

The Professional Artist as Public School Educator

A Research Report of the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education

2000-2001

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Introduction

Over the past eight years, the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) has undergone an extensive regimen of program research and evaluation, utilizing both staff members and external consultants to collect, analyze, and interpret information on program effectiveness. This information has been used to shape and strengthen the partnership program each year in response to the needs of students, teachers and teaching artists as well as to changing political and cultural pressures within the Chicago Public School System. In addition, the documentation and publication of insights and lessons learned through arts integration experiences in the schools has contributed significantly to the wider body of research in the field of arts education.

¹ Assisting in the design and interpretation of this research was James S. Catterall, Professor of Education at UCLA. Thanks go to CAPE Director Arnold Aprill for ongoing thoughtful discussions of observations and creative guidance during the inquiry.

During the early years of the program, evaluation efforts focused on general descriptions of the program goals and objectives along with initial impacts on student life². Positive trends were identified in terms of administrative and faculty attitudes and increased involvement in the arts partnerships, due mainly to student interest. More recently, a closer, more detailed analysis of CAPE's growing influence on student learning, teaching practice and school climate has highlighted the value of quality, arts integrated instruction, including evidence of positive effects on standardized math and reading test scores³.

Last year, our research turned to program sustainability, partly in light of reduced funding, as well as to the assimilation of new partnership schools and an increasing organizational focus on the professional development of participating teachers and artists. In the vast majority of cases, CAPE partnerships have evolved through trials and successes to bring lasting effects on administrators, teachers, and students.

Through these studies, it is increasingly apparent that the participation of well-trained teaching artists is a valuable, and in some cases vital, addition to the general education of youth. The presence and artistic know-how brought to the classroom by these talented, dedicated professionals can, and is, having notable, sustainable influence on whole school improvement through transforming the daily learning experiences of educators and students alike. Not only does the presence of a quality arts program enliven a school atmosphere and promote the advancement of artistic skills and aesthetic knowledge, but a closer look at rigorous arts integrated activities in the classroom is revealing important insights into the cognitive benefits of arts education. Not only can artfully constructed lessons that authentically bridge the arts and academic content domains assist in the acquisition of artistic understanding, but they can enhance learning across the academic curriculum and, perhaps more importantly, the underlying thinking curriculum.

Natural extensions of this research.

Up to this point, CAPE research and evaluation efforts have focused mainly on partnership structure, teacher training, and student outcomes. As the professional artist is so central to the implementation and success of the partnerships, the CAPE Board and evaluators agreed on the need to take a closer look at the artists' role within the CAPE partnership structure as part of the 2000-2001 evaluation agenda. From the teaching artist's unique perspective as both external witness to and active participant in urban schooling, there is much to be learned from their insights and experiences in the classroom. This constitutes the purpose of the present study.

While the body of research conducted on the subject of teaching artists is limited, there are some general statements that can be made about their roles in the classroom. In her book, *Beyond Enrichment*⁴, Jane Remer noted that artists bring cultural understanding to students by presenting artistic experiences that connect with their lives outside school. She wrote, "Artists represent living traditions and can raise significant questions both about the past -- the roots and traditions from which they spring -- and about future practices and concerns." This education in

² Early evaluations (1992-1998) were conducted by NCREL.

³ Prof. James S. Catterall, UCLA, has been the principal investigator for evaluation efforts since 1998.

⁴ Remer, Jane. *Beyond Enrichment*, American Council for the Arts, New York, 1996, p. 318.

culture is “experiential and intellectual knowledge without which children are not fully educated, sentient and feeling human beings.”

In addition, artists can share personal work habits such as discipline, tenacity, revising and experiencing the satisfaction of completing creative projects. These habits of mind, as identified in a recent arts education study from Teachers College at Columbia University⁵, can and do transfer to success in other academic endeavors. Working side by side with professionals, students practice and learn through cooperative and active learning, often accessing multiple ways of comprehending academic concepts presented in a unit of study.

Teaching artists can encourage students through creative processes unfamiliar to many classroom teachers who did not experience a quality arts education themselves. They can play an important role in helping both educators and students learn to critique and make aesthetic judgements, primary to artistic appreciation as well as important in developing an ability to express experiences and ideas through an art medium.

Successful programs in education must ultimately provide benefits for *all* participants and the effects of this type of work on the creative life of the professional artist has received some, albeit limited, attention. A literature review on the subject was just completed by The Centre for Creative Communities in England⁶. Its findings indicated that many artists gained significant artistic and social skills though their work in education and received both inspiration and needed financial support for their own creative endeavors. In contrast, other artists reported the work to be time and labor intensive to conflict with other creative activities. Another review, “Artists in the Schools” by Sharp and Dust⁷, noted that a majority of the teaching artists chose to work with children because of the personal satisfaction and enjoyment this allowed, more so than for financial or creative rewards.

These broad statements warrant more detailed exploration. To this end, this evaluation study picks up where previous CAPE and other studies have left off. This inquiry is an attempt to expand understanding of who among professional artists choose to work in the schools and why, what do they bring to the school environment, how do artists impact educational practices, and what might the future hold for artists and schools wishing to continue such partnerships?

Design of the Study

The specific focus of this study was to explore the ethos and work of professional artists who choose to involve themselves in classroom partnerships with teachers. As the research proceeded, our inquiries were directed to a number of facets: the teaching artists’ unique perspectives on their work, the challenges and rewards they experience, their anticipations and

⁵ Burton, Judith; Horowitz, Robert; and Abeles, Hal. “Learning in and Through the Arts: Curriculum Implications,” *Champions of Change*, ed. by Edward B. Fiske, Arts Education Partnership, Washington D.C. 1999.

⁶ Losito, Christina and Williams, Jennifer. “The Impact of Educational Work on Artists’ Practice,” Centre for Creative Communities, UK, 2001.

⁷ Note: needs citation.

aspirations versus the realities they find in this work, and their interactions with and influences on what could be called school cultures.

The primary subjects of the study were artists working in the Chicago Public Schools through the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE). This organization has worked with roughly 1000 teachers and artists in about 50 schools during the past nine years. To expand the context of this study and add to its potential ability to discern general conditions of artists' work in the schools, we included artists associated with a second longstanding partnership program, Performing Tree of Los Angeles. Program coordinators from additional organizations influenced by or modeled after CAPE's program were also interviewed for this study.

Three main topics were investigated in this study:

The Teaching Artist Experience

Here we explored artists' backgrounds – who is drawn to such programs, motivations and personal missions, beliefs and attitudes about their work, and the rewards of involvement.

The Artists' Influences in the Classroom

This topic embraced the artists' perceptions about their impact in the schools through working with students, teachers, art-specialists, and school administrators. These inquiries aimed at processes of lesson planning, artists' understandings of cognitive development and appropriate instructional designs, the uses of technology, and issues regarding the assessment of students.

Teaching Artists and School Culture

Finally, we questioned artists about their insights into larger issues of school change and effective educational reform potentially or actually linked to the wide engagement of artists and teachers within single schools. How and when does an artist or a "team" of artists become part of school culture – a recognizable part of the fabric of a school community? What larger roles do artists play in the education of teachers and other members of school communities, and what challenges and opportunities face them as they contemplate future work in partnerships with teachers and schools? As part of this inquiry, we explored special projects in arts integration that brought multiple schools and artists together.

Methods

Because this study was an exploration of artists' opinions, beliefs, attitudes and recounted experiences, the research relied mainly on interviews with and surveys of artists. We also observed professional development meetings during which artists had opportunities to interact among themselves and with program staff concerning their assumptions and knowledge about the purposes, designs, and workings of their partnerships. Detailed protocols – interview and

survey questions and guides for systematic observations of meetings – were developed in advance of the work. These protocols grew out of the several year history of observation and asking CAPE participants questions about their work, and the protocols used for this study were designed interactively by the research team and the CAPE staff and Director.

During the spring of 2001, we conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with individual teaching artists located in both Chicago and Los Angeles. In addition, we conducted two focus-group interviews with an additional thirteen CAPE teaching artists. These group discussions allowed discussions of ideas and experiences that revealed insights not readily obtained in individual interviews. The focus groups also provided the artists with an opportunity to gauge and clarify their experiences against those of other participating artists, and for the research team to discern qualities of the artists' experiences as well as observe the thinking processes involved.

In addition, we observed CAPE-sponsored workshop days during fall 2000 and early winter 2001. Here professional artists and teachers came together to discuss the challenges and successes of their arts integration experiences and to gain new ideas to strengthen and expand their efforts in the classroom. These workshops were well attended (more than 25 at one meeting, more than 100 at another). These sessions revealed important information and suggestions about the working relationships between classroom teachers and professional artists; they also provided insights into current issues being addressed in arts integration partnerships.

