



Training to Teach the Teachers Arts



Arts Impact

Summary of Findings

**2002-2005 Arts Education Model
Development and Dissemination Project**

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education



Mission Statement

Arts Impact believes that every child should receive an arts education as part of the core educational experience and to meet state standards in the arts. To achieve this objective, Arts Impact trains elementary classroom teachers to become competent and confident teachers of visual and performing arts.





Report Introduction

The following report presents the findings from a three-year (2002-2005) evaluation of teacher training in the Arts Impact teacher training program. The two-year training program was developed and refined for two two-year cycles before receiving a U. S. Department of Education Arts Education Model Development and Dissemination grant in 2002. Those funds, along with continued support from the state government, and foundations, allowed Arts Impact to serve seventy-five teachers from nine school districts during the research timeline. Arts Impact stands on the premise that concept-based arts instruction, linked with authentic classroom performance-based assessments, provides students with the potential to meet state requirements for learning in the arts. The teacher training project was designed to demonstrate the capacity to advance teachers and students toward this goal.

This summary report will document teacher training results and student learning outcomes

Program History

Since 1999, the Arts Impact teacher-training program has strategically addressed the gap between what children need to learn and what teachers know how to teach. Currently, most elementary school staffs in the state of Washington include music specialists but leave a gap in students' overall arts education in the other three art forms – visual art, dance and theater. Without specialists, the elementary teacher becomes the de facto arts teacher.

Arts Impact began as the Pierce County Arts Education Partnership (PCAEP), under the management of the Cultural Council of Greater Tacoma. Now, as part of Puget Sound Educational Service District, Arts Impact has trained more than 200 teachers from Pierce, King, Kitsap and Snohomish Counties.

Program Partners

Regional cultural organizations hosted the summer teacher training institutes and provided vital resources, study visits, and venues for students to apply skills in responding to art. For the period of the grant, cultural partners included the Museum of Glass and founding partners Tacoma Art Museum and the Broadway Center for the Performing Arts. The Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Children's Theatre, Pacific Northwest Ballet and University of Washington World Series joined as partners for the 2005-2007 training cycle.

These partners remain a vital component of the Arts Impact teacher training program.



Program Components

The following program components were included during the research cycle of the program.

- A one week summer institute provided 30 hours of intensive, hands-on instruction in basic concepts and skills in dance, theater, and visual art. Teachers participated as students and analyzed art-classroom management, delivery, and criteria-based reflection processes. Teachers received training in performance-based assessment strategies, critical responses to art, and the creative and performing artistic processes.

The second-year summer institute introduced additional concepts with a focus on arts-infused learning (teaching concepts in the arts shared with other core classroom disciplines) and extended assessment strategies.

The institute training staff consisted of the Arts Impact curriculum and assessment director, teams of 3-6 artist-mentors, and cultural educators from the host institutions.

- Ten-hour mentorships paired each teacher with an artist-mentor to teach the arts in a classroom setting, write an arts lesson, and assess students at formative and summative points in the lesson. The mentorship is a key feature of the Arts Impact project, and provides a support system for successful teaching practices and accountability for teacher performance.



The second-year 10-hour mentorship paired teachers with an artist-mentor from a different artistic discipline.

- Study trips to partnering cultural organizations provided first-hand opportunities to identify and discuss the artistic concepts and skills they were studying as used by exemplary arts professionals.
- Workshops (up to 12 workshops regionally located at school sites) were offered throughout the school year for teachers. Teachers attended at least two workshops. The workshops focused on additional foundational arts concepts and skills, specific teaching strategies, and reestablished contact with artist-mentors for ongoing advisement.
- Collegial review with an assessment liaison provided an opportunity for teachers to submit their lessons for feedback. This allowed an independent check of the viability of the targets and criteria within the teacher-written lesson. This process ensured consistent, program-wide standards for classroom-based assessments.

Each of the above components remains central to the current Arts Impact teacher training program.

