

Improving Washington's Schools



**An Evaluation of The Community
Consortium Grants Program,
2003-2004**

Arts in Education Program
Washington State Arts Commission



Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D.
EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT

© 2005 Michael E. Sikes



Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D.
EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT

Mano e Mente, Inc.
4344 Modoc Road, #1
Santa Barbara, CA 93110
805.681.0016
msikesphd@cox.net



Contents

Executive Summary	5
Using this Report	7
Introduction	9
Renewing Student Achievement	11
Renewing Teaching	17
Empowering Leadership	27
Reform at Three Levels	41
The Findings in Context	43
The Evaluation Process	47
References	49

Executive Summary

Purpose of this Report

In 2004, the Washington State Arts Commission (WSAC) commissioned an evaluation of the Community Consortium Grants Program (CCGP). A new kind of initiative, designed to foster sustainable collaborations of arts organizations and schools, the CCGP focuses on helping students meet Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) in the arts. It does this by improving teaching and learning, providing professional development for teachers and artists, and enhancing community support for arts education. This report presents findings of the evaluation.

Findings of the Evaluation

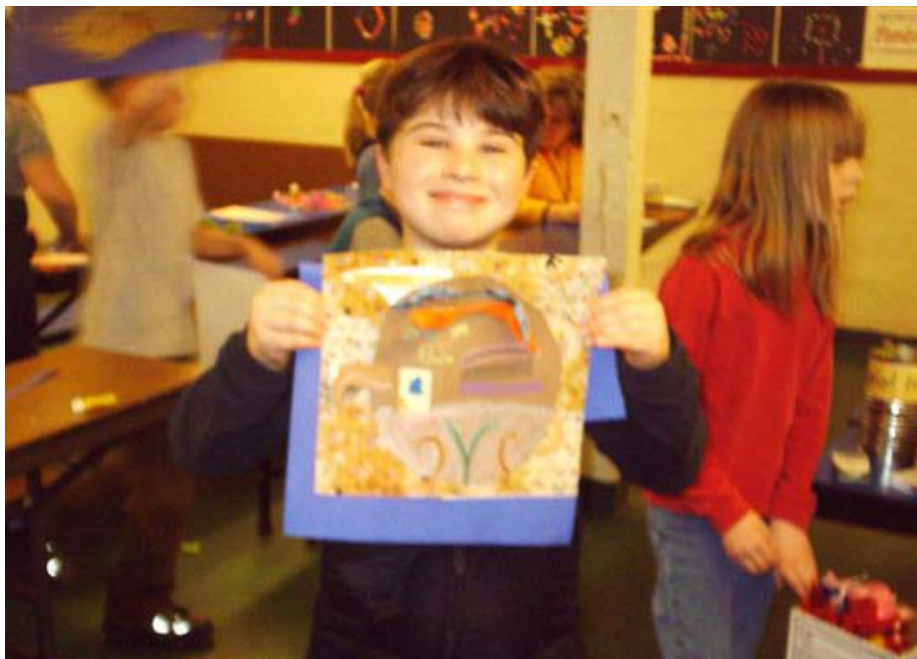
Teaching and learning

The Community Consortium Grants Program is continuing to bring about significant improvements to teaching methods and to student achievement in the schools and communities that it impacts. These improvements include more effective alignment of teaching and lesson content with the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). The improved alignment, in turn, is helping transform the standards into learning at the classroom level.

The evaluation also finds that teachers in the Consortia are providing more authentic, integrated curricula and instruction, which lead to greater student engagement, particularly where students have previously been marginalized or uninterested in schooling. Moreover, the enhanced teaching and learning are helping focus on the state's standardized assessments in the arts.

Professional development

The Program is impacting professional development of teachers, resulting in changes to their professional knowledge and practice in ways that should bring about more long-term effects on student learning. Teachers are learning to use arts content, both in arts-focused lessons and across the curriculum.



Policy transformation

The Program is transforming administrators and leaders and raising community awareness of the values of educational experiences in the arts; moreover, the impacted communities are responding by providing increased support for their schools. Thus the CCGP is making important strides toward transforming arts education policy by changing the perceptions and actions of parents, publics, and policymakers in regard to education.

Three levels of reform

These various effects constitute an integrated approach to school change that can be more effective than isolated, fragmentary approaches. Together, they offer significant promise of helping schools across Washington improve student achievement, teacher effectiveness, school leadership, and community involvement and support.

Detailed analyses of data are presented in the full version of this report, *Improving Washington's Schools: An Evaluation of The Community Consortium Grants Program, 2003–2004*, available from the Washington State Arts Commission.

Using this Report

This report is divided into the following sections:

Introduction

A brief background of The Community Consortium Grants Program.

Major findings

- Renewing student achievement: teaching and learning
- Renewing teaching: professional development
- Empowering leadership: policy transformation
- Reform at three levels: levels of leadership

Findings in context

This section considers the findings within the larger context of educational research and policy.

The evaluation process

A general description of the methods used in the evaluation.



Introduction

The Community Consortium Grants Program (CCGP) represents a new kind of initiative, designed to foster sustainable collaborations of arts organizations and schools. Established in 1999, the CCGP focuses on helping students meet Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) in the arts.

The CCGP is administered through the Arts in Education (AIE) Program of the Washington State Arts Commission (WSAC), the state agency of Washington responsible for supporting the arts and culture. The agency's strategic plan charges WSAC in part to:

Improve teaching and learning by supporting and promoting sustainable arts-based curricula and programs in K-12 public schools.

The Plan identifies the following strategies:

- Use state arts education Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts (EALRs) as standards for WSAC's arts education programs.
- Strengthen and replicate Arts Education Community Consortia to more school districts.
- Encourage replication of proven practices in arts education.

In 2004, WSAC contracted with Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D., an independent consultant, to conduct an evaluation of this program as it concluded its fifth year, 2003–2004. This report presents findings of that evaluation.

Program Goals

The current goals of the Community Consortium Grants program are:

1. To encourage and support a community's capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public schools and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education.
2. To encourage full utilization of local resources by supporting partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members.
3. To help communities develop strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students and will be sustainable due to community participation and advocacy.
4. To develop local arts education expertise by supporting training of local educators and

teaching artists in creating and teaching arts lessons based on the EALRs, integrating the arts into other subject areas, and assessing student performance in the arts. (Source: WSAC Website)

The Approach Used in This Report

This report is designed to build on previous evaluations of the program by exploring these questions:

- Are the Consortia bringing about changes to teaching and learning, both in the classroom and in the larger context of community-based learning?
- Are the Consortia effectively conducting professional development of teachers, artists, and administrators, resulting in change to their professional knowledge and practice?
- Are the Consortia impacting policy at the community level by changing the perceptions and actions of parents, publics, and policymakers?
- How are these effects related in helping to build overall sustainable structures for improved learning in Washington schools?

The findings of this evaluation are drawn from Consortium member final reports. Excerpts from these reports appear throughout as examples of evidence.

Major Findings of the Evaluation

The evaluation finds credible and persuasive evidence for the following outcomes:

1. The Community Consortium Grants Program is continuing to help improve student learning.
2. The Program is impacting professional development of teachers, resulting in changes to their professional knowledge and practice in ways that should bring about more long-term effects on student learning.
3. The Program is at the initial stages of transforming arts education policy by raising community awareness of the values of educational experiences in the arts and thus changing the perceptions and actions of parents, publics, and policymakers in regard to education.
4. The combined effects of improving teaching and learning, developing the skills of educators and administrators, and building local policy support constitute a powerful integrated approach to school change.

Each of these outcomes is elaborated in the following four sections of the report.

Renewing Student Achievement

“Most of all, art builds children’s confidence in their ability to do things, and that impacts all of their work.”