In early summer 2001, we administered an extensive survey containing 45 short essay items to 150 teaching artists who had created integrated units in the CAPE program during the past eight years. This survey was built on the information gained through interviews and observations during the school year and was designed to capture a full array of perceptions of artists working with teachers. To boost the number of survey responses and to test the more general nature of the information generated throughout this study, follow-up surveys were sent to non-responding CAPE artists as well as to an additional 80 teaching artists currently working in the Los Angeles schools. In all, seventy-four artists responded, with 44 surveys received from CAPE artists and another 30 from Los Angeles-based Performing Tree artists. Before a substantive analysis of the whole body of surveys, item responses were compared for the two groups and analyzed for similarities and contrasts. There were some material differences reported below. Most findings in this report are based on the comments of CAPE artists; in cases where we rely on the entire sample of surveys in the discussion findings below, we make explicit note of this.

Data from our interviews and surveys were extensively analyzed using qualitative methods of content analysis, including the use of formal rubrics for classifying and quantifying responses to short answer items. This resulted in both statistical information describing distributions of responses and rich descriptions leading to our findings. This information was trained on our main questions – the teaching artist experience, the artists' influences in the school, and the role of artists in school culture.

Findings

The Teaching Artist Experience

Who becomes a teaching artist?

We benefit from no known research on the background and motivation of teaching artists. Certainly, art schools and artists cultures inform students that teaching is a common parallel profession for artists for a number of possible reasons: teaching pays bills while allowing blocks of free time and can provide access to expensive equipment, facilities, and materials. Teaching also can be a source of inspiration and continued honing of artistic skills as well as provide a means to participate in the life of a community.

We discovered, however, that many artists do not turn to teaching as a means either of financial support or of inspiration. So we are left to wonder, who are these unique individuals drawn to educational service while in the midst of professional careers in another field? Our interviews and surveys pointed to one common influence: at least 75 percent of respondents came from homes where at least one parent or close relative was an educator or at least strongly believed in providing a quality education for their children. What this statistic suggests is that, for the majority of teaching artists, the work they do in the schools today is very likely a natural extension of deeply ingrained personal values.

This point was underscored by the fact that the majority of survey respondents (75 percent) thought of themselves as entwining two identities -- the professional artist and the teaching artist. This group was more likely to name a childhood educational influence than the artists among the 20 percent who thought of themselves more strictly as professional artists who sometimes teach. Another 5 percent thought of themselves solely as teaching artists; this group had ultimately found more satisfaction in their instructional work than in the creation of works of art. For these individuals, teaching has become their art form and the classroom their medium.

Digging deeper, artists were also asked to comment on how they became interested in arts education as a vocation. As predicted, the majority cited long held personal interests in education. One artist stated, "In my home state, all "unnecessary" classes and programs were eliminated in public schools in order to balance the budget. I fortunately went to a private school. Theatre arts, choir, and dance shaped me as a person. I vowed to try to have that kind of impact on kids." Others discovered their belief in education usually during college years, after witnessing other arts educators' work with students. A visual artist wrote, "I realized that art and education can be practiced as a single pursuit. An artist who is able to impart, encourage and exercise the creative process with others is also an educator."

As other studies have indicated, some artists were involved in the work simply for the love of teaching their art form to children, and several mentioned the need for financial support. When asked about the importance of cross-curriculum integration as a particular form of arts education, artists talked about opportunities to:

- broaden children's educational experience,
- to assist teachers in developing more enlivening and effective instructional techniques,
- to explore an avenue to develop multicultural and social connections relevant to the students' lives,
- to inform other areas of learning,
- and quite simply, to create a way to bring the much neglected subject of art into the daily classroom schedule.

These teaching artists saw a great need for the work and were inspired by the challenge of integration. A visual artist echoed many others when she explained, "I like the creative process of combining ideas with the teachers and developing interesting projects." Another added, "This is arts advocacy work. I want to help [create] a healthy future that will not let arts (which should be at the center of a healthy life) be cut from the lives and education of the children. Art must be respected as sacred for one to get the most out of it. I was tired of seeing it set up for failure." Specifically addressing the CAPE program, an in-school art specialist wrote, "CAPE has a strong conceptual framework for art education theory and well grounded practice for art education practice." Through CAPE's approach to integration, art learning and learning in academic subjects are brought together to enforce each other, but not compete with each other.

When asked about specific motivations, Los Angeles-based teaching artists most often referred to their love for teaching and a desire to pass on artistic traditions to students in a format that positively influenced other areas of the curriculum. For the most part, these artists had come from a long history of artist residencies based on performance rather than instruction. They were associated with an organization that only recently had begun to embrace an integrated approach to art education. Many of these artists were finding the crossover to integrated instruction a formidable challenge, as CAPE artists and teachers had initially experienced. A few, with strong educational backgrounds, were able to immediately recognize the value of integrated instruction and had been successful in developing powerful, effective lessons during their initial attempts.

Artists' Aspirations and Goals

After identifying the main sources of motivation, artists were asked to expound on their personal goals in the classroom. What did they hope to accomplish artistically? What were their educational goals for children? The answers to questions of aspiration fell into four groupings: artistic goals, educational goals, social goals, and personal goals.

The Artistic Mission

Artistic intentions fell into six basic categories as listed below, with a sample of individual survey responses listed under each heading. These topics reveal a holistic approach to artistic development, well beyond simply teaching specific art skills.

1. Instill a passion for the arts.

- Bring art to children of all ages.
- Share the joy of art making.
- Create a dynamic environment where the creative process in art is something to fall in love with.

2. Teach the value of artistic activity.

- Awaken creativity and curiosity.
- Access and expand students' imagination.
- Instill feelings of mastery and empowerment regarding the arts.
- Teach students to understand, appreciate, and make aesthetic judgements in the arts.
- Give students the tools and exposure to create their own dramas and make their own connections to life and the school curriculum.
- Learn to use an art form as both a pleasurable and meaningful human activity.

3. Encouraging self-expression through skill development.

- Provide a safe environment for creative expression.
- Teach students to value and trust their artistic ideas and actions.
- Reveal to students the power of personal expression through words, movement, and drama.
- Introduce the power and potential of visual arts as forms of communication.
- Help students understand basic artistic concepts and feel confident in their abilities to express themselves.

4. Help students experience new ways of thinking and seeing.

- Develop their ability to perceive the world around them – social, physical, historical – through drawing, color, print, visual arts practice.
- Provide them with the opportunity to develop an artistic perspective on life and learning.

5. Identify natural talent.

- Create artistic excitement among undiscovered talent.
- Help students find their artistic selves - the creative ability each student has deep inside them.

6. Train both students and teachers.

- Give them positive, high quality artistic experiences.
- Develop artistic skills in each student *and* teacher.
- Create communities of collaborators.
- Create an enjoyable experience so that students [and teachers] feel comfortable and interested in using their bodies as a way of learning educational material.

Educational Mission

Reflecting holistic conceptions of teaching more generally, artists held intentions that transcended the effort to integrate the curriculum. Here are some of the educational purposes they reported:

1. Enrich Academic Learning.

- Bring the truth about this country's history and the experience of diverse groups of people to the students.
- Promote reading, writing, and poetry.
- Break down the creative process and techniques of art making.

2. Develop Learning skills.

- Expand a child's range of thinking.
- Help students think more creatively about everything – not just art projects.
- Teach the many facets of storytelling as a tool for memory retention in academics, arts, and life.
- Establish art educational theory as a viable model for teaching higher order thinking skills and working with children who have [notable] spatial intelligence.
- Link interest and imagination to learning. You have to *learn how to learn* to succeed and be a productive adult.
- Give students a framework to look at the world. Give them the tools to express themselves. Offer them a conceptual lens to see the connected-ness of their studies.
- Interact with students in the learning process. Share the joy of discovery and the moments of finding correlation between what they are learning and their outside world.

3. Develop Students' Confidence as Learners.

- Help a student find creative strength.
- Enhance students' partnership and presentation skills.
- Build artistic leadership and community.
- Teach the process of the art and teach students how they can use this process in any way.
- Instill feelings of empowerment and motivation regarding the arts.
- Give "disconnected" students a place to join in and express themselves.
- Teach that the human body is a good thing and we should like the one we have.

- Help students realize they can succeed in school doing any project if their heart, effort and perseverance are there.
- Teach the students to trust themselves and be their own teachers.

4. Inform Instructional Practice.

- Use the arts to create a more inclusive and exciting curriculum that captures the interest of ALL students.
- Break out of the usual textbook “question and answer” mind set. Create new approaches to learning.
- Enrich the basic curriculum with hands-on experiences.
- Provide a kinesthetic approach to learning material so that students can “feel” learning in addition to “thinking” it.
- Demonstrate that the arts help people be better learners.
- Help teachers experience their students in a new way.
- Share how arts instruction can be a classroom management skill.

Social Mission

The artists’ social missions reflected a desire to balance the education scales for socially disadvantaged children and unveiled their belief in the arts as a medium for mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation.

1. Equity

- Make art education available to students of all socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Give something valuable to students who do not have art programming in their schools.
- Create lots of opportunities for young people (especially Mexican-American students) that they might otherwise not be exposed to.