The Project

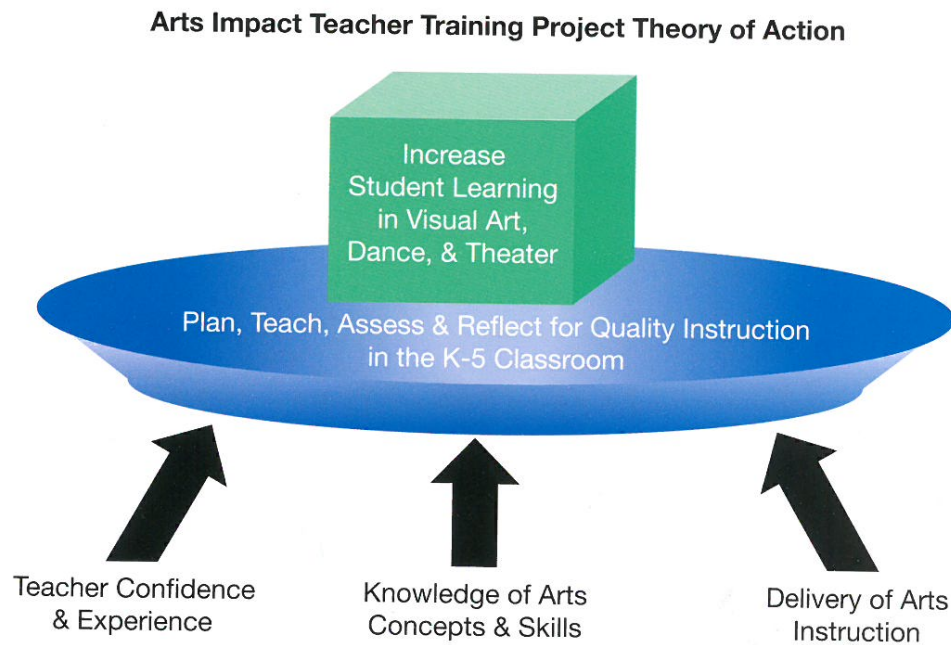
The Arts Impact teacher training project was based on a theory of action built from current research on developing teacher practices and behaviors. This theory postulates that to increase student learning, teachers must first have a confidence and willingness to teach the content, a firm grasp of content knowledge, and skills in delivering the content to be able to recognize what students know and are able to do against set criteria.

The project looked at developing or increasing confidence, knowledge and skills, and instructional

practice in participating teachers. The project's ability to influence these areas was measured with different instruments for each area. The results were compared and analyzed to identify the challenges and promises of the project in changing teacher practice to increase student learning in the arts.

Arts Impact sought to understand the impact of the components of a teacher-training model as they influenced teacher learning and consequently student achievement in the arts.

Figure 1.1





Models

The project experimented with three implementation models, each of which included the core elements of the training program plus additional individualized features. These models were designed to meet the needs of participating districts as well as explore ways to structure professional development in arts education to affect sustainable change in a schools' instructional plan. These models included:

- **Core Training Model**, serving teams of teachers varying in size from 3-6 from various schools throughout the Pierce County region.
- **Whole School Model**, in which an entire intermediate school staff participated in the training.
- **Multi-Arts Model**, which paired one district's school-based multi-art specialists with partnering classroom teachers to strengthen collaborative planning for concept-based arts instruction.

Model Comparisons

Although each model was created to meet slightly different goals, the basic training of the teachers was similar enough that, for purposes of this evaluation report, measurements were based on program participants as a whole, unless otherwise stated.

Ongoing Investigation

It is important to note the whole school model school, Ptarmigan Ridge Intermediate School in Orting School District, received one major training component not available to the core or multi-arts models that resulted in a significant outcome for the school, but was not included as a research component. This program dynamic was the implementation of discipline-specific study circles. Teachers worked with Arts Impact staff to develop K-5 curriculum in visual art and dance subsequently adopted by the Orting School District school board. A strong set of theater lessons were also compiled and sequenced for use by Ptarmigan Ridge teachers.

There are several facets of the whole school model that merit investigation including impact on school culture, teacher morale, and sustainability of arts instruction. Based on anecdotal follow-up on the viability of the training with the principal of this school, schools should opt for the whole school model for teacher training as the best option where feasible.

