

Arts in Education Grant Programs at the U.S. Department of Education Impact in Chicago: Increasing Achievement for Low Performing Students

Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE), an arts partner to Chicago Public Schools, recently completed a 4-year, Department of Education (DOE) supported grant program. This program, Partnership in Arts Integration Research (PAIR), partnered teaching artists with 4th, 5th, and 6th grade classroom teachers from six schools to impact student academic performance. These treatment schools were compared with six highly comparable control schools that did not have this type of arts integrated instruction nor CAPE led professional development. This rigorous program gathered multiple sources of research data to look at the positive growth of students and schools engaged in arts integrated instruction.

While we saw much growth in a variety of areas of student and teacher performance, we are highlighting two:

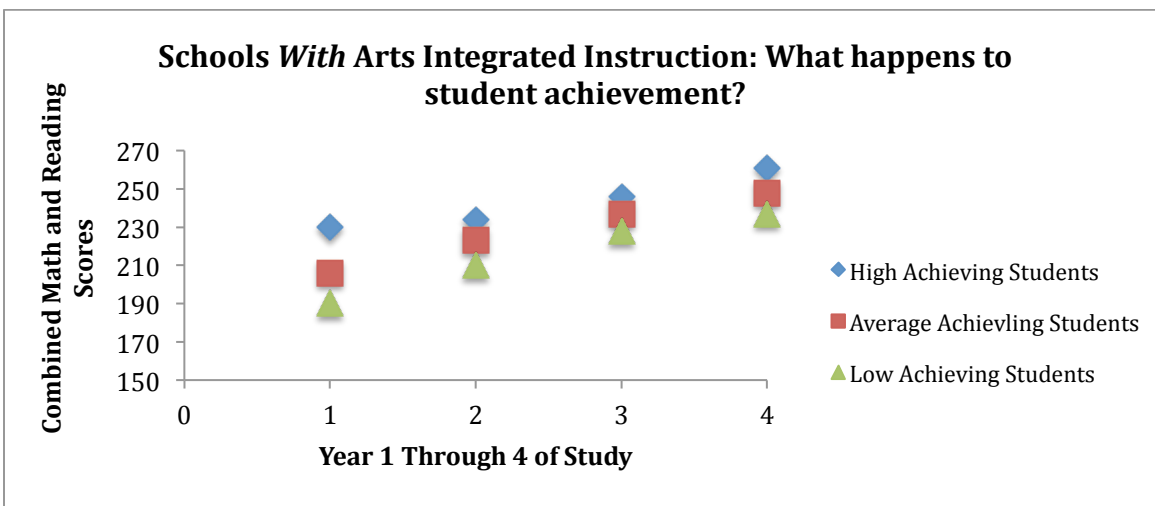
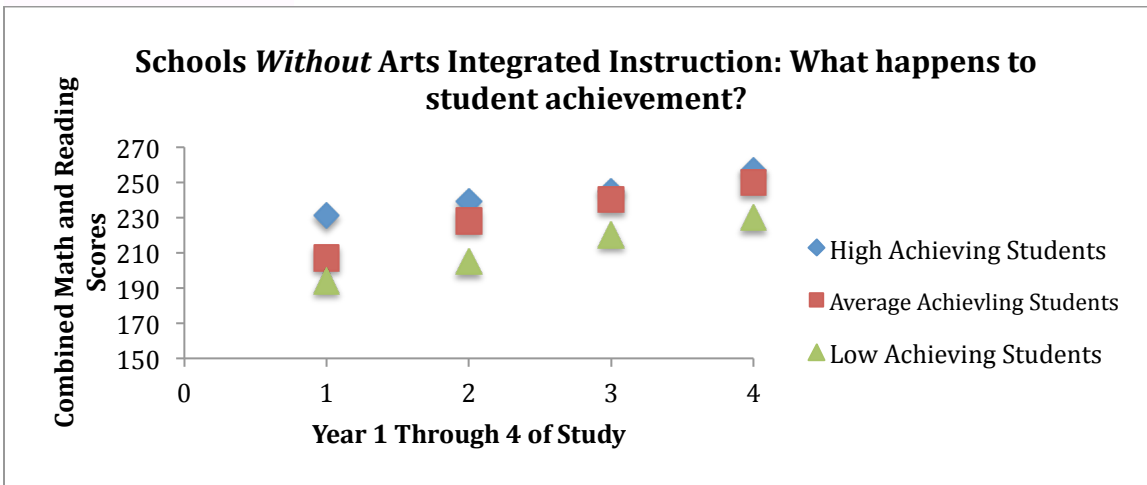
- **Low performing students¹ increase academic achievement with more consistency in treatment schools than students in control schools without arts integrated instruction.**
- **Low achieving students in the treatment schools lessened the gap between their ISAT scores and those of high achieving students by 22%. This is significantly higher than their counterparts in the control schools who only made gains of 14% during the four years of the study.**