2. Diversity

- Encourage the democratic vision that each one of us has a unique voice and the right to express it.
- Help students recognize that there are many ways to interpret an art work and help build a tolerance to different points of view.
- Bring students to an appreciation of the talents and abilities of their classmates.
- Encourage an appreciation for collaborative models of communication.
- Eradicate racism.

3. Self-respect

- Create a link between youth, their culture, and their past.
- Instill self-confidence and mutual respect.
- Help students to become truly independent and autonomous thinkers.

4. Community

- Create community through cooperative and collaborative work.
- I believe that education will make the world a better place. Politically, this is not a state or federal matter to me. I participate in my community schools because I am a member of this community.
- Create the audience/artist of tomorrow by giving back to the community today.
- Change the school system and the lives of urban youth for the better.

Although many artists did not specifically discuss their personal missions with the teachers before the integrated units were taught, the artists were aware of imbuing the lessons with these purposes beyond the instructional objectives set forth in the lessons through the written plans they developed with the classroom teachers. The power and influence of these underlying purposes cannot be underestimated, as children learn most readily from watching and listening to what the adults in their world say and do, and intentionality usually shines through. The evidence of teaching artists' influence is discussed more thoroughly in the next section of the report on influence in the classroom.

Personal Goals and Rewards

Impacting ways of thinking through art. When asked about the personal satisfactions and tangible benefits accrued through arts integration work, artists mentioned intellectual, emotional, and creative payoffs, as well as financial compensation. Of great interest was the fact that teaching artists were often more rewarded by affecting thinking skills than by impacting artistic knowledge. Sixty-eight percent of surveyed CAPE artists agreed with this statement; the other 32 percent felt growth in both areas was of equal importance to them. This conscious awareness of the high value and ability of arts integration to aim in the development of cognitive growth is a particular characteristic of CAPE artists and reflects the explicit efforts of the organization staff to encourage that focus. In Los Angeles, 60 percent were rewarded by an equal growth in artistic know-how, while 35 percent were most interested in cognitive growth. The remaining 5 percent reportedly remained unconcerned with cognitive development. This difference in perspective likely reflects the fact that Performing Tree artists in Los Angeles are, for the most part, in various stages of transition from working in shorter term residencies to longer-term partnerships.

Either way, the acknowledged, conscious interest in developing students' thinking capacities brings to light an important aspect of the role of the artist in education. As one high school arts integration coordinator and musical composer eloquently put it, "Art is an immensely powerful tool. When I leave school for the day I ask myself, 'Have I changed students' lives? Did I get anyone to wonder, to look, to just reconsider, to look at the world in a completely different way?' When you see those breakthroughs, maybe only three or four times in a life, you just can't put an economic value on that. It not only validates what you do, and pays the bills, but it puts your self-esteem clearly on another level. You have put a piece of yourself in the person whose life has been changed and got them to see in a completely different way. Your part stays with them for the rest of their lives."

Teaching art skills. Other rewards echoed inspiring the attainment of children's artistic development, igniting enthusiasm for the arts in both students and teachers, giving under-privileged students constructive opportunities for self-expression, and gaining personal creative skills and inspiration. A poet noted, "When the students write a good line of poetry I feel like a mid-wife who has helped deliver it. The joy of that equals the joy of writing my own poetry."

Career development. About half of the survey respondents commented on the impact of arts integrative work on their creative careers. One common theme was that much of what the artists taught in the classroom went back into their own work. The process of teaching deepened their own understanding of their craft. It also kept artists engaged in creative thinking and risk taking, which transferred into taking more creative approaches in external projects. One artist wrote, "My own creativity gets tapped with each assignment. I write much more. I realize that young people *need* to be instructed to use and discover their own creativity. It's extremely apparent. So I feel a responsibility to pass on what I know." Some artists have noticed an increase in demand for their artwork as it began to reflect some of the current cultural issues they were addressing in the school curriculum. In addition, frequent contact with other CAPE artists provided a source of encouragement and new opportunities for pursuing both individual and collaborative creative endeavors.

Other employment opportunities have presented themselves as artists continue to engage in this work. For some, gaining confidence in working with students has led to teaching jobs in other venues. Teaching in-service workshops for teachers and speaking at educational conferences were mentioned. Several have been asked to join other grant projects in schools where they had previously built positive working relationships through CAPE. Others have moved into the role of arts administrator to expand their sphere of influence in arts education. Their experience with the CAPE approach to arts integration has reportedly influenced the restructuring of other arts education programs they work with.

Financial reward. Financial compensation is another more obvious reward for teaching artists, and artists were asked how this issue affected their creative lives. Two-thirds of CAPE artists reported that economic instability was an on-going concern. At least half of the Los Angeles artists concurred. One visual artist went so far as to state, "There is no secure path for the artist/educator," reflecting some resignation among the many who have chosen this dual career path. Others disclosed various degrees of frustration over the workload created by handling two demanding careers. Although some were inspired by the duality and used the experiences in the classroom to advance their own art making, others were frustrated by the time and energy teaching took away from their own creative work. The fear that teaching jobs would dry up due to budget cuts was an ever-present concern. Even so, the vast majority of teaching artists had no immediate plans to leave their current career course. Some were actively looking for ways to streamline their working lives and move into better paying positions in the field, others were satisfied with their current insecure situation because of the flexibility it allowed them to pursue creative projects as they arose.

One actor shared her experience:

Compared to my friends, who are just artists and not educators, I am more stable. This work allows me to pay my bills. I'm young and don't have a family or anything, so it works for

me, for now. I work part-time for two organizations. I pay my own medical, which is something I would love to not pay. That's a problem. I'd like to make more money, but I don't see it as a factor for my getting out of this field, ever. A more ideal situation would be to work for one organization, as it gets confusing working for two. To be in one school full time and work on whole curriculum integration would be awesome.

Ninety percent of all teaching artists interviewed and surveyed had at least minimal coverage of health insurance that was typically provided, in part, through a spouse's job or their own. Even so, a number mentioned the need for an artists union which could provide insurance coverage, a retirement plan and negotiate improved teaching pay that would more accurately reflect their expertise and years of experience.

Overall, the rewards for involvement were numerous and varied, both in and out of the actual integrative partnership experience. It is, no doubt, the overall combination of these benefits as well as the sense of fulfillment gained from adhering to deeply held personal values that keeps teaching artists in this field, despite on-going financial worries.

Artists' Influence in the Classroom

The Artist in the School

Beyond the aspirations outlined in the previous discussion of personal missions, artists identified a number of unique contributions they feel they bring to the school environment. Assisting students to express themselves and experience learning in an authentic, hands-on manner was noted, as well as the fact that learning through the arts allows for a generous amount of personal choice making. Art making does not involve looking for a single right answer, which is so often the case in academic studies. Learning to take risks and make choices that receive positive support from knowledgeable professionals builds a child's self-confidence for continued experimentation. It builds motivation for discovery learning. One artist wrote, "A good artist is familiar with the creative process and the discipline and risk taking it takes to make good art. You have to try things out – you are always looking to improve through trial and error as part of the process. A good teaching artist will encourage students to try things out." Involvement in learning through the arts can help students learn to be their own teachers and critics and take more responsibility for their educational process.

Artists also mentioned the increased exposure to creative thought and action that they prompt, which appears to be sidelined in the rush to increase test scores in core academic areas. A visual artist explained,

Artists have many different ideas and ways to solve problems. Some of my art students who [have talent] change the class because they come in with a different way of seeing things. The other students see someone who can be creative and it really sets them off and gives them permission to experiment. On the south side

where I teach, there is a real desire to see students excel academically from preschool on up. Children are not always encouraged to be creative.

One artist sensed that children experienced the creative process like a wave of relief from regimented instruction. The beauty of the arts is that it can be utilized in the teaching of all subject areas and used with all types of student learners. To make both students and teachers aware of its transdisciplinary power is a primary concern for many artists involved in integration-based partnerships.

Artists also were aware of their role in bringing out a student's individuality. "We are the only ones who do that," observed one actor. "We can provide them with an opportunity to voice their own opinion, which they don't often get a chance to do." Another artist wrote, "Kids seem to intuitively feel you are playing by different rules and maybe rules they can succeed with." In this way, artists are often able to reach students who struggle in a more traditional learning environment.

Many of the artists interviewed observed an educational disconnect between students and the schools which they felt the arts could help bridge. However, as in any other subject, quality instruction is needed and a lack of background in the arts or poor pre-service training has not prepared the majority of classroom teachers for this role. In this situation, the presence of the professional, trained teaching artist, particularly adept at building links between the arts and the school curriculum through integrated instruction, is a valuable addition in the classroom.

Contributions to the Ways Children Learn

Each of the contributions mentioned here focus more directly on issues of basic learning rather than on the advancement of specific art skills or the discovery of young talent, although these are equally valuable contributions that professional artists can bring to a school. These reflections echo the findings that teaching artists are highly aware of their impact on student learning and highly motivated to assist in the development of basic cognitive skills. Without professional training in educational theory, the majority of their understanding about how students learn through the arts appears to have developed through trial and error of working with students in the classroom along with their own experience of being a student of the arts. CAPE artists were asked to share some of the insights on student learning they had gained through integrative instruction.