—2004 Final Report

Finding 1: The Community Consortium Grants Program is continuing to help improve student learning.

This evaluation finds that the grantees and their Consortium partners are playing pivotal roles effectively meeting the Essential Academic Learning Requirements. This conclusion is based on analyses of lesson plans and curricula, teacher guides, and other documents demonstrating numerous connections to the EALRs. Moreover, the implementation of these curricula, as described and documented in final report narratives, photography, and media, are clearly transforming the standards into actual teaching and learning in Washington’s classrooms.

Corresponds to Goal 1: To encourage and support a community’s capacity to implement the state’s Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public schools and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education.

Indicators that Support this Finding

- Lesson plans, teacher guides, and other learning materials incorporate the EALRs in their design.
- Meaningful connections link curricula, units, and lessons to EALRs.
- Assessment practices tap in-depth student knowledge and skills.

A previous report (Sikes, 2003) identified a series of steps that lead to implementing standards:

1. Identify the standards that are most central to the program.
2. Adapt and publish the standards.
3. Unpack the standards to reveal and clarify the understandings, knowledge, and skills that are implicit in them.
4. Define the embedded questions that will guide student inquiry.
5. Identify a range of assessment tools, including the authentic tasks that demonstrate mastery of the standards.
6. Plan the learning activities that will bring about the mastery.

Aligning all of these stages and processes—standards, curriculum, student outcomes, assessments, and activities—is a primary key to successful standards-based instruction. Only if these components are aligned is the program likely to succeed as planned. As noted in a previous report, the most successful members of the Consortia followed these steps throughout and provided the essential alignment necessary to make standards-based education happen.

The present evaluation finds additional data demonstrating that the resulting learning powerfully engages students. The following excerpts from Consortium member final reports portray the range of student arts learning experiences:

This year we added a journaling component to Science of Art so we could more effectively assess student learning. We kept a selection of student writing that documents their responses including sketches of the work and analysis of the scientific principles in action. We also received feedback, both verbally and on evaluation forms. One teacher asserted, “Art appreciation is important to my math and science students. The art of glass blowing was an eye opener for my future inventors.” The other large component added this year is a design-based project for participating students. This project was piloted with two of our partner schools, Wilson High School and Tacoma School of the Arts. The school groups were required to take the concepts they learned in the “Sound of Glass” unit and create their own glass orchestra. Students designed an instrument (size, style, thickness) made of glass and the Museum’s hot shop team created the pieces according to the students’ specifications. The classes then composed a piece of music to be performed by the glass orchestra and presented it for the public at the Museum.



Three after-school art sessions were on the calendar during the 2002-2003 school year. This means 65 kids, rather than 40 were able to enrich their understanding of the visual arts focusing on shape and form—the elements they have received regular classroom instruction on. The after school art program for 4-6 graders and 1-3 graders were completed in three, six week sessions. These children had the opportunity to explore the element of shape and form in greater depth working with a local artist. They were exposed to a wide range of artists and their unique styles. The children then create works of their own, applying what they learn and exploring many mediums. This program has been a huge success. Both the grades 4-6 and grades 1-3 filled past capacity in the first day.

The reports cite numerous instances of teachers providing testimony to the effects of the program on their own students:

It happens every year—there’s always at least one student in the classroom who you haven’t been able to reach, and you do because of the arts. There is always a bloomer with this hidden, latent gift... It’s worth it just for that kid.

Another teacher added:

Every year it is exciting to see many students start their practices with great frustration and comments that they can’t do it... then Martha gives them a few pointers... then we see students make changes in their attitude, skill level, and motivation to practice more, and to create something they are proud of; this is learning.

Another clear characteristic that emerges from the data are the authenticity and depth of student work, as a number of teachers have observed:

Art has a major role in building the foundation for reading, math, and writing. It trains children to analyze and look for detail... as children develop their art skills they expand their awareness of the world around them. Their visual perception becomes much more clearly and quickly defined. This is very important background ... [for] reading, writing and math. Most of all, art builds children’s confidence in their ability to do things, and that impacts all of their work.

Thompson’s “Rainy Night” highlighted the idea of reflection and symmetry for our art learning. In addition, my second graders are bringing art to life for our school’s Gallery Walk for the public. Each child has learned about an artist’s life and style and will become the artist or the art for the public gallery walk.

These varied programs are meeting standards not only in the arts, but across the curriculum:

A model residency in Japanese ceramics, for second and third graders, was piloted by [the] artist-in-residence. She carefully thought through the challenge of developing a short and simple but culturally authentic project for young students, resulting in a product (a Japanese tea bowl) that they themselves could use in a culminating event, a Japanese tea ceremony, presented inside a simulated Japanese teahouse, presided over by two Japanese hostesses who served green tea and Japanese cakes. Students built on previously developed skills with clay and glazes in making their bowls; students learned arts vocabulary alongside Japanese vocabulary and were taught the significance of

tea ceremony rituals as they themselves were applying audience skills in this unusual arts setting. The residency was significant not simply because of the impact on the 140 students who worked in this residency with this artist but also because of the model it provided for JSIS [Jackson School of International Studies] teachers, of a short series of simple arts lessons (three, including tea ceremony) that taught measurable arts skills and also contributed to student learning in other curricula. In its year-end review, the Visual Arts Team concurred with this evaluation: it recommended, using this model, that ceramics projects focus on the rich ceramics traditions in both Mexico and Japan, to integrate most easily with the JSIS language immersion program.

Teachers pointed out ways in which the arts experiences are engaging students who might otherwise be marginalized:

We are infusing art and drama into our curriculum and it motivates the kids to learn and gives them a whole new dimension... the program provides opportunities for students to excel, build confidence, and raises self-esteem in students who are not strong academically.

The most dramatic evidence of improved student self-esteem occurred at HIMS, [Hamilton International Middle School] in an arts residency in Taiko drumming that Kim Alessi presented for the two self-contained Special Education classes. Teacher Heather Emmett said, "I am the teacher of six boys in a self-contained special education classroom. The students have Down Syndrome, autism, fragile X, fetal alcohol syndrome, and cerebral palsy. Because these boys have these disabilities they often do not have access to activities that many typically developing peers have. This year, however, they had the unique opportunity to participate in Taiko drumming. Through this activity I saw many of the boys come alive and have fun at something new. One student in particular who really excelled at this was one of the boys with autism. This particular student does not like really loud noises, so we weren't sure how he would react to the noise from the drums. We were greatly surprised to see that he not only could tolerate the noise, but was eager to join in. He was working hard to keep with the rhythm of the instructor. We found that he really enjoyed drumming and it opened the door for him to participate in an after school Afro-Cuban drumming class with typically developing peers. Another student who greatly benefited from this activity was the boy with cerebral palsy. The disability mostly affects his right side, making a lot of movement in his right hand difficult. He was very motivated by the drumming so it became a great strengthening activity for him. He too participated in the after school drumming class for several weeks.

Impact on Testing

A number of final reports referenced program components designed to help students succeed on the Washington State Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), the state's standardized tests:

The 2002–2003 WASL scores for Mountain Meadow show scores well above the state average in all areas as well the highest of any school in the White River School District. Even with already high scores, gains were made in all four areas. Mountain Meadow was #1 in combined math and reading scores for schools of like size in the state. Mountain Meadow children continue to develop skills necessary to be successful, well-rounded individuals.

As a new school, SOTA's [School of the Arts] second class of sophomores once again outperformed other schools on the WASLs in-spring 2003. Spring 2004 scores have not yet been released. While we believe the arts are an important factor in these comparatively high scores, there are many aspects of the SOTA experience that contribute including an extremely supportive environment during WASL testing.