Ptarmigan Ridge principal Rex Kerbs noted, "When every teacher is involved in the Arts Impact program, the ability to change school culture in these content areas is greatly enhanced. With similar training and experiences, the teachers are able to use the same language and tools to support the arts. While they bring their own talents and gifts to each lesson, the curriculum connections embedded in the whole school model also help sustain the program. Colleagues can ask questions of each other and share expertise. This in turn improves teacher morale in the process of teaching the arts. They feel like a team that has been trained together and is continuing to be supported as they learn and grow as arts educators."



Research Propositions

The following research propositions guided the evaluation process.

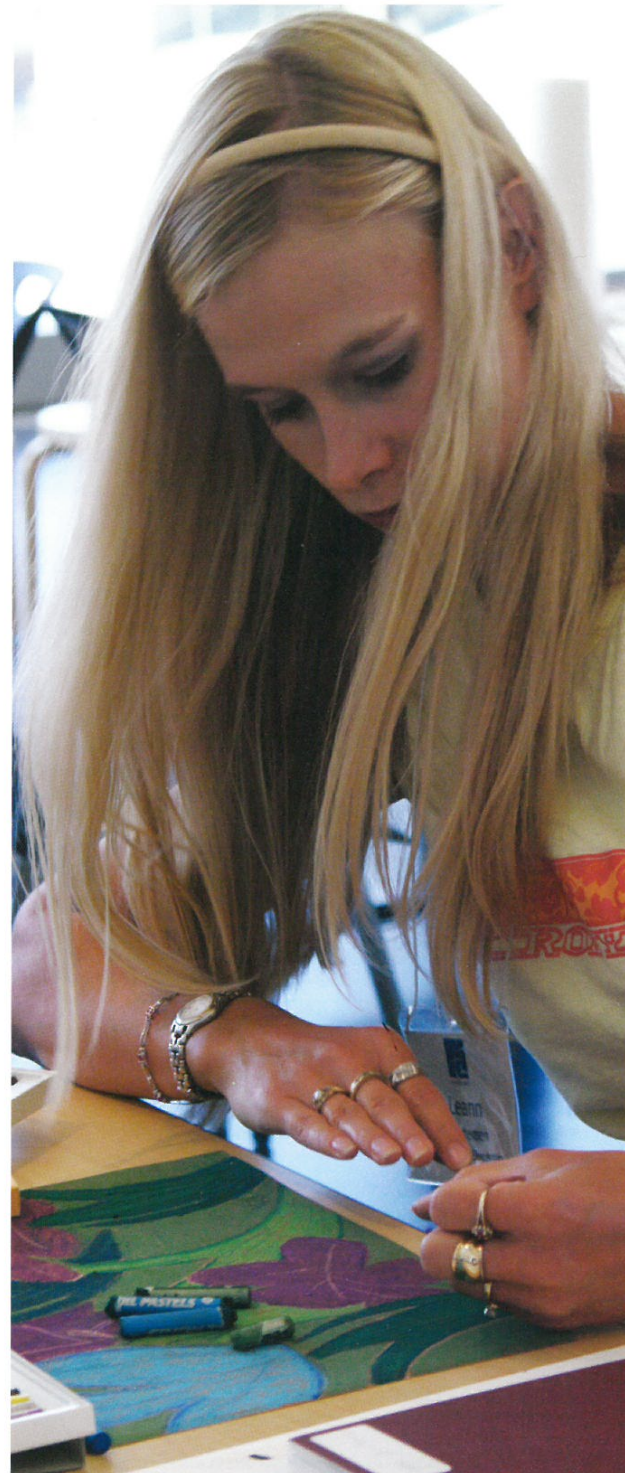
1. Teachers will demonstrate understanding of foundational concepts, skills and processes in visual art, dance and theater.
2. Teachers will demonstrate increased autonomy in concept-based arts instruction.
3. Students will demonstrate understanding of foundational concepts, skills, and processes in visual art, dance and theater.
4. There will be a successful transfer of knowledge of foundational concepts, skills, and processes in visual art, dance and theater from artis-mentor, to teacher to student.



Research Instruments and Data Collection

Data was collected primarily from two sources: the week-long summer institute and the ten-hour mentorship. The following instruments were used to gather data on all aspects of the project's tenets of changing teacher practice:

- Performance-based assessments measured teacher growth in arts concepts and skills.
- A pre-post survey measured teacher perception of knowledge and skills.
- An analytic rubric measured levels of teacher performance in planning, teaching and assessing.
- Performance-based assessments measured student learning of lessons taught during the mentorships.