Many of these insights had to do with cognition; the way children process and utilize information. Artists recognize that students learn in a variety of ways and referred to Howard Gardner's research on multiple intelligences. The importance of kinesthetic activities became apparent for many students struggling with book learning. One artist reported that he and his wife read about brain research to look for clues in how to improve their instructional effectiveness. The majority of respondents expressed surprise at students' learning capacities, particularly their ability to connect ideas across domains and come up with creative ideas and solutions during artistic problem solving. One artist found that the more she challenged the students, the more they were able to do. Another added, "Students can be challenged as artists in ways I previously thought were reserved for professionals."

A reoccurring observation was that children appeared to lack challenge in traditional teaching methods and lack sufficient opportunities to connect their personal talents and interests with required learning in the classroom. Hands-on learning, which is afforded through the arts, was overwhelmingly held to be the best way for students to learn, all across the curriculum. In addition, the importance of meeting students at their current skill level was an important consideration in planning effective teaching units. “You have to reach children exactly where they are – in their world first, before you can expand that world,” wrote a musician. Other educational research on cognitive-based instruction has confirmed this observation. In order to meet students at their individual levels, most artists focused their lessons on artistic process rather than on specific outcomes.

Artists recognized the existence of cognitive development stages and the difference between what children at the various grade levels were capable of understanding conceptually. One high school art specialist observed the lack of innate or acquired imaginative ability among his students and believed that prior years of education which had offered little exposure to creative thinking processes had hindered the conceptual capacities of his students.

The myth that professional artists are only in the classroom to teach about art is put to rest in the remarks of one sculptor: “The ability to think creatively is a skill that improves the quality of life. The ability to gain art skills is idiosyncratic and based on how effectively art skills serve ones needs for self-expression.” In keeping with this line of inquiry, artists were then asked to reveal what types of impact they thought they were having on student learning.

How artists integrate lessons

Our sample size (74) was large enough to be able to make some general statements about what was going on in terms of classroom instruction. The majority of participating artists were either visual artists or actors and taught the greatest proportion of lesson plans in the schools. The breakdown in the types of units taught is shown below.

Percentage of Units Integrating Specific Art Forms

Visual Arts	36%
Drama	28%
Music	27%
Dance	11%
Creative Writing/Storytelling	11%
New Media/Video	3%

In the CAPE program, visual arts (47 percent), drama and dance were the most commonly integrated art forms. With Performing Tree, drama (50 percent), music and creative writing/storytelling were more common, reflecting different organizational histories and residency styles as well as artist availability. These figures may also indicate the most common art forms that classroom teachers have at least rudimentary experience in and feel most comfortable working with. One 4th grade teacher who had been working in the Los Angeles schools for 28 years admitted she saw no relevant connection between dance or acting and an academic education. However, she actively participated in a highly successful poetry partnership. This information can be useful for planning to meet the needs and requests of classroom teachers who are willing to participate in artist/teacher partnerships. It also reveals a general imbalance in the type of art skills being taught through integrated units.

As we head into the information age, the use of technology was also explored in this study. Ninety percent of surveyed CAPE artists reported having a computer at home. Another 50 percent also had at least one of the following: a fax machine, scanner or camera.

Yet nearly 80 percent of these artists included little to no computer literacy in their lessons. Computers in the classroom were used mainly for documentation or research, scanning visual images, or publishing student writing. In addition, artists reported that many classrooms did not yet have sufficient equipment to be incorporated into their lesson plans. For all intensive purposes, beyond those artists working in new media and video, the use of technology has not yet been enveloped into this work in any significant way.

In order to analyze artist's approaches to their work in the classroom, they were asked to identify the use of a number of lesson planning elements that previous years of CAPE research had linked with the development of effective integrated units. Planning guides were used at initial meetings with teachers about 70 percent of the time. Adequate planning time with the teacher continued to be a problem with many artists, who were still carrying the bulk of responsibility for this task. Teacher training in an art form before partnering in the classroom was not common among CAPE lessons. This is an important area of consideration as related research has shown that teachers who are familiar with an art form being taught to their students are more engaged during integrated units with teaching artists. Seventy percent of CAPE artists

acknowledged the regular use of art learning standards, but only 60 percent referenced learning standards in other subject areas. In addition, although many artists taught specific content gathered from student materials, almost 1/3 admitted to rarely, if ever referencing actual curriculum content. This suggests that though teaching artists may understand the goals and techniques of arts integration, actual alignment to what the students are engaged in learning in the classroom could be closer. In these cases, it may be that arts integrated lessons are being used for enrichment purposes rather than to teach required academic concepts. In 75 percent of the lessons, concept bridges between an art form and academic subject were reportedly clarified, however in another 25 percent they were not. There was a noted correlation between artists who did not address specific content and who did not delineate underlying concept bridges, indicating that as many as 1 out of 4 teaching artists could likely benefit from additional training in creating effective integrated units.

In talking with both administrators and teachers about the work of teaching artists, a common request was for stronger curriculum tie-ins in order to cover more material and prepare students for standardized testing. Art programs must align with broader educational goals, and as witnessed through their transdisciplinary capacity, can offer much in the way of supporting learning across the curriculum. However, specific grade level content must be directly addressed to be most effective and this information must be communicated between the classroom teacher and the artist during the initial planning meetings in order to be adequately included in the integrated units.

Assessing outcomes

Though most planned units apparently included time for mutual reflection with a teacher partner, the element of student assessment was less clear. Since about 70 percent acknowledged the inclusion of some form of assessment, artists were asked to identify how they determined whether their units were successful. Many artists reported a self-reflection process that took place when they left the school at the end of a teaching experience. They asked themselves analytical questions that reveal underlying educational concerns and goals:

Artists reflecting about students:

- Were students engaged almost all of the time?
- How was their focus, concentration and energy level?
- How easily did they catch on?
- Were they asking “what if?” rather than “how to?”
- Did students leave with more questions than they brought in?
- Were we all WOWed at least once, by something totally new?
- Did they take risks? Try new methods and materials?
- Were they spontaneous? Communicating thoughts more freely and honestly?
- How responsive were they during class discussions?
- Were they working better in a group, both small and large?
- Has self-confidence increased?
- Did they use the art vocabulary taught?
- Are students making connections with other areas of the curriculum?
- Was there completion and student satisfaction with the project?
- Is their evidence of knowledge retention? Did they talk about it later?

Artists reflecting about teachers:

- Did they seem to understand the lesson?
- Were they actively engaged?
- Were they gaining artistic knowledge and skills?
- Did they have any new ideas?

Artists reflecting on planning and facilitating instruction:

- Did I clearly state my objectives and explain my criteria for evaluation?
- Was the focus of my lesson investigation rather than production?
- How can I break down information better?
- Did we get out of the shallow end of the thought pool?
- Did they see how an artist makes choices to pack multiple meanings into a work of art?
- Did students see a dynamic person who wants to make a difference?
- Did I enjoy the encounter?
- What would I do differently next time?

These questions could be asked by almost any educator in relation to a wide variety of subject areas, again reflecting the strong emphasis these artists place on advancing general learning capacities in addition to guiding students through artistic explorations. In fact, when asked if they considered participation in the arts and learning to be one and the same, 85 percent of the artists acknowledged a very definite connection. Several shared their thoughts on the subject:

Art, like learning, is an endless period of research and mastery on all levels.

Creative art involves both intuitive and deductive reasoning.

Learning is understanding how to keep an open mind, create abstract concepts and problem-solve. These skills are used everyday and art is the key.

True learning involves problem solving, meeting challenges, solving puzzles, doing things in new ways. These are all things you do in the arts. The arts will make you a better learner.

In terms of more formal assessment means, artists were asked what they thought were the most effective approaches to gauging student outcomes. Portfolio assessment, or tracking student progress over time, was the most common answer, though this was left to the schools to follow through on. For performance art, allowing students to practice presentation and communication skills became an important part of the criteria for success. Student self-evaluation, either through discussion or journaling, was also considered a viable option, as well as grading based on rubrics measuring skill level and knowledge. An interesting option was to observe how well students were able to demonstrate knowledge by teaching new skills and content to their peers. There were no clear indications that the development of student skills in the arts was being tracked in

any significant way at this time. Artists in Los Angeles were generally not involved in formal assessment measures, partially because teachers were, for the most part, not currently pressured to document artistic development. In addition, many artists did not hold the perception that individual student assessment was part of their job.