Several of the reports referenced preparation for the upcoming statewide assessment in the arts:

The knowledge base gained about quality arts education will [help] staff to continue to prepare students for the mandatory 2008 state arts assessment. Because the district arts committee participated in all levels of lesson development and teacher training, the work done at Mountain Meadow will branch out to other schools in the district.



While some of the data reveal evidence that the program is impacting student test scores, the data provide several other important indicators:

- Consortium members are beginning to focus on test data as possible indicators of success. This can be useful, provided they understand the data as *indicators* and not *outcomes*, a crucial distinction. Outcomes should include student engagement, student mastery of knowledge and skills, student use of higher-order thinking, and so on. Assessment data is only one source of evidence of these outcomes.
- The programs are inculcating skills that might be assessable in other, more authentic ways, such as student projects, portfolios, and performances.
- The programs are using more of these authentic and meaningful assessment tools.
- Consortium evaluations acknowledge some of the threats to validity in making inferences about connections between their programs and test data.

The Next Challenge

These successes demonstrate that at a fundamental level of classroom practice, teaching and learning are continuing to experience significant transformation. This finding is in alignment with conclusions from previous studies.

There is another important impact taking place in the Program, however, one which may prove even more important in the coming years. That impact is the renewal of teaching practice in classrooms. It is major focus of this report and is fully explored in the next section.

Renewing Teaching

“During the weeklong training, a dedicated group of twelve teachers fell in love with the program. When asked how the training could be improved, one teacher said, “I don’t know. Every day I went home happy and fulfilled. Each morning I was excited and eager to learn and interact with a variety of professional folks.”

— 2004 Final Report

Finding 2: The Program is impacting professional development of teachers, resulting in changes to their professional knowledge and practice in ways that should bring about more long-term effects on student learning.

In 1966, the Coleman Report, a landmark study submitted to Congress, claimed that schools have relatively little influence on student achievement in comparison to such factors as student home life, culture, and socio-economic status; and thus the role of teachers in the success of students is marginal, at best.

Corresponds to Goal 4: To develop local arts education expertise by supporting training of local educators and teaching artists in creating and teaching arts lessons based on the EALRs, integrating the arts into other subject areas, and assessing student performance in the arts.

Forty years of research have largely overturned this view, replacing it with a much more sophisticated and complex picture of the many variables that go into a child’s success—one of which is unquestionably the ability of the teacher. This ability is a mixture of preparation, knowledge, skill, and dedication. All of these factors can be substantially altered through effective professional development.

Indicators that Support this Finding

- Final reports and other materials describe extensive professional development activities.
- Final reports and other materials provide evidence of alterations in teachers practice.

Based on data from the Consortia, as well as other research in arts education (e.g., Deasy, 2002), this report can cite several ways that the arts can impact teacher training. An examination of the data from the final reports demonstrates that these various effects constitute a multi-part model of teacher change.

Teacher Change Model: Strands of Teacher Learning

Teachers experience learning in several key strands:

- Attaining basic content knowledge
- Gaining comfort with challenging subjects and methods
- Using new curricular tools
- Integrating subjects

Next, teachers deepen their knowledge via the following mechanisms:

- Mentorship
- Using residencies and community resources
- Understanding effects on students
- Understanding assessment

Finally, teachers use their new knowledge to bring about change through the following mechanisms:

- Engagement
- Advocacy
- Leadership
- Planning
- Collaboration

Strands of Teacher Learning

Attaining basic content knowledge

At a beginning level, teachers may lack the basic knowledge of how to teach to an arts standard, or to use arts to help meet other learning standards. They may need help in any of the six steps identified in the previous section, Renewing Student Achievement. In addition, they may need to know how to manage when arts materials and facilities are in short supply or nonexistent. They might need some help in identifying community resources they might tap.

Gaining comfort with challenging subjects and methods

There is a natural reluctance to try something new. The arts, especially performing arts, can be challenging and require teachers to tap faculties of public performance that are often neglected in teaching other subjects. Classroom management can take on a new uncertainty when students are given necessary freedom to create and perform. However, teachers seem to be rising to the challenge, as demonstrated in the following:

On Thursday, March 18, 2004, from 4:30–7:00 pm, 10 teachers, principals, and parent coordinators representing each school participated in a workshop that

included an overview of the project, the distribution and discussion of curriculum development resources, and a creative movement workshop. During the creative movement workshop, the group learned basic dance concepts such as time, space, and energy, which require no formal dance training and can be replicated with their own students to create dance-related classroom activities.

This is amplified by a building administrator:



The greatest benefit from the grant lies in the training and experience the classroom teachers gain. In most instances the teachers are able to extend lessons first presented by the artists: lessons focused on the arts and integrated with other subject areas. I see teachers becoming more comfortable and efficient in including art and drama into their daily lessons. The real beneficiaries of this growth are our students-by being able to experience learning activities that provide deeper levels of understanding and allowing them additional creative ways in which to demonstrate their knowledge.

Numerous other reports attested to this effect. Since teaching is an imaginative act, in that teachers are helping students to imagine a better future state and bring it about through learning, these stretches are useful.

Using new curricular tools

The Consortium program is also stimulating curriculum use among teachers. Several teachers were quoted as saying: “I want to develop curriculum and lesson plans such as these!” and “It might be helpful to bring together a think-tank of people from all the areas of expertise: college and high school, junior high, upper and lower elementary teachers, to brainstorm.” Other responses confirm this:

We saw a significant improvement in the use of the curriculum over the past year. Several groups that attended Science of Art in the fall returned in the spring to experience a different unit, resulting in a substantial increase in the use of the available units. For example, just one teacher used the curriculum before attending the BrainArt unit for the fall session, but nearly every teacher did for the spring. Teachers appreciated the way the Museum used these science

concepts and gave them meaning and a connection to “real life.” One teacher said, “I love the hands-on approach that is offered and the Museum gave it all real meaning and real life applications.” Another stated, “I’ve always wanted to integrate applications of concepts and this was a great example.” We are also working hard to move toward a layered approach with each unit, increasing adaptability for either older or younger students. This includes working with teachers to get input on the age appropriateness of our materials.

Increased use of curriculum based on the Arts EALRs, and in the number of teachers trained in Arts EALRs, was most apparent in the school-wide initiation of an introductory ceramics program at JSIS, with training for all teachers and interested parents, four lessons for all students in basic methods of hand building, and an additional project (three lessons) for all kindergarten through third grade students to create a ceramics piece within a specific cultural context.

Integrating subjects

Another area that can challenge teachers is integrating subject areas. Although there is evidence that this is how children and adults tend to naturally learn, it is counter to standard practice in today’s schools. The following artifacts provide evidence of the extensive use of integration:

School culture was especially strengthened by the collaborative projects for *El Dia de los Muertos*, which involved students in visual art, woodshop, English Language Learners, Spanish, and drama/media literacy. These students not only produced their own art works with artists-in-residence but also hosted a “Mexican village” reception for fourth- and fifth-graders from JSIS, who paraded through the neighborhood with their holiday *calaveras* (lanterns).

Reports provide detailed descriptions of integrated lessons:

[The] woodshop teacher ... integrated his curriculum with arts activities at HIMS by attending the Consortium training at The Burke Museum to learn the arts skills addressed; [by], with his students, building and painting wood trays for the *El Dia de los Muertos tapetes* project; [by] co-teaching the *alebrijes* project with artist-in-residence Fulgencio Lazo; [by] consulting with Gale Lurie on ceramics projects; [by] planning to integrate the woodshop curriculum with instrument-building in 2004-05. Japanese teacher, Kayomi McDonald...actively reinforced Taiko lessons in her Japanese classes and drummed with her students and artist-in-residence, Kim Alessi, at the display of student performances, the International Arts Celebration, in May, a project component about which students were also very enthusiastic.

