations. Testing emphasizes the acquisition of products produced by others; the arts emphasize content growing out of one's personal experiences, especially those having to do with matters of feeling. Such matters of emphasis are so fundamental that it seems as though testing and the arts reside in different worlds" (p.2). Eisner (1999) also argues that we should not talk about assessment in the arts without also attempting to improve the culture of arts education in our schools.

The experiential perspective we have adopted here is not well represented in most of the scholarship on arts assessment, which focuses more on intentions (goals, standards), and products/culminating performances. In what follows, we review the four best-known and most broad-based arts assessment movements to indicate how they appraise quality arts learning. It appears that a focus on assessing quality arts learning experiences remains to be developed.

National Arts Standards

In 1994, with the passing of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the arts were included as required learning (thanks to the insistence of the Music Educators National Conference and other national arts networks after the arts were initially were left out). Educators in music, visual arts, theater, and dance then developed national standards outlining what every student needs to know (Mahlmann and others, 1994). These national standards focus on *cumulative, sequential learning* in the arts. They recommend that 15% of the total instruction time in elementary and middle school should be spent on the arts and that the arts be a requirement rather than an elective in high school.

The National Arts Standards are also intended to serve as a foundation for the assessment of student learning. They specify the content areas to be evaluated and establish achievement standards for proficient and advanced performances within each content area at each level. They outline, in both general and specific terms, what students *should* know and be able to do in the arts at each grade level. According to these standards, at the end of high school, each student should be able to communicate at a basic level in each art form. That is, students should know the basic vocabularies, techniques, knowledge, skills, and methods of each art form. They should also be proficient in at least one art form, which the standards characterize as the ability to pose and solve artistic problems insightfully within that art form. Students should be able to interpret, analyze, and evaluate examples in each art form, and they should have an informed acquaintance with exemplary works from different cultures and historical periods. They should also be able to make connections and integrate understandings across the different art forms.

The Consortium claims that standards are essential and foundational to any discussion of quality and accountability in the arts (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994). The standards are not binding for U.S. public schools, but they have informed many state standards in the arts. However, while the arts standards are meant to guide what should be assessed, only a handful of states currently include arts among their "high-stakes" assessments.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Arts Assessment

While the National Standards are prescriptive for a K-12 curriculum in the arts, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Arts assessment was developed for a different purpose – to provide a sense of what is actually being learned in the U.S. public schools in the arts. In 1997, NAEP completed the first national assessment of arts education in 20 years, based on 6480 students in 268 schools (Persky, Sandene, & Askew, 1998). Although field-tested for fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders in all four arts disciplines, only eighth-grade music, theater, and visual arts were included in the full-scale assessment (an assessment of dance was field-tested but was not administered due to failure to get an adequately sized national sample). The assessment included paper-and-pencil tasks, as well as performance tasks, to determine students' ability to create original art, perform or re-create existing art, and respond to the arts (Woodworth et al., 2007). Results of the second arts assessment (in the spring of 2008, in grade eight) will be released in 2009.

Persky (2004, p. 628) articulates the key tensions involved in the design and scoring of the NAEP arts assessments: "Making tasks feasible for administration yet authentic in the terms presented in the NAEP arts framework; encouraging thoughtful student responding without burdening students with too many directions and constraints; enabling students from a wide range of arts backgrounds to perform on the assessment, again without undue reading burden or constraints; and enabling student responses to be scoreable without making tasks too limiting."

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and Advanced Placement Arts

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) and the Advanced Placement (AP) program of the College Board are two large-scale programs that are considered to be markers of rigor in a high school education. The IB program includes arts courses in visual arts, film/new media, theater, and music. The AP program includes two courses in the visual arts (Studio Art and Art History) and one in music (Music Theory). These two

programs give insight into what is viewed as high quality work in the arts at the high school level, again, as viewed through outcomes rather than experiences, and they demonstrate strategies for conducting large scale formal assessments of learning in the arts.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

The IB Diploma Program places a strong emphasis on assessing students' processes along with their products (Boughton, 2004), and is thus the assessment model most consistent with the arts learning experience focus of this report. Students keep research logbooks documenting their process and self-assessment. They also seek connections between learning in the arts and in other disciplines. In addition to the Diploma program (which is a two year program for students ages 16-19), there is a Primary Years Program (for ages 3-12) and a Middle Years Program (ages 11-16) in which the arts are an integrated component. At all levels of the IB program in all disciplines, the focus is on integrating knowledge and skills across the curriculum, developing the abilities to communicate in multiple modalities, and gaining multi-cultural understanding (International Baccalaureate organization, 1999, 2000a,b, 2005; htpp:// www.ibo.org).

Speaking about the IB program, Doug Boughton explained to us that the key to quality of IB arts instruction is in its assessment structure. "The assessment typically in the IB program is portfolio, where the criteria for assessment drives the program and those criteria are the things that express what's really important to [teachers] about education – for example, imagination and creative behavior, the capacity to pursue an idea or to develop a theme, the capacity to express ideas but in so doing, improve technical skills in multiple media, which is somewhat less important, really, than to pursue ideas."

Assessment in the IB diploma program is conducted by external examiners who are typically part of the international arts community. It focuses on the learning done over the course of the program, looking at products such as a portfolio created over time or a research journal documenting artistic processes. There is extensive work done in training IB examiners: inter-rater reliability among scorers is assessed, a multitude of diverse benchmarks il-

lustrate the different scores, and both the benchmarks and the criteria for evaluation are open to public debate and evolve over time (Boughton, 2004).

Advanced Placement (AP)

The AP program consists of a college level introductory course in Art, Art History, and Music Theory. Guidelines in each art form are developed annually by college-level and AP teachers; there are no standard curricula for an AP arts course.

While individual teachers assign grades for student work in AP courses, external assessment of students is carried out by exam. The Studio Art AP exam is comprised entirely of a portfolio of work within a chosen concentration (e.g., drawing, 2-D design, 3-D), which is assessed by multiple trained judges (The College Board, 2006a). The Music Theory exam comprises multiple choice and written free-response questions, some of which are based on an aural stimulus and some of which are not (The College Board, 2006b). There is also an assessment of sight-singing, worth 10% of the exam grade, in which students record their singing and submit it with their exam. The Art History exam combines multiple choice questions with short and longer essay questions, some of which are based on images presented in the test. The essay component comprises 60% of the exam grade (The College Board, 2005). AP exam scores range between 1 and 5, and colleges set their own standards on what scores will be acceptable to gain credit at their institution. Like the IB external examination, arts assessments in the Advanced Placement program strive to provide authentic assessments of arts learning but within a standardized assessment scheme, with inter-rater reliability among scorers (Myford & Sims-Gunzenhauser, 2004).

Clearly, while high quality approaches to assessment have been developed, there is no single "best" approach, and indeed many of the people we talked with argue for multiple methods of assessment, both qualitative and quantitative. Nonetheless, the question remains: should the arts be assessed at all? Ultimately, the strongest argument we heard from our interviewees was pragmatic. Speaking mainly of formal K-12 arts education, Jane Remer sums it up this way: "…the arts are no more or less sa-

cred than any other subject of study, and if we want them to count in classrooms, we must figure out a way to count them – *in context* – in terms of process, achievement, and product." She goes on to warn that "if arts people do not get behind this notion, one of two things will happen; [the arts] will continue to be ignored as essential studies, or someone that knows nothing about the arts will design tests for us that violate our artistic principles and do not honor processes or products. We will get what we deserve."

The Foundational Questions: Implications for Quality

As we noted at the start of the chapter, perspectives on these four questions often take the form of debate in the scholarly literature, with arguments made for the pros and cons of particular choices. In practice, answers to these questions are often far more nuanced and may well be simultaneously principled and pragmatic. Indeed, in our site visits, we saw the fine art of what might be called "principled pragmatism" developed to a very high level. As practitioners who work endlessly on the challenges of defining, achieving, and sustaining quality in arts learning experiences, the people we met with are deeply experienced in holding very high standards while developing innovative solutions to stubborn challenges (such as severely limited resources).

Jordan Simmons, executive director of East Bay Performing Arts Center, talks of the decision on what to teach – what he calls the "repertory" question – as a defining moment in the life of that organization. In essence, instead of deciding an absolute focus on a particular performing art, style, or genre to offer their students, they decided to create a blended repertory of offerings that evolves over time in response to the changes in the interests of their community. Recognizing Richmond, California, their home, as a dynamic and evolving community in which many rich and evolving cultures exist and influence each other, they wanted the Center to be a place which could be responsive to the needs, interests, and desires of that community. This means that the question of what will be taught is continually changing. In fact, the Center has a policy of holding a percentage of

their budget aside each year so they can quickly add new courses to respond to new interests in studying particular art forms and styles. In this way, the principle of responsiveness to the interests of the community defines the approach to the question of what to teach, although, as the Center's name suggests, they also made an early and defining choice to focus on the performing arts.

In each area addressed by these four questions, the reality of how they are answered is closer to a blend of principle and pragmatics than purely one or the other. Some principles, such as authenticity and transparency in assessment, may well be challenged by district or funder requirements. These challenges don't always force compromises that undermine quality, but they do force serious consideration by the educators in each setting of what is or isn't acceptable practice in their context. In the hands of arts educators who constantly struggle to clarify and articulate their principles, these challenges often spark innovative answers to foundational questions.

District requirements may similarly force innovative approaches to achieving the best possible solutions to the challenge of who will teach the arts. Available personnel may both bring and lack critical elements of expertise. Excellent artists committed to teaching may not have adequate pedagogical knowledge, just as excellent classroom teachers committed to bringing the arts into their curric-

ulum may not have sufficient subject matter knowledge. What we saw over and over during the site visits were educators who refused to be defeated by these challenges and who also rejected the constraints and traditions that forced dichotomous choices (making or looking; artists or specialists; old or new art; and so on) or standard operating procedures. Instead we encountered people who are, in effect, creating not only new practices, but also, in many cases, reconsidering the very assumptions behind the debates in the literature.

In the next decade, the written record of the field's thinking on these foundational questions will certainly come to represent the innovations in practice and the evolution in conceptualizing the nature of the issues themselves that are taking place now. Indeed, in the coming years there are likely to be new publications and forums (certainly exploiting the explosive possibilities of the Internet) reflecting these changes, just as the past decade saw the emergence of the *Teaching Artists Journal* and a host of Web-based dialogues.

As is so often the case, changes in thought and practice precede the written record. In the next chapter, we try to capture what we saw and heard about the nature of the decisions with a significant impact on quality, who is involved in making those decisions, and how they approach making them.

CHAPTER 5: DECISION MAKERS, DECISIONS, AND DECISION MAKING

WHILE VIRTUALLY ALL PROGRAMS address the foundational decisions discussed in the previous chapter, there are many other decisions that arts educators must grapple with, as well. While each situation has its own demands, many choices are predictable. In this chapter, we examine three aspects of the complex realm of decisions – who is making the decisions, the demands of effective decision making processes, and the nature and challenges of the decisions being made.

Decision Makers

Decisions about quality arts learning experiences are often seen as the province of administrators, program directors, and those who set policies regarding resources and regulations. Policy makers on the federal, state, and local levels have extraordinary power in this regard, most critically in relation to whether there will even be any arts learning opportunities and, if so, the nature and extent of those activities and who has access to them. The challenges of access and equity are dramatic and extreme in arts education. Teachers, students, and parents generally have little or no fundamental control in those decisions, though, if they are active and effective advocates, they may well have influence.

The challenges of achieving quality, however, while still exceedingly difficult, have different dynamics from the challenges of access, at least from a decision making perspective. We began this study with the idea of the key decision makers being situated hierarchically – we assumed that more power was wielded in decisions that affect the quality of arts education by those with the broadest reach, such as district, state, and national policy makers. To a considerable degree, this is supported by our data. But in taking an "experience perspective" – placing a primary focus on the nature of the experiences that students have in their arts classes, rather than on more decontextualized measures of outcomes, for example – we had to reconsider the question of who, ultimately, makes the critical decisions and the nature of those decisions that most affect the quality of an arts education.

In this reconsideration, we found it useful to categorize all of these decision makers in relation to their proximity to "the rooms" in which arts learning and teaching take place. Of course, learning in the arts takes place in many kinds of "rooms" – studios, rehearsal halls, theaters, and other traditional settings for an arts education, but also in classrooms, church basements, public parks, school hallways, and the many other places teachers find to share their love and knowledge of the arts with their students. In brief, we identified three sets of decision makers, each set sharing a similar proximity to the learning experience, but each also representing multiple different roles.

In some cases, people cross the artificial lines of this categorization, but, with occasional exceptions, we've found these categories to hold up reasonably well. We have tried in this conceptualization to represent only those roles we actually encountered in our study. Certainly, there are people in other roles who make important decisions influencing the quality of arts education programs, but we think it is important to acknowledge the limits of our study and note again the importance of further work in this area that tests and extends the particular limitations of our analysis.

The three groups of decision makers we identified who influence the quality of arts learning experiences are defined and diagrammed below:

- those "in the room" (students and teachers and, occasionally, others, including parents, classroom aides, and presenting artists)
- those just outside the room, who may interact with those in the outer-most circle and who may visit the room in which arts learning experiences occur (supervisors, program administrators, art department coordinators, principals, parents, other teachers, mentors, evaluators, and site liaisons)
- those furthest from the room who may rarely, if ever, enter the room (funders, district arts coordinators, superintendents, school committee members, civic leaders, representatives from the town or city government, board membersand founders)

Those just outside the room and those even further away who may never, or only rarely, enter the room, have powerful influences on the likelihood that those "in the

Decision Makers furthest
away from the room

Decision Makers
just outside the room

Decision Makers
inside the room
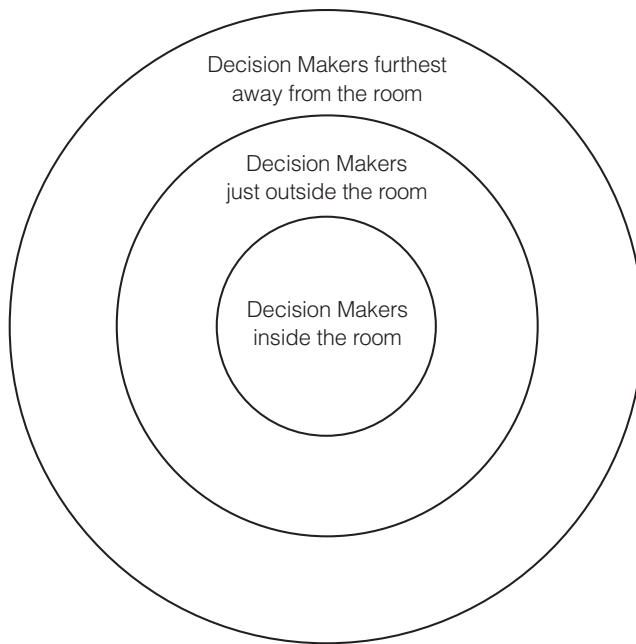
Diagram 2: Three Groups of Decision Makers
(by proximity to "the room" or arts learning experience)

room" will have a high quality arts learning experience. Their decisions are also critical to whether that quality can be achieved and sustained consistently over time and across classrooms. In our interviews and observations, though, we came to see the critical nature of the decisions made by students and teachers in the moment of the learning experience.

While it is certainly foolish to try to determine whether any of these decision makers is more important than any others, it is important to acknowledge that, as researchers, we did not enter this study with an assumption that students would emerge as significant in the list of decision makers in the quest for quality. It was during the site visits and interviews with both young people and adults that we began to recognize that, indeed, students are making decisions all the time that have a critical impact on the likelihood of quality learning experiences. Their decisions are often the last made and most frequently revisited and revised, even in the moments of

the learning experiences, but, as such, they have, like the individual players in teamwork in the final seconds of a basketball game, a profoundly determining significance on the outcome of all prior decisions and efforts.

The Interconnectedness of Decision Makers

Decisions made by those in the outer circle are often characterized by the breadth of their reach. They influence the experiences of many people. In many cases, these decision makers, who generally don't know the names of the people in the actual classrooms that they influence, are more concerned with issues of access and, sometimes, equity than of quality. They expect those in the inner circles to deal with the challenges of quality and feel that they've done their job in relation to quality by establishing hiring criteria, curriculum frameworks, and access to resources. If, however, there isn't genuine dialogue of some sort across the circles about what the real needs are and what the priorities should be in a specific setting, there is a good chance that the efforts to create quality by those in the outer circle are just so much wishful thinking.

There is a temporal dimension to these decisions as well. Those closest to "the room" of the learning experience make their decisions just before and also "in the moment" of the experience. These decisions affect those who make them and those within and closest to "the room." Those further away from "the room" most often make their decisions long before anyone walks into a learning space, and those decisions often affect the experiences of many learners and teachers in multiple settings over significant periods of times, often over years. A funder's decision to make a grant often creates the opportunity for access to quality arts learning experiences for multiple years. A school committee's approval of a new curriculum framework (and a budget to support its implementation!) will likely affect what is taught, who teaches it, and how it is taught for many years. When a state legislature enacts a law requiring provision of out-of-school time for learning opportunities for all children in the state (and a budget to support its implementation!), the impact may well be felt by many children and families for as long as the budget remains intact.

Generally speaking, the dimensions of proximity and time correlate with a financial dimension: those farthest away from the room most often make decisions determining the allocation and use of the largest amounts of money. For example, in very general terms, the state allocates money to schools for a variety of purposes and funders give grants with line items for art supplies. Administrators determine how to distribute those funds among all of the offerings of the program or school. Teachers decide how to use the funds they've been allocated – which materials, equipment, and so forth. It is common knowledge that teachers often supplement these allocated resources, drawing on personal funds, in order to increase the inadequate funds with which they've been provided. They do so in order to create the highest possible quality learning experiences for their students. In these cases, their determination of what constitutes a quality arts learning opportunity is not aligned with those decision makers in the outer circles.

This is potentially problematic. Money – both amounts and how it is specified to be used – is crucial to any formal, sustained educational enterprise. When those making decisions about the allocations of funds are also most removed from the immediate lives and experiences of those to be served by the funds, there is room for false assumptions, misunderstandings, and, potentially, wasteful or even harmful decisions. Of course, "outer circle" decision makers are well aware of these possibilities and work hard to evaluate their decisions. For example, when asking for evaluations of programs, the evaluations should be a prologue to a far wider dialogue among participants from all of the circles.

Obviously, in such an integrated system, decisions in each circle affect decisions in the others and, ultimately, the quality of the experiences "in the room." Given this reality, successful systems of decision making recognize the delicacy and likelihood of mistakes made in the outer circle and provide frequent, open, and dynamic channels of communication with the explicit purpose of informing the outer circle decision makers.

Quality, Context, and Available Resources

The most commonly cited challenge to any arts program's ability to provide high quality learning experiences on a consistent and reliable basis is the availability of resources, notably money, but also time, space, and professional expertise. This challenge is intensified when there is a desire to expand the reach of the program to serve more young people. In this regard, the challenge of access is tied to quality via the availability of adequate resources to do the work right and well.

While most of those we interviewed during our site visits did address the issue of resources as critical, persistent, and frustrating, there was also a strong sense that the lack of resources did not fundamentally cripple them in their quest for quality. Indeed, a number of people we talked to were very clear that, as artists, they were quite used to working in less than ideal conditions and being resourceful. In essence, what we heard from these artists and educators was that, while the effort to increase and improve resources is constant for them, they also recognize that excellent arts teaching and learning (and arts practice!) can be – and is – done all the time with less than adequate resources.

So what might distinguish those who are defeated by inadequate resources and those who find ways to thrive despite the frustrations? Our sense, based on our interviews, is that educators who succeed are those who focus their paramount attention on how best to use what they've got. This requires the constant work of deep examination of one's purposes and all available experience and knowledge of how to achieve those aims. It is important to note at this point, as we examine the sets of decisions that have critical impact on the likelihood of high quality arts learning experiences, that, somewhat counter intuitively, we found that the deepest challenge to achieving quality is actually knowing what you think constitutes quality, not the degree to which you have time, space, or money. In other words, as critical as resources are – and everyone agrees on their critical importance – it is more profoundly challenging to achieve quality if you don't know what it is you are actually trying to achieve – what it looks like, what its essential elements are in your context, and what is required to achieve it.

Even with resources, it can be extremely difficult to make most of the kinds of decisions discussed in the next

section. Why? Because these decisions require knowing what you truly think is most important – the most important for students to learn, the most powerful ideas on which to focus, and the most critical skills, capacities, and dispositions to foster. It also requires knowing what you think is both optimal and acceptable in terms of time, space, and money – length of time for rehearsals, optimal conditions for performance, and so on. The resources of time, space, and money are never infinite, nor should they be. Learning and creativity depend on some constraints. So, while arts educators are certainly justified in longing for and fighting for additional resources in most public school and out-of-school settings, they must be able to identify both what is optimal as a goal and what is acceptable as a bar below which it will be impossible to provide a reasonably high quality learning experience. Given the seemingly endless nature of the effort to clarify these understandings in the settings we visited, it appears that there are no shortcuts on this path to achieving quality.

Decisions

There are countless decisions that influence the likelihood that students will have a high quality experience in an arts class, and there are many decision makers, as well. Some of these decisions are most likely made by people nearer or farther away from "the room" in which the learning takes place, and many of those decisions are made by people with very different relationships to the actual learning experience working together.

In the interviews during our site visits, we frequently asked about difficult decisions the program has faced and which decisions seem to have had a particular impact on the quality of learning experiences for young people. From those responses and our observations, we have identified 10 sets of decisions and have placed them in two basic categories, again drawing on the idea of proximity to the "spaces" of arts learning experiences.

We begin with *organizational* or *programmatic decisions* that are generally made by those just outside the room and people who rarely, if ever, enter the room itself. We then move to an analysis of teachers' decisions before they enter the room. These *instructional design decisions* are most often made with – or in alignment with deci-

sions made by – at least some of the people just outside the room. We also consider the critical *teaching decisions* made in the moments of interaction with students. We then shift to examine the nature of the *learning decisions* that students make both before and during the learning experience. In each case, we have tried to name the kinds of decisions identified as especially critical to the quality of an arts education by participants in the study and through our own analysis.

These basic decisions are encountered by virtually all programs, teachers, and students. In some situations, however, the basic decisions are essentially givens – the age of the students, for example, in a middle school program, or the community from which students are drawn. But even these "givens" were, at some point, decisions. The superintendent, the curriculum coordinator, the principal of the middle school, for example, alone or together, must have determined, at some point, that it was a high priority to offer visual arts or music or theater to the seventh graders. Of course, this could have been a decision made in the center circle by a classroom teacher, based on her own passion for the arts or out of responsiveness to her students' expressions of interest and their desire to engage in some artistic enterprise. In any case, what now may seem like a given – the seventh graders will do a play in their history class every year – was once a decision made by someone. It wasn't always the case, though now it is taken as a given.

Working from the outside and moving toward "the room" in which the arts learning experiences take place, these kinds of decisions are, in broad categories, either organizational/programmatic or directly related to teaching/learning. The organizational/programmatic decisions fall into eight groups. Note that four of these sets of decisions are essentially the "foundational questions" discussed in Chapter 4 (who teaches, what to teach and how, where teaching and learning occur, and how to assess learning), questions about which there has been considerable writing. When questions, like "what to teach and how," occur in both the organizational/programmatic and teaching/learning sets, we answer them on greater levels of specificity as one gets closer to 'the room.'

Note, too, that some sets of decisions, like "who

teaches," have different levels of specificity as they come closer to 'the room.' For example, in larger systems (like public schools), decision makers in the outer circle may determine the certification criteria for art teachers, but they rarely hire specific teachers for a school. In smaller scale non profit arts education programs, the administrator(s) may set the hiring criteria and priorities *and* do the actual hiring.

Other sets of decisions, such as those about partnerships and the culture of a program, have also been discussed in the literature, while still others, such as those addressing the staffing and growth of programs, have been less explored by theorists, researchers, and others.

Organizational and Programmatic Sets of Decisions

Teachers make a wide variety of decisions, listed below. While these kinds of decisions are familiar to those who work in the field, each one is important to think about in order to keep the outcome of quality in mind. Too often, these decisions are made for purely pragmatic reasons. Some of the most important kinds of decisions teachers must make are the following:

Sets of decisions about:	
Students	Which students should be targeted for particular courses, programs, or woshops (particular ages, degrees of prior access to arts learning opportunities, socio-economic demographics, and so forth), eligibility for participation in the program or class, size of classes.
Programming/offerings	What to teach, including which art forms to focus on, specific course titles, repertoire of art works and artistic traditions to highlight.
Allocation of resources	Time (length of offerings per session, length over days/weeks), physical spaces, and money (amounts and purposes).
Staffing	Both teachers and program staff (administrators, supervisors, coordinators, liaisons, development, custodial, and so forth); criteria for teachers (certification criteria, hiring criteria and priorities).
Program evaluation	Internal and external, formal and informal, formative and summative approaches to determining the quality of all program offerings and decisions.
Program culture	Expectations, norms, and rules for everyone (youth and adults) on "how to be" when in the program, including the values (trust, respect, recognition and appreciation of differences, and so on) guiding relations, interactions, and work processes.
Growth and development	How and when to expand offerings, number of students served, geographic locations (communities served), including the delicate problem of increasing access while sustaining and improving quality.
Partnerships	With whom to join (individuals, organizations, municipal departments, community groups, funders, and so forth) in collaboration to provide the highest possible quality experiences to the greatest number of students.

Teaching and Learning Decisions – In the "Room/Space" and in the Moment

Teaching/learning decisions take place "in the room" or just outside it. Most are made shortly before a particular class/rehearsal or during the session itself. Some decisions are made earlier, but then many of those earlier decisions are reconsidered as the moment of teaching and learning approaches. In short, these are highly fluid and dynamic decision making processes with countless changes and adjustments both prior to and in the moments of the experience. Further intensifying these processes are the ways in which various decisions affect each other. Students change their minds in response to a teacher's choices; teachers make last-minute 'course corrections' based on levels of engagement they perceive in their students on a particular day.

For teachers, these decisions begin with their planning and preparation processes as they design a course or a lesson and gather materials. For students, if participation is voluntary, these decisions start with their choice to attend a particular course, workshop, or program. If participation is mandatory, as with many in-school arts experiences, students make decisions, conscious or unconscious, about the intensity of their involvement in the activities of the class, both before and during a lesson. Whether voluntary or required, students make many choices "in the moment" about what stance they will take toward what is going on, how involved they will become with the artworks and artistic processes, and how open and available they will be to their fellow students and their teachers. As all teachers know, the choices students make about their openness and level of engagement have enormous impact on the quality of the learning experiences for those individuals, the rest of the group, and the teacher.

In this context, it seems helpful to sort the sets of decisions in relation to these two groups of decision makers.

The decisions teachers make concern the following:
- Curriculum (what to teach at the course or unit level) – the basic focus and outline of a course or workshop; the arts repertoire to study (including choices about genres, forms, and specific works

of art); "big ideas" to focus on; major skill sets (physical, cognitive, social, and so forth.) to work on; culminating events, performances, or projects.
- Lesson design (plan for teaching at the session level) – class plans; choice and preparation physical materials and tools for art-making; preparation of the physical space.
- How to teach – tone of classroom; persona as teacher; attention to ideas and contributions of students; classroom management; basic rules and expectations; balance of activities, reflection, and dialogue.
- How to assess student learning – incorporation and balance of reflection and self-assessment, performance assessments, portfolios, critique, rubrics, and/or other forms of assessment.
- "In the moment" facilitation choices – real-time adjustments to the lesson plan; spontaneous responses to events and developments in the class room, workshop, or rehearsal.

The decisions students make concern the following:
- Engagement – to attend or not (including whether to sign up for a course – if elective – as well as whether to go to any single session, especially if the student is in high school); level of active interest and willingness to show that interest in class;   choice to practice and/or actively prepare for class through reading, doing homework assignments, and/or reflection.
- Focus – what to work on (intentional identification of particular skills, capacities, or problems). These are sometimes directly related to the intentions of the lesson/course and sometimes are identified more individually.
- Social presence – how to be with others in the learning experience; level and nature of attetion and commitment to the learning experiences of others (active listening/watching, offering support, encouragement, critique, as appropriate, and so on); willingness to adjust one's own focus in order to support the learning of others; seeking a productive balance between accepting respon-

sibility for one's own learning and the learning of others.

Decision Making

While the scope of our study precluded an in-depth analysis of the decision making processes at each of the sites we visited, we did hear consistent reports of what seems to matter when decisions are truly supporting efforts to achieve quality. We also heard some common frustrations and analyses in reports of situations in which there seemed to be great difficulty achieving and/or sustaining quality programs. In brief, the idea of alignment and misalignment, though not always articulated in those exact words, emerged as key to understanding both the best and worst of our interviewees' experiences in striving to achieve quality in arts learning and teaching. Language used to describe alignment and misalignment included phrases such as, "we were all on the same page" or "we didn't see eye-to-eye on everything."

Two dimensions of alignment that emerged as especially powerful in the context of achieving and sustaining quality:

- Personal/organization – alignment between the individual and the particular organization in which she or he is working.
- Organization/wider system – alignment between the organization and the wider network of institutions, governmental entities, agencies, partners, and communities in which it exists.

Personal and Organizational Alignment

As Morgan Cousins, educator at Urban Word, and many others made clear in our interviews, ideas about what constitutes quality in these arts education contexts are deeply subjective and personal. Insofar as the quality of one's work is an indicator of how satisfying and rewarding that work is, most educators and artists have a strong need for an alignment of their personal purposes and values with those of the organizations in which they work. Given the considerable challenges and minimal financial rewards of arts education, the significance of personal satisfaction is profound. If the work isn't personally meaningful, why would anyone stay at it? A tolerance for

compromise and mediocrity is oxymoronic for serious arts educators. Yet, paradoxically, compromise and mediocrity are so often the coin of the realm. Finding situations in which one's vision of excellence is reasonably closely aligned with that of the group with whom you work can mean the difference between deep satisfaction and deep frustration.