Artists' Contributions to Teacher Learning

In recent years, CAPE has focused on teacher education as a major element of their program and artists were asked to comment on the effects they felt their work was having on classroom teachers. Ninety-three percent reported witnessing positive changes in teachers they had worked with. Here are some of the indications of in-class professional development in action:

- Teachers were enthusiastic and engaged in the exercises as learners.
- They repeated the units later by themselves.
- Teachers commented on discovering how to motivate students who are not easily engaged.
- The focus of assignment changed from “step-by-step, make what I make” to more open-ended exercises with guiding parameters.
- Teachers later incorporated parts of the integrated units into the study of other subjects.
- They asked the artists to help brainstorm other integrative projects for the future.
- Teachers followed through by taking private lessons in an art form introduced by an artist.
- Teachers volunteered for leadership roles in school art programs after working in an arts integrated partnership.
- Their ability to collaborate with another professional (the artist) increased.
- Teachers have taken the information from the unit and taught a workshop for other colleagues, incorporating their own ideas.
- Teachers often shared that they gained new perspectives on their students' abilities and learning styles after watching the artist work with them.

Artists' Work with School Arts Specialists

Interactions with in-school art specialists were less common, as most artist/teacher partnerships involved the classroom teachers only. Many schools did not employ art specialists or used the visiting artist in classrooms that did not have the opportunity to work with the school's part-time specialist. However, in some cases, a CAPE partnership included an art specialist – typically in music or visual arts-as the main collaborating teacher. In other cases, the art specialist was the CAPE coordinator for the school and was peripherally involved in a coordinating and consulting role. Several artists mentioned that in-school art specialists often appeared interested in their projects, but had no time in their own schedules to engage in the work. Others occasionally found the art specialist aloof and distant, as though challenged by the presence of the professional artist. The art of diplomacy is undoubtedly a necessary skill for the

successful teaching artist.

About 50 percent of the artists noted they had some contact with art specialists over the years and felt, in general, that when they worked together, both parties had gained from the collaborations. They shared and blended their knowledge and took units to higher levels of accomplishment than they could have managed alone. Artists observed that on these occasions, the art specialist sometimes gained increased respect from fellow faculty and administrators, which gave them a stronger feeling of inclusion in the school's culture. Two art specialists shared that after working in public schools for years as art specialists, they found the work of engaging children in a much broader content area through arts integrated instruction to be a richly rewarding experience.

The Artist and School Culture

The Artist's Fit with a School

When a partnership is initiated within a school for the first time, the teachers and artists involved face the challenging task of blending their divergent sets of skills, knowledge and perceptions in order to develop a functional working relationship. Artists were asked to share how they engaged with a school culture and earned the trust and support of the faculty. The degree of acceptance depended in large part on basic considerations, such as the length of involvement with a school, the interest of the administration and the percentage of faculty participating in integrated units – i.e. the existing scope of an arts-integration culture.

Beyond these fundamental issues, artists offered some additional insights on how they worked to develop a constructive, integrated situation for themselves:

- Be yourself. Most of the time teachers can accept that.
- Respect their schedule by showing up on time and leaving on time, whether you are teaching the students or attending a planning meeting. It's important to act professionally.
- You have to be patient and flexible as plans change constantly.
- Try to be sensitive to their point of view and needs. Trust takes time to build.
- Showing up with a written lesson plan wins big points.
- Emphasize the positive and validate the efforts they have already made in the arts. Compliments are very helpful. You have to realize that teachers are working hard and are doing the best they can with what they have and know.
- Communicate thoroughly with teachers so they feel some sense of control over what is going on and encourage them to join in with the teaching.
- Once a scope and sequence for the arts was developed for the school, teachers were more eager to plan integrated units. They just needed a sensible plan to follow.

Artists and Teachers as Co-educators

Although the artists interviewed and surveyed represented a diverse population of novice and experienced teaching artists, when asked about their current attitudes about teachers and principals in regards to the integration work, a few remarks were commonly repeated. Classroom teachers had, in general, earned tremendous respect from teaching artists for their commitment, tireless effort and response to seemingly overwhelming odds in providing their students with a quality education. Teachers were perceived to be unfairly burdened with constant test score pressures and large class sizes, while working with students of an extreme range of abilities and knowledge. If teachers showed little active interest in the artists' efforts or seemed unwilling to get deeply involved with planning and teaching the unit, most artists felt it was because they were already overwhelmed with other instructional duties, or lacked sufficient background in the arts.

The relationship between teachers and students was sometimes observed to be overly controlling, fear-based, manipulative and distrustful. Arts education, through integrated instruction, can provide a positive avenue where teachers can model learning and work along with their students as creative explorers, shifting the relationship dynamic to one of respectful collaboration, where students are able to take more responsibility for their own learning.

Rigidity in the classroom environment was seen as counterproductive, as was chaos. Artists know that art making requires flexibility, risk-taking and mess-making in order to succeed, as well as self-discipline, tenacity and focus. When the students were not properly disciplined in their behavior and approach to learning, art lessons—as well as academic—were very difficult to teach. Classroom management was therefore seen to be a central concern. When students are fully engaged in learning through the arts, they are able to see the results of their own focus and discipline, which can carry over to the study of other subjects.

Artists and the hard work of schooling

A handful of artists felt burnout was a major problem and observed that some of the teachers appeared to have lost their patience and belief in students and had stopped trying to reach the most challenging ones. Insufficient training was suggested as a problem as well as a lack of understanding about the effectiveness of their instructional techniques. For the most part, however, teachers were found to be welcoming and supportive of the artists and tended to get more involved in the partnerships as their level of artistic self-confidence and trust grew. These artists recognized that teachers need on-going reinforcement and encouragement in the face of constant pressures and hoped to bring active assistance, fresh teaching ideas and positive, creative energy into their classrooms, besides the integrated art experiences.

The focus group interviews that were conducted in early winter revealed the strong sensibility CAPE artists hold on how students ought to be managed and the type of environment necessary to encourage effective learning. With little background in educational theory, their insights into the needs of the students closely aligned with contemporary ideas of classroom life and instruction. Artists were asked to describe some of the central challenges they witnessed in urban education and to explain how arts instruction could help address those problems.

Of primary concern was the overemphasis on standardized testing. Students were seen to engage in a disproportionate amount of rote memorization rather than investigative learning. There was no time to deeply consider concepts and issues in the rush to absorb facts and figures. Creative expression was judged to be inhibited in such an environment. Integrated instruction was seen as a way to offer a combination of fact finding and conceptual investigation, deepening the level of comprehension and creative thought processing gained from a unit of study.

Artists and School Principals

The artists' perspective on school administration followed a similar vein of thinking. Many principals seemed to be overwhelmed with responsibilities. There was a strong sense that the vision, attitude and supportive actions of a principal accounted for the difference between a productive school and a failing school. A strong focus on academic test scores meant that many artists felt ignored by the administration or sidelined in their efforts. Some reportedly had never been introduced to a principal. However, when artists did occasionally interact with administrators, many were pleased and surprised to discover that school leaders did indeed believe in the value of arts education and sincerely hoped the artists would provide quality, creative experiences for their students. As one artist wrote, "Most of them do not wish to obstruct creativity in the way I used to think."

Schools as challenging artistic venues.

Overcrowded classrooms make for cramped quarters, and with the removal of recess periods in many schedules, students need alternative outlets for energy. Performing arts in particular can provide kinesthetic opportunities for exercising both mind and body as well as reach students who struggle with traditional book-focused instruction. In addition, students often come to school while facing tremendous challenges in their home life situations and have no outlet to constructively address their feelings. Arts integration can help students find a voice to express their unique experiences while, at the same time, provide them with a potential source of personal pleasure in creative activity. The arts, taught in an authentic manner, can also provide a safe place to work out differences of opinion and beliefs and learn to accept the divergent perspectives of those around them.

Artists on conditions for success.

The CAPE evaluation study of 1998-1999 interviewed both teachers and artists about the main factors that support the success of integrated units. Supportive principals, skilled artists, risk-taking teachers, well-defined learning objectives, realistic assessment plans, and flexible scheduling were among those elements mentioned. However, with more experience under their belt, artists were surveyed again on this issue and now thought, that though each of the former elements were still necessary, the overriding factor for the successful implementation of a unit was the degree of active interest and participation by the partnering classroom teacher. This finding aligns with a long held tenet of educational reform theory that nothing really advances in school reform without the consent and support of the person in charge at the

classroom level. Artists still find this issue to be a major challenge in their work, due to the lack of time, interest and art training held by many, many teachers.

In addition, developing a solid, collaborative working relationship is of utmost importance and often gets sidelined if there is not sufficient planning time built into the unit. The question of exactly how much planning time is needed to develop rigorous integrated units needs further clarification. Artists also noted that their own knowledge of the material to be covered and their own ability to work with students in a school environment were major factors in how well the unit is received. They also reflected on the degree to which a principal's attitude toward the students directly effected their willingness to actively engage in learning, as well as the classroom teacher's ability to control and gain the trust of the students.

When asked what they currently needed to increase the effectiveness of their integration work, artists listed the following items as being most important:

- More support from school administration
- Enthusiastic teachers, willing to learn
- Specific knowledge about school subjects
- More advance planning time with teachers
- New ideas for integrating lessons
- A better scheduling system
- More training in classroom management techniques
- More teaching opportunities
- Increased pay and benefits.