Deepening Teacher Knowledge

Mentorship

As teachers learn to work with artists, they develop reciprocal relationships in which they and participating artists mentored each other, developed curriculum, and improved their practices as educators:

Coaching, mentoring and professional training of teaching artists in EALRs and assessment has become an essential component for teaching artists. Each teaching artist has received training from the Consortium's consultant, Meredith Essex, to directly support work in the classroom, including individual coaching and mentoring in lesson development [and] alignment with Arts Essential Learning Requirements.

Additional hours for artist Gale Lurie as a trainer and consultant, beyond her student contact hours as artist-in-residence, enabled her to "institutionalize" the knowledge she was presenting. She developed a ceramics handbook for teachers, to reinforce the arts concepts, vocabulary, skills, and techniques to which she introduced teachers and students, and to provide a resource for classroom teachers as they move into the next stage of the program planning and teaching a ceramics lesson or series of lessons themselves, with Ms. Lurie mentoring.

Mentor opportunities for new artists to the program and for artists with limited teaching experience were an asset to our program because they helped artists with wonderful talent and skill break down their lessons into age appropriate lessons that taught specific skills

Using residencies and community resources

Associated with this is greater use of the residencies by teachers involved in the programs:

Teachers are looking ahead for next year and already planning how to incorporate a residency into their classroom curriculum. Many are ordering school materials this summer to support materials requirements. Participating artists voiced that the experience of working with students was inspiring, refueling and mutually beneficial for both student and artist.

Understanding effects on students

Repeatedly, teachers have demonstrated that they understand the impact on students. Being able to personally articulate the value of arts education experiences is an important offshoot of teacher training:

Anecdotal evidence includes a teacher who told us about a student that was always in trouble at school and yet he was excited about his trip to the Museum so much so that every day he asked when they were going. The teacher said that during his visit, he was the most engaged she had ever seen him! Additionally, Wilson High School asked for volunteers to participate in our design-based glass orchestra project after their visit to the Museum, and surprisingly, more than one-half of the students who visited volunteered to use their personal time to work on this special project.

Understanding assessment

It is essential that teachers understand the vital role that assessment plays in arts learning. Significant evidence demonstrates that teachers are using advanced arts education assessment techniques and learning from the results:

Kim Fairbanks has used reflective peer critique as a means for criteria based self-assessment for 2nd grade students. She also has employed the use of teacher criteria based checklists as an assessment tool. Richard Clairmont also used criteria based checklists. Martha Worthley used rubrics and checklists for 6th grade integrated lessons so that mastery of specific skills was recorded for each student. On a couple of larger projects, students self-assessed their learning. In classes with younger students, Worthley does a “pre and post” assessment, checking in verbally with students for their knowledge prior to beginning a project, and for what they learned afterwards. In this way, Worthley can tell what is retained from one lesson to the next.

Teachers in the Change Process

Engagement

The next step in the process is renewed teacher engagement. Several of the final reports provided data attesting to the power of the Consortium programs to re-connect educators to the teaching process. Perhaps none is a more powerful testimony than the following description :

Within two days of announcing the opportunity, twenty educators expressed an interest in participating, as well as many others who were not available, but



indicated interest for future trainings. During the weeklong training, a dedicated group of twelve teachers fell in love with the program. When asked how the training could be improved, one teacher said, “I don’t know. Every day I went home happy and fulfilled. Each morning I was excited and eager to learn and interact with a variety of professional folks.”

Advocacy

Teacher training and engagement, in turn, have a series of impacts on the program. One of these is teacher and administrator advocacy:

At both Grant Street and Mountain View Elementary Schools, teaching artists were given their own classroom spaces after years of working itinerantly. Regular classroom teachers lobbied the administration for this change. At the Blue Heron Middle School, the establishment of the annual Tales, Texts & Theater program as a democratic and diverse arts learning opportunity for all 7th grade students and teachers was only possible because the principal, Ami Fields, fully supported the school’s participation; it was a risk for her, but it’s paying off.

Teachers initially hesitant to devote class time to the arts became advocates for the program after meeting with artists and experiencing a residency. 100% of our participating teachers want to host a residency next year.

Leadership

Teacher advocacy is further articulated in the form of leadership:

The Site Council at Mountain View Elementary set a building goal for teachers to re-teach a lesson originally taught by an artist. Teachers now take responsibility for independently conducting rehearsals supporting theatre lessons and request follow up ideas to support visual art lessons independently. For example, after 5th grade classes worked with Martha Worthley to learn a variety of watercolor techniques, teachers requested a list of follow-up exercises, with samples.

After a slow start to the ceramics program two years ago, key to building momentum during this school year were: the willingness of two individual teachers, who are themselves ceramicists, to take on leadership roles in coaching less experienced teachers; parents' taking on crucial out-of-class components, such as buying supplies, firing student work, and maintaining the kiln; the Visual Arts Team's mid-year decision to continue a focus on ceramics and thus commit to building expertise among classroom teachers. The Visual Arts Team also considered how the new ceramics program was meshing with continuing implementation of classroom-based visual arts lessons using the curriculum resource, SRA Arts Connections. It recommended that continuing a school-wide focus, month by month, on particular visual arts elements will be most successful if time is set aside during staff meetings for selecting lessons from the resource and for reporting back results. Time has already been scheduled, during the August 2004 planning days before students return to school, to introduce this structure.

The planned process of the two schools "taking ownership" of the Consortium and its activities was considerably advanced this year by school representatives' taking responsibility for many details: planning, scheduling, and implementing Consortium activities, each of which may be comparatively minor on its own but is essential to smooth completion of Consortium plans. Responsibility for documenting Consortium activities, and disseminating information about them, was also transferred to school representatives, who took all Consortium photographs, assembled the Consortium website...and will periodically update its postings.

Planning

One of the components of leadership is planning:

Every teacher who hosts a residency is included in every step of the experience from planning, to the hands on learning, to assessment. Artists and teachers meet with our education specialist to plan each residency and outline specific learning goals, and link art lessons with curriculum from other disciplines. Many of the teachers who hosted residencies for the first time this year were inaugurated into the essence of arts education by planning with artists about how to address essential learning goals through relative, age appropriate projects, and learning first hand through participation in the projects themselves. Teachers who are familiar with the program are now able to initiate and plan projects with little help from Methow Arts staff, and outline sophisticated lessons that build on previous learning to provide sequential skill development.

Collaboration

Another useful dimension of teacher practice is the ability to form partnerships with artists in both planning and leadership:

This has been a highly effective model because the teachers have input on what kinds of lessons are developed, the lesson can more easily be integrated into existing curriculum. The artist and teachers are working together, and the artist is modeling quality art instruction, so the teachers learn how to effectively teach



the lesson themselves. The teachers also learn how to logistically handle art materials in the classroom. This insures continued use of these lessons in the future once the artist has gone. Staff from around the district has been, and will continue to be, released from their classrooms to participate and observe in classrooms where Barbra is working.

The lessons developed during the previous two years were used by every grade level in the building. This means the teachers independently taught the lessons focused on color and line that the artist had worked with them on the years before. The ability to teach these lessons on their own with success, gives great value to the model that has been used at Mountain Meadow. The level of understanding and enthusiasm for both staff and students continues to grow. Ongoing teacher training has also occurred. Every Tuesday that Barbra is in the building, the teachers receive a two-hour after school in-service focusing on the art lesson she has completed with the grade level from the previous week. This provides the opportunity for staff to experience the content and skills being taught in grade levels they don't teach, learn how the curriculum builds K-6 and receive some much needed reinforcement in developing their personal understanding of the element of shape and form.