One source of the significant entrepreneurial activity in arts education today, beyond need and opportunity, may well be the desire to create an organization, large or small, that actually expresses one's personal focus, mission, and values in very specific terms. Teens Rock the Mic (TRTM), a project of a small organization called The Juno Collective that closed in May 2007, due to a lack of financial resources, was guided by the energy and vision of co-founder Melissa Borgmann, a long-standing member of the arts and education communities in Minneapolis. As declared on their website, "The Juno Collective was born in the wake of 'No Child Left Behind' legislation and the invitation to respond collaboratively, in a more complex manner to honor the intelligence and measure the literacy of our youth, beyond standardized testing." The history of the short life of TRTM reveals the critical urgency of alignment between an organization and its wider network of partners, stakeholders, and supports.

Organizational and Wider Systems Alignment

The extreme expression of misalignment between a program and the wider system within which it lives is a disruption of a flow of financial support. There are many potential reasons for this life-threatening disconnect between programs and funders or policy makers with control of financial resources, but, in a sense, it always represents a change in the alignment of purposes and priorities. As noted earlier, program staff and funders, representing people in the middle and outer circles of the diagram in the previous chapter, certainly don't make most of their decisions together, but both make decisions that have a powerful influence on what happens 'in the room.' The challenge for everyone is the degree to which they are in communication, working together to assure not only the quality of the "inner circle" experience, but also the future of those experiences.

In this regard, initiatives underway in both Dallas and New York City have sought to bring myriad partners across these large cities together in cohesive and coordinated efforts. While the strategies are different in each city, the desire seems similar, notably the goal of access to high quality arts education over many years for all children. The New York City Department of Education's Blueprint was an effort to bring a broad range of players from across the three circles together to build a common and comprehensive vision of arts education in the city's schools. In Dallas, Big Thought is working with many partners to provide both consistent access and consistent high quality to offerings all across the city, both in and out-of-schools. The ambition of these efforts is impressive, the challenges major, and the outcomes will be significant. Insofar as these efforts have already suggested, and will continue to suggest, ways of building increased communication and collaboration among the decision makers close and far away from 'the room,' they will provide much needed guidance to the field. Of course, somewhat smaller efforts exist all over the country, including the Seattle Arts Education Consortium, a collaboration of six major arts education programs.

When people in the "outer circle" make decisions that affect the future – even the very possibility – of actual arts learning opportunities without direct communication and collaboration toward finding alternative resources, a bond of alignment is broken. Indeed, the work of finding partners and building partnerships across the concentric circles is both delicate and profound in the life of an arts program, whether all of those relationships exist within a school system or extend across multiple systems (school districts, municipal departments and programs, the private sector, individuals with resources, boards of directors, arts organizations, and so on). Most programs have complex webs of partnerships and these partnerships almost always take considerable time and effort to build and sustain. Over time and especially as programs grow, the density of partners and players in the concentric circles thickens.

This thickening most often represents a larger community dedicated to the perpetuation of the program, which is important and good. It also represents greater challenges to creating and sustaining alignment of basic purposes and ideas about quality among the many players. In some settings, particular people, often those who have been champions of the program, may become too central to the life of the program and, in the event of their departure, the program can quickly become vulnerable. Many partnerships between schools and arts programs rely heavily on the active support of the school principal to facilitate critical aspects of the program. A change in principals can reveal that the strength of the whole enterprise may be more like a house of cards than a brick house built on a strong foundation. But what is the basis of the strength of this kind of foundation?

Communication Among Decision Makers

Whatever the degree to which decision makers are out of alignment in their approaches, perspectives, purposes and values, good lines of communication are essential to reaching decisions that support the achievement of quality. This, too, seems common-sense and, in many ways, may barely need exploration. Clearly, when decision makers are engaged in genuine dialogue, not only within the circles, but across roles, responsibilities, and proximity to "the room," they increase the likelihood that they will work in harmony, not discord. But in some of the sites we visited, there were perspectives on decision making that seemed particularly relevant to an understanding of how quality may be achieved in arts education.

Antonia Contro, executive director of Marwen, rejected our suggestion that the only or even the most important learning goes on in the center circle of our diagram of concentric circles. She argued that her responsibility is to make sure that every decision maker who influenced the quality of their program was also having an educational experience. This was, from her perspective, especially important for the members of her board, given the governance structure of Marwen. But she also emphasized that she was equally committed to the growth, development, and learning experiences of her staff, students' parents and families, and, of course, the students themselves. Her method was to make sure that virtually every encounter with board members, for example, included some direct experience with students,

their art work, the Marwen faculty and staff, or even art-making. Contro wants these experiences to be surprising, to change people's understandings, to deepen their appreciation of children, art, and artists, broadly, and Marwen's mission and accomplishments specifically. In other words, "communication" in this context is not simply talk, but thoughtfully conceived opportunities for learning about learning and art and young people that can inform commitment, participation, and, most critically, decision making.

The challenge of creating a dialogue among partners that both seriously educates all participants and develops collective knowledge about what constitutes quality and how to achieve it is profound. From our observations during the site visits, it seems clear that it doesn't happen without intentionality and serious effort. Helping to create some entry points into these kinds of conversations is the point of the Three Circles tool we introduce in Chapter 6.

The goal of this ongoing dialogue is an alignment across all parties on what quality arts learning experiences look like and how best to create those experiences in a specific setting. In this regard, everyone across the three circles of decision makers becomes engaged in a learning experience, negotiating with each other, examining practice and products together, considering both process and effects, and developing both individual and collective principles that can guide decision making. Dialogue and experiences together are, in this way, the path toward alignment, the creation of a compass shared by as many as possible and guiding both individual and collective decisions.

PART III:

Quality
in Practice

CHAPTER 6: TOOLS FOR ACHIEVING AND SUSTAINING QUALITY IN ARTS EDUCATION

SINCE QUALITY SEEMS TO BE, at least in part, a product of dialogue and debate that is probing, frequent, collaborative, and explicit, this chapter offers several tools to help a wide array of decision makers address the twin challenges of reflection and alignment in pursuit of quality. The tools are designed to be used solo or in workshops, meetings, or other collegial settings. Their purpose is to help arts educators and their associates build and clarify their ideas about high quality arts education and help create alignment between a program's aspirations and its practices.

We present four tools:

- **The Learning Purposes of Arts Education:** A tool or reflecting on visions and actions.
- **Four Lenses on Quality:** A tool for identifying specific elements of quality in an arts learning experience.
- **Examining the Base: Foundational Issues.** A tool for reflecting on foundational program matic decisions.
- **Three Circles of Decision Makers:** A tool for exploring who makes decisions that influence quality, and how these decision makers work together.

Who Should Use These Tools, and in What Settings?

In using these tools, we encourage the participation of as many members of a program's community as possible. One dimension of a program's strength may well be the degree to which the entire community is concerned about issues of quality. The dialogues these tools aim to encourage may be good ways to bring people from across the community together in conversation.

How Should the Tools Be Used?

The tools are designed to guide small and large group reflection and discussion. It's useful to have a designated facilitator who helps the group follow the protocols accompanying each tool and keeps track of timing.

A Note on Timing and Facilitation:

Because the contexts and needs of different arts programs vary so greatly, the protocols don't indicate the length of time for each step. Given the great variety in sizes of groups, the level of familiarity among participants, and the complexity of the issues being addressed through the use of each of the tools, we felt it better for the facilitators in each setting to make their own best guesses about the right amount of time to spend in each phase of these dialogues. That said, we don't imagine any of these conversations to be quick and easy. Given the potential complexity of these sessions, we encourage viewing these as ongoing conversations. While much can be accomplished in one session, it is unlikely that a single session will be adequate to consider the implications of the ideas, concerns, and questions raised by the use of the tool.

The Learning Purposes of Arts Education: A Tool for Reflecting on Visions and Actions

The nature of quality in any specific arts education setting is closely linked to the purposes held by the educators and community that have come together to create that learning opportunity. No arts educators or arts programs that were part of this study view their work as having a single purpose; most believe that students learn many kinds of valuable things through the arts and that in high quality arts settings, multiple purposes can, and should, be pursued. Of course, most view some outcomes as more central and essential than others.

The purpose of this tool is to help a wide range of participants, including students, parents, teachers, administrators and various other partners, reflect on what they believe students learn through the arts, why these outcomes are important, and what their program is doing to pursue these outcomes. While there may not be full agreement about these purposes, one critical aspect of the conversations this tool stimulates is a better understanding of people's basic beliefs concerning purposes, and of

the ways in which these beliefs are aligned and misaligned across the community. Another important dimension of the conversations stimulated by this tool is a better understanding of the match between a program's key purposes and its various practices and activities.

Steps in the Use of the Learning Purposes Tool

Facilitator's introduction: Welcome participants and frame the session.

- Welcome the participants and ask everyone to introduce themselves.
- Introduce the purposes of the session and the rationale for using it at this time.
- Introduce the basic steps of the protocol for using the tool. Explain the time frame for the session.
- Ask for any questions or concerns before beginning.

Step 1. Identify the learning purposes you value.

- Alone, with a colleague, or in a group: Brainstorm several learning purposes you hold dear. For now, don't worry about prioritizing or evaluating your ideas, just get all your ideas down. (Feel free to use the purposes listed on the tool to stimulate your thinking, but don't feel bound by them.)
- Review your list and circle the handful of purposes that seem most important. Make a note of any questions or concerns that arise as you identify key purposes.

Step 2: Create a "master list" of purposes.

- As a whole group: Share your lists and explore the similarities and differences. Identify major themes across all the lists.
- Create a master list of possible learning purposes for your program or approach, marking the purposes that each group has identified as most important. Don't worry if the list is a little long. You will revisit and refine it after the next step.

Step 3: Seek alignment around key purposes.

- As a whole group, review the list and try to identify a set of 4-7 purposes that you all believe

are central to the mission of your program. These purposes should express the key things you want students to learn, understand or develop as a result of their participation in the program. As you seek to identify this set of key purposes, feel free to revise or combine purposes from the master list to reflect people's ideas and values.

This process may reveal some disagreement or tensions in people's beliefs. That's good, because one of the goals of the process is to surface misalignments among people's beliefs so that they can be acknowledged and discussed. But the discussion can be sensitive. Remind the group of the importance of being respectful of everyone's views and allowing all voices to be heard.

Step 4: Connect purposes and practices.

- In pairs or small groups with different partners: Assign each group 2-3 purposes from the handful of key purposes that have emerged as central. For each purpose, list the main things your program or approach currently does to try to achieve this.
- Reflect on the match between each learning purpose and the list of things your program does to achieve this. What works and what doesn't (and how do you know)? What needs attention? What would you like to do better or differently? Are there new ideas about achieving this purpose that you would like to explore?

Step 5: Consolidate ideas.

- As a whole group: Share and discuss your reflections. In doing this, you may find that you want to revise or add to your list of key purposes.

Step 6: Think ahead.

- As a whole group: Decide what action plans or follow-up conversations should be pursued, if any, as a result of this experience.

The Learning Purposes of Arts Education:

A tool for reflecting on visions and actions

What do you believe are, or should be, the big learning purposes of your arts education program or approach?

What are the main things you do, or would like to do, to achieve each purpose?

Why teach the arts? Some common beliefs among arts educators
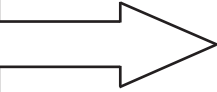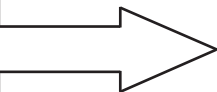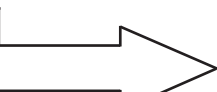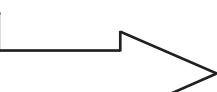
Arts Education....

▶ Fosters broad dispositions and skills

▶ Teaches artistic skills and techniques

▶ Develops aesthetic awareness

▶ Provides ways of pursuing understanding in the world

▶ Helps students engage with community, civic, and social issues

▶ Provides a venue for self-expression

▶ Helps students develop as individuals

The Learning Purposes of Arts Education:

A tool for reflecting on visions and actions

What do you believe are, or should be, the big learning purposes of your arts education program or approach?	What are the main things you do, or would like to do, to achieve each purpose?

Four Lenses on Quality: A Tool for Identifying Specific Elements of Quality in an Arts Learning Setting

While conducting this study, it became abundantly clear that articulating what constitutes quality in arts learning experiences is challenging for most arts educators. The problem isn't that they lack ideas about the nature of quality in their work, but rather that they have more ideas than can be captured in a few statements. Indeed, the depth of their experience and involvement in this work has led them to consider the great variety and complexity of the dimensions of quality in arts learning and teaching. These multiple dimensions of quality are both an indication of the richness of the learning experiences available to young people and an indication of the challenge arts educators have in capturing the dimensionality of arts learning and teaching in assessments and evaluations. Establishing and protecting the quality of these programs can be compromised when the various decision makers are not explicitly aware of or aligned around their beliefs about what aspects of the program are most important to protect or improve.

The purpose of this tool is to provide a structure for the many people involved in developing and participating in an arts education program to talk together about what constitutes quality. The tool, like several of the questions we asked people during our research, focuses on the question of 'what quality looks like' when one walks into an arts classroom or other setting for serious arts learning. The subjective nature of this question is a key to the productive use of the tool; that is, the goal of these conversations is to surface each participant's beliefs about the nature of quality in arts teaching and learning. Differences in opinion and perspective are especially important to note and probe. They may not be easy to resolve, nor should one aim for easy resolution. Significant differences could be the source of significant misalignment in decision making processes; significant differences could also lead to fruitful evolution in thinking as differences are discussed. The depth of dialogue and the clarity that emerges from a close examination of these differences are the signs of usefulness of the tool.

Steps in the Use of the Four Lenses Tool:

Facilitator's introduction: Welcome participants and frame the session.

- Welcome the participants and ask everyone to introduce themselves.
- Introduce the purposes of the session and the rationale for using it at this time.
- Introduce the basic steps of the protocol for using the tool. Explain the time frame for the session.
- Ask for any questions or concerns before beginning.

Step 1. Identify elements of quality as seen through each of the four lenses.

- Alone, with a colleague or in a group: Imagine looking at the arts learning experiences in your setting through each of the four lenses. For each lens, brainstorm a list of elements of high quality you would see (Elements = practices or visible characteristics).
- Ask yourselves: Is anything important missing from this list of elements?
- Use a colored pen or crayon to circle those elements that feel especially important in your setting.

Step 2: Explore others' ideas.

- Share your lists with 4 or 5 other individuals or groups. Discuss one lens at time, exploring similarities and differences across the lists.

Step 3: Work towards a common analysis.

- As a whole group: Report from small groups to the larger group, if the size of whole group makes this relevant. Identify areas of agreement and disagreement and explore the reasons why people see the situation in the ways they do (e.g., Different roles? Different assumptions? Different goals?).
- Draw a large version of the diagram and fill it in with everything related to each lens.

Step 4: Share beliefs about what quality should look like in your setting.

Noting all items described in each lens, discuss as a group why and how the various elements in each lens are important in your organization. Consider how your organization is taking steps to improve and/or insure their quality

Step 5: Think ahead.

- As a group, decide what action plans or follow-up conversations should be pursued, if any, as a result of this experience.

Four Lenses of Quality in Arts Education Experiences

"In the Room" A Mapping Exercise

What are the elements of high quality in each of these four dimensions in your setting?

Environment

Student
Learning

Pedagogy

Community
Dynamics
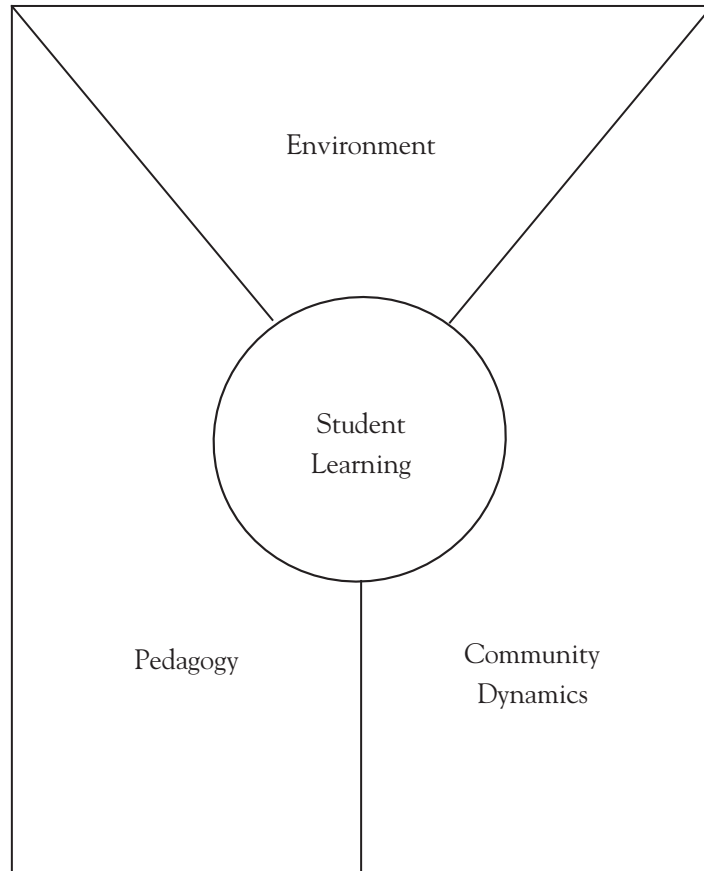
Diagram 3: Four Lenses of Quality in Arts Education Experiences

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Student Learning

Engagement

Purposeful experiences creating or engaging with works of art

Emotional openness and honesty

Experimentation, exploration, and inquiry

Ownership

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Pedagogy

Authenticity

Modeling artistic processes, inquiry, and habits

Participation in the learning experience

Making learning relevant and connected to prior knowledge

Intentionality, flexibility, and transparency

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Community Dynamics

Respect and trust among all participants, along with a belief in student capacities

Openness of communication

Collaboration

Quality as Seen Through the Lens of Environment

Functional and aesthetic space and materials

The arts occupy a central place in the physical environment

Sufficient time for authentic artistic work

Examining the Base: A Tool for Identifying and Reflecting on Program-Defining Decisions

The purpose of this tool is to help practitioners, administrators, and other members of the community connected to a particular arts education program to determine or reconsider their answers to the set of foundational questions identified in Chapter 4. We consider these questions as 'foundational' because they are questions all programs must answer and because they establish a 'base' upon which virtually all other programmatic decisions are made. A program's answers to these questions are not set in stone. As a program is being created, as it is considering expansion, or as other changes unfold, these decisions are explicitly and implicitly revisited and even challenged, The four foundational questions are:

WHO: Who teaches the arts? And who are the students?
What background, contexts, roles, and perspectives will teachers bring to this program?
Who will be served by this program – and why focus on that population?

WHERE: Where are the arts taught?

Where does this learning and teaching take place?

WHAT & HOW: What is taught and *how*?
What will be the content of instruction and how will it be taught?

ASSESSMENT: How is arts learning *assessed?*
How, for whom, and for what purposes, is evidence of learning gathered?

The questions in this tool lead participants through a process of considering pragmatics first, purposes and ideals second, and quality third. Of course, in practice, pragmatics and ideals are intertwined, and in considering quality from the perspective of a program's foundation, many questions are likely to arise, including the following kinds of concerns:

- Can we provide for as many – and as diverse – a student body as we have chosen to serve and maintain high quality for all involved?
- Do we have enough highly qualified teachers to provide the learning opportunities that we

intend?
- Our student body has changed in significant ways in recent years. Are our decisions about what to teach and how to teach still as appropriate and relevant as they were when we began?

Ultimately, a foundation can only hold so much weight. If a program is struggling or growing, the base must be revisited, reconsidered, and, if appropriate, redesigned. The purpose of this tool is to help in that process.

Steps in the Use of the Examining the Base Tool:

Facilitator's introduction: Welcome participants and frame the session.

- Welcome the participants and ask everyone to introduce themselves.
- Introduce the purposes of the session and the rationale for using it at this time.
- Introduce the basic steps of the protocol for using the tool. Explain the time frame for the session.
- Ask for any questions or concerns before beginning.

Step 1. Examine your program's current answers to the foundational questions.

- Divide the group into four groups, assuming there are enough people present to have at least a pair work on each question.
- Each group considers three questions about the question they've been assigned:

What does the program currently do that embodies the answer to the question?

What pragmatic considerations does this answer reflect?

How does the answer align with your program's basic purposes? (If you have already used the "Purposes" tool, use the list you created to help you think about this question.)

Step 2. Collect ideas from all groups.

- Reconvene into the whole group and ask each group to report on their answers.
- After each report, ask for questions of clarifica-

tion and then for topics or issues that anyone would like to raise about any of those answers. Compile a list of these topics on chart paper, so you can return to them.

Step 3: Dig into the issues.

- As a whole group: Revisit the chart paper and identify which topics are of greatest shared concern. (One way to do this is to read through the list and ask everyone to vote only three times for the issues s/he would most want to discuss.)
- Depending on the size of the group and the number of issues selected for discussion, there could be subdivisions into smaller groups to discuss particular issues from the chart. The goal here is to explore as many concerns as have been raised about the "foundational decisions" upon which the program is operating.
- Review what has been learned so far in considering these foundational decisions. Identify topics or issues that must receive more consideration.

Step 4: Consider the foundational decisions from the standpoint of quality.

In small groups comprised of different people from the earlier groups:

- Each small group considers one of the foundational decisions through the lens of the question: *From the standpoint of creating high quality arts learning experiences for students, how do you feel about these decisions?*

NOTE: These discussions can be quite sensitive. In a sense, this tool is intended to surface concerns and discontent. Given that, participants should be encouraged to frame their comments as concerns and questions rather than provocations.

The small group should be given adequate time (and fair warning) to prepare a report with key points from their conversation. The report should note where consensus was achieved and where there were disagreements in answers to the framing question. The major points should be noted on chart paper.

As a whole group:

- The whole group listens to the reports of the four groups. The facilitator leaves time for clarifying questions following each report.
- The group must consider which of the foundational decisions should be given further consideration, especially in light of the questions raised from the standpoint of perceptions of the quality of the arts learning experiences students are having in the class or program.

Step 5: Think ahead.

- As a group, decide what action plans or follow-up conversations should be pursued, if any, as a result of this experience.

Examining the base

Who?	Where?	What?	How?

A Tool for Identifying and Reflecting on
Program-defining Decisions

Identify your programmatic decisions and realities in each area:	*Reflect:*
Who teaches the arts? What background, contexts, roles, and What perspectives do teachers bring? Who will be served by this program – and why focus on that population? **Where are the arts taught?** Where does this learning and teaching take place? **What is taught and *how?*** What is the content of instruction and how is it taught? **How is arts learning *assessed?*** How, for whom, and for what purposes, is evidence of learning gathered?	• What pragmatic considerations do your decisions in each of these areas reflect? • How do these decisions align with the basic purposes for arts education in your setting? • From the standpoint of creating high quality arts learning experiences for students, how do you feel about these decisions?

100

Three Circles of Decision Makers: A Tool for Analyzing Alignment and Misalignment Across Levels of Decision Makers

The purpose of the tool is to help groups identify where there is good communication among relevant decision makers and where those decision makers are aligned – or misaligned – in terms of what constitutes quality in arts learning experiences. It is meant to provoke thought and dialogue, and it can be used by multiple constituencies within a particular setting, including any of the stakeholders in the work of the program. It may make sense to start with relatively small groups within a setting that share both significant knowledge of the workings of the program and a deep concern for its vitality and strength. This tool can be used as a relatively quick part of a meeting or conversation or as the focus of a much longer, dedicated examination of decision making processes and outcomes. Like the other tools accompanying this report, it is intended to be used as a step in a process that could easily take a series of conversations. In some settings, considering issues of communication and alignment in this way could well become a long-term and regular process.

In the process of using this tool, participants are asked to consider:

Who: Who are the relevant decision makers and where do they fit in the diagram?

Communication: Among these many decision makers, what are the patterns and formats for communication about substantive aspects of those decisions and their impact? Where might the communication be inadequate?

Critical Decisions: Which decisions are having most impact – positive or negative – on the quality of students' arts learning experiences?

Ideas about Quality: Are there significant differences in ideas about what constitutes a high quality arts learning experience among any of these decision makers? How do you know? Have these been discussed explicitly?

Steps in the Use of the Three Circles of Decision Makers Tool:

Facilitator's introduction: Welcome participants and frame the session.

- Welcome the participants and ask everyone to introduce themselves.
- Introduce the purposes of the session and the rationale for using it at this time.
- Introduce the basic steps of the protocol for using the tool. Explain the time frame for the session.
- Ask for any questions or concerns before beginning.

Step 1. Toward identifying 'who,' 'lines of communication,' and 'alignment/ misalignment.'

- Alone or with a colleague: Mark on your diagram who you think are key decision makers in each circle in your setting?
- Draw lines between those people who you believe are in regular or adequate communication within and across these circles when making decisions that affect the quality of students' learning experiences. Strong, thick lines might indicate good lines of communication, while broken lines may suggest weaker lines of communication.
- Consider which of these decision makers are aligned on beliefs about what constitutes quality learning experiences in your setting. Use one color (green, for example) to indicate significant alignment and another color (red) to indicate significant misalignment. A third color (yellow) could represent inadequate information for determining degrees of alignment. Any red lines should be keyed to a note in the margins about what the differences are.

Step 2: Working toward a common analysis.

- In small groups: Share your diagrams with one or two others. Consider where you see potentially significant differences in your assessments of *who*, *communication*, and *alignment*. There aren't absolute answers to these questions. It is most important to see where there is consensus or significant differences in the diagrams and then to listen as each person explains what informs her determinations.

- As a whole group: Report from small groups to the larger group. Identify areas of agreement and disagreement. Again, explore the reasons why people see the situation in the ways they do. Encourage specificity in responses. ("I was thinking about the monthly coord-i nators meetings, where I think the area coordinators discuss issues of professional development.")

- Leave room for different and contradictory perspectives, but always ground opinions in some specific evidence. It should not be adequate to simply declare that someone or some groups never listen or don't respect the opinions of others. (e.g., a claim that principals never listen to teachers or vice versa.) The purpose here is to raise questions about communication and ideas about what constitutes quality and to surface specific areas for further inquiry.

- Draw one large version of the diagram on chart paper and fill it in with everything related to *who*, *communication*, and *alignment*.

Step 3: Identifying puzzles of communication and beliefs about quality.

- Noting all items and areas with a lack of consensus, try to articulate the nature of the differences in perspective expressed and note them as a puzzle in need of further consideration.

Step 4: Steps toward solving the puzzles.

- Identify ways of exploring the puzzles just named. This could involve conversations with people who are not present about their perspectives on any aspect of this analysis, including the premise that there may be cause for concern about the decisions that impact quality in this setting. Name specific tasks and people responsible for them.

- Plan the next conversation in which the group will reconvene to share findings from these efforts to get more information toward understanding the puzzles.

Step 5: Think ahead

- As a group, decide what action plans or follow-up conversations should be pursued, if any, as a result of this experience.

Identifying Decision Makers Who Impact The Quality of Arts Learning Experiences

Who are decision makers? Who works together to make decisions?
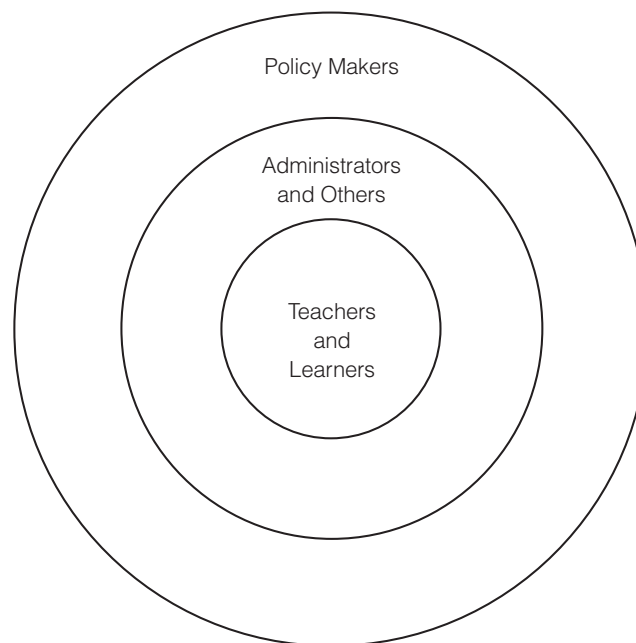
Diagram 4: Identifying Decision Makers Who Impact the Quality of Arts Learning Experiences

CHAPTER 7: IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

WHEN PROJECT ZERO BEGAN this research, our goal was to gain insights that could help educators and administrators across all areas of the field of arts education explore issues of quality in their own settings and contexts. To this end, we undertook a study of wide scope, encompassing all major art forms, multiple ages and contexts, and in-school and out-of-school settings. Wide scope and in-depth focus aren't usually equally compatible, and our findings are admittedly broad. They provide an early, rudimentary map of the "qualities of quality" in arts education that can guide, but not prescribe, practice and which we hope will lead to more in-depth explorations in the future. There remains much to be determined. Is quality the same across art forms or different age groups? Are there important differences in experiences when the focus is perception or production, or when learning is conducted in or out of school, or when arts are integrated or taught on their own? Until these specific contexts and approaches are studied separately and comparatively, these questions cannot be answered systematically.

Toward an Experience Perspective

Our hope is that this report encourages a shift in the focus of conversations about the nature of quality in arts education and how it might be achieved and sustained. *We believe it is time to expand beyond the legislative perspective on quality, in which the primary focus is on policies that create the conditions for high quality arts programs, and instead embrace an experience perspective, in which the primary focus is on the nature of the learning experiences for students.* This shift of focus prioritizes students' learning as the heart of the matter – the compass and measure of every arts learning experience.