Artists' Projections and Hopes for the Future of this Work

The key to accessing the power of arts education lies in the quality of instruction. Currently, it is the professional teaching artists and in-school art specialists (when available) who, for the most part, hold the necessary training and experience to successfully reach students through the arts. Despite CAPE's program focus on teacher training and artists continuing efforts to educate their instructional partners along with the students, artists generally feel confident that their role in the schools will provide an important contribution for years to come. A dancer wrote, "We spend just as much time learning about the arts as any doctor, lawyer, or banker does in their trade. While a goal is to encourage teachers to use artistic tools, what artists have to provide [will] remain valuable and unique to those artists." Another added, "Without a great deal of training in an art form, teachers cannot offer the depth of knowledge professionals can. There is no way they can help students understand the artistic processes in the way an artist can."

Other artists have more faith in the ability of teachers to pick up sufficient art skills to be quite successful in teaching basic elements and processes of the major art forms, at least at the elementary school level where the bulk of integrated units are taught. However, the professional artists' perspective and personal experience cannot be easily duplicated. These artists envision that their work will become increasingly more interesting and exciting as teachers gain more training and experience, but for the most part, they do not fear being excluded from the classroom due to reduced need. In fact, their own experience has shown that when teachers

discover the value of arts integration and begin to fully engage in the lessons, they are more likely than ever to invite an artist back to help plan more units.

Artists also were very aware of the important role district administrators held in supporting art education programming. From an internal vantage point, an in-school art specialist had witnessed a number of positive changes CPS has recently implemented in terms of offering more professional development opportunities for arts specialists, providing funding to assist in making art part of the core curriculum and creating magnet schools in the arts. Specific suggestions that artists had for strengthening the degree of support at the district level included the following:

1. Provide administrators with continual access to new research in the field that helps clarify the benefits of supporting strong, cross-curricular arts education programs. These leaders need to not only identify and acknowledge these benefits, but actively build art programs that can address some of the current problems in schools, such as a lack of perceived relevancy of the curriculum, a sense of academic isolation, boredom, narrow instructional styles and high dropout rates. Artists have witnessed these problems first hand in the classroom and find integrated instruction can offer a partial solution by offering equal access to hands-on investigative, stimulating, creative learning opportunities, typically involving group collaboration.
2. Actively encourage administrators to resist pulling funding from arts education programs as a response to other academic or fiscal challenges.
3. Encourage a greater receptivity to community arts organizations with the talent, knowledge and tireless dedication to support not only the artistic growth, but also the academic, cognitive, and social development of students.
4. Encourage districts to consider hiring professional artists as curriculum consultants in schools, not to take the place of art specialists, but to assist whole faculties in the cross curriculum application of the arts. Not only would schools benefit from a consistent, long-term association with a professional teaching artist, but the artists would benefit through increased economic stability.
5. Help facilitate increased professional development opportunities within the district where arts specialists, classroom teachers and professional artists work together to strengthen the application of the arts across the curriculum.

Structuring artists' work in the schools.

CAPE artists were asked to identify their preferences in terms of working formats and discuss the benefits of each. Thirty-four percent of all respondents said that they would prefer to work with just one school in a long-term residency situation. Moving from school to school reportedly required tremendous energy, both physically and psychologically, and held the danger of burnout over time. In addition many artist felt that working with the same students and teachers was by far the best way to have a lasting educational impact. They enjoyed the experience of being valued and warmly welcomed by both faculty and students. In addition, once

they grew familiar with what a particular group of students and teachers were capable of, they could more effectively tailor arts experiences to their needs and interests. During interviews, artists confirmed that only in schools where they returned for sequential years did they feel as if they played a recognized role in the life of the school.

Not every teaching artist was looking for a full time position, however. In fact, 71 percent hoped only for consistent part-time work. Among these part-time educators, some liked the freedom to work in a variety of schools in order to bring arts experiences to as many children as possible. This also freed them of responsibilities associated with long-term commitments so they could continue to focus more energy on their own creative endeavors. This preference was much more common among artists in Los Angeles who were still engaged in school performances. CAPE artists, whose work centered on arts integration, showed a very strong preference for working in a small number of schools (5 or less) over several years. Artists in both showed cities showed enthusiasm for the idea of becoming a permanent artist-in-residence for a school, either working as an integration specialist with all of the faculty, or focusing on bringing intensive experiences to specific grade levels.

Expanding the Contributions of Artists, and Opportunities for Contributing, to the School

Beyond developing individual units with selected classroom teachers, artists were asked to share their vision for how their role in a school could expand in the future, if funding was available. The most commonly mentioned idea was to place a teaching artist in a school on a salaried basis, to work with all faculty and students in expanding integrated instruction. In addition, it was noted that such permanent resident artists could be helpful in improving the quality of school assemblies and other school-wide productions and exhibitions. Other artists could also be brought in to model productive collaboration among adults. Some artists were willing to teach in after-school programs, held either at a school or nearby community center, as well as to work with parents during evening programs. They recognized the need for adults to experience quality arts instruction along with the children, not only to help them understand the importance of the arts for their own lives, but to garner increased support for arts education programming.

In general, establishing a closer relationship between students, teachers, school administrators, artists, parents, arts organizations and local universities was viewed as a way to grow stronger support for art programs. One of the ways this could manifest is the participation between artists, teachers, parent volunteers and university researchers in action research projects. Action research brings educators who are dedicated to instructional reform together with trained researchers in pursuing new knowledge in the field as well as increasing their own understanding and capacities as informed teaching professionals. Some of this has already occurred within the CAPE partnerships, however, an increase in research activities would undoubtedly enhance understanding about arts integration practices as well as give participants the opportunity to share their growing knowledge more directly with colleagues, parents and administrators.

The construction of an arts education network between schools has been a part of the CAPE program agenda since its inception. Artists have supported the continual growth of this network and hoped to participate in more activities that joined schools together in common artistic and educational goals. The CAPE staff has organized several special projects that not

only expand the meaning of partnership by creating links with other arts organizations, but also formally add to the construction of educational curriculum.

In one recent project, elementary schools from eight Chicago neighborhoods brought their individual documentary studies on aspects of their communities together in a collaborative exhibition celebrating diversity and connections. *Indivisible: Stories of Chicago Communities* was inspired by a photo-documentary exhibit at the Terra Museum about people around the country actively engaged in trying to better their communities. The resulting exhibition, held at two local galleries, gave students the experience of community validation for their efforts, brought schools together in an exchange of social and artistic ideas, and provided teachers with a professional development experience. Teaching artists were inspired by the change to collaborate on larger scale art projects with other artists and were enthusiastic about creating additional opportunities.

In another partnership with the Mississippi Arts Commission's Arts Education Program, artists and folklorist from both Chicago and Mississippi are currently creating a Chicago/Delta Exchange around the historical issues connected to the Great Delta migration. These artists will work with students and teachers at the middle school level to gather evidence on the historical, literary, and artistic links between Chicago and Mississippi. The tangible results of this collaboration, when completed, will include the shared creation of a website, a video production, a book of oral histories, a play about one aspect of migration, and a mural about a particular event. In addition, a curriculum unit on the subject, along with associated materials, will be developed. Continued collaborations are planned for the future as these teachers, students, and artists further investigate the historical influences of cultural exchange on each location.

These efforts not only create a connection between the schools and teaching artists involved in the special projects, but align with a much larger network of schools, non-profit organizations, and state and federal agencies working together to make arts education a central part of the schooling of youth across the country. The programs are models of cooperation and group learning, cross-cultural exchange, an innovative way to construct authentic, relevant curriculum and an inspiring experiment in the possible. Artists involved in special projects gained professionally from the public exposure and enjoyed receiving recognition for their efforts.

Advanced learning and professional development for artists.

Too often artists felt their arts education work was either unrecognized or undervalued. One of the issues is the lack of credentials available to professional artists who engage in this work. When asked to comment on the subject, 50 percent of respondents said they would be interested in pursuing some form of accreditation. This was true of both Chicago and Los Angeles artists. Being certified as a teaching artist was seen as a way to help them gain more stable employment with schools, possibly increase grant opportunities, and acknowledge their skills and experience in arts education.

Some artists were unwilling to take courses, feeling their years of prior experience should automatically qualify them for official certification as a teaching artist. Others were willing to take either weekend or summer school classes, if the program was relatively short. They also felt

they should earn credit for life experience as an arts educator. For the most part, these artists were not interested in earning a full, classroom teaching credential and becoming a school art specialist with a full schedule of set classes passing through each day. Retaining an identity as a professional artist and working in an arts integration consulting role for schools was a more common goal. They were, however, interested in learning about many of the same topics covered in traditional education courses. Classroom management techniques was at the top of the list, followed by integrated curriculum building, working with learning standards, and collaborating successfully with teachers.

In terms of professional development offered by CAPE, 57 percent of survey respondents claimed the workshops for artists and teachers were inspiring and beneficial. Others had not attended workshops due to time conflicts or a lack of particular interest in the topics covered. Networking with other artists was named as the main benefit along with sharing ideas to try in the classroom.