The extensive documentation of these powerful effects on teachers leads to the conclusion that school change is likely within the Consortia because of this training. However, there is an addition critical component of the educational change equation, that of overall school and community leadership. That is discussed in the next section.

Empowering Leadership

“We are building a reputation in our region for quality arts experiences for students in our schools.”

— 2004 Final Report

Finding 3: The Program is at the initial stages of transforming arts education policy by raising community awareness of the values of educational experiences in the arts and thus changing the perceptions and actions of parents, publics, and policymakers in regard to education.

Corresponds to Goal 3: To help communities develop strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students and will be sustainable due to community participation and advocacy.

Indicators that Would Support this Finding

- Various community stakeholders clearly and convincingly articulate the value of the arts in their schools.
- Policy mechanisms, such as funding, staffing, dedicated spaces, instructional time, and supplies support arts instruction.

There is evidence that the CCGP is having an effect on leadership in the schools, and indirectly on policy at the local level, in a way that will ultimately increase the viability of arts programs and arts teaching.

Why are these inputs important? The research on educational policy argues strongly for a new role of leadership in school change, one that closely mirrors the work of the Consortium. In order to understand this, it may be useful to consider the various strands of leadership that can help bring about change in Washington.

Part of the answer comes from the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), a University of Washington think tank. In 2001, it reported on a study of the factors that facilitate progress in Washington’s elementary schools—as measured in terms of EALRs and WASL results. It found that within the first year or two of standards-based reform, they adopted a culture of continuous and relentless improvement and they developed an interconnected array of the following strategies, all aimed at improving student learning:

- instructional alignment with the EALRs and across grade levels
- more efficient use of time
- more collaborative and intentional staff development
- more strategic parent involvement
- more intentional staff evaluation
- relentless and on-going analysis of strengths and weaknesses
- better targeted resources to help low-performing students (McCarthy, 2001)

The report goes on to note:

While the respondents at most of this year's study schools included one or more of these strategies in their approach to improvement, most schools seemed to adopt the strategies one by one, in a slow and disintegrated fashion. For instance, in many schools, just this year they adopted strategies, such as team planning



and block scheduling, that were well underway in fast-improving schools during our first year of investigation. Sometimes it appeared that these schools took longer to recognize that an isolated, though important change strategy will have limited effect if not reinforced by other complementary ones.

Another view is offered by Brooks (2000), also writing for CRPE, who identifies the following as the indispensable elements of an accountability system:

- Fair, reliable, relevant, and understandable indicators of school performance
- Predictable and consistent incentives for performance
- Opportunities for schools to build their capacity, ensuring tools and resources for schools that need to improve
- Flexibility for schools to adapt to help their students learn and meet state standards of performance

- A safety net, providing functional learning opportunities for students when school improvement is not possible
- A comprehensive public information campaign that helps schools and the public understand the process
- An independent body guiding the system and providing a check and balance on the political oversight of the system.

Based on the preceding, this report considers the leadership achievements of the Consortia through a multi-level framework.

This framework is used as a structure for considering significant amounts of data from the Consortia.

A Leadership Framework

Administrative leadership

- Developing a learning community
- Using evaluation and assessment

Engaging parent and community involvement

- Understanding public value
- Communicating public value
- Gaining public feedback on public value
- Using public value to foster growth

Extending Learning Communities Beyond the School

- Building partnerships
- Comprehensive school planning
- Developing the structure for continued community support

Administrative Leadership

The first component of this framework is the support and leadership of administrators in the targeted schools. Based on data from the final reports, this leadership is beginning to emerge as one of the characteristics of the Consortia sites:

Continued growth is seen in school principals dedicating teacher in-service time to arts integration training for the following year. Paths which build capacity have been created through the tangible support, enthusiasm and willingness to commit time, space, and energy to arts education.

Developing a learning community

Part of the reason for this renewal of leadership is that administrators are increasingly understanding the value of arts experiences for their students and schools—an example of learning at the administration level. A basic component of learning, both as individuals and organizations, is the more effective use of data. A review of the final reports reveals significant increases in the extent, depth, and quality of program evaluation and data use. Some of the evaluations are conducted in-house, while some are contracted to consultants. Many of the survey instruments used in these evaluations are carefully designed and result in extensive, thoughtful responses. Consortium members have increased their evaluation capacity through the Evaluation Tool Kit (Sikes, 1999) and the January, 2004, training provided by WSAC.

Using evaluation and assessment

Several reports pointed out that evaluation training had helped them to use information more effectively.

In an effort to improve their effectiveness in assessing student learning in the arts, teaching artists and the grant administrator have also attended a day long workshop with Michael Sikes, WSAC consultant, and a 2-hour arts assessment workshop led by Tina LaPadula of Arts Corps in Seattle.

Several of the Consortium final reports noted that they had made extensive changes to their evaluation processes, partly in response to WSAC's training and grants requirements:

We evaluated our evaluation systems early in the program planning and initiated some changes with how we collect data and what we expect from our partners. We have learned to keep evaluation simple and meaningful and time efficient in order to gain participation from our teachers and administrators. We used five main sources of evaluation: simple written forms for teachers and students that ask open ended but specific questions; self determined student letters; face to face meetings with students, administrators, teachers and artists; presentation by students of their work; and observation. The information gleaned from these sources has been compiled, and distilled into an outline of our successes challenges and expanded goals for our program that will guide future planning.

We have made marked improvement in our assessment strategies this year. Attending WSAC's evaluation training in January gave us valuable information and helped us to incorporate a video evaluation component as well as a design-based assessment, directly linked to EALRs both of which were incredibly successful. The Summer Teacher Institute also provided insight and a wealth of

knowledge in making this program perfect for our audience. Science of Art has and will continue to improve and grow based on a careful analysis of data and evaluation instruments.

Consortium manager, Cathy Palmer, and HIMS International Education Director, Sue Ranney, participated in the WSAC-sponsored evaluation and assessment workshop in January. Suggestions from this workshop led to Ms. Palmer's increasing the number of artist observations, interviews, and student "reflections" collected during residencies. Consortium members also planned to work with an independent assessment consultant in 2004-05, who will provide additional arts assessment training for teachers as well as guide team-building activities for school-based Consortium members.

There are numerous examples of using evaluation to improve programs and to enhance organizational learning:

Both teacher and consultant observed that students would have benefited greatly from more explicit introduction of dance vocabulary and teaching of movement sequences in addition to specific dances. Older students could also have gained some experience with choreography by using steps to create their own movement sequences. The strongest recommendation was that time and budget should have been allocated for the artist's company to present a dance assembly before the residency began.



In these efforts to expand participation and enthusiasm among both teachers and students at HIMS, fellow-through was occasionally spotty (for example, one teacher did not make time for students to use the self/group-assessment rubric that the artist had developed) and expectations of teachers not always clear. Expanding the number of students involved in Consortium projects was successful, but left some students with small roles to play in the broadly collaborative projects for *El Dia de los Muertos*. Among students in the twelve classes that participated in the *tapetes* project, for example, a typical comment was "I got to put yellow for a background and I worked very hard on my outline of a bird and didn't even get to paint it on." To address these challenges, classroom teachers will themselves teach the *tapetes* and *alebrijes* lessons;

students will thus be able to “take ownership” of their own products, even if a larger communal design is sacrificed. And in 2004-05 teachers will participate in training, led by Justin Maggart, in working with artists to clarify learning goals and assessment tools.