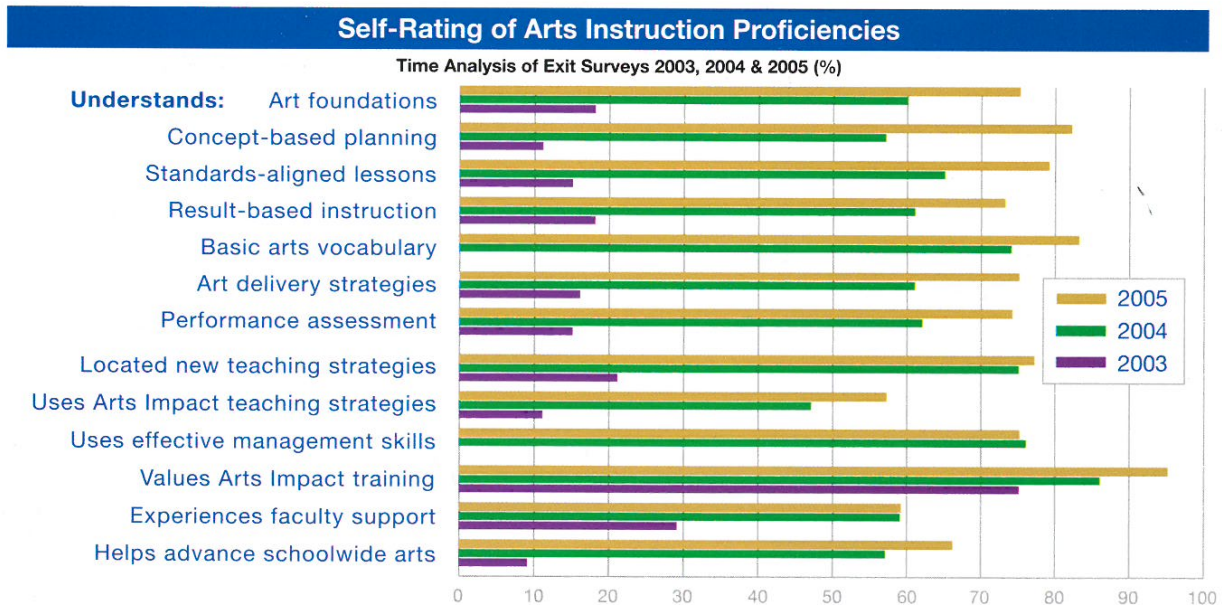
confidence is increased as a result of their participation. A central premise of the theory of action states that increased teacher confidence combined with increased knowledge and skills will transfer to improved student achievement. To measure growth in teacher confidence, a survey was administered at the beginning of the Arts Impact project and again at the end of the project. This self-reported pre-post check is a key determinant used to chart growth in the teachers' confidence in the arts.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the change in teacher confidence in understanding and being able to teach arts concepts. Two indicators of practice were added to the 2004 teacher institute exit

survey in year two based on feedback from the teachers and artist-mentors. These are stated as "understands basic arts vocabulary" and "uses effective management skills." While these were new additions to the survey, these practices were reported by the teachers to be areas they felt most proficient.

After attending two summer institutes and participating in a 10-hour, on-the-job mentorship, teachers made significant progress in gaining skills, knowledge, and confidence. The results from the 2004 institute exit survey reveal that teachers experienced substantial growth in both the practical and pedagogical aspects of arts instruction during the first year of

Figure 1.3²



Note: 2003 n=83; 2004 n=72; 2005 n=56. "Basic arts vocabulary" and "Uses effective management skills" were added to the instrument in 2004.



training and during their second institute. More than 70% of the teachers reported using new teaching strategies following the 2004 institute in comparison to just over 20% after the 2003 institute, an increase of more than fifty percent. By year 2005, nearly 100% of the teachers reported valuing Arts Impact training and saw themselves as advocates for school-wide arts. In 2003, less than 10% considered themselves school-wide arts advocates. However, by 2005, 66% saw themselves as advocates. This further underlines the achievements gained through a long-term, job-embedded training model.