Although it could be accessed as a potential source for professional development, the CAPE website was not generally utilized by teaching artists. Seventy percent had yet to visit the site, others had done so just once or twice. With a steadily growing interest in the use of informational websites for locating and developing lesson-planning ideas, it would make sense to expand the interactive capacity of the current CAPE website to encourage usage, not only by participating artists and teachers in Chicago, but by educators everywhere.

Some suggestions for future workshop topics were as follows:

- Assessment techniques
- Utilizing the imagination and metaphorical thinking
- How to form a satisfying collaboration with teachers
- Designing and implementing integrated units
- Combining art forms within integrated units
- Focus sessions on ideas for integrating specific art forms
- Incorporating new media technology

Conclusions

Viable contributing roles for artists. Although professional artists have been, at least peripherally, involved in public education in America for the past fifty years, we are only now beginning to realize the extent of valuable contributions they can and do make to the schooling of youth. This study has attempted to clarify the breadth of these contributions and, in particular, provide insight into the ways artists advance essential learning skills beyond their more obvious gifts of encouraging both creative self-expression and an ever-deepening appreciation for the various art forms. As an evaluation study is, by nature, confined to brief glimpses of specified activities and perspectives, the conclusions garnered from this effort should not be considered definitive, but reveal trends of thought and experience of teaching artists who have worked in arts integration-based programs and found the process worthwhile.

Artist roots in educational values. It was discovered that the majority of these artists had strong educational values instilled in their youth and that this work was likely an extension of those values as much as a desire to share their passion for a particular art form. Many reconnected with those childhood values during their college years and shortly thereafter as they began their professional careers as artists and needed additional financial support. College level art students are traditionally steered toward teaching as a common side profession, yet they are too rarely offered courses to prepare them for that path.

Professional importance of credentialling. A greater emphasis on teacher education in BFA and MFA programs would not only help identify promising teaching artists, but better prepare them for the work. Stronger partnership alliances between college level art departments and local arts agencies and organizations would inform the training and better serve the needs of young artists, hiring arts organizations, and schools. An alternative Teaching Artist certification program offered at this level would be beneficial for interested students as well as for public schools looking for qualified assistance with their art program. About half of the surveyed artists indicated an interest in earning some type of certification, without wanting to pursue a formal degree in education. Artists with educational training would also be more likely to quickly understand the potential of art integrated instruction and have more immediate success in the classroom.

Multiple agendas of artists. In identifying personal missions attached to their teaching efforts, artists were very articulate about artistic, educational and social agendas. They not only wanted to introduce students to the power, potential and passion of the arts through explorations of self-expression, but also wanted to stretch students' creative and critical thinking capacities and deepen their understanding of other academic subjects.

Pursuit of social justice. From their observations in the classroom, many artists were sensitive to the socioeconomic and racial inequities present in schooling and hoped to use the arts as an equalizer, in terms of successfully reaching educational objectives as well as in teaching mutual respect, tolerance and cooperative learning. The pursuit of these multi-faceted objectives indicates that artists can, and do, provide rich and meaningful learning opportunities that stretch far beyond the acquisition of art skills.

Roles for diverse art forms. The most common art forms used in integration were visual arts and theatre, due in part to artist availability and perceived ease of integration.

Teachers appear to have an easier time building concept bridges between visual arts or drama and language arts (a commonly integrated subject) than they do with dance or music. Continuing to offer specialized workshops in literacy integration, specifically using visual arts and drama, would be a useful approach to professional development for both teachers and artists. Successful training starts with an educator's comfort level. In addition, making a more concerted effort to attract artists working in other mediums would help balance and extend the kinds of integration units being planned. New media technology has not been utilized in a significant manner in CAPE's integration work to date. As more equipment is made available in the classrooms, that situation will likely change, just as an emphasis on the use of new media is growing in the professional art world. When schools hire technology specialists to assist in the maintenance, use and training for new equipment, the opportunity for collaborative projects in this area will also increase.

Challenges of planning. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of arts integration work lies in the actual planning of rigorous, effective units. Because of the variation in the degree of preparation and training of both artists and teachers engaged in this work, along with differences in instructional styles, lesson plans varied greatly in content and purpose. Also, artists were often finding it difficult to engage teachers as full partners in planning and teaching a unit. Taking the time to train the teachers in the elements, principles and tools of the art form being integrated has proven to ignite more interest and participation during the teaching of the unit. In addition, teachers were more interested in co-planning units when a scope and sequence for the arts was adopted by their school. Two ways of cooperative planning seemed to work best: 1) working from a pre-designed planning guide 2) having sufficient planning time built into the school schedule. Principals, teachers, artists, and students have all recognized the need for a closer connection between artistic concepts and the academic content they were assigned to study for standardized testing preparation. These goals must be clarified during initial planning meetings and revisited throughout a unit.

Under-developed assessment processes. Although artists reported being involved in assessment activities during lessons, the evidence of assessment was not easily visible. Many artists were uncertain of the actual effect they were having on individual students and were under little pressure to participate in assessment. Most measurement appeared to take place through informal observation. Artists stated they were more often interested in how learning skills advanced than in how specific art skills had grown (although the two were often viewed as one in the same). With program funders and education policy makers eager to hear about the academic effects of strong art programs, the area of student assessment in arts education will become increasingly important and will likely need to be addressed through increasingly specific ways by both teachers and artists in integration-based partnerships. Tracking student learning in the arts will give additional validity to quality art programs as well as provide teachers with a wealth of information about students in terms of artistic, cognitive and emotional development. The challenge for teachers is to find time to follow their students' artistic development along with increasing accountability pressures in other academic subjects. Artists could help with that task, and are often, due to professional and technical know-how, in a better position to draw conclusions from a piece of artwork than a classroom teacher. They could also help develop meaningful rubrics and other means for measuring achievement. An in-school art specialist, when available, could also play an important role in student assessment in the arts.

Artist contributions to professional development of educators. Artists had considerable evidence of making a constructive contribution to the professional development of both classroom teachers and in-school art specialists, particularly when the relationship had time to grow over several residency experiences. Teachers were reportedly able to later repeat planned units without the artist, shared their experiences in workshops with other teachers, spoke of gaining new perspectives on challenging students and occasionally took classes in an art form that had been introduced. When art specialists were included in the planning process, artists enjoyed the collaboration and were able to take units to a higher level of achievement than they could have accomplished otherwise.

Conditions of effective partnering. Relationships with teachers worked best when artists were able to consider the teachers' needs and respond in a professional, respectful manner. Artists recognized the need for positive reinforcement and constant encouragement, both for teachers and students, as well as the need to be patient and flexible in the dynamic environment of a school. As integrated units were most successful when teachers were actively involved, utilizing these tools in building a strong, trusting relationship is very important. In addition, it became apparent that art specialists and classroom teachers would benefit from either pre-service or in-service training in how to collaborate with other professionals in the classroom.

Orientations to the future. In looking to the future, teaching artists felt strongly that their work in the schools would continue, if funding sources were available. They were confident in their ability to add important and unique contributions to schools. With nearly 60 percent of CAPE artists stating a preference for working with a small, consistent number of schools (1-5), the sense of belonging and influencing lasting change for individual students and the school culture as a whole appeared to be significant driving forces behind their work. The format of maintaining a permanent, part-time residency at a school that is supported by district funds was popular, as artists recognized the need for better pay and more consistent work along with the possibility of health and retirement benefits. Working directly for the district as an on-site integration specialist would be a possible approach to stabilizing their economic situation. Another commonly mentioned idea among the teaching artists in both Chicago and Los Angeles was the need to form an artist's union to stabilize teaching wages and provide access to affordable health and retirement plans.

Despite on-going economic concerns, few artists expressed any intention of changing careers plans in the immediate future, for example, returning to creating art full time. A more common path was to move from the role of teaching artist to arts education program administrator. Facilitating organizations of teaching artists became a new form of creative work, with its never ending challenges and constant need for revision and growth. The influence of CAPE's work has grown beyond the boundaries of its own programs as these committed artists have moved out into the larger community and changed the structure and functions of other arts organizations they have joined. For those who have chosen to remain engaged at the classroom level indefinitely, involvement with the arts integration process appears to increasingly fuel their understanding of the power and potential of their role in education. The knowledge that their efforts are slowly but surely helping to improve the public schooling experience while enriching the lives of the people in their community through the sharing their passion and knowledge of the arts makes for satisfying work indeed.

Program Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from the views of teaching artists and the professional opinions of the research and evaluation team.

1. **Engage principals and art-specialists.** Work with administrators and in-school art specialists to find ways to engage them more actively in supporting and participating in the work of the partnerships. In addition, CAPE may want to develop a plan for assisting arts specialists in fostering, or reclaiming, identities as practicing artists.