Engaging Parent and Community Involvement

Understanding public value

A second major component of the leadership model is the active engagement of parents and community members. This in turn is divided into several aspects. One of these is the ability to understand the public value of arts programs. Several of the final reports described the application of this understanding:

In looking for sustainability, the partners and stakeholders of the Port Townsend Community Consortium have consistently examined and refined their role in the service of the Port Townsend community. The Consortium has recently joined forces with the Children’s Festival of Art and the Jefferson Arts Center Project to form the Youth Arts Council, merging the Jefferson County art organizations that provide arts learning opportunities for children. Operating within the 501(c)(3) umbrella provided by this expansion holds the promise of future sustainability and thoughtful growth. As partners, the Youth Arts Council will provide arts in the schools, after-school art programs, weekend family art programs, a summer camp in the arts, and an annual day-long arts festival that served 1200 people in 2003.



Communicating public value

A further step in marshaling community support is the communication of this public value. The final reports described many examples in extensive detail. Because of this detail and the

obvious importance of this component, many of the reports are excerpted at length. Some sites are using a variety of techniques for dissemination, including the internet:

In 2003-04 the International Arts Consortium made progress towards... disseminating useful information (residency plans and assessment tools) about its work through a unified Internet posting, with identifying logo.

Also crucial to the Consortium's dissemination of its work were the collecting, editing, and posting, at one Internet location, under an identifying logo, residency plans and assessment tools from some of its work of the past four years (www.seattleschools.org/schools/hamilton/iac/index.htm). The site provides the most vivid, easily accessible, and growing record of the Consortium's work, and enables the Consortium to document and publicize its work without the considerable cost of hard-copying.

The prominent display of student work is a frequent occurrence in the Consortium programs, one which communicates their value publicly:

All of the residencies highlight and validate student skill, creativity, uniqueness, and potential. Students are regularly celebrated by the display and honoring of their work. The stained glass piece in the Methow high school was used as a cover for the graduating class roster printed in the local newspaper. It joins over 30 other pieces that students have created in the schools over the years and serve as reminders of the capabilities of the students, and their value as creators and owners of their schools.

A number of the Consortium made use of community partners to help communicate value:

This year, our Consortium benefited from the addition of two new community partners who engaged in program planning and assessment, provided funding and have become thoughtful and well informed advocates for arts education in their communities. The Mid Valley Hospital is a community hospital that serves all four rural school districts that are partners in our Consortium. The hospital provided significant cash and in-kind contribution that provided for high quality materials for art work and space on their walls for permanent and revolving exhibits by students. We have currently installed 10 large frames with mats that swing open to change work, and will install a series of 2' x 7' painted silk banners in a central mail area mat was identified as an eyesore by staff.

Dissemination of the Consortium's work was also achieved not only through the *El Dia de los Muertos* workshop at the Burke Museum but also through sessions

at the Seattle “Festival Mosaic” (a full-day teacher training organized by Consortium member Seattle International Children’s Festival, in collaboration with the Outreach Centers at the Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington and with the Washington State Council for the Social Studies).

As the preceding also shows, some of the Consortia provided public displays of student work at sites away from the school when the opportunity arose. Here is another example:

Another significant community participant was the Methow Valley Sport Trail association who helps identify sites and fund permanent student installations along our vast trail system. This year...students... finished the second phase of a clay relief sculpture on a cement retaining wall along a well traveled trail.



Significantly, the dissemination and display of student work affords a role for the students in articulating the public value of their educational experiences:

Artwork from 1st graders through 6th graders was represented. The Mountain Meadow Artwalk was held June 3. This was another chance for the community to see the work the students have done during the school year. Mountain Meadow children and staff opened the doors of the school to the community. This artwalk featured all the work created during the year as a result of the Consortia grant. Children acted as docents, explaining the various artwork, famous artists, techniques and processes used at each grade level. Art stations were set up for parents and community members to create their own artwork, working with their children using the techniques that were learned this year. The turn out for this event was much larger it has been to date. Families and community members coming through the door for the evening event stated how this event has become a Mountain Meadow tradition to look forward to at the

end of the school year. The Pierce County Arts Commission held their monthly meeting at Mountain Meadow the afternoon of the event and also toured the visual arts displays.

Gaining public feedback on public value

Not surprisingly, these activities are leading to response from community members; the cumulative effect, in many cases, has been widespread community recognition of the importance and impact of these programs:

Mountain Meadow has become a school of the arts in the eyes of the community. That label will have lasting impact in the years to come. Working with the principal, the staff will continue to seek out and pursue meaningful art experiences for the children. There will also be a visual arts curriculum in place that is aligned strongly with the state arts EALRs. The staff will be familiar with the curriculum and trained to teach it to the best of their abilities.

An additional component of leadership is community feedback that confirms perception of the program's value. Some examples illustrate this communication process:

Our new partnerships have expanded public projects that help fuel an increasing appreciation for student artwork, are an expression of our unique community, and inform the public about our program. Our Consortium partners often receive phone calls, emails and other unsolicited comments of appreciation of the student work by the public.

I see the parents who were not believers in the value of the arts and who disparaged this program initially, attending the performance with astonishment at the beauty and accomplishment of their child. I see all the families who have never attended a performing arts event begin to change their minds about its value. I see the young man whose father was highly disapproving until the morning of the performance when his son blocked a goal at a soccer game and he asked his wife, "Where did he learn how to jump like that?" and his wife replied, "Ballet." The father unexpectedly attended that afternoon's performance and gave his son roses.

There are countless examples of parents approaching each other or teachers or the principal to express their support after seeing the impact on their student. A

tangible result of this is the unanimous vote, with many supporting comments from parents of past participants, to increase PTA funding for the Discover Dance residency.

Direct comments from parents, quoted in the reports, seem to confirm this:

I expected to enjoy watching the kids perform, but I didn't expect to watch the entire performance with a lump in my throat. I was so moved by the opportunity all these children had to be stars—to feel the beauty in the movement of their bodies, to hear the magic of their words, their voices. And to stand on the stage of McCaw Hall!

I've seen a slow awakening of our community to the excitement and physical benefits that dance brings.

Using public value to foster growth

At some point, the communication of value should result in increased parent and community involvement. This seems to be happening extensively throughout many of the sites:

Parent and community volunteers assisted regularly in the classrooms, enhancing the program by providing important teacher support and experiencing firsthand the benefit of arts education. A parent group began a funding alliance that provided \$3,000 towards the program, and superintendents at every school supported school board buy-in. In the Methow, the school board approved an additional \$2,000 on top of their budgeted cost share to support a stained glass project for advanced art students.

Increased perceptions of value, by parents and policymakers, should lead to program growth. There is some evidence of such a connection:

In the 2003/04 school year, our Consortium doubled in scope with the addition of two new school district partners, Okanogan and Pateros. The addition of these districts means that our Consortium is serving 3,614 students and 284 teachers in a 48 mile radius, which includes 10 rural communities in two winding river valleys separated by a mountain pass.

Not all of the programs were equally successful:

Unfortunately, it has been difficult to drum up equal parent and community interest in the program. A public performance of the Art World show for parents

only garnered nine audience members, almost all of them children who had already seen the show and wanted to see it again. The Consortium has evaluated its strategies for involving parents and community and has plans in place to create more community enthusiasm and support in the coming year by providing opportunities for students to perform their own plays for parents. The hope is that if the students are performing (as opposed to professional actors) their parents might take the time to attend a performance.

However, the following kinds of results seem to be more typical:

Mountain Meadow PTA provided financial support, and helped with many of the events related to the project by helping with anything from set up to providing refreshments. The financial support increased by about \$1, 250.00 from the previous year. They have committed to \$2,000.00 for the 2004-2005 school year.

Pierce County Arts Commission provided financial support to help with transportation costs, after school art class artist fees and consulted with coordinator as needed. They have already committed to funding the 2004-2005 Consortium through the Arts Education Grant.