Implications for Particular Audiences

Creating quality arts learning experiences requires the involvement of people at all levels in the arts learning experience, and there are particular challenges and ramifications for individuals in different roles. Here are some implications of the findings of this study for different participants in arts education.

Students

Student learning is at the heart of quality, and it is crucial to recognize that s**tudents themselves are decision makers** who significantly influence the quality of their arts learning experiences as well as the experiences of others. This is an important finding of our study, with implications for practice and further research. One implication is that adults should seek to engage students in explicit conversations about the decisions they are making – notably about whether or not to engage in a particular class, what they want to work on in that context, and their responsibility to other learners. An appreciation of the importance of students as decision makers suggests that teachers and artists hone their ability to listen to, observe, and talk with students, often in new ways. Teacher/artists, parents and mentors need to take time to examine decisions that students make and help them consider their choices and the impact of those choices on the quality of their learning experiences.

Teachers (Including Arts Teachers, Teaching Artists, Teachers of Non-Art Subjects, and Volunteers)

The most important indication of excellence in arts education is the quality of students' learning experiences, not the quality of the artworks they produce. In a very real sense, *students' experiences are the primary product*, not the artworks they produce, and teachers need to remember to see students' artworks as evidence of student learning. This points to the importance of creating ways to gather evidence of student learning over time (e.g., through portfolios and/or reflections, photographs, videos, audio recordings), and to review the evidence regularly with students, both individually and in groups, and with other teachers and wider groups of educators, as well as with parents. It also suggests the value of documentation of *learning in action* – recording in various ways what actually happens in classes, and discussing those experiences in reflective, analytic ways that include consideration of how to improve the experience for everyone involved.

Professional Development Leaders (Including Leaders Who Shape and Provide Pre-Service and In-Service Education)

While important strides in professional development for arts educators have been made in recent years, explicit focus on helping arts educators explore quality in arts learning is an area in which considerable work still needs to be done. Learning can be hard to see. Arts educators need pre-service and in-service professional development opportunities to help them develop tools and strategies for observing student learning and identifying signs of quality. In addition, *teachers need professional development experiences that allow them to reflect on their philosophy of practice through the lens of quality, considering their purposes, approaches, and effectiveness.* Doing this in conversation with other arts educators is especially important because it helps develop a learning community among adults, encouraging teachers to stay in contact with each other and with broader conversations in the field.

Administrators (Including Those at the Organizational, Community, and District Levels):

Because the locus of quality is students' learning experiences, it is important that people who make decisions that affect the parameters of those experiences know what is actually going on in classrooms. This suggests the need to create ways for administrators to have regular encounters with classroom practices. It also suggests *the critical importance of creating opportunities for educators close to the classroom and administrators farther away from it to reflect together regularly on the quality of their programs and how best to continue – and improve – their efforts to achieve it.*

Funders and Boards of Directors

Funders and boards of directors are essential collaborators in the quest for quality; they are as deeply concerned with achieving quality as anyone else involved in an arts program, including students and parents. In a broad sense, the implications of this study for funders and boards is straightforward: *Take care to provide arts programs with funds, requirements, and structures that explicitly support the ongoing pursuit of quality.* There are several ways to do this. For example, one is to support the documentation of quality. The field needs more pictures of excellent prac-

tice that make quality visible in different contexts and arts forms. Educators are hungry to engage in that kind of looking and analysis. Funding of projects that document quality can provide provocations for conversations among faculties and staffs of schools and arts organizations that could increase quality and provide an immense contribution to the field.

Another way funders and boards can support the pursuit of quality is to *emphasize assessments that capture the "qualities and quality" of student learning experiences.* In any educational setting, the question of how success is determined or measured is critical. As many have noted, assessments established to determine success in meeting goals and purposes will drive the design and facilitation of learning experiences. Indeed, we have seen time and again how "assessments drive curriculum." Among the implications then is the imperative that evaluation of arts programs include direct encounter with the "live" learning experience. Certainly many criteria for quality – length of learning time, quality of materials, experience of teachers, and so on – are critically important, but serious assessment must also consider what is actually happening "in the room."

The important general point for funders and boards is that the pursuit of quality takes time and requires financial resources. Observational and reflective processes take serious time and involve such supports as professional development, the involvement of outside observers and facilitators, and materials for documenting classroom life. All of these require significant financial support. Currently, most programs struggle to find the time and the financial and human resources to reflect upon, analyze, and document the quality of their students' learning experiences. *Funders might consider establishing a "10 % for quality" policy,* which would assume that 10% be added to any budget simply to support these kinds of activities and expenses.

Advocates

As noted in the beginning of this report, access and excellence are both major challenges for arts educators. The challenges of access to arts education for many young Americans is so stark and so significant that arguments for creating many more arts learning opportunities are

relatively easy to make. The challenges of quality are as significant, but nuanced discussion of what constitutes quality is often more difficult. Arts education advocates are often in the position of articulating the values and benefits of arts learning opportunities. It is critical that arts education advocates become more skilled in articulating compellingly the need for access and excellence in quality. *Sensitivity to the complexity of defining, achieving and sustaining quality, as well as to the contextual meaning of quality in different settings, could become one of the key characteristics of effective advocates.*

Researchers

There are several possible areas for further research suggested by this study, and in the next section we mention a few of them. Some of these investigations may well be pursued by professional researchers. We want to stress, however, that one implication of this study has to do with who we think of as researchers. *Insofar as the quest for quality is fundamentally tied to what happens "in the room" where arts learning takes place, the whole conceptualization of research must expand to include teachers, administrators, and students – those most deeply and directly involved in the living experience of arts learning – as researchers, capable of contributing essential questions, data, and analysis to the study of what constitutes quality.*

Promising Areas for Further Research

Close-up pictures of "in the room" learning experiences. This study was intentionally broad in scope, with the hope that it could provide a foundation for further research. Clearly, we need many more close-up pictures of excellent practice across arts education contexts to understand the nuances and details of achieving quality in particular situations. This research might well pay particular attention to the lenses suggested by this study: learning, pedagogy, community dynamics, and environment, and to the ways purposes and foundational decisions come to life in student learning. We hope the tools we offer in this report can aid such observations and descriptions of practice.

Refining and developing tools for studying quality. Further research is needed to refine the tools presented in this report. Local efforts to work with, test, and refine

these and other tools must be undertaken and made public. Documentation of the ways in which these tools (and any others that may be developed or already exist) aid in the quest for quality should be published. Establishment of websites dedicated to practices that support that quality of arts education could be a way for researchers, administrators, and practitioners to collaborate on the development of new and better tools and protocols across diverse settings.

Linking quality experiences to established standards. We were unable to explore fully the relationship between standards and outcomes established by national, state, and district entities or professional associations on the one hand, and the specific dimensions of actual arts learning experiences on the other hand. This is an important area of investigation and one on which researchers, policy makers, and practitioners should collaborate.

Foundational questions and essential decisions. The literature review conducted for this study identified four foundational questions that constitute a major set of decisions that arts educators must make in creating and sustaining virtually all programs. More work needs to be done to understand the nature and timing of the kinds of decisions that are most critical to the quality of arts programs. This work could well help all decision makers become substantively more aware of the ultimate impact of their choices and decisions.

The arts and other disciplines. Investigating and pursuing excellence in arts education and continuing to investigate its character does not depend on drawing distinctions between art and other disciplines: It is likely that excellence in arts education overlaps in significant ways with excellence in other educational areas. For instance, until more research is done, we cannot know the degree to which the elements of quality described here for arts education apply to other academic disciplines. Are there differences in the qualities themselves? Are there differences in emphasis and significance? This research should include both critical analysis across the art forms as well as across academic disciplines. With the model established by this study, comparative research on quality learning and teaching across disciplines may be achieved more readily, research that looks for similarities across contexts, not just

differences. This realm of research is a natural setting for productive collaborations among educational researchers who may typically focus on a single discipline (the case for many researchers in arts education). Researchers from other fields (such as public health, business, and sports – domains in which learning, performance, and quality are linked) may also provide important insights.

Concluding Thoughts

This study revealed that, in the actual practice of arts education, there are multiple versions of excellence. High quality arts programs can exist in or out of schools; they can be taught by teaching artists, art teachers, non-arts teachers, or volunteers; they can focus on production or perception; and they can be integrated with academics or taught as separate subjects; and there is no single recipe for achieving quality. There do seem to be some necessary ingredients, though. On a programmatic level these include:

- Striving for multiple big purposes simultaneously.
- Shaping and examining the quality of student learning experiences to make sure that they align with core program goals and beliefs.
- Taking care that foundational decisions about who, what, where, and how the arts are taught are well aligned with a program's big purposes.
- Continually seeking alignment between a program's purposes, its vision of quality, and the programmatic decisions that are made at all levels by all constituencies.

There are no shortcuts. Achieving quality involves an ongoing examination of programmatic as well as personal purposes and values, along with a continual examination of what is actually happening "in the room." This quest does not end. Arts educators deeply committed to quality know that this search is an essential element of what constitutes quality. It is perhaps one of the greatest lessons we can offer our students – that the pursuit of quality is both central to the achievement of excellence and a wonderful, challenging, and compelling learning experience in itself.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

THE GOAL OF THE QUALITIES OF THE QUALITY project was to conduct a multi-faceted study of how arts educators define and strive to create high quality arts-learning experiences for children and youth. The follow-ing chart, also included in the Introduction, identifies the defining methodological decisions and major research questions that gave shape to the study.

Three Broad Research Questions	1. How do arts educators in the United States – including leading practitioners, theorists, and administrators – conceive of and define high quality arts learning and teaching? 2. What markers of excellence do educators and administrators look for in the actual activities of art learning and teaching as they unfold in the classroom? 3. How do a program's foundational decisions, as well as its ongoing day-to-day decisions, impact the pursuit and achievement of quality?
Scope of Research	AGES: Grades K-12. LOCATIONS: In school and out of school; urban, suburban, and rural sites. ART FORMS: Dance, theater, music, visual arts, and some emerging forms, such as spoken word.
Three Research Strands	Literature review. Interviews with 16 recognized theorists and practitioners in the field. Site visits to 12 notable programs yielding interviews with over 250 people.
Nomination Process for Each Research Strand	Nominations solicited by email from several hundred arts education professionals in a wide range of roles across the United States.

The Broad Scope of the Study

Teaching and learning in the arts for children and adolescents between kindergarten and high school graduation takes place in many and diverse settings, including home and family. We focused on formal, intentional arts learning experiences – in classes, workshops, studios, and projects. We tried to capture the full breadth of these settings in the study, including arts education opportunities in and out of school and in rural, urban, and suburban settings. We also included all of the major art forms – dance, theater, music, and visual arts, alone, in combination, and extending to such contemporary and emerging forms as documentary film or radio and spoken word. We sought a wide range of settings, including schools, museums, folk art, and community arts contexts.

In addition, we aimed for a broad representation of ideas, experiences, and perspectives in gathering our data. During the two year study, we interviewed over 250 people, visited 12 sites, and reviewed over 500 sources, including articles, chapters, newspaper articles, and books. Our interviewees included students (K-12), parents, teachers, administrators, theorists, researchers, arts program board members, members of the business community, municipal leaders, founders of organizations, community activists, and a mayor of a major city.

We are well aware that the limitations of the study – a dozen site visits and only 16 "expert" interviews – are severe, especially given the breadth of the field as we defined it. At the same time, we felt there was great potential significance in findings that represented this breadth of perspectives on questions of quality in arts education. Since no prior study has undertaken this task with such scope, we felt it was legitimate and important to see what a broad view could yield before undertaking much needed further study into more specialized areas. We sought to identify convergence of ideas, practices, and patterns of decision making regarding quality. We recognize that there are differences that make a difference – across art forms, and across settings and contexts, and it is our hope that this study will provoke further study of quality, in each of the art forms and for specific ages groups and settings.

Research Questions

The three research questions that defined the study (see chart) were formulated with two goals in mind. The first was to orient our investigation toward the experiential dimension of quality. In several places throughout this report, we argue for the importance of trying to understand how, at this moment in time, arts educators conceive of quality "on the ground" – in the flow of teaching and learning in the classroom or other authentic setting – rather than what they take as proxies for quality, such as assessment scores, or attendance rates, or other measures that capture certain outcomes of an experience rather than the qualities of the experience itself. This explains why our first research question asks what *constitutes* quality in arts education, rather than asking how excellence is measured or what its outcomes are.

A second reason the top-level research questions are broad is that they reflect an effort to resist imposing our own ideas about the major field-defining issues at this moment in time on the views of others in the field. Almost any research initiative begins with preconceptions about findings. Researchers must acknowledge these preconceptions but take care not to let them shape the actual findings. As one example, we anticipated that our findings might cluster around issues concerning standards and assessment since these issues are now on the minds of many educators. Similarly, given the heated debates about how to justify the arts in the school curriculum, we expected people to be strongly interested in talking about justification. Neither of these expectations was fulfilled.

We formulated a set of mid-level questions to guide the development of our interview protocols, and later, to inform our data analysis. The questions were designed to be broad enough to allow the themes we anticipated to emerge, but also to challenge their emergence or allow them *not* to emerge. The list of mid-level questions was revised many times during the early stages of the project; here we include only the final version.

Mid-level research questions

Beliefs about the nature of quality:

- What do arts education practitioners, administrators, and theorists believe are the essential purposes of high quality arts education? What do they believe arts education should be striving to achieve?
- What do arts education practitioners, administrators, and theorists believe are essential features of high quality *teaching* in the arts?
- What do arts education practitioners, administrators, and theorists believe are essential features of high quality *learning* in the arts?

Sources of beliefs about quality:

- How do arts education practitioners, administrators, and theorists come to their understandings of what constitutes quality and how to achieve it?
- What kinds of background experiences and beliefs inform people's ideas about quality?

Evidence/markers of quality:

- What do practitioners report looking for and/or seeing in an arts learning experience that, for them, serves as evidence of quality arts learning and teaching?

Challenges to quality:

- What questions, debates, and dichotomies do arts education practitioners, administrators, and theorists report they currently struggle with regarding the nature of quality arts learning and teaching and how to achieve it?
- How do arts education practitioners, administrators, and theorists identify the major obstacles to achieving high quality arts learning and teaching?

Decisions affecting quality

- What is the relationship between quality arts learning and teaching, and decision making related to the design and support of arts programs?
- When and where are decisions about quality located? Who makes them? How are they made?

The Three Research Strands

We pursued three strands of inquiry – a literature review, a series of one-on-one interviews with experts in the field, and a series of site visit-interviews to programs in diverse settings across the U.S. Our goal was to explore theoretical, research, and practical perspectives on quality and then to triangulate from these perspectives to identify significant convergences and divergences. Lois Hetland and Ellen Winner led the literature review strand; Shari Tishman led the interview strand; Steve Seidel led the site visit strand. Within each strand, small teams of research assistants were involved in data collection and analysis and most research assistants participated on more than one strand team.

Nomination Process

We sought to cast a wide net encompassing leaders in arts education, the academic fields, policy makers, funders, administrators, practitioners, and public officials. We wanted diversity in terms of school and non-school settings, art forms, and local, regional, and national representation. To this end, we devised a nomination process to help us decide whom to interview, which programs to visit, and which literature to review. An online nomination and selection process was developed for all three strands, and nomination requests were sent to 403 people or organizations across the United States. Nominators included people in four categories: Administrator/artist/practitioner; researcher/theorist/professor; funder/philanthropist; public official (often people in state departments of education and/or state arts agencies). All were invited via email to contribute their nominations through a specially designed project website. (See Appendix D for the nomination request letter).

The nomination form asked for suggestions of literature, people, and programs that addressed issues of quality in arts education in explicit and/or important ways. The form did not ask nominators to identify the "best" programs, but rather programs where quality was taken seriously and where participants might be especially thoughtful and articulate about the question of what constitutes quality in arts learning and teaching. This same qualification was sought in relation to nominations for interview-

ees and literature – thoughtful articulations of the nature of quality in arts education.

Of the 403 possible nominators, 378 successfully received the nomination invitation. Forty-seven percent (177 people) responded by nominations in at least one strand. Some offered suggestions in all three areas – literature, interviewees, and sites – while others only made suggestions in one or two areas. All nominated literature was sought and, when found, reviewed. All nominated interviewees were investigated and considered for selection. All nominated sites were sent an online explanation of the study and an invitation to apply for selection.

Activities of the Three Research Strands

The Literature Review Research Strand

The goal of the literature review was to gain insight into what leading scholars in arts education have written about what constitutes quality teaching and learning in the various arts.

We conducted an extensive search for articles and books addressing issues of excellence in arts learning and teaching. Surprisingly, we found scant literature that explicitly took up the question of quality. Instead we found writings and sometimes debates about how best to teach an art form. By determining the kind of arts education these authors advocated, we inferred what they held as standards and markers of both excellence and weakness in arts education.

We adopted the following five-pronged approach.

- We reviewed the works of major theorists in each art form through the contributions in the most current major handbooks of arts education: Eisner and Day's *Handbook of Research and Policy in Arts Education* (Erlbaum, 2004). Colwell's *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* (Wadsworth, 2002), Taylor's *Researching Drama and Arts Education* (Routledge, 1996), and Preston-Dunlop's *Handbook for Dance in Education* (Princeton Book Company, 1988).
- We reviewed all available references suggested through the nomination process.
- We reviewed all appropriate references found through hand searches of arts education journals conducted in libraries at Boston University, Harvard University, and Luna Kids Dance in Oakland, California.
- We reviewed all the applications for the case studies. One hundred twenty-one organizations, including community arts centers, schools, cultural institutions, and partnerships, completed applications for selection as sites to be studied. The applications included questions about quality (See Site Visit Strand, below).
- We reviewed standards for assessing learning in the arts to determine the categories of learning that the major assessment systems believe should be attained by high quality arts programs. The four assessment approaches reviewed were:
  - International Baccalaureate Program
  - Advanced Placement Program
  - National Standards for Arts Education
  - NAEP (National Arts Assessment of Educational Progress) Arts Assessment

Our searches and nominations yielded almost 1,000 articles and books, and about half of these proved relevant to the question of quality.

Literature data analysis. The literature analysis was iterative and periodically shared with the cross-strand research team for critique and suggestions. Initial review occurred before the interview and site data were collected. Through it we identified "hot spots" – issues where there was debate and analysis in the literature. These hot spots aligned in many ways with the preconceptions we described earlier – our advance ideas about what sorts of themes would emerge in the data. For example, there was a great deal written about assessment, about integration versus stand-alone approaches to arts education, and about how to justify the presence of the arts in schools. The fact that our preconceptions in part reflected the literature in the field is no surprise. As scholars, we were reasonably familiar with much of this literature, and it naturally influenced the way we conceived of field-defining issues. Through an iterative process of comparing results with the other research strands, it became clear that while there were many connections between the

emergent themes in the literature review and the emergent themes in the interviews and site visit strands, there were also differences. For example, although the people we interviewed had plenty of ideas about assessment, by and large it was not the burning issue on people's minds that the literature suggested it might be. Nor was the issue of how to justify the arts weighing heavily on peoples' minds. But though the themes that emerged in the literature review had a different profile than those that emerged in the other two strands – which *were* similar to each other – the differences had less to do with disagreement in substance than in tone and emphasis. Part of the role of the literature in any field – and arts education is no exception – is to provide a forum for debate. Sometimes this leads to polarization, with people publicly identifying themselves as aligning with certain perspectives and against others. Other times, people seem less worried about choosing sides and more interested in synthesizing what is best from a range of perspectives and practices. As we describe in the previous chapters, the findings from the interview and site visit strands suggest that the field of arts education is currently in such an expansive mood.

The Interview Research Strand

We conducted 16 structured interviews of experts, some of whom were theorists and some practitioners. A list of the interviewees can be found in Appendix B.

Interview selection process. The web-based interview nomination process yielded 465 possible interview candidates, numerically distributed as follows:

Number of nominations	
Nominated once	400
Nominated twice	42
Nominated three times	15
Nominated four times	4
Nominated more than four times	4
TOTAL	465

It is striking that out of 465 total nominations, 65 candidates received more than one nomination, but only

8 people received 4 or more nominations (and no one received more than 10 nominations). Self-nominations were permitted, and in several cases the increase from one numerical category to another was due to self-nomination. The large number of single and double nominations, combined with the quite small number of four-and-over nominations, is itself an interesting finding that suggests that the field, as defined by this study, has widely varying views about who its leading figures are.

Several considerations influenced our ultimate selection of interviewees. All potential interviewees were nominated at least once, and most, more than once. However, the nomination process did not yield 15 clear "winners," so selection was not a matter of choosing candidates with the most votes. We made an initial cut at the two-nomination mark, yielding 65 people. (We did not make a cut at the three-nomination mark because of the frequency with which the difference between two and three nominations was due to self-nomination.) We then applied additional selection criteria to the list to identify a set of candidates who reflected the breadth and complexity of the field. The criteria included the following: representation across art forms (dance, music, visual arts, theater, integrated arts), representation across roles (administrator, theorist, practitioner), and representation across contexts and sites (university/academic, school-based, out of school, museums, consultant, artist-practitioner). As we applied these criteria, we found gaps not addressed by our list of 65 nominees. To fill out the list for missing criteria, we revisited the total pool of nominees.

The interview selection process also took into consideration whether nominees were also nominated in the literature and/or case study strands. When cross-strand nominations occurred, the three strands discussed which strand was most likely to capture the nominee's input best. This process helped us achieve maximum representation across the entire study – another reason why a simple vote count was, by itself, too crude a method of selection.

The interview selection process was complex and difficult; as such, it reflects certain unavoidable biases. For example, to receive multiple nominations a nominee had to be well-known, either through published writings or other high-visibility activities. Thus, many nominees

were likely to be older, which may under-represent emerging trends in the field. We attempted to balance the set of interviewees, but we acknowledge that the selection process could not yield a list of people who definitively represent all the important trends in art education. Rather, it yielded a list of figures whom many people in the field perceive as influential about quality concerns, modified by our efforts to achieve representation across art forms and roles and to maximize representation across the three strands of our research.

Interview protocol development. Our interview protocol consisted of ten questions (which can be found in Appendix D), which were designed with a twofold purpose: (1) to reflect the top- and mid-level questions that guide the study as a whole, and (2) to be open-ended and responsive to the interests and concerns of the interviewees. After an extended process of development, the protocol was pilot-tested with Fernando Hernandez, an internationally-known arts educator and scholar at the University of Barcelona and advisor to The Qualities of Quality Project. We learned that the interview could be conducted within 75 minutes, that the questions appeared to be clear, and that the answers we obtained were informative.

Interview procedure. Everyone we invited to be interviewed accepted our request. The interview questions were sent to interviewees several weeks in advance and again immediately prior to the interview. All interviews were conducted via phone by Shari Tishman, with a research assistant as a silent listener (introduced in advance to the interviewee), who later transcribed the interview and assisted in the analysis of the transcripts. The interviews lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Immediately following each interview, the interviewer and listener reflected on the interview together and captured immediate impressions through a "debrief protocol," (Appendix D) which was written up and included in the data set for the interviews.

Interview data analysis. Interview transcripts were coded and analyzed through an iterative process. First, we developed provisional top-level coding categories by analyzing data from the debriefing protocols. We compared these very preliminary findings with a similar first-pass analysis from the case study and literature strands, which suggested cross-strand connections to explore more explicitly. Simultaneously, we analyzed all the transcripts and extracted each interviewee's main ideas in three categories: (1) characteristics of high quality teaching in the arts; (2) characteristics of high quality learning in the arts; and (3) beliefs about the purposes of arts education. Based on these two initial analyses and in conversation across the other project strands, we developed a more extensive list of coding categories. This iterative process continued throughout the preparation of the final report, with refinements and changes all along the way as the three research strands continued to identify, interpret, and weave together their findings.

The Site Visit Research Strand

Site visit selection process. We sent applications to all nominated sites. Site applications included a total of seven major questions and requested basic information about the program. The questions probed how people in the site thought about and addressed issues of quality, what influences were especially important developing their ideas about quality in arts education, and what specific challenges to quality the program had encountered. (See Appendix D for the application questions.)

Of the 246 programs nominated, we received 120 complete applications. Given our focus on quality in student-learning experiences, applications received from programs focused exclusively on the professional development of arts educators or teachers were excluded from the final selections. Nevertheless, we analyzed those applications to gain insight into the critical and challenging arena of professional development in the arts.

We selected 12 sites distributed across the major dimensions that characterize the breadth of this study – art forms, K-12, in- and out-of-school programs, and rural/suburban/urban settings (Appendix C lists these sites). Multiple readers on our research team independently reviewed each application and assessed areas of strength and weakness in each. Our first cut selected those applications replete with detail and specificity about issues of quality. These characteristics suggested an ability to articulate ideas about what constitutes quality and how to achieve it. After this initial selection, we re-read the selected ap-

plications to identify more nuanced dimensions. Final selection was based on evidence in the applications that the program addressed issues and challenges of quality in their context in direct, straightforward ways. We also reviewed various possible combinations of sites to achieve distribution across the dimensions noted above. We then notified the selected sites and advised them about the requirements for participation. All selected sites agreed to participate.

These programs were not chosen as "exemplars" of quality arts education. Such selection would have been impossible. After all, the very purpose of our study was to determine the qualities by which such a judgment could responsibly be made. The selection indicates our perception that the applicants were thorough, specific, and articulate in their discussion of what constitutes quality, how they strive to achieve it, and how they contributed to a whole that we felt represented the diversity of the entire pool of applicants.

Site visit procedure. Each site was visited for two days and at each visit, we interviewed a wide range of stakeholders including K-12 students, parents, teachers, administrators, arts program board members, members of the business community, municipal leaders, founders of organizations, community activists and leaders. In addition we observed classes, workshops, or rehearsals. At the request of The Wallace Foundation, we included in our list of sites both Dallas and New York City, where recent initiatives and developments, along with the long histories at these sites of active arts education communities, made the opportunity to talk with practitioners in both cities highly relevant.

The site visits allowed us an opportunity to combine observations and interviews and to ground our conversations in specific physical spaces, neighborhoods, and populations – all aspects of the setting likely to influence the goals, design, and practical details of the programs. In almost every case, we were given tours of the communities the programs served and were introduced to people who could provide details on program history. In all cases, the programs were generous and open in planning and hosting our visits, in whom we met, in what we observed, and in the candor of the conversations.

Protocols for the site visits were not as formal as those used in the interviews. All sites were notified in advance about the kinds of issues we hoped to explore while visiting, but, out of necessity, the on-site interviews were open-ended and responsive to the particular events of the visits: Questions emerged, for example, from observations, earlier interviews, and accrued impressions during the visits.

Among the strands, the site visits provided the richest setting for direct investigation of the nature of the decisions and decision making processes that influence the character of quality "on the ground" in arts education. Site visits offered multiple perspectives on common experiences. For example, a conversation about a particular dance rehearsal or session of a digital photography workshop with students, teachers, and supervisors or administrators provided insight into the responsibilities that each participant has for the ultimate quality of the experience.

Site visit data analysis. Analysis of case study data began upon returning from our first site visit. Data was initially coded according to categories suggested by our top-level questions with particular focus on capturing (1) interviewee's ideas about the nature or characteristics of a quality arts learning experience, as well as (2) ideas about how quality arts learning experiences are achieved and sustained. As a result of continued site visit research, post-visit debrief meetings and cross-strand comparisons of findings, our analytic frame and coding scheme evolved and expanded over time, which precipitated additional exploration of the site visit data. This iterative process continued to shape site visit analysis, throughout the remainder of the study and into the final stages of the development of this report.

Cross-Strand Integration

Data analysis was conducted on two levels: intrastrand and inter-strand. Initial processing (e.g., debriefing, memos, transcribing) was conducted within strands. Strand-specific coding schemes were developed and applied to the data. At the same time, through progress memos reviewed and discussed at cross-strand data analysis meetings, the entire research team engaged in close

examination of the convergences and divergences of their emergent findings.

Early stages of the analysis illuminated some strong areas of convergence across the strands and over dimensions of breadth in the field (e.g., art forms, K-12, urban/suburban/rural). Given our interest in findings of practical import for decision makers, we attended more to convergence than to divergence at this stage. Cross-strand analysis was especially important for synthesizing the diverse dimensions of quality. We remained intentionally alert and skeptical about the clarity of our language, coding schemes, and emerging conceptual frameworks, which was particularly challenging. Contributions of the research assistants who participated on more than one strand provided critical comparative eyes in the cross-strand analysis. The opportunity to present early findings from the study at conferences and meetings also provided critical perspective on the veracity of our analysis.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW STRAND INTERVIEWEES

Eric Booth

Currently a faculty member at the Kennedy Center, and director of the mentoring program at the Juilliard School, Eric Booth is an active advocate of the arts. He is founder and editor of the *Teaching Artist* journal and author of articles and books dedicated to arts education and arts educators. In his writing, research, and teaching, Booth strives to facilitate student engagement through and in the arts.

Doug Boughton

Doug Boughton is professor of art and education at Northern Illinois University. His research and writing interests include the assessment of student learning in art, portfolio assessment and art curriculum policy. He has worked in the United States and internationally with organizations committed to arts education research.

Rika Burnham

Recently appointed the head of education at the Frick Art Museum in New York, Rika Burnham has spent her career working in museum education as a lecture, educator and leader. She is committed to improving arts education for both students and teachers within the museum setting.

Ana Cardona

Ana Cardona currently works as a consultant for the Michigan Department of Education where she provides leadership for curriculum instruction and assessment in the areas of dance, media arts, theatre and the visual arts. She has a longstanding personal and professional commitment to the arts, with a particular focus on issues of diversity.

Laura Chapman

Based in Cincinnati, Laura Chapman is an independent consultant on arts education and has authored over 25 books on the topic. She believes that arts education is essential for all children and through her work critically examines the school cultures that create the current state of arts education programs. Her recent interests include the use of personal experience inquiry as a pathway to understand teaching and learning in pre-K-12 visual arts education.