2. **Instruction in arts skills for teachers.** CAPE artists are in a position to make a strong impact on teachers in terms of teaching basic art concepts and skills in the major art forms being integrated. Teacher training in an art form is not typically part of a planned unit, but evidence suggests that knowledge of even basic skills allows teachers to engage in the integrated units at a much deeper level. (In return, teachers should be encouraged to share educational know-how more explicitly with teaching artists.) Instruction in art skills could happen in after-school sessions where art forms are broken down into basic steps for learning and later teaching, and through guiding teachers in their own artistic explorations. Special attention to skills needed at particular grade levels as specified in a school's scope and sequence for the arts would be helpful. In addition, artists and CAPE staff may be able to provide information on where teachers can take more basic art classes. Teachers will also attend art openings and performances when a known CAPE artist is involved.

3. **Induction programs for new artists.** Develop a methodical way for training new artists who join the CAPE network, including side-by-side mentoring with experienced artists. Careful attention is needed to the orientation of new artists and teachers in partnership collaboration. New artists would benefit from training sessions that would provide them with the personal skills to lay the foundation for a long-term relationship with each new teacher and school.

4. **Increase formal recognition programs.** Beyond foundational support, CAPE's stronger assets are the teaching artists and classroom teachers who, through participating in the partnerships, have grown to understand and believe in the powerful possibilities of arts integration in whole school reform. Artists and teachers alike would benefit from explicit recognition of their efforts over the years. An on-going program for acknowledging and celebrating partnerships at the close of each unit or year, or an occasional special event honoring the work of these dedicated individuals is recommended. Program volunteers could possibly be recruited for a long-term implementation plan.

6. **Increase the presence of under-represented art forms/subjects.** More attention should be paid to the types of subject matter and arts forms being integrated to strive for a balance across the curriculum and the arts. Dance, new media, math, and science are particularly neglected in integration work to date.

7. **Increase the presence of technology-related arts.** Although there have been pockets of highly successful units incorporating new media, CAPE needs to develop a policy and practice for technology-related arts. This includes understanding the limitations and possibilities each school faces with equipment and staffing, providing training and access to network teachers and artists, and encouraging schools to expand their technology use through collaborations with CAPE partners. One area of interest that could be pursued immediately is to offer teachers and artists a course in website design to showcase their artistic endeavors.

8. **Expand and refine learning assessment.** As school districts continue to apply pressure for accountability of all schooling activities, the issue of formal assessment for integrated units needs to be tackled in a concerted way. Guidelines for acceptable measures and formats for assessments could be developed by artists and teachers and made available to all partnerships. In addition, CAPE may consider taking an active role in encouraging partnership schools to develop a system for tracking the development of arts skills over time.

9. **Expand ongoing program assessment.** At this time, CAPE may consider moving in the direction of more openly participatory evaluations, where staff, teachers, and artists help set the agenda and collect data. Not only does engaging in the self-reflective work of evaluation make participants more aware of the needs of partnerships, but provides a powerful source of professional development in understanding their own role in the work of the partnerships.

10. **Involve artists and teachers as investigators in ongoing program research.** Another way to draw participants deeper into the theoretical work of CAPE is to design and support action research projects, involving university researchers, artists, teachers, and parent volunteers. Action research brings practitioners who are dedicated to instructional reform together with trained researchers in pursuing new knowledge in the field as well as increasing their own understanding and capacities as informed teaching professionals. Some of this has already occurred within the CAPE partnerships; however, an increase in research activities would undoubtedly enhance understanding about arts integration practices as well as give participants the opportunity to share their growing knowledge more directly with colleagues, parents and administrators.

11. **Expand internal communications.** Maintaining a graphically pleasing (using the color of HTML for example) monthly e-letter with information for teachers *and artists* could be an efficient way to share timely news on research, workshops, new partners, success stories, and new resources. For those who do not use e-mail, a simple, quarterly newsletter could suffice. A volunteer may be available to handle this project.

12. **Build routines for artists to share their insights and goals.** Artists should be encouraged to explicitly share their personal artistic, educational, and social objectives with teachers and when possible, find ways to include them in the lesson plans. It is important that artists not assume their goals are subversive to the goals of the teacher or school, and recognize the opportunity to actively model strong academic and social values. Many teachers may also have underlying missions and objective. They should start identifying them, discussing them and building those goals into the lesson assessment.

13. **Wider dissemination of lesson plans.** Although the partnerships have been documenting their work for years, the lesson plans and results have yet to be put to full use.

Three areas that need to be addressed are 1) documenting units in a manner that is useful to others, 2) collecting related units into resource books, and 3) expanding the content and capacity of the CAPE website as an idea incubator for new partnerships. Although it could be accessed as a potential source for professional development, the CAPE website is not utilized by teaching artists. Seventy percent had yet to visit the site, others had done so once or twice. With a steadily growing interest in the use of informational websites for locating and developing lesson-planning ideas, it would make sense to expand the interactive capacity of the current CAPE website to encourage usage, not only by participating artists and teachers in Chicago, but by educators everywhere.

12. Enhance relations with area colleges/ arts institutions. Stronger partnership alliances between college level art departments and local arts agencies and organizations would inform the training and career-information needs of young artists, hiring arts organizations, and schools. CAPE could benefit from a policy for interfacing with university arts programs and alternative certification programs. A first step is to bring an art department in as a partner, in order for them to realize the potential of training and placing skilled artists in the classroom.

Areas for Further Research

The observations and findings of this research point to a number of new areas CAPE could explore as part of its goal to continually improve the impact of the arts integration partnerships on students and educators and on the field of education more generally. Here we catalogue and describe such opportunities.

How can the work of the teaching artist be recognized as an emerging professional career choice?

This research could explore categories of self identity, providing a description of the range of possible roles of artists within the schools, improving certification procedures, gaining professional respect for both roles as practicing artists and teaching artists, confronting salary and health benefits concerns, and simply increasing the amount of theoretical literature about this work that is available to the field.

How does an artist, or an organization, engage in-school allies in a deeply committed, sustaining manner?

With only half of teaching artists reporting any contact with art specialists and school administrators, more study of the whole-school integration of artists into the school is needed. In addition, the issue of bringing novice teachers up to speed on ideas and theory regarding curriculum integration theory and techniques in an efficient manner needs further consideration.

Since schools have limited resources, how does the goal to achieve a fully integrated curriculum become a priority in a school?

Within this topic falls the issue of whether it is economically and realistically better to partner with arts organizations or to hire an in-school art specialist to work with classroom teachers in deepening and expanding integration efforts. Another issue is to explore the feasibility of employing teaching artists as school staff members on a permanent basis.

For in-school art specialists, how can working with teaching artists or an arts organization allow them to reinforce or reclaim an identity as a practicing artist?

It is unknown how much in-school art specialists hope to gain from partnership work in terms of connecting with the practice of creating art. Another question is whether partnering arts organizations, or even the collaborating artists, can or should make a concerted effort to offer an art specialist assistance in this regard.

How are practicing artists or other teaching artists trained, and how might they be more effectively trained for traditional art residency formats brought to this work?

This question includes a study of the kinds of training, or mentoring programs that would help artists learn about the creative and educational theory behind arts integration. A related issue is how do practicing artists learn to co-plan with educators in ways that professionally develop both of them as well as provide a substantial experience for students?

How should planning time in the artist/teacher partnership be structured to be most productive?

Issues imbedded in this question include identifying the amount of planning time needed for a rigorous unit of instruction, the items that need to be attended to during planning meetings, the importance of and means for establishing a trusting, mutually respectful relationship, the use of efficient planning guides, the degree of detailed organization that needs to be addressed, and periods set aside for mutual reflection about the integration process during implementation and wind-down of instructional units.

What is the effect of CAPE's programmatic emphasis on cognitive development on the development of high quality art experiences in the classroom?

Different arts initiatives have different focuses. CAPE associates might explore the following questions: Are there opportunities or obstacles created when an initiative influences artists to pursue learning skills rather than art skills? Is there a significant overemphasis on the intellectual rather than the intuitive process of art making in integrated units? How does this impact the kind of artwork created in the classroom? Is it possible, or necessary to create a true balance? Does the practice of using themes for cross-school exhibitions that are both local issues and universal concerns encourage the creation of better art or more socially conscious art or both? Does it make the art experience more valuable? To whom?

What impact does an individual's participation in the CAPE network have on other schools and organizations outside the network?

There is anecdotal evidence that CAPE teachers and artists have had influence on other schools and arts organizations both inside and outside the CAPE network when they changed jobs or organization affiliations. Tracking the efforts of former CAPE participants might provide clues on how the work of CAPE spreads beyond its active network. CAPE may be in a position to act as a mentor in more directly aiding other arts organizations that aspire to a similar mission of implementing arts integration for whole school reform.

What the best way to encourage partnership development beyond the CAPE network?

This topic recognizes CAPE's status as a living laboratory for effective arts integration partnerships. Issues that might be explored include attracting teachers and artists outside the current partnerships to participate in professional development courses, encouraging CAPE artists to serve as trainers in other programs, providing them with opportunities to view veteran partnerships in action, and facilitating access to other types of resources and materials.