Extending Learning Communities Beyond the School

Building partnerships

Another result of the increased perception of value is the growth of partnerships. There are numerous references to such collaborations increasing the impact of the programs. The following is one example:

We have partnered with companies such as Battelle...graduate students in math, physics, occupational health, computer science, materials science, teaching, and music; volunteers from the community as teaching docents as well as chaperones; professors in math, computer science, physics, music, and dance; community outreach groups who normally teach only math or only science; as well as all of the visiting teachers and students, from first through twelfth grades.

Some of these partnerships involve higher education:

After the past year of programming, we also piloted a four-day expanded

teacher-training workshop, the Summer Teacher Institute, in cooperation with the University of Washington, Tacoma. We were able to offer clock hours/CEUs (Continuing Education Units authorized through UWT) to the participating teachers. The tremendous success of this pilot workshop will allow us to launch the full 5-day expanded model for college credit next year. Within two days of announcing the opportunity, twenty educators expressed an interest in participating, as well as many others who were not available, but indicated interest for future trainings.

Comprehensive school planning

As an outcome of leadership, many school sites are conducting more comprehensive school planning:

Seattle School District requires that administrators and staff at each school develop a “transformation plan,” which both specifies long-term goals (with strategies for achieving them) and governs allocation of instructional time and financial resources. Consortium members Joanne Uhlenkott (JSIS physical education/dance specialist) and Jill Bjerke (JSIS Bilingual Orientation Center teacher) proposed that the JSIS transformation plan be modified to include arts education among strategies “to enhance each student’s social, emotional, creative, physical and academic growth” by “incorporat[ing] multiple intelligences and diverse learning style strategies throughout the curriculum.” The specific strategies adopted are to “update curriculum maps to include visual arts” and to “utilize the Silver Burdett [music] curriculum to enhance multicultural awareness and international music.” These may seem small modifications to a comprehensive school plan, but are indeed significant, in that they mandate instructional time and open up building-based financial resources for such activities as teacher training in arts instruction or arts assessment. The painstaking process took eight months, from formulating the proposal in spring 2003, developing support for it among the staff, and shepherding it through the adoption process in fall 2003.

The effects of this planning are often significant:

HIMS has included in its transformation plan a mandate to “integrate international art themes in the unified arts curriculum,” along with requirements for projects with a global/international perspective in each class... Increased visibility and participation have in turn generated increased administrative support: HIMS principal, Terry Acena, has led the efforts to preserve funding for her contract with its arts responsibilities.

Developing the structure for continued community support

In turn, these various inputs and outcomes have the cumulative effect of developing the structure for continued community support:

Parental support for Consortium activities at JSIS has been consistently strong and enthusiastic. But creating a structure, to channel and sustain that support from year to year and pass on to new parents what has been learned, has been challenging. In 2003-04, an expanded and vigorous group of supporters has coalesced around the new ceramics program. Key to this success were: a specific project learning to run and maintain the kiln crucial to the success of a broader program in which parents had high interest; training planned specifically for parents by the artist-in-residence, presented at a time when many parents could attend; a few “sparkplug” parents who were not deterred from involvement by the heavy responsibilities of their “baptism by firing”; development of systems (detailed, written instructions for kiln use, and a buddy system pairing parents who were experienced in firing with those just learning) to make responsibilities manageable and tasks time-limited. The group of twenty-some parents is already preparing to be represented in next year’s ceramics lesson-planning sessions



between classroom teachers and consultant Gale Lurie, to offer logistical support in ordering supplies, scheduling kiln time, and soliciting classroom volunteers.

Reform at Three Levels

“I believe that the power of this program and its ripple affect cannot be overstated.”

— 2004 Final Report

Finding 4: The combined effects of improving teaching and learning, developing the skills of educators and administrators, and building local policy support constitute a powerful integrated approach to school change.

Corresponds to all four goals of the Program.

Indicators that Would Support this Finding

- Data from final reports of Consortium members show correlations among the various constituents of school change.

In examining the data from the extensive final report narratives, the three effects outlined in the preceding sections—improving teaching and learning, developing the skills of educators, and building community support—are strongly related. Where the Consortia are most successful at one of these opportunities, they are more likely to be succeeding at the other two, as well. And those programs that are most successful at all three are most likely to be bringing about lasting and meaningful change in their schools. The following excerpt gives the flavor of this systemic effect across the school and the community:

One of the objectives of the Discover Dance Consortium is to create a sense of excitement for art and dance that is shared by parents, students, teachers, administrators, and community members in order to foster the further development of arts education in the schools. To this end, the Discover Dance Consortium involves the school community at every level: student, parent, teacher, principal, and community involvement are integral to the success of the Consortium. Participating teachers are intimately involved with the entire process; principals and administrators play a key role in communicating with

parents and the community; and because the project makes such a profound impact on students, parents are drawn into the process, and encouraged to attend dress rehearsals, associated fieldtrips, and the culminating performance. As a result, teachers, principals, parents and community members become more acquainted with the arts, observe the transformative power of arts education, and are therefore more likely to advocate for arts education.

The Findings in Context

Based on the preceding analysis, the following conclusions and recommendations are offered to the various stakeholders, including the Washington State Arts Commission.

Consortia Programs and the WSAC Strategic Plan

Based on the preceding data, it is clear that the Program is contributing significantly to the attainment of the following objective in WSAC's Strategic Plan:

Improve teaching and learning by supporting and promoting sustainable arts-based curricula and programs in K-12 public schools.

In support of this conclusion, this evaluation finds that:

- The various Consortium programs are using the EALRs as significant standards and benchmarks for teaching and learning activities, as noted above.
- The overall Program is building capacity across the state for improved teaching and leadership.
- The Program is yielding models of excellence that can be replicated, both statewide and nationally.

Beyond Standards: Expanding the Range of Impacts

Since *A Nation at Risk* (1983) put schools in the glare of public accountability, education reform over the past twenty-year years has focused on a range of outcomes, inputs, tools, and measures for achieving its aims.

Gradually over the years, the issue of student achievement has assumed primacy, as the standards movement of the 1990s, the increased alignment with testing, and the 2002 legislation *No Child Left Behind*, moved the nation more toward an industrial-type outcomes model based on productivity measured in arithmetic units.

Parallel to publication of *A Nation at Risk* was the development of *Toward Civilization*, the landmark 1988 National Endowment for the Arts report which called for increasing emphasis

on arts education in the nation’s schools. In a sense, the causes of these two enterprises—school reform and arts education—have moved steadily forward together in the intervening years. And in that time, the arts have steadily slipped into the wake of standards-based accountability, seeking to justify their value partly on the ability to help students learn.

There is mounting evidence that they in fact do this. *A Mosaic of Knowledge* (2002), the predecessor to this report, provides data from the CCGP on the impact of arts learning on achievement. This finding is also reflected in such national research as *Critical Links* (2002).

The findings of this evaluation argue that the sole reliance on student data is inadequate for understanding the overall process of school change. It suggests instead a model for bringing about education reform consisting of three levels: (1) classroom K-12 instruction; (2) teacher and administrator professional development; and (3) transformation of policy through education of parents, publics, and policymakers.

Levels of School Change

Level	Effect
Classroom K-12 instruction	Changes student content and conceptual knowledge, improves skills
Teacher and administrator professional development	Improves teacher/administrator knowledge and skill; develops tools and processes
Transformation of policy through education of parents, publics, and policymakers.	Results in changes of policy related to instruction, curriculum, assessment, and other key variables

These levels are important because:

1. Evidence suggests that educators and leaders are not able to change education simply by boosting student achievement scores. Instead, the change process has to move on all three levels at once.
2. Changing policy and support as well as changing teaching can provide a greater supply of the critical inputs to bring about student achievement.
3. All three of these processes are basically processes of challenging and changing epistemologies and therefore are about learning.