Kristin Congdon

Kristin Congdon's work is largely based in the preservation of folk arts, feminist criticism and the role of arts education in the community. She has taught in a variety of settings, including public schools, correctional settings, treatment facilities, museums, and universities, and currently teaches at the University of Central Florida.

Elliot Eisner

Elliot Eisner is emeritus professor of Art and Education at Stanford University. His work has focused on art education, curriculum studies and qualitative research methodology. Originally trained as a painter, his teaching and research explore the ways in which schools can improve by using the processes of the arts in all their programs. Elliot Eisner's recent writings focus on how the arts prepare students to make complex decisions inside and outside of the classroom.

Sara Lee Gibb

Sara Lee Gibb is the current president of the National Dance Education Organization and the professor of modern dance and assistant dean at Brigham Young University. She has researched dance pedagogy and curriculum development for all levels of learners and is interested in exploring the science, biology and technologies that support the art of dance.

Louise Music

As Alameda County arts learning coordinator, Louise Music provides networking and information exchange to establish and promote the role of the arts in learning and to facilitate communication between the schools and their surrounding organizations. Through her work and her close involvement with many local and national arts organizations, Louise Music works to make the arts become an integral part of every child's development and education.

Bennett Reimer

Bennett Reimer is emeritus professor of music at Northwestern University. He has devoted his career to the philosophy of music education and curriculum design in music education. Bennett Reimer believes that musicality is inherent in each individual and that aesthetic experiences in music are both possible and critical for all students.

Jane Remer

Jane Remer has worked as an author, teacher and freelance consultant in the field of arts education. She believes that the arts belong in the education of all children and she has been involved in institutional development, program design and implementation, documentation, research, evaluation and professional training at the state, national and local levels. Her recent writings explore how and why the arts can be central to education in our public schools.

Johnny Saldaña

Johnny Saldaña has been centrally involved in the field of theater education as a teacher educator, drama specialist, director, and researcher. He is currently the professor of theater and assistant chair at Arizona State University. His work has focused on drama in the classroom, drama with multicultural materials, ethnotheater, theater for social change, and qualitative research in education.

Lissa Soep

Lissa Soep serves as the director of education and senior producer in the newsroom at Youth Radio working with other staff and youth to develop, document and evaluate learning experiences in youth radio. She has authored publications that explore youth media and community based education and has lectured widely about youth culture, language and learning.

Susan Sollins

Currently the executive producer and creator of the television series Art:21 – Art in the Twenty-First Century, Susan Sollins has worked as a museum educator, curator and creator of public programming with a particular focus on contemporary art. She is the co-founder and former executive director of Independent Curators International, a non-profit museum without walls that develops traveling exhibitions of contemporary art to viewers all over the world.

Bill Strickland

An arts educator and entrepreneur with a deep commitment to providing arts education to underserved communities, Bill Strickland is the founder and CEO of the Manchester Craftsmen Guild, a center for arts and learning that aims to inspire urban youth through the arts and mentored training in life skills.

Cynthia Weiss

A public artist and painter, Cynthia Weiss currently works as the school partnerships manager at the Columbia College Chicago Office of Community Arts Partnerships, directing art programs that invite community and school participation. Her dual identity as artist and art educator inspire her teaching, writing, and art.

APPENDIX C: CASE STUDY SELECTED SITES

Appalachian Media Institute (AMI) of Appalshop – Whitesburg, Kentucky

htpp://www. appalshop.org

Rebecca O'Doherty, Director

Appalshop is a multi-media arts and cultural organization that strives to develop effective ways to use media to address the complex issues facing central Appalachia. In 1988 Appalshop staff members founded the Appalachian Media Institute (AMI), a media training program for central Appalachian youth. Using the technological and artistic resources of Appalshop, AMI helps young people explore how media production skills can be used to ask, and begin to answer, critical questions of themselves and their communities. With opportunities to have input into community dialogues, and frame those dialogues themselves, young people develop the skills and critical thinking abilities necessary to become leaders in creating sustainable futures for their communities. Since its inception AMI has directly engaged over 600 young people in media production.

ArtsConnection – New York, New York

htpp://www.artsconnection.org

Steven Tennen, Executive Director

For twenty-eight years, ArtsConnection has provided programming in the performing, visual, literary, and media arts to the New York City public schools. Connecting professional artists with children, teachers, and families, ArtsConnection's goal is to make the arts an essential part of education. Their programs and services have enriched the lives of over three million children who represent the breadth of cultural and economic diversity in the City's five boroughs. ArtsConnection strives to provide comprehensive, flexible, and diverse programs that meet the educational needs of participating schools, to strengthen families and communities through public and after school programs, to build strong foundations for collab- orative partnerships among teachers, artists, and school adminis-

trators through professional development, and to share its work with the broadest audience possible.

Arts Corps – Seattle, Washington

htpp://www.artscorps.org

Lisa Fitzhugh, founder and Executive Director

Arts Corps was founded in 2000 on the principle that all young people, not just those with resources, should have access to quality arts learning opportunities. In response to many schools scaling down or eliminating the arts in curriculum, Arts Corps has become a leader in addressing the arts gap, placing professional teaching artists at schools, community centers and other organizations in King County to facilitate a creative journey for young people, ages 5 to 19. Teaching in diverse art forms and in all disciplines, Arts Corps's teaching artists reach several thousand students a year, providing them with powerful arts learning experiences. These teaching artists model creative habits of mind and have a profound impact on the youth with whom they work.

Big Thought – Dallas, Texas

htpp://www.bigthought.org

Giselle Antoni, Executive Director

Big Thought is a learning partnership inspiring, empowering, and uniting children and communities through education, arts and culture. The "big thought" is that a community, working together, can lift children up and better their lives using arts and culture as tools and catalysts. Big Thought supports community partnerships, cultural integration for academic achievement, youth development and family learning.

**Center of Creative Arts (COCA) –
St. Louis, Missouri**

htpp:// www.cocastl.org

Stephanie Riven, founding Director
Rebecca Carson, Director of Performing Arts
Shawna Flanigan, Urban Arts Director

COCA (Center of Creative Arts) has been providing meaningful arts experiences to St. Louisans and their families for two decades. COCA has become the largest multidisciplinary arts institution and one of the most valuable community assets in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Housed in a 60,000 square foot building designed by world-renowned architect Eric Mendelsohn, COCA attracts 50,000 area residents each year.

COCA's multidisciplinary and multicultural arts programs include performances in the 400-seat theatre; educational classes, camps, and workshops serving individuals aged 6 months through adult; artists' residencies; exhibits of contemporary art in the Millstone Gallery at COCA; and an extensive outreach program offered to low-income youth through our nationally recognized Urban Arts Program. It is the organization's mission to make a COCA is a multidisciplinary community arts center that provides exceptional arts education through programs, performances and exhibitions.

City Lore – New York, New York

htpp://www.citylore.org

Steve Zeitlin, Executive Director
Amanda Dargan, Education Director

City Lore is a nonprofit membership organization founded in 1986 to produce programs and publications that convey the richness of New York City's cultural heritage. City Lore staff includes folklorists, historians, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists, all of whom specialize in the creation of programs and materials for public education and enjoyment. In addition to staff projects, affiliated individuals and organizations work through City Lore to produce independent films, exhibits, and other media projects that are dynamic and diverse, reflecting the city surrounding them. City Lore's education pro-

grams engage youth, families, and educators in exploring the role of the arts and culture in their own lives and in the lives of others, encouraging youth to see the arts as a powerful means for expressing their ideas and for understanding the world around them.

**East Bay Center for Performing Arts –
Richmond, California**

htpp://www.eastbaycenter.org

Jordan Simmons, Artistic Director

At East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, in a neighborhood known as the Iron Triangle and distinguished primarily for its chronic poverty and violence, young artists have, since 1968, been discovering how training in the arts illuminates their fullest capacity as human beings. Through the creation of original music, film, theater, and dance, and self-determined community projects, East Bay Center for Performing Arts emphasizes the cause of social justice, the hard work needed to prepare, the skills to create, and the courage to perform. Over these past forty years, more than 50,000 student artists from diverse backgrounds and experiences participated in the Center's programs where they have found within themselves the means to develop skills that enable them to think, lead, and contribute to the world they see around them.

**Find Yourself at the Met, Metropolitan Museum of Art
– New York, New York**

http://www.metmuseum.org/events/students

Rika Burnham, former Associate Museum Educator

The Metropolitan Museum of Art welcomes students to a program of free classes held after school and on weekends during the school year and on weekdays during the summer. Both middle school and high school students have the opportunity to study original works of art in the Museum with instructors from the Education Department. All classes ask students to be active participants in understanding and appreciating works of art, and to look and respond through discussion in the galleries or through the creation of their own works of art in the studio.

Lincoln Center Institute – New York, New York

htpp://www.lincolncenter.org

Scott Noppe-Brandon, Executive Director

Lincoln Center Institute (LCI) is the educational cornerstone of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. Founded in 1975, the Institute brings dance, music, theater, film, visual arts, and architecture into classrooms in the New York City area, across the nation, and around the world. In more than three decades of outreach, LCI's approach has reached over 20 million students, teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and professors of education worldwide.

Marwen – Chicago, Illinois

htpp:// www.marwen.org

Steven Berkowitz, Founder and Chairman of the Board
Antonia Contro, Executive Director
Scott Lundius, Director of Education

Marwen was founded in 1987 to educate and inspire Chicago's youth through the visual arts. Chicago is a city rich in history, architecture, art, and culture, and it is Marwen's intent to leverage these resources, providing students with an out-of-school program that provides access to opportunity, while remaining highly relevant to their individual and collective experiences. Marwen serves nearly 2,000 students annually in the 15,000 square foot facility located in downtown Chicago that houses studios, exhibition spaces for students and alumni and a career center.

Museum Studies, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)
– New York, New York

http://redstudio.moma.org/programs/

Heather Maxson, Program Administrator

The high school Museum Studies program at the Museum of Modern Art offers New York City high school students a series of workshops addressing issues related to curatorial and museum work and the opportunity to organize an exhibition of student artwork. The program combines educational and practical experiences, introducing students to various careers in the arts while also address-ing methods of presentation. Students meet with museum staff from the education, graphic design, and exhibition design and production departments as well as curatorial and other departments. The student curators select from student artwork submissions to create an exhibition.

New Trier High School Visual Arts Department –
Winnetka, Illinois

http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/arts/default.asp

Stephen Murphy, Art Department Chair

New Trier High School is a public school located in the suburbs 16 miles north of Chicago on Lake Michigan. New Trier Township is a suburban district well known regionally and nationally for its academic, arts, and athletic programs. At New Trier, art is essential to a student's total educational and personal development. Over 4,000 students attend the school on two campuses, and approximately 900 students of all abilities take visual art annually. The Art Department is dedicated to the achievement of visual literacy for all students. Art Classes offer opportunities for students to cultivate original thought, develop analytical and problem-solving skills (critical and creative thinking), evaluate, critique, and articulate ideas, and learn appreciation and tolerance of different individuals, ideas, and cultures.

Opening Minds through the Arts (OMA) –
Tucson, Arizona

htpp:// www.omaproject.org

Joan Ashcraft, Director of Fine and Performing Arts
Rick Wamer, Program Coordinator

Opening Minds through the Arts uses instrumental music, opera, dance, theater and visual arts to help teach reading, writing, math and science to children in kindergarten through 8th grade. Inspired by exciting, ongoing research into connections between brain development and music, OMA strives to integrate arts education with core curriculum. Each fully implemented OMA school has an Arts Integration Specialist and a team of seven artists who work alongside classroom teachers, adapting each lesson to support teaching of core skills and knowledge. In addition, children learn to play the recorder, violin, a

wind instrument and keyboard with the goals of fostering creative development, improving test scores, encouraging self-expression, igniting love and understanding of the arts, narrowing the gap between less privileged and more privilege students, building community, and supporting the arts. Currently, over 19,000 students and 700 teachers in 44 schools in the Tucson Unified School District are participating in the OMA program working with 53 Teaching Artists.

Sound Learning – Atlanta, Georgia

htpp:// www.atlantasymphony.org/communityandeducation/educationalprograms/soundlearning.aspx

David Myers, Director for the Georgia State University Center for Educational Partnerships in Music

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Georgia State University's Center for Educational Partnerships in Music, Fulton County Schools, and Atlanta Public Schools implemented *Sound Learning*, an innovative, integrated arts education program. 2007-2008 marks the ninth year of the program. Sound Learning enhances core curriculum study and expands learning opportunities through the infusion of music into all subject areas. Sound Learning allows students, teachers, and musicians to explore the connection between music and the general curriculum, using the artist residencies and music curriculum materials developed by the ASO's Education Department. Sound Learning was founded with the belief that arts education has proven vital as a key to enhance intellectual development, physical wellness, and improved academic achievement.

Studio In a School – New York, New York

htpp://www.studioinaschool.org

Thomas Cahill, President and CEO

Studio in a School provides programs to more than 170 schools throughout the five boroughs. Every year, over 90 professional artists devote some 45,000 hours to more than 30,000 pre-k through high school students and around 2,500 teachers. Studio in a School provides children with the invaluable experience and guidance of a professional artist, high quality art materials, in-depth creative experience, and the joy of making art. Their in-depth programs focus exclusively on teaching children how to express their experiences through visual art and the development of imagination, expression and careful observation.

Studio Museum of Harlem, New York, New York

htpp://studiomuseum.org

Sandra Jackson-Dumont, former Director of Education and Public Programs

The Studio Museum in Harlem is the nexus for black artists locally, nationally, and internationally, and for work that has been inspired by black culture. The Expanding the Walls (ETW) at the Studio Museum is designed to expose youth to the James VanDerZee photographic archive housed at the Museum as a way of generating dialogue and art making that explore ideas of community identity, history and culture. The program combines studio and museum visits with artists, curators and educators, offsite exposure visits with community organizations that deepen the students' understanding of the social and cultural history of Harlem, and a rigorous course in 35 mm photography. The program culminates with an exhibition of student and VanDerZee photographs curated by the students themselves.

Teens Rock the Mic (TRTM) of the Juno Collective – Minneapolis, Minnesota

Website no longer available

Melissa Borgmann, co-founder

Teens Rock the Mic began as ensemble of urban poets and youth leaders who traveled to San Francisco for the Youth Speaks Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival in April, 2005. The mission of this program was to impact society by giving voice to those without – through story, experience, and art of spoken word. These young activists and artist strove to raise awareness, promote social justice and uplift the community, the nation and the world. Due to a lack of financial resources to sustain the program, Teens Rock the Mic folded after its final collaborative performance with One Voice Mixed Chorus in June, 2007. However, a number

of its founding teen artists have continued on in their own organizational efforts, as young adult teaching and performing artists, inspiring audiences and classrooms of all ages.

Urban Word – New York, New York

htpp://www.urbanwordnyc.org

Michael Cirelli, Executive Director

Founded in 1999, Urban Word NYC™ (UW) exists to ensure that New York City youth have a safe, supportive, dynamic and challenging community in which to discover their powerful voices – through written and spoken word – and use them to express their views, strengthen self-esteem and engage them in opportunities that address the sociopolitical issues that affect them. UW provides free and uncensored writing and performance opportunities to over 15,000 youth in all five boroughs of New York City. The organization's workshops are designed to develop critical thinking skills, leadership, and to ignite a personal commitment to growth and learning which leads to heightened in-school performance, and a greater interest in pursuing higher education.

Will Power to Youth at Shakespeare Festival/LA – Los Angeles, California

htpp://www.shakespearefestivalla.org/education/will_power_to_youth.php

Ben Donenberg, Producing Artistic Director
Sara Adelman, Managing Director
Chris Anthony, Associate Artistic Director/Director of Youth and Education

Will Power to Youth (WPY) serves young people in the Los Angeles community who do not traditionally have access to theater programs, job training, academic enrichment, or other arts opportunities. 20-30 Los Angeles youth are hired into and get paid to participate in this arts-based educational enrichment program. During each session – 30 hours a week for seven weeks – youth work closely with professional artists and human relations facilitators. Together, they create an adaptation of a Shakespeare play inspired by their personal experiences. WPY is designed to help its participants make the transition into adulthood under their mission to enchant, enrich and build community through professional theatrical traditions accessible to all.

Program/Organization Application

The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education

GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization or Program Name: _____

Contact Person First Name: _____Contact Person Last Name: _____

Contact Email Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Mailing Address Line 1: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Country: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Program or Organization Website/Web Address: _____

Please help us create a profile of your program or organization.

Describe the context in which your program takes place or in which your organization is based. *(Check all that apply)*

_____Out of school: Community Arts Organization

_____School Program (includes programs affiliated with a school and occurring during school hours)

_____Out of school: Museum

_____Out of school: Other Setting

_____Partnership (collaboration between multiple schools/organizations/museums/community art centers).

Who are the collaborators?

What is the age of students participating in your program(s) or organization? *(Check all that apply)*

____5-11 years old (K-5th grade) ____12-14 years old (6th-8th grade) ____15-18 years old (9th-12th grade)

Which art form does your program or organization offer? *(Check all that apply)*

____Dance ____Visual ____Art ____Music ____Theater ____New media (for example, video, sound or web-based technology) ____Other

Describe the scale of your program or organization. *(Check all that apply)*

____Single school or site ____Multiple schools or sites ____Widespread across many schools or sites. How many?

Describe the setting of your program or organization. *(Check all that apply)*

____National ____International ____Rural ____Urban ____Suburban

Describe the community your program or organization serves, including the socio-economic background of your participants.

What kind of funding does your program or organization receive? *(Check all that apply)*

____Public funds (supported through city/state/federal funds) ____Grant funded (supported through foundation or government grants) ____Private donations (private donors or in-kind support) ____Family supported (fee or tuition based) ____Other

Who teaches in your program or organization? (Check all that apply)

____Classroom teachers (of non-art subjects) ____Art specialists ____Teaching artists ____Other

What is the relationship of your program or organization to the school curriculum? (Check all that apply)

____Non-integrated (no relationship to the school curriculum) ____Integrated with school curriculum

Goals and Purposes

What are the goals of your organization/program? How are they related to high quality learning and teaching?

What do you do to identify and achieve high quality arts learning and teaching in your program or organization?

What theories and practices shape your ideas about how to achieve quality?

Assessment

How do you assess the quality of arts learning and teaching in your program or organization?

Challenges

Describe some obstacles or challenges to achieving quality that your organization has faced and how you have addressed them.

If you are not a new program, how do you sustain quality over time and/or across changes (in leadership, funding, size, resources, etc.)?

Interview Protocol

1. What are your big ideas about what counts as high quality teaching in the arts? What are your big ideas about what counts as high quality learning in the arts?

2. Given your ideas about quality in arts teaching and learning, what do you think the focus, or purpose of arts education should be?

3. Given your ideas about quality in arts teaching and learning, What are some of the important controversies around what the focus of arts education should be?

4. How have your ideas about quality in arts teaching and learning evolved? Are there ideas, theories and/or experiences that have strongly influenced you?

5. Are there particular art forms and contexts you have in mind when you are responding to these questions? Do your ideas about quality in arts education differ across art forms and/or contexts?

6. With your ideas about quality arts learning and teaching as a backdrop, what do you think is especially important to keep in mind about assessing arts learning, and assessing arts teaching?

7. What are your thoughts or questions about the relationship between high quality learning and teaching in the arts and high quality learning and teaching in other disciplines?

8. What social, political or cultural factors, if any, do you think it is important to keep in mind when we think about quality in art education?

9. Think for a moment at the level of state or national policy. What kinds of national arts education policies are essential to insure your vision of quality arts education?

10. What do program or local level decision makers need to understand about quality in order to make good decisions about where to focus their attention and resources?

Interview Debriefing Protocol

Name of interviewee ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ Date ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Interviewer ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ Listener/Transcriber ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Headlines?

Highlights?

Themes, puzzles and questions worth returning to:

Striking connections & contrasts – with other interviews, literature, case studies:

Immediate action plans:

APPENDIX E: REFERENCES

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National Coalition for CORE ARTS Standards

National Core Arts Standards:
A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning

This narrative document outlines the philosophy, primary goals, dynamic processes, structures, and outcomes that shape student learning and achievement in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts, as articulated in the National Core Arts Standards. To view the National Core Arts Standards go to www.nationalartsstandards.org.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD
Understanding and Using the Core Arts Standards

The arts have always served as the distinctive vehicle for discovering who we are. Providing ways of thinking as disciplined as science or math and as disparate as philosophy or literature, the arts are used by and have shaped every culture and individual on earth. They continue to infuse our lives on nearly all levels—generating a significant part of the creative and intellectual capital that drives our economy. The arts inform our lives with meaning every time we experience the joy of a well-remembered song, experience the flash of inspiration that comes with immersing ourselves in an artist's sculpture, enjoying a sublime dance, learning from an exciting animation, or being moved by a captivating play.

The fact that the arts provide important touchstones confirms their value to the development of every human being. Nurturing our children, then, necessarily means that we must provide all of them—not just those identified as "talented"—with a well-rounded education that includes the arts. By doing so, we are fulfilling the college and career readiness needs of our students, laying the foundations for the success of our schools and, ultimately, the success of our nation.

The central purposes of education standards are to identify the learning that we want for all of our students and to drive improvement in the system that delivers that learning. Standards, therefore, should embody the key concepts, processes and traditions of study in each subject area, and articulate the aspirations of those invested in our schools—students, teachers, administrators, and the community at large. To realize that end goal, these new, voluntary National Core Arts Standards are framed by a definition of artistic literacy that includes philosophical foundations and lifelong goals, artistic processes and creative practices, anchor and performance standards that students should attain, and model cornerstone assessments by which they can be measured. The connective threads of this conceptual framework are designed to be understood by all stakeholders and, ultimately, to ensure success for both educators and students in the real world of the school.

The framework is being developed in the complex, evolving context of local, state, and national educational practice and public policy. Therefore, the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) expects that this guiding document will evolve as the standards are brought to completion. This conceptual framework is intended to serve as an entry point into the further refinement of the standards through feedback and discussion with a broad range of stakeholders.

In addition, while extensive research has been done in support of the standards revision (ranging from international standards and to alignment to the Common Core Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts), the research phase of the work is far from complete. To further refine and develop this new generation of arts standards, NCCAS is committed to seeking out and gathering input from a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in arts education. Teachers, students, parents, and decision makers all have a stake in the work of creating coherent standards that will shape policy and classroom practice, helping arts education to solidify its contributions to the students of America.

The Context for Arts Education
Arts education has had a formal place in American schools at least since the early1800s. The unique and essential contributions of the arts to every child's growth and development were as clear to Americans then as they are to us today. Unfortunately, children's access to arts education as part of their core education continues to be uneven across our nation's nearly 14,000 school districts. Some local education agencies currently offer a full, balanced education that includes rich and varied arts opportunities for their students. However, too many schools have succumbed to funding challenges or embraced a narrow focus on tested subjects, resulting in minimal, if any, arts experiences for the children they serve.

Narrow curricula and wide variances in the breadth of subject areas offered are incompatible with the ideal of a comprehensive public education. The underlying challenge seems to be how we can organize concepts, manage systems, and leverage resources to provide a better education for every child. The original 1964 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was designed to address problems of educational equity, particularly for high-poverty students. Through its most recent revision, the 2001 act known as *No Child Left Behind*, ESEA continues to be a driving force in education at the federal and consequently at the state and local levels.

The status of arts education in federal law (and, more importantly, in American schools) has also evolved over time. While arts education has been subject to less data-gathering than subjects such as mathematics and English language arts, we do know enough to present a relatively accurate picture of the status of arts education in today's schools. The Department of Education's Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) report, *Arts Education In Public Elementary and Secondary Schools 1999-2000 and 2009-10*, affirmed that there is a real and robust infrastructure of arts education in American schools. However, it also revealed extreme inequities in students' access to arts education, indicating that arts education is not universally available, is too often limited to music and art, and is inconsistent across grade levels. [1]

These inequities in learning opportunity have, not surprisingly, resulted in lackluster achievement, as evidenced in student scores on the 2008 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) in music and visual arts. (NAEP did not test theatre and dance students, nor were the media arts a part of the study.)

- [1] At the elementary level, 94% of our schools offer music, 83% offer visual arts. Fewer schools at this level offer dance or theatre: 3% included dance and 4% offered theatre.
- At the elementary level (at least three times per week) is offered in the following percentages of schools: 15% for music, 8 percent for visual arts. The percentages for dance and theatre were not measured.
- At the elementary level, 88% of classroom teachers include arts as part of their ongoing instruction
- At the eighth grade level, 57% of eighth graders attend schools offering a credible level of instruction in music; the figure for visual arts is 47%, while data for dance and theatre were not collected.
- At the eighth grade level, there are differences (many of which are statistically significant) in achievement levels between some of the diverse ethnic, economic and geographic groups served by American schools. That is, minorities, poorer children, and urban schools seem to achieve less in the arts.
- Some arts programs are provided on a co-curricular (having an academic and extra-curricular component) or extra-curricular basis. At the middle and secondary levels, for example, 82% of queried theatre educators classified their programs as co-curricular, and 13% said that their programs were strictly extra-curricular.
- At the secondary level, 91% of our schools offer music, 89% offer visual arts, 12% offer dance, and 45% offer theatre.
- Americans' reports of lifetime learning in the arts (as children or as adults) show that about one-third of our citizens have taken lessons or classes in music; about 17% have done so in visual arts, about 12 percent in dance, and about six percent in theatre. These percentages have been declining at least for the past three decades.

Education in the United States
Education in the United States is primarily provided by the public sector, with control and funding coming from state, local, and federal agencies. Public education is universally available, but policies regarding school curricula, funding, teaching, and employment are established by locally elected policy-makers having jurisdiction over school districts, who must also comply with numerous directives from state legislatures. The quality and availability of education in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts vary widely, particularly in locales where arts education is not compulsory. Further, the educational achievement gap in the U.S. between Black/Hispanic students and White/Asian Pacific Islander students, as well as urban/suburban schools, also applies to equity and access in arts education. Federal law does require that *all* schools that receive federal funding must provide services to meet the individual needs of students with special needs or disabilities and provide access to the general curriculum, which may include arts instruction. [2]

In most American schools today, students begin their formal education in kindergarten by age five and advance in age-based cohort groups through twelfth grade. While educational requirements vary state to state, the curriculum in public elementary education is typically determined by individual school districts that select curriculum and classroom resources linked to a state's learning standards and benchmarks for a given grade level. Students in most high schools (grades 9-12) take a broad variety of classes without special emphasis in any particular subject, with the exception of students enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs or themed schools. Students are required to take a certain minimum number of courses in mandatory subjects for high school graduation, and may elect additional courses to round out their requirements toward graduation. States set graduation requirements for students, and individual schools must provide the opportunity for students to meet or exceed the minimum. High school students receive credits for courses as determined by local policies. The National Core Arts Standards are designed to encourage excellence within this educational structure. The arts standards also acknowledge the value of assessment to evaluate curriculum, instruction, student achievement, and teacher effectiveness—most often (and uniquely) through performance or portfolio assessments.

The new voluntary arts standards are designed to guide the delivery of arts education in the classroom with new ways of thinking, learning, and creating. The standards also inform policy-makers about implementation of arts programs for the traditional and emerging models and structures of education. As with other subject areas, a commitment to quality education, equitable opportunities, and comprehensive expectations is embedded within the new arts standards.

Arts standards in America
The standards movement emerged with the 1994 passage of the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. Title II of that act established a National Education Standards and Improvement Council, which was charged with finding appropriate organizations to write standards. There were three goals for the standards development process: (1) to ensure that the standards reflect the best ideas in education, both in the United States and internationally; (2) to ensure that they reflected the best knowledge about teaching and

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[2] The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.

learning, and (3) to ensure that they had been developed through a broad-based, open process. The standards themselves were to define what students should "know and be able to do" to the end that "all students learn to use their minds well, so that they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy."

While the arts were not initially included as a core content area in *Goals 2000,* they did eventually become part of the legislation and were the first academic subject to successfully write standards under that law (though they were preceded by and profited from standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics). Following the general idea of developing "voluntary" standards for "what students should know and be able to do," and in anticipation of the passage of the act, a consortium of organizations representing teachers of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts approached the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1992 for a grant to move forward in this area.

The group completed its work and released the *National Standards for Arts Education* in 1994, the same year the Goals 2000 Act was enacted. The 1994 standards established achievement expectations for students at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade. The introduction to the standards set out the following purposes for that document:

> Standards for arts education are important for two fundamental reasons. First, they help define what a good education in the arts should provide: a thorough grounding in a basic body of knowledge and the skills required both to make sense and to make use of each of the arts discipline—including the intellectual tools to make qualitative judgments about artistic products and expression. Second, when states and school districts adopt the standards, they are taking a stand for rigor, informed by a clear intent. A set of standards for arts education says, in effect, "An education in the arts means that students should know what is spelled out here, reach specified levels of attainment, and do both at defined points in their education."

Those standards, accepted by then-Secretary of Education Richard Riley, were highly influential. It is fair to say that they have helped shape curricula across the United States, through adoption of state standards, in the development of scope-and-sequence documents at the local education agency level, and by challenging individual arts educators to reflect on their practices.

International arts standards
As a part of the effort to improve American standards for arts education, NCCAS studied the standards that have been established in other nations. A 2011 study by the College Board, an NCCAS leadership team member, found that arts standards exist in nations throughout the world. International arts standards seem to share certain universal assumptions about the primary educational goals to be attained. While the language used in different nations may vary, most standards for arts education seem to be grouped in three broad areas:
- Generating/Problem solving; this corresponds to the American formulation of "Creating."
- Expressing/Realizing; this corresponds to the American usage of "Performing."
- Responding/Appreciating; this corresponds to the American "Responding."