Below are two charts. On the first chart, we see students whose standardized academic tests were tracked for four years. These students are from six comparison schools that *did not* receive the arts integrated instruction.

On the second chart, we see student academic scores tracked over six years from students in six schools who *did* receive the arts integrated instruction.

Note that, when you compare low performing students in the schools who received the arts integrated instruction to students who did not, you can clearly see that low performing students consistently increased their performance each school year they engaged in arts integrated learning. In the comparison schools, while there was some improvement, it did not occur to the degree that the arts integration program schools experienced.

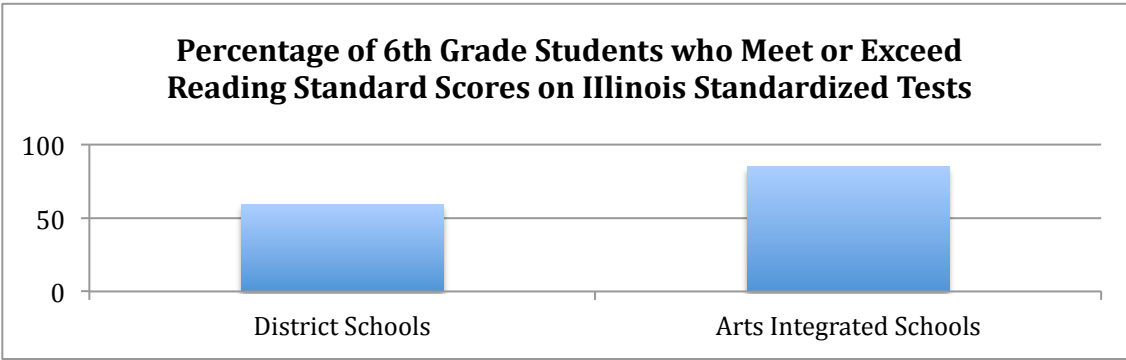
¹ Students were designated as Low, Average and High performing according to their 3rd grade ISAT scores, prior to the start of the program.



Chicago Arts Integrated Schools outperform schools across the district

Below is a chart comparing the overall average of 2010 standardized test scores from 6th grade students in the arts integrated program (students who went through the entire length of the PAIR program) to the averaged scored of 6th grade students from across the Chicago school district. This chart focuses on reading scores, and, as is clearly evident, the treatment schools show much higher achievement in the standardized tests.

85% of students in the treatment schools met or exceeded standard reading scores in comparison to the district average of 59%.



Conclusion & Recommendations

From our program in the schools, and our research, it is evident that arts integrated teaching and learning has clear, positive, demonstrable results, obtained by rigorous and professionally reviewed methods. The results indicate that the arts are among the best methods for deep and wide levels of student engagement in academic learning, and that the arts may hold the key for overall school improvement.

We could not have produced this research or achieved these results without the U.S. Department of Education's Arts In Education grant program.