The various data of the CCGP indicate that the arts can have a role in impacting all three of these change processes.

Aspects of Artful Teaching and Leadership

Data from the evaluation of the Community Consortium Program show that the arts can inform and infuse a number of important acts and skills. In some cases, these require considerable alterations in mental models about teaching practice (the sets of assumptions and worldviews that educators have). The following list, which draws upon concepts both from the EALRs and other standards, but also from data in the final reports, advances a theory of what teachers learn to do better through arts-based professional development:

Perceiving. This involves an entire suite of sensory actions that included seeing (instead of just looking), hearing, and feeling—including the feeling of one’s own position and attitude in space (proprioceptive sensation).

Responding. To respond is to form a mental state appropriate to the reality being perceived, and to be fully aware of and engaged with this state. There is evidence that responding includes two sub-skills:

- **Attending.** The primary definition of this word is “to pay attention to.” It comes from the Latin *attendere* and means “to stretch to.” This deeper meaning suggests that learning involves stretching one’s assumptions, perceptions, and worldviews to more fully understand and engage with information, concepts, and people.
- **Appreciating.** This word comes to us from the Latin *appretiare* and means “to grasp the nature, worth, quality, and significance of.” The word may be almost interchangeable with *evaluation*, although the latter is charged with some negative connotations because of the current focus on accountability.

Imagining. This term means to form an image, to comprehend the possibility of things that have not been.

Creating. The highest level of Bloom’s revised taxonomy (Hoffman, 1999), creating involves taking images and turning them reality.

Expressing. Every day we learn more about emotional intelligence. Expressing is the process of giving utterance to feelings.

Performing. This word, like so many others, contains much more meaning than we normally credit it. “Perform” comes from Old French, *per fournir*, and means “to thoroughly complete.” It might also be interpreted as *to give form to*. Regardless, it is the powerful last act in the learning process. A performance is the presentation of a play, a musical recital, a gallery exhibition, a literary reading, a science fair entry, or a project presentation in any subject. At the level of teaching, it can be the execution of a lesson plan in the classroom. In leadership, it is advocacy for a new way of teaching.

All of these mental skills are critical to teaching and learning. In the most current models, they are things that teachers and students do together, often side by side. But they are also critical to all actors in the educational change process. They are strongly developed by experience in using the arts. The Community Consortia are bringing about their use in Washington's schools. As one report noted, gratefully:

What we most appreciate is the flexibility of the Arts Education Consortium Program and the respect for locally tailored, innovative solutions to implementing standards-based arts programs. Here on Vashon, the link with the artists in our community has proven to be a powerful vehicle to imbedding not only a love of the arts in every day school life, but quality and rigor that may not otherwise be attained in a rural island environment. When artists and teachers work together in carefully planned collaborative partnership, the results are truly catalytic. Whether they teach in the arts disciplines themselves, the general classroom or in a particular subject area, Vashon teachers are highly skilled in the use of artist partners in their curriculum. WSAC support in refining and sharing this model has been of inestimable value to us.

These are powerful effects. With them, the ability of educators, administrators, and publics to change the future of education may still not be certain. But absent them, the inability to effectively determine a desired future for Washington's children probably is.

The Evaluation Process

The Focus

This evaluation began with a review of final reports and supporting documents, including curricula and teacher guides. At length, the author concluded that the best way to tell the story of the Consortia's current work was via an ethnographic study. Thus this evaluation has focused solely on the reports, testimonies, and perceptions of those closest to the programs on a continuous basis.

Final Reports

Consortium members submitted narrative final reports. These reports were based on the following prompts:

Report qualitative and quantitative outcomes of your Consortium's work, concentrating on the applicable improvements listed below or other improvements.

- Improvements in student and teacher arts learning and school improvements due to the arts, like:

- Increase in use of curriculum based on the Arts EALRs

- Increase in student test scores

- Increase in assessing students' ability to create, perform, and respond to the arts

- Higher number of teachers trained in the Arts EALRs and/or arts assessment methods

- Improved school culture

- Improved student involvement

- Absenteeism reduced

- Improved student self-esteem

- Teacher enthusiasm increased.

- Improved support for arts education, like:

- Principal, superintendent, and/or parental support increased

- Community support for arts education increased.

- Improvements in the Consortium and its programming and planning, like:
 - Expansion of Consortium partners
 - Increased funding leveraged by Consortium Grant
 - Training in use of evaluation and/or data collection for quality improvement of your Consortium programming
 - Useful documentation of your Consortium's progress in improving arts education and dissemination of results.

These data were collected, analyzed, and searched for coherent ideas and concepts—ones which seemed to be repeated throughout the body of data. The emphasis throughout this evaluation was on conducting a thorough and rigorous analysis of actual data in the form of documents, artifacts, and products of the program. There has been a consistent practice to rule out primarily anecdotal data where it has seemed to be speculative, in favor of data that cited actual observations.

References

- Brooks, S. R. (2000). *How states can hold schools accountable: The strong schools model of standards-based reform*. Center on Reinventing Public Education. Retrieved March 20, 2005, from <http://www.crpe.org/pubs/pdf/holdschoolsaccount.pdf>.
- Deasy, R. J. (2002). *Critical links: Learning in the arts and student academic and social development*. Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership.
- Elliott, C. (1999). *Locating the energy for change: An introduction to appreciative inquiry*. International Institute For Sustainable Development. Retrieved March 14, 2005, from <http://www.iisd.org/pdf/appreciativeinquiry.pdf>.
- Gardner, H. (2004). *Changing minds*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hoffman, B. (Ed.). (1999). Bloom's revised taxonomy. *The Encyclopedia of Educational Technology*. Retrieved April 4, 2005, from San Diego State University website, <http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/Articles/bloomrev/>.
- Klein, S., & Diket, R. Creating artful leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*. 2(1), 23-30.
- Lambert, L., et. al. (2002). *The constructivist leader*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- McCarthy, M. S. (2001). *Washington elementary schools on the slow track under standards-based reform*. Center on Reinventing Public Education. Retrieved March 20, 2005, from <http://www.crpe.org/pubs/pdf/slowtrack.pdf>
- Severeide, R. (2000). *Washington State Arts Education Community Consortia 1999–2000 Grant Program: Year one report*. Portland, OR: Early Childhood Strategies.
- Severeide, R. (2001). *Washington State Arts Education Community Consortia 2001–2002 Grant Program: Year two report*. Portland, OR: Early Childhood Strategies.
- Severeide, R. (2002). *Learning from successful arts education community consortia: A case study*. Portland, OR: Early Childhood Strategies.
- Sikes, M. (1999). *The evaluation toolkit*. Retrieved April 4, 2005, from WASC website, <http://www.arts.wa.gov/progAIE/evalKit/aieCCEval1.html>.
- Sikes, M. (2003). *A mosaic of knowledge: An evaluation of the Community Consortium Grants Program, 2001–2002*.



About the Author

Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D., is a consultant who designs and evaluates education programs and learning systems. He currently works with school districts, organizations, and agencies across the nation.

In January, 2004, the author conducted a training session for Consortium members in Seattle. For many of the members, it was the first face-to-face meeting with their colleagues. Sikes conducted the evaluation of the Community Consortium Program in 2003. Prior to that, in 1996 Sikes conducted an evaluation of the then-existing AIE grants program. The report of that evaluation *Fertile Ground: A Report on Arts Education*, noted that the state of Washington possessed a rare combination of community resources and schools with needs. The communities offered tremendous potential for the effective use of grants that could pair schools, especially in rural and isolated communities, with cultural organizations and artists.

Sikes also developed the Evaluation Tool Kit®, which has served as a key process aid in the ongoing assessment of the Community Consortium Program.