Further, both the history of standards in the United States and comparisons with our international colleagues confirm that a complete education system must include significant and well-designed programs in the arts and that well-designed standards play an essential role in delivering quality curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Standards in the United States have never been a monolithic and prescriptive set of governing rules for curriculum or teaching methods. Rather, the nation's current standards for arts education have served as an important guide to the development of curricula in all fifty states and in the District of Columbia. It is also important to point out that standards are "living" documents, a vision that was articulated in the introduction to the 1994 standards document:

> As we look ahead, it is important to keep two things in mind: To the degree that students are successful in achieving them, the standards will have to be raised to encourage higher expectations. At the same time, even though the substance of each of the arts discipline will remain basically constant, the changes created by technology, new cultural trends, and educational advances will necessitate changes in the standards as well.

Indeed, many states have gone through one or more revisions of their own standards in the years since the appearance of the first edition of the national standards. Clearly, standards in the arts have played and continue to play an important role in improving and supporting education for America's students. But the standards must be kept fresh if they are to remain relevant and influential.

The standards process today
The voluntary National Core Arts Standards being developed with this framework are a re-imagining of the 1994 *National Standards for Arts Education,* and more recently, the *2005 Standards for Learning and Teaching Dance in the Arts*. These standards are being crafted to guide arts curriculum, instruction, and assessment in America's schools. Toward that end, they emphasize the process-oriented nature of the arts and arts learning that guide the continuous and systematic operations of instructional improvement by:
- Defining artistic literacy through a set of overarching Philosophical Foundations and Lifelong Goals that clarify long-term expectations for arts learning.
- Placing Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards at the forefront of the work.
- Identifying Creative Practices as the bridge for the application of the Artistic Processes across all learning.
- Specifying Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions that provide conceptual throughlines and articulate value and meaning within and across the arts discipline.
- Providing Model Cornerstone Assessments of student learning aligned to the Artistic Processes.

The National Core Arts Standards will be delivered to the field through a web-based platform, designed to allow flexible sorting and organizing to meet individual teacher and local district needs. The web-based platform will allow for examples of student work to be linked directly to each of the standards. Over time, as teachers implement the standards and capture student work based on the model cornerstone assessments, this repository of representative student work near standard, at standard, and above standard will grow.

The format and design of this new set of standards will reposition the way in which the field interacts with standards and assessments. No longer will we talk about standards as lists of what students should know and be able to do. Rather, we will talk about standards as measurable and attainable learning events based on artistic goals.

A backwards design approach was selected as a clear and cogent model for building standards. The Understanding by Design (UbD) Framework®, co-created by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins, assists educators in first identifying important outcomes of learning, then determining acceptable evidence of attainment, and finally designing the best path for achieving those desired results. These standards have been developed using the UbD framework as a major design driver. Jay McTighe, along with visual arts educator Daisy McTighe, provided early guidance to standards writing chairs as well as additional assistance on model cornerstone assessments.

These standards are also developed with the full knowledge of current trends in the field of public education, including— notably—the Common Core State Standards. Educators familiar with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, in particular, will find similarities in structure that should aid in the smooth implementation of the National Core Arts Standards. Simultaneously, those same educators will find differences in content and presentation that stem from the unique nature and traditions of each art form. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards is not associated with the Common Core State Standards project, although it did review CCSS concepts and design.

The National Core Arts Standards are built around evidence—not just evidence of student learning, but also research-based discoveries that helped writers and reviewers determine best-practice methods for the presentation of the standards as well as their content. In addition to research compiled by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) member organizations, the standards writers have benefited from research efforts of the College Board.[3] (The College Board's research on behalf of NCCAS is detailed in the Research-based Discoveries section of this document.) Additional valuable research on arts education may be found in sources including ArtsEdSearch.

The structure of the new arts standards suggests that they are learning events, progressing across grades and levels to create a sequential, standards-based approach to arts education. However, they also assume that learning does not happen out of context. Quality learning requires opportunity-to-learn conditions that create a rigorous and supportive learning environment. Standards are only one building block of quality arts education.

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[3] Under the leadership of Nancy Rubino, Senior Director, Office of Academic Initiatives, AP and College Readiness, the College Board, and her team of researchers, led by Amy Charleroy.

SECTION I: The National Core Arts Standards

This section communicates the purpose and relationship of the major elements of the new arts standards: Philosophical Foundations/Lifelong Goals, Artistic Processes, Anchor Standards, and Performance Standards. Additionally, NCCAS-developed instructional support resources available on the website are explained. These include: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, Process Components, and Model Cornerstone Assessments. All of these elements are displayed visually in the Standards Matrix to illustrate their role in the development of knowledge and skills for the discipline studied, as well as their overarching function of nurturing the ultimate goal of artistic literacy.

The National Core Arts Standards Matrix

The Standards Matrix provides a unified view of the Standards for the five arts disciplines. Helping educators throughout the nation work toward common ends by recommending worthy goals for students as they progress – from grade to grade, instructor to instructor, school to school, or community to community – is one of the key reasons for providing arts standards. Rather than offering simply a compilation of individual skills and knowledge, the National Core Arts Standards integrate the processes, skills and knowledge, sample assessments, and criteria for successful learning into a single organized system that spans PreK-12 and is aligned to the philosophical foundations and lifelong goals. Rooted in backward design, this outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning in the arts emanates from four artistic processes, eleven anchor standards, and PK-12 performance standards articulated by each of the five arts disciplines.

Instructional support resources provide greater insight into the meaning of the standards; provide instructional guidance; and show how student learning can be measured through rich performance tasks. The instructional support resources include enduring understandings, essential questions, process components, glossaries, and model cornerstone assessments with key traits. Some of these support resources are emphasized differently among the arts disciplines. To accommodate these nuances, web-based viewing and reporting options will vary slightly across arts disciplines.

There are numerous advantages of a web-based presentation of standards, including the ability to add content, enhance the site over time, and link to NCCAS organizational member sites for additional resources and professional development opportunities. The site will also allow users to identify how 21st Century skills align to the new standards.

While the standards are rooted in an outcomes-based approach, they are also built on a balance between the existing structure of American schools and an attainable vision of what that structure could and should be. Thus, performance standards for students up to grade 8 are listed grade-by-grade, in the full knowledge that some schools do not provide instruction in some art forms in certain grades within that span. Notwithstanding this fact, performance standards appear at grade level because that is the typical working structure of our nation's PK-8 schools, and the standards are meant as a guide to articulating the place of the arts in those schools. Individual districts will have to work through implementation of these standards within current allocations of time and resources even as they work toward the full availability of the arts for all students.

Because students' selection of arts courses can occur at any grade, the new high school standards are presented in three levels of proficiency rather than by grade. The three levels—Proficient, Accomplished, and Advanced—are flexible enough to accommodate

varying degrees of achievement by students during high school, including those who build on their PreK-8 foundation by pursuing deeper engagement in one arts discipline, as well as those who explore a wide range of artistic pursuits and experiences (further defined on page 17).

The standards matrix is a visual aid that shows the arrangement of and relationship among the elements of the National Core Arts Standards. Altogether, these elements will assist local education agencies in writing curriculum. The elements include sample cornerstone assessments – supplied for grades 2, 5, and 8, and for each high school proficiency level – that illustrate how student learning can be assessed through rich performance tasks with clearly identified criteria. These tasks are intended to serve as models to guide the development of local assessments and as such, will eventually be benchmarked with student work and available on the NCCAS website.

ARTISTIC LITERACY						
Philosophical Foundation		← →		Lifelong Goals		
Artistic Processes	Anchor Standards	Pre K—grade 8 Discipline-specific Performance Standards (grade by grade)	HS Performance Standards			
			Proficient	Accomplished	Advanced	
Creating	3 Common Anchor Standards					
Performing (Dance, Music, Theatre) Presenting (Visual Arts) Producing (Media Arts)	3 Common Anchor Standards					
Responding	3 Common Anchor Standards					
Connecting	2 Common Anchor Standards					

The above chart is a representational graphic only. To see the full grid, refer to the [Standards Matrix](#) *located on NCCAS website. Instructional resources and their relationship to the standards are shown in the full matrix layout.*

Philosophical foundations and lifelong goals
The philosophical foundations and lifelong goals establish the basis for the new standards and illuminate artistic literacy by expressing the overarching common values and expectations for learning in arts education across the five arts disciplines (see page 17for an in-depth explanation of artistic literacy).

Philosophical Foundation	Lifelong Goals
The Arts as Communication	
In today's multimedia society, the arts are the media, and therefore provide powerful and essential means of communication. The arts provide unique symbol systems and metaphors that convey and inform life experience (i.e., the arts are ways of knowing).	Artistically literate citizens use a variety of artistic media, symbols and metaphors to independently create and perform work that expresses and communicates their own ideas, and are able to respond by analyzing and interpreting the artistic communications of others.
The Arts as Creative Personal Realization	
Participation in each of the arts as creators, performers, and audience members enables individuals to discover and develop their own creative capacity, thereby providing a source of lifelong satisfaction.	Artistically literate citizens find at least one arts discipline in which they develop sufficient competence to continue active involvement in creating, performing, and responding to art as an adult.
The Arts as Culture, History, and Connectors	
Throughout history the arts have provided essential means for individuals and communities to express their ideas, experiences, feelings, and deepest beliefs. Each discipline shares common goals, but approaches them through distinct media and techniques. Understanding artwork provides insights into individuals' own and others' cultures and societies, while also providing opportunities to access, express, and integrate meaning across a variety of content areas.	Artistically literate citizens know and understand artwork from varied historical periods and cultures, and actively seek and appreciate diverse forms and genres of artwork of enduring quality/significance. They also seek to understand relationships among the arts, and cultivate habits of searching for and identifying patterns, relationships between the arts and other knowledge.
Arts as Means to Wellbeing	
Participation in the arts as creators, performers, and audience members (responders) enhances mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.	Artistically literate citizens find joy, inspiration, peace, intellectual stimulation, meaning, and other life-enhancing qualities through participation in all of the arts.
The Arts as Community Engagement	
The arts provide means for individuals to collaborate and connect with others in an enjoyable inclusive environment as they create, prepare, and share artwork that bring communities together.	Artistically literate citizens seek artistic experience and support the arts in their local, state, national, and global communities.

Artistic processes The Artistic Processes are the cognitive and physical actions by which arts learning and making are realized. Inspired by the 1997 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) Arts Education Assessment Framework, the National Core Arts Standards are based on the artistic processes of Creating; Performing/ Producing/Presenting; Responding; and Connecting. Each of the arts disciplines incorporates these processes in some manner. These processes define and organize the link between the art and the learner.

The identification of these Artistic Processes was informed by two studies conducted by the College Board: A Review of Selected State Arts Standards and International Arts Education Standards: A Survey of the Arts Education Standards and Practices of Fifteen Countries and Regions. The former reviewed a series of recently revised arts education standards from states and large districts nationwide, noting trends in the structure and organization of these standards, as well as finding commonalities among their guiding philosophies. The researchers found that the NAEP framework was a significant source of influence in many recent standards revisions. The framework of creating, performing, and responding became a foundational element for the structure and content of the standards of several states: Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Washington, among others. In the other study, College Board researchers reviewed the recently created standards of 15 countries worldwide. In 14 of the studied countries, the skills of creating, performing, and responding were found to form the core of these international examples as well, though the terminology varied.

Included in the NAEP framework were definitions for creating, performing, and responding. The writing groups of the National Core Arts Standards have broadened the NAEP definitions and in some cases made them discipline-centric. Though the NCCAS definitions are shorter, the use of verbs suggests that the arts operate in an active "hands-on" and "minds-on" capacity.

CREATE (NAEP definition)	CREATING (NCCAS definition)
Creating refers to generating original art.	Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

PERFORM (NAEP definition)	PERFORMING/PRODUCING PRESENTING (NCCAS definition)
Performing/interpreting means performing an existing work, a process that calls upon the interpretive or re-creative skills of the student.	Performing (dance, music, theatre): Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation.
	Presenting (visual arts): Interpreting and sharing artistic work.
	Producing (media arts): Realizing and presenting artistic ideas and work.
Note: The various arts disciplines have chosen different words to represent this artistic process; however, they are clustered here as essentially parallel.	

RESPOND (NAEP definition)	RESPONDING (NCCAS definition)
Responding varies from that of an audience member to the interactive response between a student and a particular medium.	Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning .

NAEP definition	CONNECTING (NCCAS definition)
N/A	Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

The current set of arts standards emerge from the Artistic Processes of Creating, Performing/Presenting/Producing, Responding, and Connecting. Each artistic process branches into two or three anchor standards. The performance standards, which describe student learning in each of the specific arts disciplines, align with anchor standards. Collectively, the design reflects a cohesive and aligned system that allows for commonality across the disciplines and specificity within each discipline, therefore establishing the appropriate level of breadth and depth required for national standards. The model below represents a portion of the full design.
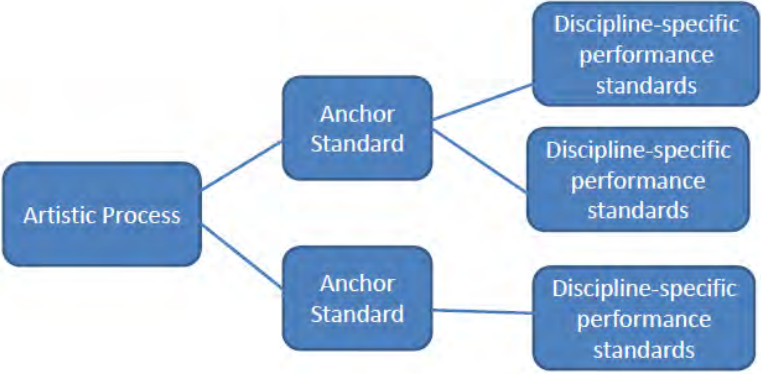
Anchor standards
Anchor standards describe the general knowledge and skill that teachers expect students to demonstrate throughout their education in the arts. These anchor standards are parallel across arts disciplines and grade levels and serve as the tangible educational expression of artistic literacy.

National Core Arts Standards			
Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards			
Artistic Processes			
Creating Definition: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.	**Performing/Presenting/ Producing** Definitions: **Performing:** Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation. **Presenting**: Interpreting and sharing artistic work. **Producing**: Realizing and presenting artistic ideas and work.	**Responding** Definition: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.	**Connecting** Definition: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.
Anchor Standards			
Students will: 1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. 2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. 3. Refine and complete artistic work.	Students will: 4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. 5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. 6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.	Students will: 7. Perceive and analyze artistic work. 8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. 9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.	Students will: 10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. 11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Performance standards

Performance standards are discipline-specific (dance, media arts, music, visual arts, theatre), grade-by-grade articulations of student achievement in the arts PK-8 and at three proficiency levels in high school (proficient, accomplished and advanced). As such, the performance standards translate the anchor standards into specific, measurable learning goals.

Instructional resources

Completing the design features of the model, instructional resources are provided to support teachers as they build understanding about the new standards and consider multiple ways to implement the standards in their classrooms. The instructional resources include: enduring understandings and essential questions; process components; glossaries; and model cornerstone assessment with key traits. Instructional resources receive different emphasis based on various approaches to teaching and learning in individual disciplines. The web application of each discipline's resources reflects these differences.

Enduring understandings and essential questions
The National Core Arts Standards have been written using enduring understandings and essential questions to help both educators and students organize the information, skills and experiences within artistic processes. Enduring understandings and essential questions focus on what are often called "big ideas." Current brain research suggests that, by organizing information (in the arts and other subjects) into a conceptual framework, greater "transfer" is facilitated—a key aspect of planning and delivering big ideas in curricula. Further, in *How People Learn* (National Research Council, 2000), one of the key factors which distinguishes "expert" learners from "novices" is the ability to organize or cluster thinking around big ideas. This process allows more efficient retrieval of prior knowledge, as well as improved "mental filing" of new information. Therefore, teachers who are interested in helping their students understand must be intentional about helping students construct their own mental "storage and retrieval" systems, and teachers must seek to learn about and implement meta-cognitive strategies that students can use to facilitate their meaning-making or understanding.

Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins explain in their seminal text, *Understanding by Design* (ASCD, 2005), that enduring understandings refer to the big ideas or important understandings "that we want students to 'get inside of' and retain after they've forgotten many of the details. Put differently… [the big ideas and understandings] implicitly answer the question, Why is this topic worth studying?"

Enduring understandings are statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom. They synthesize what students should come to understand as a result of studying a particular content area. Moreover, they articulate what students should value about the content area over the course of their lifetimes. Enduring understandings should also enable students to make connections to other disciplines beyond the arts. A true grasp of an enduring understanding mastered through a variety of activities is demonstrated by the student's ability to explain, interpret, analyze, apply and evaluate its core elements.

In their book, Wiggins and McTighe define essential questions as "questions that are not answerable with finality in a brief sentence…." Their aim is to "stimulate thought, to provoke inquiry, and to spark more questions—including thoughtful student questions—not just pat answers…instead of thinking of content as something to be covered, consider knowledge and skill as the means of addressing questions central to understanding key issues in your subject." Essential questions also guide students as they uncover enduring understandings. Wiggins and McTighe assert that essential questions are those that encourage, hint at, even *demand* transfer beyond the particular topic in which students first encounter them, and therefore, should recur over the years to promote conceptual connections and curriculum coherence.

Reflecting differences in traditions and instructional practices among the arts, the specific enduring understandings and essential questions addressed by their standards also vary somewhat. For example, one enduring understanding in the music standards for the artistic process of Creating is "The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians' work emerge from a variety of sources." This understanding is suggested, in slightly different language, within other arts disciplines as well. An enduring understanding in the visual arts standards for the artistic process of Responding is "People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism." Again, this is an idea that

appears, with modest variation in wording but with very similar meaning, in the other arts. An enduring understanding for theatre in the artistic process of Performing is "Theatre artists share and present stories, ideas, and envisioned worlds to explore the human experience." This understanding is evident in every other discipline. The same sort of fundamental ideas and core processes appear in the enduring understandings of dance, and media arts as well. For dance, in the artistic process of Connecting: "As dance is experienced, all personal experiences, knowledge, and contexts are integrated and synthesized to interpret meaning." In media arts, for Producing: "Media artists integrate various forms and contents to develop complex, unified artworks."

Model cornerstone assessments
In education, what is chosen for assessment signals what is valued. In other words, the evidence that is collected tells students what is most important for them to learn. What is not assessed is likely to be regarded as unimportant. Sample model cornerstone assessments are provided within the standards to illustrate the type of evidence needed to show attainment of desired learning. This idea is key to backward design: the assessments bring the standards to life by illustrating the demonstrations of desired learning and the criteria by which student performances should be judged. Standards-based curriculum and associated instruction can then be designed "backward" from key assessments that reflect the desired outcomes.

Jay McTighe (2011), describing the characteristics of cornerstone assessments, wrote "They:
- are *curriculum embedded* (as opposed to externally imposed);
- *recur over the grades*, becoming increasingly sophisticated over time;
- establish *authentic contexts* for performance;
- assess *understanding* and *transfer* via genuine performance;
- *integrate 21st century skills* (e.g., critical thinking, technology use, teamwork) with subject area content;
- evaluate performance with established *rubrics*;
- engage students in *meaningful learning* while encouraging the best teaching;
- provide content for a student's portfolio (so that they graduate with a *resume of demonstrated accomplishments* rather than simply a transcript of courses taken).

Unlike externally-developed standardized tests that interrupt instruction occasionally, cornerstone assessments are curriculum-embedded. Indeed, the term cornerstone is meant to suggest that just as a cornerstone anchors a building, these assessments should anchor the curriculum around the most important performances that students should be able to do (on their own) with acquired content knowledge and skills. They are intended to engage students in applying knowledge and skills in authentic and relevant contexts. They call for higher-order thinking (e.g., evaluation) and habits of mind (e.g., persistence) in order to achieve successful results. Their authenticity and complexity is what distinguishes them from the de-contextualized, selected-response items found on many tests.

Cornerstone tasks serve as more than just a means of gathering assessment evidence. These tasks are, by design, "worth teaching to" because they embody valuable learning goals and worthy accomplishments. Accordingly, they should be presented at the *beginning* of a course or a unit of instruction to serve as meaningful and concrete learning targets for students. Such assessment transparency is needed if standards are going to be met. Students must know the tasks to be mastered well in advance, and have continued opportunities to work toward their accomplishment.

The illustrative cornerstone assessments included in the standards reflect genuine and recurring performances that become increasingly sophisticated across the grades. Just as a keel protects boats from aimless drift, these tasks are designed to prevent "curriculum drift" by helping educators and learners always keep the ends—lifelong goals—in mind.

For these reasons, cornerstone assessments are included in the National Core Arts Standards project. The standards are built with the expectation that schools or districts will value the understanding and transfer of knowledge and skills that will come with a standards-based curriculum in the arts and therefore, acknowledge that they are important curricular goals. Moreover, NCCAS hopes that the inclusion of cornerstone assessments in this project will focus the great majority of classroom- and district-level assessments around rich performance tasks that demand transfer. These assessments also provide the basis for collecting the benchmark student work that illustrates the nature and quality of student achievement envisioned in the standards. This paradigm shift in measuring student learning in the arts will offer relevant and reliable evidence of what students truly understand and know how to do, for it is only when students are able to apply their learning thoughtfully and flexibly to a new situation that true understanding of the content is demonstrated.

Integral to each model cornerstone assessment are key traits. Key traits describe the criteria or "look-for's" used to build evaluation tools for open-ended performance tasks. The lists of key traits included in these example performance tasks disclose for students and teachers what skills and cognitive demands are being asked for in the task.

Process components
Process components are the actions artists carry out as they complete each artistic process. Students' ability to carry out these operational verbs empowers them to work through the artistic process independently. The process components played a key role in generating enduring understandings and performance standards, and serve as the action verbs that collectively build toward the artistic processes. Process components and their definitions are presented among supplemental resources. In the final presentation of standards individual arts disciplines have placed differing levels of emphasis on the process components. Music standards, in particular, place process components in a central role. Visual arts standards, on the other hand, place greater emphasis on enduring understandings and essential questions.

SECTION II: Establishing Principles and Informing the Work

> **Foundations of Artistic Literacy**
> *Artistic literacy is the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts. Fluency in the language(s) of the arts is the ability to create, perform/produce/present, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms that are unique to the arts. It is embodied in specific philosophical foundations and lifelong goals that enable an artistically literate person to transfer arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts.*

In developing these standards, NCCAS has provided a structure within which educators can give all children key arts experiences. Through creative practices, these experiences will help them understand what it means to be artistically literate, and how that literacy can enrich their education and lives with 21st century skills developed through the arts.

What it means to be artistically literate

While individuals can learn *about* dance, media, music, theatre, and visual arts through reading print texts, artistic *literacy* requires that they engage in artistic creation processes directly through the use of appropriate materials (such as charcoal or paint or clay, musical instruments and scores, digital and mechanical apparatuses, light boards, and the actual human body) and in appropriate spaces (concert halls, stages, dance rehearsal spaces, arts studios and computer labs). For authentic practice to occur in arts classrooms, teachers and students must participate fully and jointly in activities where they can exercise the creative practices of imagine, investigate, construct, and reflect as unique beings committed to giving meaning to their experiences. In our increasingly multi-media age, where information is communicated less through numeracy and the written word, these meta-cognitive activities are critical to student learning and achievement across the arts and other academic disciplines.

Throughout history the arts have provided essential means for individuals and communities to generate experiences, construct knowledge, and express their ideas, feelings, and beliefs. Each arts discipline shares common goals, but approaches them through distinct media, practices, and techniques. Due to the highly process-oriented and reflective nature of arts making, arts education naturally encourages creative thinking, logical reasoning, and meta-cognition. Active engagement in the artistic process allows individuals to develop and realize their creative potential(s).

In addition to—indeed, as a result of—students' creating and performing, careful study of their own and others' art involves them in exploring and making sense of the broad human condition across time and cultures.

Arts literacy also fosters connections among the arts and between the arts and other disciplines, thereby providing opportunities to access, develop, express, and integrate meaning across a variety of content areas. Indeed, an arts-literate individual recognizes the value of the arts as a place of free expression and the importance of observing and participating in the social, political, spiritual, financial, and aesthetic aspects of their communities (both local and global, in person and virtually) and works to introduce the arts into those settings.

[Recent research on arts education](#) as it relates to students' social, emotional, and cognitive developmental needs indicates that arts experiences are consistently found to give students tools to make sense of their world and make connections between disparate ideas, while also making connections between themselves and others. Researchers found that the social and emotional benefits of arts education exist for students at all grades and levels.

An artistically literate person understands that each arts discipline employs unique sign and symbol systems to make and express meaning. For example, while a theatre artist or a dancer might primarily be concerned with the ways that dancers and actors interact with each other, spaces and materials, a musician might consider the gestures that convey meaning from a conductor to members of an orchestra or choir as signs that must be interpreted accurately in order for an ensemble to work together. Visual artists must understand the nuances of line, color, texture, and form to successfully create and communicate. Conversely media artists must understand the languages of analogue and digital media if they want to determine appropriate methods of integrating technologies for the purpose of artistic expression. Arts literacy therefore requires an acknowledgement that each arts discipline has its own language, which is informed by its history and common practices, and that learning these languages requires in-depth immersion and training.

The arts provide means for individuals to collaborate and connect with others in an inclusive environment as they create, prepare, and share artwork that bring communities together. Additionally, an artistically literate person must have the capacity to transfer arts knowledge and understandings into a variety of settings, both in and outside of school. For example, within a school setting, theatre students might use their training in acting to create persuasive presentations for a history, science, or math class. Conversely, media arts students may apply their expertise in animation to create a series of public service announcements for a local cable television channel.

The Common Core Standards for English Language Arts acknowledge such connections by including numerous arts references in the text of the standards, including recommendations for students to read works of drama, analyze and interpret images and illustrations, compare the same work in different media, and complement written works with graphic and multimedia components.

The National Core Arts Standards' philosophical foundations and lifelong goals establish a definition of artistic literacy that clarifies how students can be involved in the arts beyond the high school level, and how that arts involvement contributes to college, career, and lifelong learning. To that end, the College Board researchers conducted a [survey of college arts instructors and department heads](#) to determine what students are commonly expected to know, understand, and be able to do in the arts beyond high school. The most common responses indicated that at this level students are expected to "develop functional competence in manipulating the basic elements, principles, and vocabulary" of dance, media arts, music, theatre, and/or visual art, but further responses noted that the opportunity to refine personal work in response to feedback is significant as well. This outcome implies that arts study and therefore, artistic literacy, even among non-arts majors, is not limited to arts history and appreciation courses, but should include art-making experiences that can lead to a satisfying lifetime of active and creative practices.

Arts Success and Achievement through Creative Practices
Success and achievement in the arts demands engagement in the four fundamental creative practices of imagination, investigation, construction, and reflection in multiple contexts. These meta-cognitive activities nurture the effective work habits of curiosity, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication, and collaboration, each of which transfers to the many diverse aspects of learning and life in the 21st century.

The role of creative practices

The fundamental creative practices of imagination, investigation, construction, and reflection, which are essential in the arts but equally important for science and mathematics learning, are cognitive processes by which students not only learn within an individual discipline but also transfer their knowledge, skill, and habits to other contexts and settings. Creative practices are essential for teaching and learning the arts, and are therefore included in this document to help arts teachers identify methods to implement the core arts standards.

In the context of the National Core Arts Standards, the creative practices are fundamental for the Creating process, and also contribute to other processes across all five disciplines. The arts, both in academic and professional environments, are steeped in process and involve the interplay of artistic skills, individual voice, and the unexpected. Creativity, in particular, is given greater emphasis in the arts than in other academic disciplines. Arts teaching therefore requires a learning environment in which students are encouraged to imagine, investigate, construct, and reflect.

One effective classroom approach to elicit creative process (which is common in the arts and supported by Understanding by Design) is to encourage open-ended responses by asking essential questions and providing lessons that allow for more than one solution. While providing engaging materials and access to technology can support creativity, they do not ensure that it occurs. Arts education requires students to engage in higher-order thinking skills inclusive of the creative practices. Indeed, the arts' natural fusion of logical, analytical thought and playful unexpectedness provides students with extraordinary opportunities to exercise their creativity through the artistic processes.

A student engaged in creative practices:
- *Imagines* a mental image or concept.
- *Investigates* and studies through exploration or examination.
- *Constructs* a product by combining or arranging a series of elements.
- *Reflects* and thinks deeply about his or her work.

Creative practices:
- Evoke deep, meaningful engagement in the arts.
- Can be fluid, though there is purpose and meaning to the order in which they occur.
- Vary from person to person, project to project, and moment to moment.
- Require intense cognition that can be developed through arts engagement.

Based on the cognitive rigor of the creative practices, the College Board undertook a study to research areas of alignment between these creative practices and the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. The findings – presented in [A Review of Connections between the Common Core Standards and the National Core Arts Standards Framework](#) – indicated that the creative practices of investigation and reflection are connected to all ten of the Anchor Standards for Reading, and all four skills—imagination, investigation, construction, and reflection—were strongly represented in the Anchor Standards for Writing. Additionally, all four creative practices were found to be aligned with each of the Standards for Mathematical Practice.

Contextual awareness

Contextual awareness in arts learning arises as an indirect result and appreciation of art making. Through arts teaching, students view, make, and discuss art works, and come to realize that the arts exist not in isolation, but within the multiple dimensions of time, space, culture, and history. These intrinsic aspects of art making informs students' relationship with art and how such experiences can influence their daily life. For example, contextual awareness in the arts allows a student to:

- Absorb meaningful information through the senses.
- Develop openness in apprehension and push boundaries.
- Effectively construct artistic meaning within their cultural milieu.
- Grasp the nature and evolution of history.
- Communicate effectively within variable situations and for diverse audiences.
- Navigate the intricacies of emerging digital and global environments.

21st Century skills

The [21st Century Arts Map,](#) published by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, begins with a key observation: "Anyone who has ever seen a student become excited, energized, and confident through artistic exploration has seen first-hand how arts education engages children and contributes to their overall development. The arts—dance music, theatre, and the visual arts, which collectively include the media arts—are recognized as "core academic subjects" in Federal law, as well as in state statutes and core educational documents. While each of the arts disciplines has its own unique set of knowledge, skills, and processes, the arts share common characteristics that make arts education powerful preparation for college, career, and a fulfilling life."

Creativity and innovation

Creativity and innovation are essential for the development of the necessary skills to flourish in the 21st century, as well as to promote essential skills for successful student and workplace achievement. The goal of fostering creativity and innovation through arts education is included in numerous initiatives inside and outside education across all subjects and disciplines. Specifically, it is described in a variety of state arts standards and frameworks across the United States and is diversely applied in classrooms across the nation as an inherent aspect of teaching and learning in the arts. Widely held definitions of these aspects include:

- Creativity is the capability or act of conceiving something original/unusual.
- Innovation is the implementation of something new.
- Invention is the creation of something that has never been made before and is recognized as the product of some unique insight.

The arts impact educational change by taking the lead in the inclusion of creative practices in instruction; by recognizing creativity as a tool to learning in other content areas and for influencing many aspects of one's life; and by exploring ways to use creativity as evidence in alternative assessments that provide new ways of showing what students know and can do. As a pathway to learning in arts education, creative practices include such attributes as flexible thinking, creative problem-solving, inquisitiveness, and perseverance. Creative and innovative strategies build students ability in problem formulation, research, interpretation, communication, precision and accuracy.

Critical thinking and problem solving
Critical thinking is the essential, intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information as a guide to belief and action. It is through critical thinking and problem solving that students learn the higher-order thinking skills necessary to engage in the artistic processes and, therefore, begin to achieve artistic literacy.

Standards-based arts educators encourage their students to apply critical thinking to the artifacts and processes that they find most compelling: the art work of themselves, their peers, and the artists in the wide world they are growing to understand. Precisely because of the emotional connections that students make to and through works of art, the application of critical thinking to understanding and evaluating those works leads to the development of those structures or elements of thought implicit in all reasoning: purpose, problem, or question-at-issue; assumptions; concepts; empirical grounding; reasoning leading to conclusions; implications and consequences; objections from alternative viewpoints; and frame of reference. Critical thinking also builds contextual awareness as an indirect but fundamental aspect of artistic practice and appreciation. Through viewing, making and discussing art works, students come to realize that the arts do not exist in isolation, but are always situated within multiple dimensions, including time, space, culture and history.

Regarding the process of problem-solving, students who actively study the arts necessarily engage in and develop a disciplined, step-by-step approach to problems in creating, realizing, or understanding art. The steps involved may vary from one arts discipline to another and the order of steps in the process may change according to the personal ideas of the student artist, which in turn may prompt more than one iteration of work. But the underlying discipline is always present. When working with the arts, as with most valuable processes in our world, students engage in allocating resources, monitoring progress, and evaluating the results.

Communication
Communication lies at the heart of the arts. In studying the arts, students develop a vast repertoire of skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating meaning. Often, in the arts, this meaning concerns ideas that may be difficult to express outside of the medium chosen by the artist, but is always of great significance to the artist and the informed observer. Use of these processes is developmental and transfers to all areas of life: home, school, community, work, and beyond. It is through communication that collaboration and cooperation occur.

In learning to communicate through the arts in a standards-based curriculum, students learn to:
- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts.
- Look and listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions.
- Use communication for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate and persuade).
- Utilize multiple media and technologies, and know how to judge their effectiveness as a priority as well as assess their impact.
- Communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multi-lingual).

In order to understand the potential for connection between the arts learning and the acquisition of 21st century skills, the College Board completed an analysis comparing the 1994 *National Standards for Arts Education* to the 21st Century Art Skills Map.
The study noted areas where the goals and ideas expressed in these two documents aligned with one another. The 21st century skills mentioned above included the traits that were most frequently aligned to the 1994 standards, even though these two documents were created 16 years apart from one another. Further, they were reinforced in the standards of every arts discipline, at every grade level, as a primary component of the standards. The National Dance Education Association (NDEO) commissioned a similar study: *An Analysis of the Standards for Learning and Teaching Dance in the Arts (2005) as Compared to the 21st Century Skills Map* (Rima Faber, 2012).

Collaboration
Collaboration is the process where two or more people or groups work together to realize common goals. Most collaboration requires leadership, although the form of leadership can be shared within a decentralized and egalitarian group. Collaboration is in many ways the engine that drives our economy and our sense of shared culture. It is also an inherent part of arts instruction, whether the collaboration includes all the students in a performing cast or ensemble, or the partnership between a single artist and his or her peers and audience or in a shared visual arts project that incorporates the ideas and techniques of multiple young artists.

Further, standards-based arts instruction, by its very nature, engages students with each another, helping them:
- Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others effectively.
- Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work.
- Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work and understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas.
- View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.
- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams.
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal.
- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and values the individual contributions made by each team member.

SECTION III: Research-based Discoveries

These standards have been prepared in the context of almost two decades of research on arts teaching and learning amassed since the writing of the 1994 standards. In addition to research compiled by the subject matter associations involved in NCCAS, The College Board, an NCCAS member, has conducted the following six research projects on behalf of National Core Arts Standards:

1. [International Arts Education Standards: A Survey of the Arts Education Standards and Practices of Fifteen Countries and Regions](#) outlines existing international standards and/or benchmarks for arts education in more than a dozen of the world's most educationally advanced countries. This report includes summaries of standards and practices, and includes a cross-referenced chart of common themes and ideas from Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Finland, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, and Venezuela. The arts standards of these countries were identified by NCCAS as exemplar resources for the coalition's writers and reviewers in their upcoming standards revision work.

2. [Arts Education Standards and 21st Century Skills](#) is an analysis of the relationship between the 1994 National Standards for Arts Education and the 21st Century Skills Map in the Arts, published by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. This report offers an analysis of the level of alignment between the current arts content standards and the skills, lesson examples, and outcomes included in the P21 Arts Map, across three grade bands in the disciplines of music, dance, visual art, and theatre. The arts map, created by the NCCAS professional education association members and released in 2010, identifies creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication, and nine other skills developed through arts learning. NCCAS expects alignment with 21st century skills to be a fundamental aspect of the next generation of arts standards.

3. [College Learning in the Arts](#) was conducted in two phases. Phase I is a summary and analysis of accreditation standards—specifically those standards related to course content and instruction—for schools offering two- and four-year degrees in the arts. The second portion is a review of course goals for all AP courses in the arts, including AP Studio Art, AP Art History, and AP Music Theory. Finally, a survey of college textbooks in the arts is presented, in an effort to identify which types of arts information and content are most widely available on college campuses. Most of the material that was reviewed was rather broad in its treatment of the standards, and consequently the analysis of these resources is equally broad. In an effort to obtain more specific information about particular expectations of student arts performance at the college level, College Board researchers coordinated Phase II of this project, a national survey of professors and department heads in dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and media arts in two- and four-year colleges throughout the United States.

4. [A Review of Selected State Arts Standards](#) examines the recently revised arts education standards (in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) of eight states and districts; reviews media arts standards in four states or districts; and analyzes possible links between the new National Arts Education Standards and the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math. This report looks at the revised arts standards of seven states and one district in the United States: Colorado, Florida, Michigan, New Jersey, New York City (which also included the discipline area of "moving image."), North Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington. The second part of the report focuses on the relatively new arts form of

media arts, offering definitions, examples of best practice, and standards structure and organization in four states/districts: Los Angeles Unified School District, Minnesota, New York City, and South Carolina.

5. [Child Development and Arts Education: A review of Current Research and Best Practices](#) is a literature review that analyzes research linking arts-based learning and human development, including physical and cognitive growth and academic skills such as long-term memory, reading, creative thinking, and writing fluency. The study also includes research on the social and emotional impact of arts participation. This report is divided into four literature reviews that address the discipline of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. The reviews are further divided by grade band (early childhood, elementary, middle, high school, and college) each of which includes information on both general and discipline-specific developmental characteristics of students. The report also features a series of specific pedagogical practices that address social, emotional, and/or cognitive needs and abilities of students in each discipline and grade band.

6. [A Review of Connections between the Common Core State Standards and the Core Arts Standards](#) is a study of the Common Core standards as they relate to arts-based learning. This study was divided into two sections: In the first portion, researchers identified arts references already present in the Common Core State Standards. This analysis noted only the instances where the arts are explicitly mentioned—to commending that students read a play, for example, or respond to a performance—as opposed to recording standards that advocated for lines of inquiry that may or may not be met through arts-based study. The next phase of research involved identifying elements of the Common Core State Standards that reference the same broad goals, philosophies, thinking skills, and creative practices that are emphasized in the framework and planning documents for the Core Arts Standards.

SECTION IV: Concluding Thoughts: Re-imagined Core Arts Standards for America's Schools

The National Core Arts Standards are designed to serve an eminently practical purpose—to improve the teaching and learning of the arts in America's schools, thereby improving the education of more than 50 million students annually. To accomplish this goal, the standards have been written mindful of the realities faced by our nation's metropolitan, rural, suburban and independent school districts in the 21st century. Key among those realities is increased attention to accountability for instruction and achievement. The new arts standards will help address this priority.

The new benchmarks for arts learning articulated in these standards also focus on the more distant yet still attainable goal of achieving a complete, balanced education for all our students. Using the standards as a guide, teachers, curriculum designers, and decision makers (including administrators and school board members) can help students achieve the many skills and habits of thought necessary for success in school and beyond. That is to say, the standards outline the educational foundations for student success.

Those educational foundations for success are interwoven with a clear definition of the elements of artistic literacy and how our future citizens can achieve it. The pursuit of this literacy (accompanied by defining philosophical foundations and lifelong goals) through standards-based arts education will, in turn, support student achievement in school, career, and life.

With a focus on processes, enduring understandings, essential questions, and assessments, these arts standards represent a new and innovative approach to arts education that will serve students, teachers, parents, and decision-makers now and in the future.

Appendix A

Descriptors for High School Performance Standards Levels*

Proficient	Accomplished	Advanced
Students at the Proficient level have developed the foundational technical and expressive skills and understandings in an art form necessary to solve assigned problems or prepare assigned repertoire for presentation; make appropriate choices with some support; and may be prepared for active engagement in their community.[i] They understand the art form to be an important form of personal realization and wellbeing, and make connections between the art form, history, culture and other learning.[ii]	Students at the Accomplished level are -- with minimal assistance -- able to identify or solve arts problems based on their interests or for a particular purpose; conduct research to inform artistic decisions; and create and refine arts products, performances, or presentations that demonstrate technical proficiency, personal communication[iii] and expression. They use the art form for personal realization[iv] and wellbeing,[v] and have the necessary skills for and interest in participation in arts activity beyond the school environment.	Students at the Advanced level independently identify challenging arts problems based on their interests or for specific purposes, and bring creativity and insight to finding artistic solutions. They are facile in using at least one art form as an effective avenue for personal communication, demonstrating a higher level of technical and expressive proficiency characteristic of honors or college level work. They exploit their personal strengths and apply strategies to overcome personal challenges as arts learners. They are capable of taking a leadership role in arts activity within and beyond the school environment.
A level of achievement attainable by most students who complete a high-school level course[vi] in the arts (or equivalent) beyond the foundation of quality PreK-8 instruction.	A level of achievement attainable by most students who complete a rigorous sequence of high-school level courses (or equivalent) beyond the Proficient level.	A level and scope of achievement that significantly exceeds the Accomplished Level. Achievement at this level is indisputably rigorous and substantially expands students' knowledge, skills, and understandings beyond the expectations articulated for Accomplished achievement.

[i] Goal 5: Artistically literate citizens seek artistic experience and support the arts in their local, state, national, and global communities.

[ii] Goal 3: Artistically literate citizens know and understand artwork from varied historical periods and cultures, and actively seek and appreciate diverse forms and genres of artwork of enduring quality/significance. They also seek to understand relationships among the arts, and cultivate habits of searching for and identifying patterns, relationships between the arts and other knowledge.

[iii] Goal 1: Artistically literate citizens use a variety of artistic media, symbols and metaphors to independently create and perform work that expresses and communicates their own ideas, and are able to respond by analyzing and interpreting the artistic communications of others.

[iv] Goal 2: Artistically literate citizens find at least one arts discipline in which they develop sufficient competence to continue active involvement in creating, performing, and responding to art as an adult.

[v] Goal 4: Artistically literate citizens find joy, inspiration, peace, intellectual stimulation, meaning, and other life-enhancing qualities through participation in all of the arts.

[vi][vi][vi] Carnegie Unit (120 hours of study). As stated in the NCES Secondary Course Code book (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007341.pdf): "**Element 3. Available Credit** identifies the amount of Carnegie unit credit available to a student who successfully meets the objectives of the course. A course meeting every day for one period of the school day over the span of a school year offers one Carnegie unit. A Carnegie unit is thus a measure of 'seat time' rather than a measure of attainment of the course objectives. While some schools and districts use a performance—or competency—based metric of student progress, the Carnegie unit remains the predominant metric of student progress in schools in the United States and is part of the SCED framework. This document uses the term 'credit' to refer to what high school students typically earn upon completing a

yearlong course. Although some schools are currently experimenting with alternatives, the concept of 'credits' is still familiar and therefore useful to educators as the traditional unit earned to achieve a high school diploma, gain admission to college, and earn a college degree."

*Preparatory levels for Music Standards

In light of the practical reality of music students' involvement in Ensemble and Harmonizing Instrument classes before they enter high school, performance standards are also provided for two preparatory levels in these strands. These are attached for convenience to grade levels, but are potentially useful for earlier level experiences:

1. Novice: nominally assigned to the fifth grade level. Students at the Novice level have started specialization in an art form of their choice. They are beginning to develop the basic artistic understanding and technique necessary to advance their skill level. Their expressive skills may be identified and exploratory work begins. They may participate in presentation and performance opportunities as they are able. Their curiosity in the art form begins their journey toward personal realization and wellbeing.

2. Intermediate: nominally equivalent to the eighth grade level. Students at the Intermediate level are continuing study in a chosen specialized art form. Their development continues in artistic understanding and technical and expressive skills enabling the student to begin to independently and collaboratively create, perform and respond at their given skill level. Their presentation and performance opportunities in ensembles at school and in the community increase and students actively participate in rehearsals. Through continued study of their art form they continue their journey toward personal realization and wellbeing.
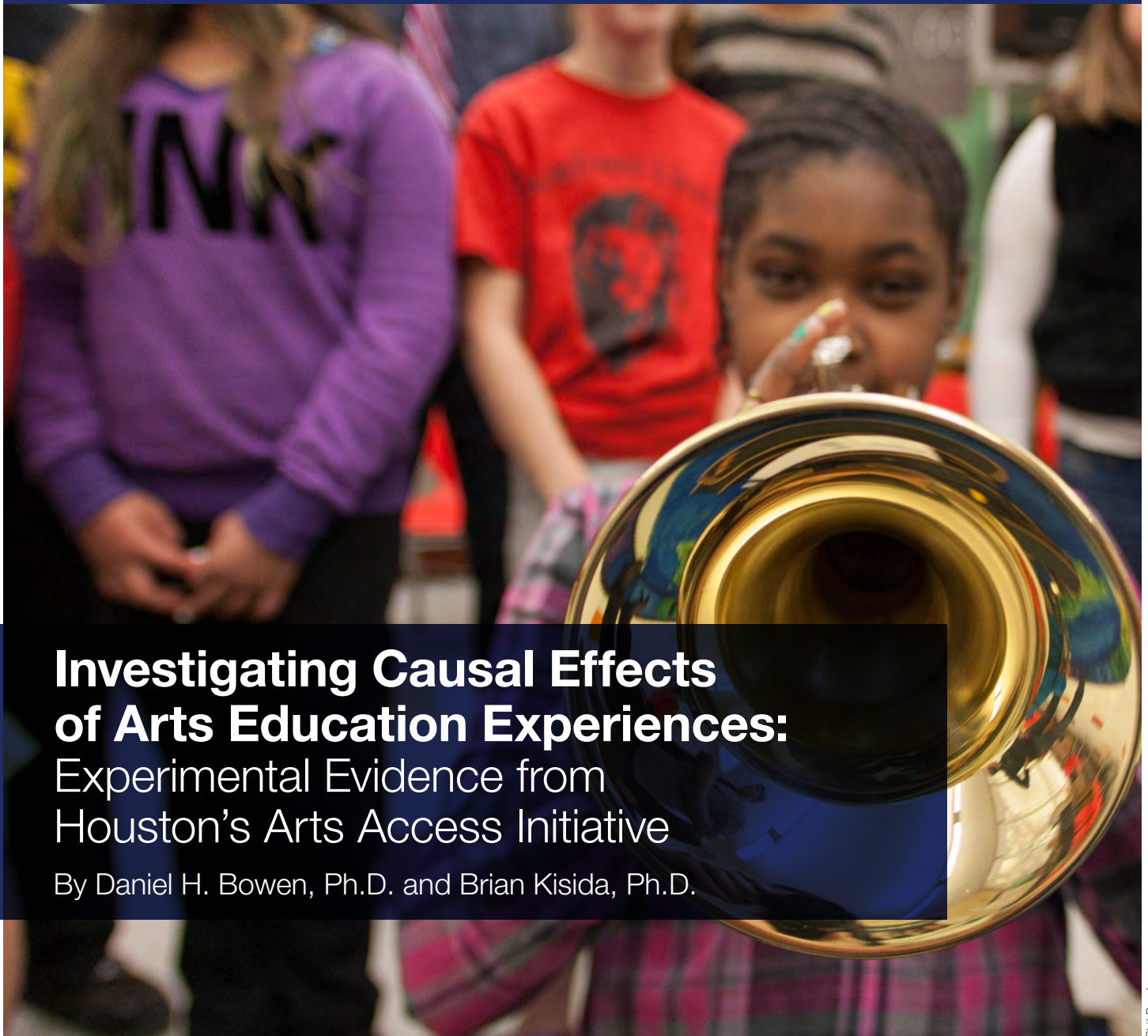
Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences:
Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative

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Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative

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172

Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative

1

Abstract

The recent wave of test-based accountability reforms has negatively impacted the provision of K-12 arts educational experiences. Advocates contend that, in addition to providing intrinsic benefits, the arts can positively influence academic and social development. However, the empirical evidence to support such claims is limited. We conducted a randomized controlled trial with 10,548 3rd-8th grade students who were enrolled in 42 schools that were assigned by lottery to receive substantial influxes of arts education experiences provided through school-community partnerships with local arts organizations, cultural institutions, and teaching-artists. We find that these increases in arts educational experiences significantly reduce the proportion of students receiving disciplinary infractions by 3.6 percentage points, improve STAAR writing achievement by 0.13 of a standard deviation, and increase students' compassion for others by 0.08 of a standard deviation. For students in elementary schools, which comprise 86 percent of the sample, we find that these arts educational experiences also significantly improve school engagement, college aspirations, and arts-facilitated empathy. These findings provide strong evidence that arts educational experiences can produce significant positive impacts on student academic and social development. Policymakers should consider these multifaceted educational benefits when assessing the role and value of the arts in K-12 schools.

Acknowledgments

Arts Access Initiative Arts Organizations for 2015–16 and 2016–17

AFA	Da Camera	Houston Grand Opera	Musiqa
Alley Theatre	Ensemble Theatre	Houston Symphony	Nameless Sound
Aperio, Music of the Americas	Express Children's Theatre	Houston Youth Symphony	Prelude Music Foundation
Ars Lyrica	FotoFest Inc.	Main Street Theater	Society for the Performing Arts
Arte Público Press	The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts	MECA	Texan-French Alliance for the Arts
Art League Houston	Houston Ballet	Mercury Chamber Orchestra	Theatre Under the Stars
City ArtWorks	Houston Center for Photography	METdance	Writers in the Schools
Contemporary Arts Museum Houston	Houston Chamber Choir	Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	Young Audiences of Houston

Introduction

Following a steady increase throughout most of the 20th century, arts education opportunities in the United States have been in steady decline since the 1980s (Hamilton et al., 2007; Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011; von Zastrow & Janc, 2004; West, 2007). This trend has not been equitable across student subgroups. Over this period, white students have experienced virtually no change, whereas African-American students have experienced reductions of 49 percent and Hispanic/Latinx students by 40 percent. Moreover, children whose parents have less than a high school education have experienced a 77 percent decline (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). Childhood arts experiences predict arts participation and engagement later in life, meaning that decreases in childhood access likely has lasting effects. These trends are especially concerning in Houston, where 86% of students enrolled in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) are African-American or Hispanic/Latinx (HISD, 2017). Moreover, in the 2012 Houston Arts Survey, it was reported that nearly 60% of respondents had attended at least one artistic performance in the past year; however, participation plummeted to 29% for individuals from households with incomes at or below $37,500 (Klineberg, Wu, & Aldape, 2012).

The arts have intrinsic benefits for participants, but advocates also contend that the arts play a vital role in public education because they enhance skills and knowledge that transfer to student performance in other academic subjects, positively affect social and emotional learning, and enhance artistic ability and creativity which are valuable skills in today's economy. (Deasy, 2002; Eisner, 2002; Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013; Winner & Hetland, 2001). However, the arts remain a prime target for cuts when education administrators and policymakers face accountability-driven tradeoffs (Yee, 2014). Since the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), the emphasis on standardized testing in "core subjects" has coincided with notable declines in school-facilitated arts exposure (Gadsden, 2008). There is a strong link between the emphasis on accountability testing and decreases in time and resources for the arts and other non-tested subjects (Bassok, Latham, & Rorem, 2016; Government Accountability Office, 2009; Guzenhauser, 2003; West, 2007). Moreover, evaluations of education programs and policies increasingly rely on empirical evidence, yet the causal benefits of the arts have rarely been rigorously investigated with experimental methods (Winner & Cooper, 2000; Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013; Winner & Hetland, 2001). As a result, policymakers and administrators struggle to make the case for the arts

175

School participation in the Initiative was voluntary, and applicants were required to commit to a monetary match earmarked for arts experiences through teaching-artist residencies, in-school professional artist performances, field trips, and afterschool programs. Demand for AAI participation exceeded supply in the first two years of implementation. Forty-six campuses applied to participate in the first year of the AAI, and 35 additional campuses applied to participate in the second year. After consulting with our research team, AAI stakeholders agreed to randomly allocate participation among 42 schools in the first two years and

in K-12 schools, and advocates lack evidence to quantify the costs that come with decreases in access.

An increasingly common strategy for addressing K-12 arts educational inequities is the formation of school-community arts partnerships. Typically, these partnerships consist of school- and district-level administrators, cultural institutions, philanthropists, government officials, researchers, and a "backbone" organization that facilitates these collaborations (Bowen & Kisida, 2017; Perille, 2016). Successful partnerships have flourished in many urban school districts, including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Seattle. One such partnership, Houston's Arts Access Initiative (AAI), launched in 2013. This multi-sector, collaborative effort aimed to advance student access to the arts through "strategy, partnerships, data collection, and advocacy." The AAI vision statement was "that every student in Houston will have the opportunity to benefit cognitively, creatively, emotionally, and academically through the arts," with an emphasis on foundational goals of equity, impact, and sustainability. As with arts education research in general, only a few studies have investigated the effects of these partnerships (Catterall & Waldorf, 1999; Rowe, Werber, Kaganoff, & Robyn, 2004). Preliminary research suggests that school-community arts partnerships improve academic achievement and attainment (Catterall & Waldorf, 1999); however, there is no causal evidence about the impacts of these interventions.

After conducting a district-wide campus inventory, AAI stakeholders developed strategies to serve schools with the lowest levels of arts resources, primarily through forging and enhancing school-community partnerships.

deferring AAI participation for the other applicants. In addition to being an impartial method for selecting AAI schools, this process was conducive to conducting a cluster randomized controlled trial (RCT).

In this study, we investigate the causal effects of increases in elementary and middle school students' arts educational experiences, provided through school-community arts partnerships in the first year of program implementation. Comparing AAI school gains to their randomly assigned counterparts, we find that increasing arts learning opportunities significantly reduces the proportion of students receiving disciplinary infractions, increases writing achievement, and increases compassion for others. We do not find significant effects overall on student attendance, math, reading, or science achievement, or other survey-based measures. For students in elementary schools, which were the main emphasis of the Initiative and comprised 86 percent of our school sample, we find that the intervention also improves student engagement, college aspirations, and arts-facilitated empathy. We also find that these effects varied substantially by student subgroups. Students receiving "limited English proficiency" (LEP) and gifted and talented (GT) program services appear to benefit more from these arts learning experiences. These results provide strong evidence that substantial increases in arts access can produce significant, multifaceted educational benefits for students.

176

Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative

5

Previous Research

The benefits of arts education are rich in theory and testimony but remain scant on rigorous empirical evidence. While existing evidence suggests that there are positive, significant associations between arts participation/engagement and educational outcomes, such studies are typically correlational and subject to omitted variable bias (Elpus, 2013). In a systematic review of the literature, Winner et al. (2013) concluded that there is limited causal evidence demonstrating that the arts affect academic outcomes. Notable exceptions include drama education, which appears to strengthen verbal skills (Podlozny, 2000), and music education, which seems to strengthen IQ (Moreno et al., 2011; Neville, 2008; Schellenberg, 2004) and improve math and reading skills (Gromko, 2005; Lee & Kim, 2006; Moreno et al., 2009; Standley, 2008).

The lack of rigorous empirical evidence is attributed to a paucity of experimental investigations. There is also concern that researchers have investigated arts impacts with a limited set of outcomes. Arts education proponents contend that arts learning experiences develop student self-expression, creativity, and empathy (Dewey, 1919; Ruppert, 2006; Zimmerman, 2009), and serve as ways to enhance cognitive abilities which foster critical thinking skills (Eisner, 2002). However, researchers rarely incorporate such outcomes in their investigations. A notable exception was an RCT evaluation of the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art's school visit program, where researchers collected original data and found that arts exposure increased student tolerance, historical empathy, and the ability to think critically about works of art (Bowen, Greene, & Kisida, 2014; Greene, Kisida, & Bowen, 2014; Kisida, Bowen, & Greene; 2016). In a recent review of arts integration research, this study was the only example of "strong evidence," as defined by the U.S. Department of Education, to demonstrate causal impacts from school-related arts education interventions (Ludwig, Boyle, & Lindsay, 2017). Moreover, a series of experimental studies of live theater field trip performances provide evidence to suggest that these experiences increase students' tolerance, social perspective taking, and command of a play's plot and vocabulary (Greene, Erickson, Watson, & Beck, 2018). However, the Crystal Bridges and theater performance studies have limited external validity, as these interventions were confined solely to a single experience with one arts organization's field trip program that occurred over a relatively short time span.

Lingering policy-relevant questions also remain regarding who benefits the most from receiving school-sponsored arts education activities. Several studies have identified that race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status are strong predictors of access to arts and cultural experiences outside of school, with historically-underserved populations receiving substantially less exposure through out-of-school, family-facilitated experiences (Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2014; Meyer, Princiotta, & Lanahan, 2004; Redford, Burns, & Hall, 2018). Moreover, studies have shown that historically-underserved students demonstrate more-pronounced, positive impacts from school-sponsored arts exposure, suggesting that these interventions reduce gaps in educational outcomes tied to arts-educational activities (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012; Kinney & Forsythe, 2004; Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2014; Podlozny, 2000; Thomas, Singh, & Klopfenstein, 2015). Consequently, students from underserved communities are more dependent on schools to provide arts access to attain these benefits.

School-Community Partnerships

School-community partnerships have become an increasingly popular strategy for addressing inequities in arts education (Bowen & Kisida, 2017). These partnerships tend to be broad coalitions formed between school administrators, cultural institutions and organizations, policymakers, and philanthropists (Perille, 2016). No study to date has examined the causal impacts of these school-community arts partnerships, but there have been noteworthy non-experimental evaluations. The earliest evidence on these partnerships comes from investigations of the school-community arts partnership prototypes that originated in Chicago and Los Angeles in 1992 and 1999, respectively. The Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) emphasized arts integration, where teaching-artists participated in elementary and high schools for in-depth six-week residencies. The CAPE evaluation team concluded that this initiative produced a mix of positive, though mostly null, impacts on student standardized test scores (Catterall & Waldorf, 1999). The Los Angeles Arts for All program was a ten-year endeavor that emphasized the cultivation of school-community arts partnerships as a means for enhancing arts education throughout the Los Angeles Unified School District. The evaluation of this program was strictly qualitative. While this study did not address student outcomes, the researchers concluded that there were inherent problems in the formation of school-community partnerships. They found that active communication, shared goals, buy-in, and adequate resources were essential for partnerships to succeed, but difficult to maintain. Specifically, arts organizations were often more interested in objectives tied to increasing student exposure to the arts and bolstering positive public relations through "simple transactions," such as one-off field trip experiences, and less interested in providing resources that were tied to teachers' educational goals, such as professional development sessions and experiences aligned with curriculum and standards (Rowe et al., 2004).

The Chicago and Los Angeles efforts served as models and provided lessons for a new crop of school-community partnerships. In addition to Houston's Arts Access Initiative, these partnerships, as well as revised or newer editions of preexisting partnerships, have developed in major metropolitan areas such as Boston (Arts Expansion Initiative), Chicago (Creative Schools Initiative), Dallas (Learning Partners), New Orleans (KID smART), and Seattle (Creative Advantage). While there have not been impact evaluations of the causal impacts of these arts partnership initiatives on students' educational outcomes, descriptive evaluations suggest that these partnerships are effective mechanisms for improving student access to arts educational resources and experiences and addressing deficits and inequities. Studies have found that these partnerships have successfully increased public school arts education funding (Perille, 2016; Silk, 2016); boosted the number of schools working with community arts partners (Silk, 2016); and expanded the number of credit-bearing arts education courses available to students (Gibson, 2016).

Ed Uthman

The AAI Intervention

A critical early step in the AAI was the collection of descriptive data on campus-level arts educational resources throughout HISD. These data were used to construct an inventory for assessing levels and distributions of arts resources and included the number of certified arts specialists, whether a school offered before/after-school arts programs, whether the campus had facilities for providing arts learning opportunities, and the number of partnerships with arts organizations over the course of the prior school year. Some of the key findings from the initial campus inventory revealed that 29 percent of the 209 K-8 campuses had no full-time arts specialist; 39 percent had either one or no community arts partners;[2] and 30 percent did not provide any arts programming outside of regular school hours (Young Audiences, 2014). While a substantial proportion of HISD's campuses were struggling to provide arts learning opportunities, it did not appear to be due to a lack of support from school leaders. Ninety-eight percent of surveyed principals and teachers agreed that "students benefit from access to the arts in school."

The findings from the campus inventory motivated AAI stakeholders to address gaps in campus-level arts resources, primarily through funding efforts to develop and enhance partnerships throughout Houston. AAI leadership recruited HISD elementary and middle schools to participate in the inaugural 2015–16 academic year, with an emphasis on serving campuses with the lowest levels of arts resources.[3] School participation in the Initiative was voluntary, and to be considered principals had to commit to the mission of the Initiative, engage in strategic arts planning with the AAI director, designate a campus-level arts liaison to coordinate and facilitate AAI-related efforts, participate in teacher and principal arts-integration professional development, and attend AAI peer-network mentoring sessions. Participating schools were also required to commit a monetary match between $1 to $10 for AAI funding, earmarked to provide arts experiences through teaching-artist residencies, in-school professional artist performances, field trips, and afterschool programs.[4] The AAI director and staff worked with principals to understand their schools' goals for the upcoming year to help guide arts program selections that would align with their objectives. As part of this process, the director and staff encouraged principals to budget for a diversity of programs such that all of the major arts disciplines were included: dance, music, theater, and visual arts.[5] The Houston Endowment provided a 1:1 match for each school's financial commitment. Including matched funds, AAI schools had an average annual budget of $14.67 per student to facilitate and enhance partnerships with arts organizations and institutions.

Using the baseline arts campus inventory, we can assess the impact of the AAI on the number of school-community arts partnerships formed as a result of the Initiative. In the year prior to applying to join the AAI, treatment and control schools were statistically equivalent in terms of their average number of school-community partnerships. In the year prior to the Initiative, AAI treatment

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2 The term "partnership" is defined here as having worked with or participated in an educational program with a community arts organization or institution. This definition broadly incorporates everything from a one-off field trip to in-depth, longer-term experiences, such as teaching-artist residencies.

3 AAI stakeholders decided to put an initial emphasis on serving elementary, along with a small portion of middle schools in its early phases, with the intention of eventually expanding to serve more secondary schools.

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4 Afterschool programs were initially considered to be one of the emphasized arts educational program formats, but this requirement was deemphasized in the initial two years of implementation.

5 There were also organizations and institutions that provided creative writing and hybrid (e.g., musical theater) programs. There were not enough creative writing program providers to make this discipline one that schools were required to include, but these programs were available to be included in AAI schools' plans.

Ed Uthman

schools had 2.76 arts partnerships compared to 2.80 for the control group. Each AAI school averaged 9.86 partnership-facilitated arts educational experiences over the school year, which represented a net increase of 5.03 additional partnerships relative to the control group schools over the same period. Thirty-nine percent of these experiences were provided in-kind by AAI partnering cultural organizations and institutions. Therefore, it is worth noting that the aforementioned average per-student budget underestimates the total investment of resources that students received as a result of the AAI.

The AAI director and staff worked with principals to understand their schools' goals for the upcoming year to help guide arts program selections that would align with their schools' objectives. The principal had the final say on their arts plan, but the AAI director and staff encouraged administrators to select a diverse array of programs such that each of the arts disciplines and formats were provided at least once over the course of the year. Fifty-four percent of AAI student experiences were primarily theatre-based, 12 percent dance, 18 percent music, and 16

percent visual arts;[6] 31 percent of these student experiences were provided through on-campus professional artist performances, 27 percent were field trip experiences, 33 percent were teaching-artist residencies, and 9 percent were programs provided outside of regular school hours.

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6 One AAI school participated in a creative writing program.

Study Design

In collaboration with AAI stakeholders, we developed the following research questions to assess the Initiative's impacts on student outcomes:

- Does a substantial increase in arts education experiences improve student-school engagement?

- Do these experiences increase students' desires to engage and participate in the arts?

- Do these experiences increase academic achievement as reflected in standardized test score growth?

- Does the AAI affect students' attitudes and values, specifically in the forms of tolerance, empathy, and compassion for others?

- Are there heterogeneous effects in outcomes across student subgroups?

The outcome measures for this study come from HISD administrative records and original student survey data. HISD records provided us with a dichotomous indicator for whether a student received a disciplinary infraction over the course of the school year, number of absences, and State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) standardized achievement gains in reading, math, science, and writing. STAAR reading and math assessments are administered to all 3rd-8th grade students. The writing assessment is administered to 4th and 7th grade students. The science test is administered to 5th and 8th grade students. We developed our survey constructs using preexisting, established instruments. Additional survey items were developed in coordination with HISD and AAI program providers and stakeholders. These constructs are student-school engagement, college aspiration, arts-facilitated empathy, compassion for others, tolerance, desire to participate in cultural consumption, disposition for arts transfer, and perceived value of the arts. Student survey outcomes, measures of construct reliability, item sources, and individual items are provided in table 1.

With demand for AAI program participation exceeding supply, we were able to conduct a school-level, cluster RCT. Due to the limited sample size of 42 campuses participating in the AAI evaluation, school applicants were stratified by pairs prior to randomization, based on (in order) grade levels served, student demographics, arts resources, and school-level achievement. This pre-randomization stratification strategy improves statistical precision when estimating effects with a limited number of clusters (Gerber & Green, 2012).

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181

Data Collection

Student-level administrative data were obtained from HISD records through the Houston Education Research Consortium's (HERC) longitudinal database, which provides student demographics, school attendance and enrollment records, STAAR scores, and disciplinary records. We collaborated with HISD to collect original survey data in 2016–17, which was year one of implementation for cohort two schools and year two of implementation for cohort one schools. Using student identification codes during survey administration, survey data were linked to student-level administrative records. The grade levels for survey participation were restricted to students enrolled in STAAR-tested grades (3rd-8th). Moreover, at the request of HISD, we restricted our survey population to students who had not received special accommodations when taking the STAAR assessments. Campus testing coordinators administered a pilot survey at the beginning of the fall semester (late September through early October), and an outcome survey at the end of the school year (late April through May). Students' responses on the spring survey provide outcome measures for both of the AAI evaluation cohorts. We are able to use the piloted fall survey as a measure of baseline responses with cohort two students as a robustness check of our findings. We could not use fall survey responses as a baseline with the first cohort because these students had already participated in the Initiative for a year prior to this round of survey data collection. Moreover, with this being the second year of implementation with the first cohort of AAI schools, we were not able to survey students who graded and transferred out of AAI treatment and control schools after the 2016–17 school year.
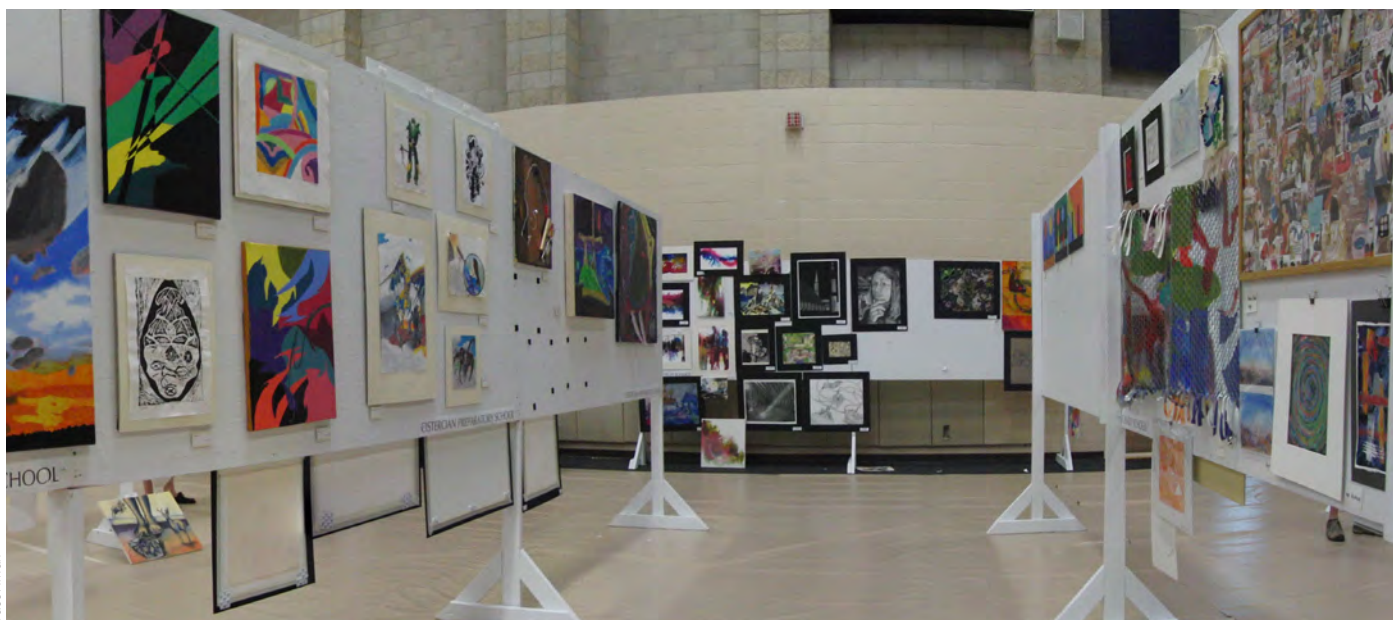
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Sample

The analytical sample for this study is restricted to 4th-8th grade students with baseline standardized math and reading test scores. We control for baseline test-score achievement throughout our analyses; therefore, students enrolled in 3rd grade and below are not included in these analyses. There were 10,548 students enrolled in AAI treatment and control schools over the evaluation period. There were 1,934 first cohort students who graded and transferred from their AAI evaluation schools. Of the 8,614 AAI evaluation students enrolled in AAI treatment and control schools the year of the survey, we collected and linked survey to administrative data for 6,340 (74 percent) students. Of the 6,500 second cohort AAI evaluation students, we collected and linked 4,901 (75 percent) spring surveys to administrative records; of these second cohort spring survey participants, we were able to link 3,708 (76 percent) of their spring responses to the pilot fall survey (or 57 percent of the second cohort of students). Thirty-six of 42 schools served students at the elementary level, with students in grades PK–5, and six were middle schools with students in grades 6–8. Student demographics, as well as baseline measures of achievement, attendance, and discipline are provided in table 2.

AAI treatment and control school students were statistically equivalent in terms of baseline grade level, gender, free- and reduced-price lunch (FRL) eligibility and higher poverty status, race/ethnicity, proportion of students receiving special education services, proportion of students receiving LEP program services, math achievement, and the proportion of students who had received a disciplinary infraction the prior academic year. However, there was a statistically significant difference in average baseline reading achievement. AAI treatment students had higher STAAR reading test scores than control students in the year prior to participating in the AAI. While this baseline imbalance calls into question the integrity of the randomization process, the fact that there is one signifi-

cant difference across fifteen baseline characteristics can be attributable to a chance outcome due to random assignment. In our analyses, we control for baseline reading achievement, along with the other specified demographic covariates, to improve precision and strengthen our ability to generate unbiased estimates of the treatment on our outcomes of interest (Gerber & Green, 2012).

Comparing targeted student participants to nonparticipants shows the extent to which survey respondents are representative of the targeted population. Survey participants, relative to the targeted survey population, were significantly more likely to be female and white, less likely to have received a disciplinary infraction in the prior academic year, had fewer absences, were less likely to be receiving special education services (due to the restriction of not surveying students who receive accommodations for STAAR testing), and were higher achieving in terms of standardized baseline STAAR reading and math scores. However, when we compare the survey participants by treatment and control status, the only observable statistically significant difference is baseline reading achievement, and this difference is not statistically significantly different from that of the broader sample (p = 0.67). Survey participant demographics, by survey participation and treatment status, are available in the appendices.

183

Analysis

The experimental design of this evaluation provides a straightforward analytical strategy. We estimate the AAI intent-to-treat (ITT) effects with the following model:

$$Y_{ism} = \alpha + AAI_s\gamma_1 + Match_m\gamma_2 + X_i\gamma_3 + \varepsilon_{ism} \quad (1)$$

Where *Y* signifies an outcome of interest for student, *i*, enrolled in school-grade, *s*, matched pair, *m*. *AAI* is a dichotomous variable that indicates whether the student was enrolled in a school that was randomly assigned to participate in the AAI; *Match* is a vector of dummy variables for the pre-randomization matched pairs; *X* is a vector of student demographics, specifically student grade level, gender, race/ethnicity, FRL eligibility/poverty status, a dichotomous indicator for receipt of special education services, LEP status, prior year absences, an indicator for whether the student received a disciplinary infraction the previous school year, and prior year's STAAR math and reading scores; ε is the error term clustered at the school-grade level. We have also estimated local average treatment effects with a two-staged least squares regression, where the AAI lottery serves as an instrument to predict the percentage of a student's school year spent in an AAI school to then estimate the impact of being enrolled for an entire academic year. First stage estimates, depending on outcome measure, range from 0.961 to 0.987, meaning that local average treatment effects were only slightly larger in magnitude than the ITT estimates. Moreover, none of the local average treatment effects were substantially different than the ITT estimates; these results are provided in the appendices.

We also investigate student-level treatment effect moderators. With such a diverse student population, we examine whether the AAI treatment produces effects that vary by subgroups that have been historically correlated with differences in educational outcomes. Studies have found that effects with arts education interventions tend to be more pronounced with students from historically-under-served communities and subgroups (Catterall, et al., 2012; Kisida et al., 2014; Podlozny, 2000). Therefore, we test the hypothesis that students who likely have less access to arts learning opportunities will experience greater treatment impacts. To investigate this possibility, we run separate analyses restricted by school-grade levels served (i.e., elementary and middle), gender, race/ethnicity, FRL and higher poverty status, LEP status, and GT status.

184

Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative

13

Results

Results, by outcome, for the overall as well as subgroup samples, are provided in tables 3 and 4. We find three statistically significant positive results for the full sample. Increasing students' arts educational experiences reduces the proportion of students receiving a disciplinary infraction by 3.6 percentage points; increases writing achievement by 0.13 of a standard deviation; and increases students' compassion for others by 0.08 of a standard deviation. Estimates are typically in the positive direction for all other outcomes, but fail to achieve traditional levels of statistical significance.

We examine moderating effects by investigating student subgroup impacts. We find numerous positive impacts, particularly on survey measures, with elementary level, LEP, and GT student subgroups. In addition to these subgroups exhibiting more-pronounced effects on writing achievement and compassion for others, these students demonstrate positive treatment effects on school engagement, college aspirations, arts-facilitated empathy, disposition for arts transfer, and perceived value of the arts. Positive effects on school engagement are particularly noteworthy, as it is the most common positive subgroup finding that was not significant for the overall sample. There is also some evidence to suggest negative impacts with middle school students in terms of school engagement and college aspiration.

185

Robustness Checks with Survey Data

The availability of survey baseline measures for students in the second cohort allows us to estimate first-year impacts in terms of growth, albeit with a smaller sample of only cohort two students. Nevertheless, this approach serves as a strong robustness check of our estimates. The compassion for others outcome remains positive in this analysis, and it is worth noting that this impact increases by roughly 40 percent, suggesting that these effects may be primarily attributable to impacts that occur in the first year of implementation. This analysis also reveals an overall statistically significant, 0.16 of a standard deviation increase in school engagement and a 5.7 percentage point increase in students' college aspirations.

Survey outcome measures were constructed such that items were standardized and equally weighted. This approach potentially over-weights item responses that are not as strongly correlated to the other items in the construction of the outcome measure. Therefore, we have also examined the sensitivity of our survey results by conducting an analysis where the outcome measures were reconstructed based on factor loadings. This alternative construction of the outcome measures has no impact on the qualitative interpretations of the treatment effect estimates. The comprehensive factor analysis estimates, by outcomes and subgroups, are provided in the appendices.

There also remains the possibility that nonresponse bias could have influenced survey-derived effect estimates. Students in the control group had a significantly higher response rate (9 percentage points) than those in the treatment group. Results from our primary analysis rely on the assumption that survey responses are missing at random and, therefore, not biasing our treatment effect estimates. Relative to the main analytical sample, we do not observe significant differences in surveyed treatment and control group students. While we cannot entirely dismiss concerns of nonresponse bias, we further investigate the sensitivity of these results by conducting an inverse-prob-ability-weighted regression adjustment (IPWRA) and bounding our treatment effect estimates, such that, on average, we trim 9 percent of the control group survey responses to estimate the bounds of the treatment effect for those students who would have been surveyed regardless of treatment status (see Lee, 2009). Rather than trimming the top and bottom 9 percent of control students, we determined trimmed proportions by response rate disparities within, rather than across the matched pairs. We find that our compassion for others outcome remains positive and statistically significant across specifications with the exception of the lower Lee bounds, which remains in the positive direction but fails to achieve statistical significance. The school engagement outcome is positive for the IPWRA and upper bound specifications, but null with the lower bound specifications. The results from these robustness checks are provided in Table 5.

Discussion & Conclusion

Our investigation is the first large-scale randomized control trial of an arts education program implemented in an authentic educational setting. This program was implemented in a diverse array of elementary and middle schools in the nation's 7th largest school district. We find that increases in students' arts learning experiences significantly improve educational outcomes. Fostering and supporting these experiences lead to improvements in student discipline, writing achievement, and compassion for others. These results are robust and support hypotheses and prior findings that the arts can play a critical role in positively affecting meaningful educational outcomes (Catterall et al., 2012; Deasy, 2002; DiMaggio, 1982; Fiske, 1999; Ruppert, 2006).

In general, the STAAR writing test assesses students' knowledge of mechanics through two components— multiple choice items and composition skills through an open-response expository essay. When we disaggregate this assessment to examine whether overall writing score gains are disproportionately driven by increases in students' mechanical or written composition achievement, we find that the AAI significantly increases student scores on both sections, but effects were greater in magnitude with written composition. Specifically, scores on the writing mechanics section increased by 0.08 of a standard deviation ($p = 0.03$), and scores on the expository essay increased by 0.18 of a standard deviation ($p < 0.01$). This increase in writing achievement, particularly with expository writing composition, is especially noteworthy in that there is limited rigorous evidence for transfer in terms of arts educational interventions bolstering outcomes typically tied to other school subject areas (Winner et al., 2013). The benefits of arts education with writing achievement potentially corroborates and further informs past research showing the benefits of the arts with regard to critical thinking, as assessed through students' written responses and interpretations of original works of art after an in-depth art museum-facilitated lesson (Bowen et al., 2014).

The main findings from this study were generally robust across student subgroups; however, there were notable variations in subgroup outcomes that could inform policy decisions and future research efforts. We find that reductions in disciplinary infractions appear to be more pronounced with middle school-level, male, African-American, non-FRL, and higher poverty-household students. Recent studies have shown that, with the exception of non-FRL, these students disproportionately incur disciplinary infractions (Anderson & Ritter, 2017; Skiba et al., 2014). Variations in subgroup outcomes are potentially attributable to ceiling effects with groups that have been less likely to incur disciplinary infractions. This consideration appears to be relevant to our sample. Ten percent of the students in our sample had received a disciplinary infraction the previous year; however, these infractions were disproportionately more likely to be incurred by males, middle schoolers, higher poverty students, and African-American students.

We also find that some outcomes are more likely to be statistically significant and positive, as well as larger in magnitude for elementary-level students. In addition to these subgroups exhibiting more-pronounced effects on writing achievement and compassion for others, these students demonstrate positive treatment effects on school engagement, college aspirations, and arts-facilitated empathy. The AAI disproportionately served elementary schools in its first two years, comprising 86 percent of our sample. Program delivery at this school level was the primary focus at this stage of the Initiative, and it is likely the disproportionate attention given to serving these schools may have better ensured fidelity of implementation. On the other hand, the effects unique to middle school students should be interpreted with caution. There were only six middle schools in this study, a circumstance which

187

lends itself to spurious results (Button et al., 2013). Finally, it is important to take into consideration that educational interventions typically have greater effects with younger students (Heckman, 2006), meaning that even with a larger middle school sample, we might not expect effects of the same magnitude.

Positive effects were also more pronounced with LEP and GT students. LEP and GT students demonstrated numerous positive effects on survey constructs, including school engagement, arts-facilitated empathy, arts transfer disposition, and valuing art. LEP students additionally showed positive effects on college aspirations and desire to consume arts. GT students had an additional positive effect on tolerance. A possible explanation for the strong, positive effects with LEP and GT students is that test-based accountability pressures have yielded circumstances that have withered the scope of K-12 educational opportunities. The majority of schools participating in the AAI had recently experienced pressure with test-based accountability sanctions. These sanctions tend to narrow educational offerings while intensifying the emphasis on student standardized test achievement, especially with those students scoring near critical accountability thresholds (Booher-Jennings, 2005; Deming, Cohodes, Jennings, & Jencks, 2016; Neal, 2010; Neal & Schanzenbach, 2010; West, 2007). The reinjection of the arts in these schools likely expanded enriching offerings and opportunities that plausibly improve student engagement, particularly with LEP and GT students who were more likely to have been adversely affected by school responses to accountability pressures.

There are a few limitations to this study. While random assignment to the AAI treatment allows us to confidently infer a causal relationship between the treatment and assessed outcomes, we remain less certain about the extent to which these results would be achieved in other contexts. In order to participate in the AAI, principals had to have the commitment and desire to improve their schools' arts educational offerings. Our research design ensures that this commitment and desire is balanced across the treatment and control groups. However, such results may not be achievable with schools that lack leaders who are as dedicated to providing and supporting the arts on their campuses. Another context-specific consideration is that Houston is a very arts-rich metropolis with a wealth of cultural institutions and organizations strongly committed to partnering with schools in the community. Smaller or less-arts-rich cities, as well as suburban and rural communities, may lack the resources necessary for providing effective school-community arts partnerships. However, it is worth nothing that there are widespread instances of school-community partnerships with arts organizations across communities of various sizes (Bowen & Kisida, 2017).

Another limitation is that, when defining the treatment for this study, we are restricted to the provision of matching funds and other AAI supports that foster, facilitate, and deliver school-community arts partnerships. We can state with confidence that our findings are a result of increasing arts educational experiences through these partnerships. However, we do not know whether (and which) particular mediators were responsible for these outcomes. The arts educational experiences that students received were incredibly diverse in terms of program format and arts discipline. The AAI director and staff worked with principals to develop plans and program selections that would align with the goals they had for their schools, which typically resulted in students receiving dance, music, theatre, and visual arts educational experiences through each of the various program formats: field trips, in-school professional artist performances, teaching-artist residencies, and programs that took place outside of regular school hours. Due to the variation and endogeneity in program selection across schools, we do not know which particular types of offerings were more likely to bring about desired effects. Finally, these analyses are restricted to shorter-term outcomes, and it remains to be seen if these effects will ultimately compound, serve as a one-time boost, or diminish over time. Critical next steps in this field of study will be to examine whether particular formats and varieties of arts educational programs are more successful in generating desired effects over longer periods of time.

The results of this study provide critical evidence that increasing students' arts educational opportunities has positive impacts on meaningful outcomes. The narrowing of educational offerings and objectives to align with accountability assessments has had adverse effects on the arts in K-12 education. Despite the logic behind narrowing educational offerings, substantial influxes of arts educational experiences do not appear to be detrimental to student growth in outcomes tied to accountability assessments. However, we do find evidence that these reductions pose significant costs. Arts learning experiences benefit students in terms of social, emotional, and academic outcomes. Education policymakers should be mindful and considerate of these benefits when assessing the opportunity costs that come with decisions pertaining to the provision of the arts in schools.

188

Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative

17

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190

Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative — **19**

TABLE 1

Table 1

Survey Outcomes

Outcome	Items	Source(s)	Cronbach's Alpha
School Engagement	■ School work is interesting. ■ School work makes me think about things in new ways. ■ School work is not very enjoyable. ■ This school is a happy place for me to be. ■ This school offers lots of different types of programs, classes, and activities to keep me interested in school.	Tripod Student Perceptions; Austin ISD Climate Survey	0.73
College Aspiration	■ I plan to go to college.	Austin ISD Climate Survey	N/A
Arts-Facilitated Empathy	■ Works of art, like paintings, music, dance performances, and plays, help me understand what life was like in another time or place. ■ I can learn about my classmates by listening to them talk about works of art. ■ Works of art help me imagine what life is like for someone else.	Greene, Kisida, & Bowen (2014)	0.67
Compassion for Others	■ I want to help people who get treated badly. ■ I am not really interested in how other people feel.	Greene, Kisida, & Bowen (2014)	0.47
Tolerance	■ I think people can have different opinions about the same thing. ■ I appreciate hearing views different from my own. ■ People who disagree with my point of view bother me.	Greene, Kisida, & Bowen (2014)	0.38
Cultural Consumption	■ I plan to go to art museums and galleries when I am an adult. ■ I plan to go to the theater for plays, musicals, and performances when I am an adult. ■ I plan to go to music concerts when I am an adult. ■ I plan to go to dance performances when I am an adult.	Greene, Kisida, & Bowen (2014)	0.73
Arts Transfer Disposition	■ The arts can help me be a better student. ■ Things I have learned in school can help me understand the arts. ■ Learning about the arts can help me understand things I learn in school.	NAEA-AAMD Art Museum Impact Survey	0.78
Value the Arts	■ The arts art interesting to me. ■ The arts are an important part of my life. ■ I enjoy talking about the arts. ■ I think artists do important work. ■ Art is one of my favorite subjects in school. ■ I would like to take more classes in the arts when I get to high school and college.	NAEA-AAMD Art Museum Impact Survey	0.85

Note: Due to there being only two items that comprised Compassion for Others and low internal consistency with Tolerance, we have analyzed these items, individually, that were used to form this construct. We have run results with these outcomes both as a single construct and by examining each of the survey items that comprise the construct individually. We primarily report analyses with these outcomes as single constructs; however, we note any instances in the ITT overall and subgroup analyses where individual items produce results that substantially deviate from those of their constructs.

TABLE 2

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics by Treatment Status

Variable	Treatment	Control	Difference
Grade Level	5.594 (0.287)	5.701 (0.274)	-0.107 (0.396)
Female	0.486 (0.006)	0.489 (0.008)	-0.003 (0.010)
FRL Status:			
Not FRL	0.136 (0.023)	0.134 (0.020)	0.002 (0.031)
Free Lunch Eligible	0.301 (0.017)	0.289 (0.021)	0.013 (0.027)
Reduced Lunch Eligible	0.074 (0.007)	0.070 (0.007)	0.004 (0.010)
Poverty	0.489 (0.030)	0.508 (0.022)	-0.019 (0.037)
Race/Ethnicity:			
African-American	0.232 (0.043)	0.243 (0.045)	-0.010 (0.062)
Hispanic/Latinx	0.708 (0.046)	0.701 (0.044)	0.007 (0.064)
White	0.027 (0.010)	0.029 (0.012)	-0.003 (0.015)
Special Education (SPED)	0.060 (0.005)	0.068 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.009)
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	0.302 (0.038)	0.283 (0.030)	0.019 (0.048)
Baseline Reading (standardized)	0.054 (0.071)	-0.128 (0.048)	**0.182*** **(0.085)**
Baseline Math (standardized)	0.018 (0.067)	-0.076 (0.057)	0.094 (0.088)
Prior Year Disciplinary Infraction	0.081 (0.019)	0.123 (0.027)	-0.042 (0.033)
Baseline Absences	4.695 (0.318)	5.389 (0.397)	-0.694 (0.507)
Sample Size	5,333	5,215	10,548

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering. When "baseline" is specified for time-sensitive academic achievement, it is for 2014–15 for the first cohort and 2015–16 for the second cohort. Test scores standardized relative to the rest of HISD with a mean of zero and standard deviation of one.

192

Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative — 21

TABLE 3

Table 3

Administrative Data-Derived Outcomes by Subgroup

Population	N	Discipline	Absences	Math	Reading	Science	Writing
Overall	4,063–10,548	**-0.036*** **(0.015)**	0.061 (0.128)	0.014 (0.063)	-0.019 (0.019)	-0.046 (0.065)	**0.127**** **(0.046)**
Elementary	2,547–5,565	-0.002 (0.007)	0.192 (0.136)	0.013 (0.042)	-0.029 (0.032)	0.009 (0.049)	**0.179**** **(0.065)**
Middle	1,516–4,983	**-0.073*** **(0.028)**	-0.087 (0.209)	-0.006 (0.121)	-0.009 (0.021)	-0.144 (0.132)	0.030 (0.023)
Female	2,009–5,140	-0.020 (0.011)	0.238 (0.142)	0.019 (0.070)	-0.021 (0.022)	-0.022 (0.067)	**0.136**** **(0.047)**
Male	2,054–5,408	**-0.053**** **(0.020)**	-0.100 (0.177)	0.010 (0.057)	-0.019 (0.021)	-0.062 (0.066)	**0.106*** **(0.050)**
Af.-Amer.	950–2,503	**-0.049**** **(0.015)**	-0.275 (0.304)	0.058 (0.045)	-0.062 (0.035)	0.061 (0.059)	0.031 (0.063)
Hisp-Latx.	2,856–7,436	-0.035 (0.018)	0.130 (0.147)	-0.016 (0.073)	-0.012 (0.022)	-0.064 (0.073)	**0.134*** **(0.057)**
Not FRL	602–1,421	**-0.059**** **(0.022)**	**0.562*** **(0.221)**	0.086 (0.082)	0.050 (0.044)	-0.083 (0.135)	0.225 (0.116)
FRL	1,485–3,875	**-0.027*** **(0.013)**	0.112 (0.117)	-0.026 (0.087)	-0.031 (0.020)	-0.073 (0.074)	**0.124*** **(0.057)**
Poverty	1,975–5,255	**-0.039*** **(0.018)**	-0.077 (0.173)	0.020 (0.045)	-0.031 (0.025)	-0.007 (0.050)	**0.094*** **(0.042)**
LEP	1,110–3,089	-0.023 (0.017)	-0.079 (0.185)	-0.030 (0.056)	-0.025 (0.031)	0.007 (0.062)	**0.266*** **(0.100)**
GT	731–1,927	-0.014 (0.010)	0.127 (0.149)	0.210 (0.166)	0.047 (0.035)	0.005 (0.150)	0.175 (0.094)

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering. Test scores are standardized with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

TABLE 4

Table 4

Survey Data-Derived Outcomes by Subgroup

Population	N	School Engagement	College Aspiration	Arts Empathy	Compassion	Tolerance	Cultural Consumption	Arts Transfer Disposition	Values Art
Overall	6,241–6,325	0.093 (0.051)	0.015 (0.018)	0.039 (0.036)	**0.080*** **(0.032)**	-0.004 (0.036)	0.029 (0.036)	0.054 (0.038)	0.060 (0.042)
Elementary	3,613–3,660	**0.260**** **(0.056)**	**0.069**** **(0.021)**	**0.097*** **(0.047)**	**0.150**** **(0.038)**	0.041 (0.040)	0.074 (0.050)	0.079 (0.047)	0.054 (0.055)
Middle	2,628–2,665	**-0.136*** **(0.047)**	**-0.053*** **(0.018)**	-0.021 (0.045)	0.010 (0.048)	-0.050 (0.064)	-0.005 (0.040)	0.030 (0.057)	0.091 (0.064)
Female	3,152–3,185	**0.120*** **(0.058)**	0.020 (0.020)	0.069 (0.044)	0.059 (0.040)	-0.012 (0.043)	0.051 (0.041)	0.048 (0.051)	0.042 (0.049)
Male	3,093–3,140	0.067 (0.053)	0.008 (0.023)	-0.004 (0.042)	**0.094*** **(0.042)**	-0.003 (0.041)	-0.004 (0.049)	0.054 (0.039)	0.068 (0.046)
Af.-Amer.	1,444–1,472	**0.146*** **(0.070)**	-0.040 (0.023)	-0.047 (0.059)	0.046 (0.041)	-0.110 (0.068)	0.030 (0.056)	0.069 (0.064)	0.032 (0.066)
Hisp-Latx.	4,333–4,386	0.065 (0.055)	0.042 (0.021)	0.049 (0.038)	**0.089*** **(0.043)**	0.010 (0.039)	0.027 (0.043)	0.025 (0.035)	0.046 (0.038)
Not FRL	840–848	**0.162*** **(0.073)**	-0.030 (0.036)	0.078 (0.114)	0.091 (0.063)	-0.012 (0.067)	0.033 (0.079)	0.114 (0.102)	0.207 (0.115)
FRL	2,345–2,381	0.077 (0.060)	0.025 (0.025)	0.064 (0.044)	0.092 (0.048)	-0.007 (0.046)	0.042 (0.044)	0.070 (0.049)	0.091 (0.055)
Poverty	3,058–3,098	0.086 (0.056)	0.022 (0.018)	-0.008 (0.039)	0.062 (0.038)	0.001 (0.044)	0.012 (0.040)	0.009 (0.039)	-0.021 (0.041)
LEP	1,970–1,993	**0.207**** **(0.072)**	**0.100**** **(0.024)**	**0.133*** **(0.058)**	**0.222**** **(0.056)**	0.041 (0.048)	**0.165*** **(0.065)**	**0.137*** **(0.061)**	**0.115*** **(0.057)**
GT	1,265–1,281	**0.158*** **(0.073)**	0.042 (0.027)	**0.201**** **(0.069)**	**0.232**** **(0.046)**	**0.136**** **(0.051)**	0.092 (0.056)	**0.176**** **(0.065)**	**0.232**** **(0.074)**

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering. When investigating individual items for Compassion for Others and Tolerance, there are some qualitative differences in the interpretations of individual survey item effects relative to those for the constructed outcomes. For the Compassion item "I want to help people who get treated badly," there is a significant positive effect with females ($p = 0.03$) and FRL-eligible students ($p = 0.03$), and a lack of a significant effect with males ($p = 0.08$). For the Compassion item "I am not really interested in how other people feel," there is a lack of a significant effect with the overall sample ($p = 0.09$) and Hispanic/Latinx students ($p = 0.09$). For the Tolerance item "I think people can have different opinions about the same thing," there is a significant negative effect with African-Americans ($p = 0.01$). For the Tolerance item "I appreciate hearing views different from my own," there is a significant positive effect with LEP students ($p = 0.03$). For the Tolerance item "People who disagree with my point of view bother me," there is a lack of a significant effect with GT students ($p = 0.12$).

TABLE 5

Table 5

Robustness Checks for Survey Outcomes

Outcome	N	ITT	2SLS	Pre-Post Cohort 2	Factor Analysis	IPWRA ATE	Lee Bounds	
							Upper	Lower
School Engagement	6,325	0.093 (0.052)	0.095 (0.051)	**0.155** (0.048)**	0.080 (0.043)	**0.074** (0.025)**	**0.164** (0.055)**	0.045 (0.073)
College Aspiration	6,311	0.015 (0.018)	0.015 (0.018)	**0.057* (0.023)**	N/A	0.010 (0.012)	**0.080** (0.029)**	-0.035 (0.032)
Arts-Facilitated Empathy	6,249	0.039 (0.036)	0.039 (0.036)	0.051 (0.047)	0.029 (0.028)	0.024 (0.027)	**0.118* (0.046)**	-0.020 (0.066)
Compassion for Others	6,290	**0.080* (0.032)**	**0.081* (0.033)**	**0.113** (0.036)**	**0.047* (0.019)**	**0.071** (0.026)**	**0.183** (0.050)**	0.033 (0.056)
Tolerance	6,299	-0.004 (0.036)	-0.004 (0.036)	0.006 (0.043)	-0.001 (0.021)	-0.016 (0.026)	0.057 (0.047)	-0.060 (0.064)
Cultural Consumption	6,241	0.030 (0.036)	0.030 (0.036)	0.031 (0.047)	0.022 (0.030)	0.030 (0.025)	0.086 (0.050)	-0.035 (0.062)
Arts Transfer Disposition	6,259	0.054 (0.038)	0.055 (0.038)	0.042 (0.051)	0.044 (0.032)	0.040 (0.027)	**0.133** (0.042)**	-0.011 (0.072)
Value the Arts	6,285	0.060 (0.043)	0.061 (0.043)	0.016 (0.045)	0.036 (0.028)	0.035 (0.027)	**0.129** (0.043)**	0.003 (0.073)

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering. Pre-post analyses are for cohort two students only; this restriction reduces the sample sizes to a range of 3,511 to 3,625 observations. Lee Bounds "snip" the upper and lower tails of the dependent variable of interest distribution with the control group, which had a higher response rate than the treatment group; the upper and lower bound snips reduced the sample sizes to a range of 5,381 to 5,700 observations. College aspiration is not included because results are based on a single survey item.

Appendices

Survey Participant Demographics and Treatment-Control Comparisons

Variable	Survey Participants	Survey Population	Part.-Pop. Difference	Survey Treat	Survey Control	T-C Difference
Grade Level	5.674 (0.232)	5.958 (0.253)	-0.284 (0.184)	5.693 (0.346)	5.656 (0.314)	0.037 (0.466)
Female	0.504 (0.007)	0.476 (0.011)	**0.027* (0.014)**	0.502 (0.010)	0.505 (0.011)	-0.003 (0.015)
FRL Status:						
Not FRL	0.134 (0.021)	0.132 (0.017)	0.002 (0.018)	0.139 (0.034)	0.130 (0.026)	0.009 (0.043)
Free Lunch	0.302 (0.017)	0.290 (0.020)	0.012 (0.014)	0.305 (0.024)	0.299 (0.024)	0.007 (0.034)
Reduced Lunch	0.074 (0.006)	0.068 (0.008)	0.006 (0.006)	0.076 (0.008)	0.073 (0.008)	0.004 (0.011)
Poverty	0.490 (0.022)	0.509 (0.022)	-0.019 (0.016)	0.480 (0.035)	0.499 (0.026)	-0.019 (0.044)
Race/Ethnicity:						
African-American	0.233 (0.032)	0.255 (0.047)	-0.022 (0.037)	0.244 (0.052)	0.222 (0.039)	0.022 (0.065)
Hispanic/Latinx	0.694 (0.034)	0.709 (0.048)	-0.015 (0.039)	0.679 (0.058)	0.707 (0.039)	-0.029 (0.070)
White	0.034 (0.011)	0.017 (0.004)	**0.018* (0.009)**	0.032 (0.016)	0.037 (0.016)	-0.005 (0.023)
SPED	0.048 (0.004)	0.097 (0.010)	**-0.049** (0.010)**	0.045 (0.006)	0.050 (0.005)	-0.006 (0.008)
LEP	0.315 (0.029)	0.318 (0.038)	-0.003 (0.037)	0.311 (0.047)	0.319 (0.035)	-0.007 (0.058)
Baseline Reading	0.046 (0.051)	-0.151 (0.072)	**0.197** (0.067)**	0.157 (0.085)	-0.055 (0.048)	**0.212* (0.097)**
Baseline Math	0.068 (0.054)	-0.122 (0.061)	**0.190** (0.058)**	0.140 (0.087)	0.002 (0.062)	0.138 (0.106)
Baseline Absences	4.289 (0.200)	7.311 (0.571)	**-2.344** (0.421)**	4.705 (0.368)	5.207 (0.363)	-0.502 (0.514)
Baseline Discipline	0.069 (0.014)	0.122 (0.027)	**-0.052* (0.020)**	0.062 (0.020)	0.075 (0.019)	-0.013 (0.027)
Sample Size	6,340	8,437	8,437	3,026	3,314	6,340

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors adjusted for school-grade clustering. Survey participation column is for the spring administration and is relative to the targeted survey population. When "baseline" is specified for time-sensitive academic achievement, it is for 2014–15 for the first cohort and 2015–16 for the second cohort. Test scores standardized relative to the rest of HISD with a mean of zero and standard deviation of one.

First Year Administrative and Survey Results—ITT and ATE

Outcome	N	ITT (s.e.)	1st Stage (s.e.)	2SLS (s.e.)
Disciplinary Infraction	10,548	**-0.036*** **(0.015)**	**0.961**** **(0.003)**	**-0.038*** **(0.015)**
Absences	10,548	0.061 (0.128)	**0.961**** **(0.003)**	0.063 (0.132)
Math (4th-8th)	10,130	0.014 (0.063)	**0.977**** **(0.002)**	0.014 (0.064)
Reading (4th-8th)	10,140	-0.046 (0.065)	**0.977**** **(0.002)**	-0.020 (0.020)
Science (5th and 8th)	4,063	-0.046 (0.065)	**0.975**** **(0.003)**	-0.047 (0.065)
Writing (4th and 7th)	4,352	**0.127**** **(0.046)**	**0.977**** **(0.003)**	**0.130**** **(0.046)**
School Engagement	6,325	0.093 (0.051)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.095 (0.051)
College Aspiration	6,311	0.015 (0.018)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.015 (0.018)
Arts-Facilitated Empathy	6,249	0.039 (0.036)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.039 (0.036)
Compassion for Others	6,290	**0.080*** **(0.032)**	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	**0.081*** **(0.033)**
Tolerance	6,299	-0.004 (0.036)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	-0.004 (0.036)
Cultural Learning	6,316	0.037 (0.039)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.038 (0.039)
Cultural Consumption	6,241	0.030 (0.036)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.030 (0.036)
Arts Transfer Disposition	6,259	0.054 (0.038)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.055 (0.038)
Value the Arts	6,285	0.060 (0.042)	**0.987**** **(0.002)**	0.061 (0.043)

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$. Standard errors are in parentheses and have been clustered at the school-grade level. Test scores are standardized with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

Local Average Treatment Effects for Administrative Data-Derived Outcomes

Population	N	Discipline	Absences	Math	Reading	Science	Writing
Overall	4,063–10,548	**-0.038*** **(0.015)**	0.063 (0.132)	0.014 (0.064)	-0.020 (0.020)	-0.047 (0.065)	**0.130**** **(0.046)**
Elementary	2,547–5,565	-0.002 (0.007)	0.201 (0.141)	0.014 (0.043)	-0.030 (0.032)	0.010 (0.050)	**0.184**** **(0.065)**
Middle	1,516–4,983	**-0.075**** **(0.028)**	-0.091 (0.211)	-0.006 (0.120)	-0.009 (0.021)	-0.147 (0.124)	0.030 (0.021)
Female	2,009–5,140	-0.021 (0.012)	0.247 (0.146)	0.019 (0.071)	-0.021 (0.022)	-0.023 (0.068)	**0.140**** **(0.047)**
Male	2,054–5,408	**-0.055**** **(0.020)**	-0.104 (0.183)	0.011 (0.058)	-0.019 (0.021)	-0.064 (0.066)	**0.108*** **(0.050)**
Af.-Amer.	950–2,503	**-0.053**** **(0.016)**	-0.295 (0.322)	0.061 (0.046)	-0.064 (0.036)	0.064 (0.059)	0.032 (0.064)
Hisp-Latx.	2,856–7,436	**-0.036*** **(0.018)**	0.134 (0.151)	-0.016 (0.073)	-0.012 (0.022)	-0.066 (0.073)	**0.136*** **(0.057)**
Not FRL	602–1,421	**-0.061**** **(0.022)**	**0.581*** **(0.225)**	0.088 (0.082)	0.051 (0.044)	-0.084 (0.132)	**0.231*** **(0.114)**
FRL	1,485–3,875	**-0.028*** **(0.013)**	0.115 (0.119)	-0.027 (0.088)	-0.031 (0.021)	-0.074 (0.073)	**0.127*** **(0.057)**
Poverty	1,975–5,255	**-0.041*** **(0.018)**	-0.081 (0.181)	0.021 (0.046)	-0.032 (0.026)	-0.007 (0.050)	**0.096*** **(0.042)**
LEP	1,110–3,089	-0.023 (0.017)	-0.082 (0.189)	-0.031 (0.057)	-0.026 (0.031)	0.007 (0.061)	**0.271**** **(0.100)**
GT	731–1,927	-0.014 (0.010)	0.130 (0.150)	0.213 (0.166)	0.048 (0.035)	0.005 (0.147)	0.178 (0.092)

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering. Test scores are standardized with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

Local Average Treatment Effects for Survey Data-Derived Outcomes

Population	N	School Engagement	College Aspiration	Arts Empathy	Compassion	Tolerance	Cultural Consumption	Arts Transfer Disposition	Values Art
Overall	6,241–6,325	0.095 (0.051)	0.015 (0.018)	0.039 (0.036)	**0.081*** **(0.033)**	-0.004 (0.036)	0.030 (0.036)	0.055 (0.038)	0.061 (0.043)
Elementary	3,613–3,660	**0.266**** **(0.057)**	**0.071**** **(0.021)**	**0.099*** **(0.048)**	**0.153**** **(0.039)**	0.042 (0.041)	0.075 (0.050)	0.080 (0.047)	0.055 (0.055)
Middle	2,628–2,665	**-0.136**** **(0.045)**	**-0.053**** **(0.018)**	-0.022 (0.044)	0.010 (0.047)	-0.050 (0.062)	-0.005 (0.038)	0.031 (0.055)	0.091 (0.062)
Female	3,152–3,185	**0.122*** **(0.058)**	0.020 (0.020)	0.070 (0.044)	0.060 (0.040)	-0.012 (0.043)	0.051 (0.041)	0.049 (0.051)	0.043 (0.049)
Male	3,093–3,140	0.068 (0.053)	0.008 (0.023)	-0.004 (0.042)	**0.095*** **(0.042)**	-0.003 (0.041)	-0.004 (0.049)	0.055 (0.039)	0.069 (0.046)
Af.-Amer.	1,444–1,472	**0.148*** **(0.069)**	-0.039 (0.023)	-0.048 (0.058)	0.047 (0.041)	-0.112 (0.068)	0.030 (0.055)	0.070 (0.063)	0.032 (0.065)
Hisp.-Latx	4,333–4,386	0.066 (0.055)	**0.042*** **(0.022)**	0.050 (0.038)	**0.090*** **(0.043)**	0.010 (0.040)	0.028 (0.043)	0.026 (0.035)	0.046 (0.038)
Not FRL	840–848	0.164 (0.072)	-0.031 (0.035)	0.079 (0.113)	0.093 (0.062)	-0.012 (0.067)	0.034 (0.078)	0.116 (0.100)	0.210 (0.114)
FRL	2,345–2,381	0.079 (0.060)	0.025 (0.025)	0.069 (0.045)	**0.095*** **(0.048)**	-0.007 (0.046)	0.043 (0.044)	0.074 (0.050)	0.095 (0.055)
Poverty	3,058–3,098	0.087 (0.056)	0.022 (0.018)	-0.008 (0.039)	0.063 (0.038)	0.001 (0.044)	0.012 (0.041)	0.010 (0.039)	-0.022 (0.041)
LEP	1,970–1,993	**0.210**** **(0.072)**	**0.102**** **(0.024)**	**0.135*** **(0.058)**	**0.225**** **(0.056)**	0.042 (0.048)	**0.167*** **(0.066)**	**0.139*** **(0.061)**	**0.116*** **(0.057)**
GT	1,265–1,281	**0.160*** **(0.073)**	0.043 (0.027)	**0.204**** **(0.069)**	**0.236**** **(0.046)**	**0.138**** **(0.050)**	0.094 (0.055)	**0.179**** **(0.065)**	**0.235**** **(0.073)**

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering.

Survey-Derived Outcomes with Factor Analysis

Population	N	School Engagement	Arts Empathy	Compassion	Tolerance	Cultural Consumption	Arts Transfer Disposition	Values Art
Overall	6,122–6,311	0.080 (0.043)	0.029 (0.028)	**0.047*** **(0.019)**	-0.001 (0.021)	0.022 (0.030)	0.044 (0.032)	0.036 (0.028)
Elementary	3,540–3,652	**0.224**** **(0.046)**	**0.076*** **(0.037)**	**0.088**** **(0.022)**	0.027 (0.024)	0.060 (0.042)	0.062 (0.040)	0.044 (0.035)
Middle	2,628–2,665	**-0.114**** **(0.037)**	-0.019 (0.034)	0.006 (0.028)	-0.028 (0.039)	-0.008 (0.036)	0.027 (0.049)	0.038 (0.041)
Female	3,096–3,182	**0.106*** **(0.049)**	0.051 (0.034)	0.034 (0.022)	-0.007 (0.026)	0.039 (0.035)	0.038 (0.044)	0.014 (0.033)
Male	3,026–3,129	0.055 (0.045)	-0.002 (0.033)	**0.057*** **(0.024)**	0.002 (0.024)	-0.004 (0.041)	0.045 (0.033)	0.049 (0.029)
Af.-Amer.	1,408–1,469	**0.122*** **(0.058)**	-0.047 (0.045)	0.023 (0.024)	-0.073 (0.039)	0.031 (0.048)	0.055 (0.055)	0.023 (0.043)
Hisp-Latx.	4,254–4,377	0.056 (0.046)	0.041 (0.030)	**0.053*** **(0.024)**	0.012 (0.024)	0.013 (0.036)	0.020 (0.030)	0.019 (0.023)
Not FRL	832–845	**0.131*** **(0.063)**	0.066 (0.088)	0.050 (0.037)	-0.006 (0.039)	0.046 (0.071)	0.095 (0.086)	0.136 (0.079)
FRL	2,302–2,380	0.067 (0.050)	0.053 (0.034)	0.054 (0.028)	0.002 (0.027)	0.023 (0.037)	0.059 (0.042)	0.036 (0.034)
Poverty	2,988–3,092	0.073 (0.046)	-0.011 (0.030)	0.036 (0.022)	0.001 (0.026)	0.008 (0.034)	0.008 (0.033)	-0.002 (0.027)
LEP	1,925–1,989	**0.179**** **(0.061)**	**0.111*** **(0.045)**	**0.135**** **(0.031)**	0.038 (0.030)	**0.122*** **(0.054)**	**0.112*** **(0.051)**	**0.077*** **(0.036)**
GT	1,250–1,280	**0.131*** **(0.063)**	**0.154**** **(0.054)**	**0.134**** **(0.026)**	**0.086**** **(0.029)**	0.067 (0.047)	**0.149**** **(0.055)**	**0.150**** **(0.052)**

Note: ** statistically significant (two-tailed) at $p < 0.01$; * significant at $p < 0.05$; standard errors in parentheses adjusted for school-grade clustering. College aspiration is not included because results are based on a single survey item.

Mission

The Kinder Institute for Urban Research builds better cities and improves people's lives by bringing together data, research, engagement, and action.

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2018-19

Ainsworth K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	.5
Total	1.5

West Sylvan Middle School

Dance	1.0
Music	.5
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	2.0
Total	2.5

Bridlemile K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Lincoln High School

Dance	0
Music	1.5
Theatre	.5
Visual Arts	3.8
Total	5.8

Skyline K-8

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Chapman K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Forest Park K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

JEFFERSON CLUSTER

Faubion Pre K-8

Dance	1.0
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	2.0

Chief Joseph K-5

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	1.0

Ockley Green Middle School

Dance	1.0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	3.0

Woodlawn K-5

Dance	0
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	.8
Total	.8

Jefferson High School

Dance	3.9
Music	0
Theatre	1.7
Visual Arts	3
Total	7.07

Tubman Middle School

Dance	1.0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	3.0

Boise-Eliot/Humboldt K-5

Dance	0
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	1.0

Vernon K-8

Dance	0
Music	1.0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	1.0
Total	2.0

King K-5

Dance	.5
Music	0
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	0
Total	.5

ARTS TAX DATA REPORT:
K-5 Metrics & Impact
Average S/T Ratio by
School in 2018-19

Average Student/Teacher ratio: 375/1
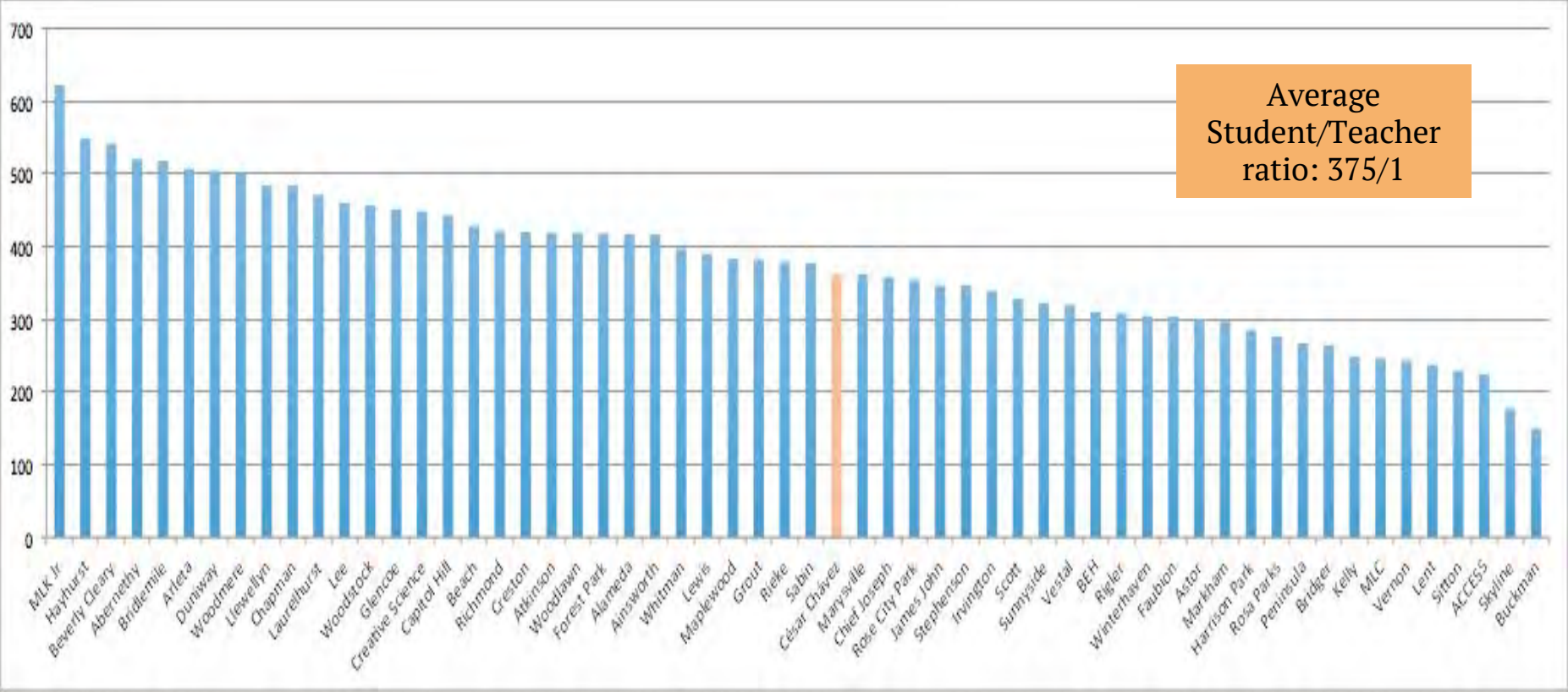
Visual & Performing Arts Department: Portland Public Schools

Historical Context	1851- 2018, no central office VAPA department • Limited sustainability • Varying TOSA support over time • Decentralization (M5) • Equitable Access

Present	Future State

1. Arts Tax established 2013-14
  a. jump from 15-63 FTE K-5
  b. from 25% to 100% of schools served
2. 2018-2019
  a. Program Implications
    i. Program Administrator Position Added
    ii. VAPA Department Established
    iii. 100% increase in department size
  b. Professional Development Implications
    i. Rollout of 2 full-day PDs for each arts discipline
    ii. Established baseline data of standards-based teaching
    iii. Established baseline data of culturally responsive/relevant teaching
  c. Partnership Implications
    i. Expanded relationship with Portland Art Museum
    ii. HEART of Portland expansion
    iii. White Bird PD for PPS teachers & arts org partners
  d. Community Engagement Implications
    i. 2 BESC galleries featuring student artwork from all clusters
    ii. 315+ VAPA events featuring student work
  e. Phase I Master Arts Education Plan
    i. Teacher stakeholder group
    ii. Best Practices research
    iii. Strategic planning model
    iv. Data collection and analysis
    v. Draft short term recommendations & superintendent/board report
	Program of Study: a comprehensive, structured approach for delivering academic and career and technical education to prepare students for postsecondary education and career success. (CTE)
	
	In Visual & Performing Arts, Program of Study is defined by::
	● Scholarship
	● Technical Skill
	● Creative Process
	● Social & Emotional Learning
	● Career & Technical Learning
	● Social Justice & Citizenry
	
	DANCE • MUSIC THEATRE • VISUAL ARTS • LITERARY ARTS
	
	K-12 Pathway Articulation
	All clusters offer K-12 pathways in all schools in at least two disciplines.
	1. K-5 Program of Study
	  a. anchor FTE in both Visual Arts & Music
	  b. share FTE for Dance/Theatre focused on SEL
	  c. exploratory sequence in K-3
	  d. deepening specialization in 4,5 (e.g. band, strings, mariachi)
	  e. continued arts integration through partnerships
	2. 6-8 Program of Study
	  a. FTE in Visual Art & Music at all schools
	  b. Cluster-specific focus FTE in either Dance or Theatre
	  c. Embedded Literary Arts integration through partnerships & professional development
	3. 9-12 Program of Study
	  a. FTE in all four arts disciplines
	  b. Cluster-specific focus in either Dance or Theatre
	4. Extended Learning
	  a. Summer Arts Academy & After School Enrichment
	
	Partnerships
	1. Embedded grade-band specific arts experiences in each arts discipline (e.g. White Bird Dance for all 3rd graders; Portland Art Museum for 6th, Oregon Symphony for 5th).
	2. Curriculum guide connected to program of study, interdisciplinary
	3. PD for teachers with partnership organization
	4. CTE
	
	Scope & Sequence
	1. A GVC that articulates K-12 pathways through standards-based anchor experiences.

Crosswalk -- Harvard's *Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education* "Seven Purposes of Arts Education"		
Purpose 1: Arts education should foster broad dispositions and skills, especially the capacity to think creatively and the capacity to make connections.	Scholarship Technical Skill Creative Process	The four lenses through which arts education is experienced.
Purpose 2: Arts education should teach artistic skills and techniques without making these primary.	Scholarship Technical Skill	
Purpose 3: Arts education should develop aesthetic awareness.	Technical Skill Creative Process	
Purpose 4: Arts practices should provide ways of pursuing understanding of the world.	Social/Emotional Learning Career & Technical Learning Social Justice & Citizenry	
Purpose 5: Arts education should provide a way for students to engage with community, civic, and social issues.	Career & Technical Learning Social Justice & Citizenry	
Purpose 6: Arts education should provide a venue for students to express themselves.	Technical Skill Creative Process	
Purpose 7: Arts education should help students develop as individuals.	Social/Emotional Learning Career & Technical Learning Social Justice & Citizenry	

Environment

Student Learning

Pedagogy

Community Dynamics