Teacher Instructional Practice

Another key component of the Arts Impact teacher-training project was the mentorships described earlier. These mentorships included side-by-side coaching with a protocol designed to guide the coaching process. This protocol, known as the Autonomy Rubric for Teachers (A.R.T.), was designed to be a tool for facilitating continuous growth in teacher practice that included strands in four categories: planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting on arts instruction. Both the teacher and their artist-mentor used the A.R.T. independently and in side-by-side comparison to reflect on the teachers' growth. This became a tool for goal setting and continued growth as a professional.

Baseline measurement of teacher instructional practice in the teaching category was administered to 24 randomly selected teachers prior to any intervention from the Arts Impact teacher training

program. The 24 teachers taught one of three lessons in visual art, theater, or dance, and were observed and rated using the art A.R.T. by observers trained in using the instrument.

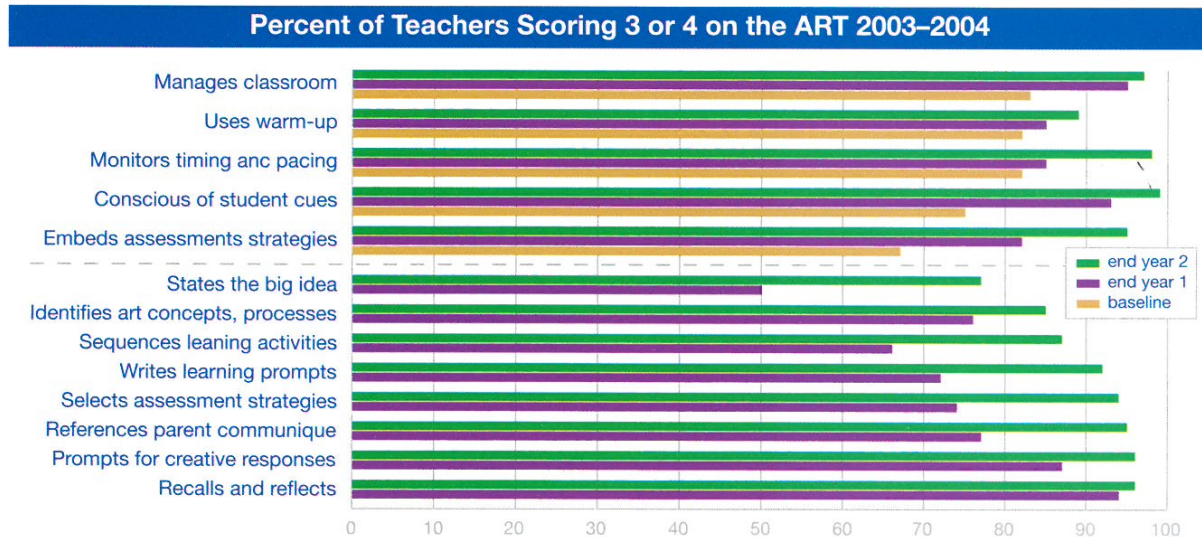
After the initial baseline A.R.T. ratings, teachers and artist-mentors used the instrument during mentorship years 2004 and 2005 in all four categories to chart growth in teaching practice. Because the artist-mentors had received more training in using the instrument, their scores were used to provide a statistical account of growth in teacher autonomy.

As figure 1.4 illustrates, use of the A.R.T. coupled with the mentoring and ongoing professional development improved teaching in the arts, but also improved teaching practice overall. The dashed line shows the break in teaching

practices that were not observed to gather baseline data during the first lesson. The practices likely to be observed in the first year of training were those elements common to all effective instruction practices. However, these showed substantial gain as a result of one and then two years of artist-mentor coaching and support.

The very strong gains made in one year and the subsequent gains in the second year of training indicate the teaching practices being used in the Arts Impact teacher training project are in fact transferring to observed changes in teacher behaviors. Teacher behaviors as “sequencing learning activities,” “writing learning prompts,” and “recalls and reflects,” will further enhance teacher practice in other subject areas as these habits of mind become routine for the teacher.

Fig. 1.4



Data compiled by Dr. Bruce Cunningham.

Student Knowledge and Skills

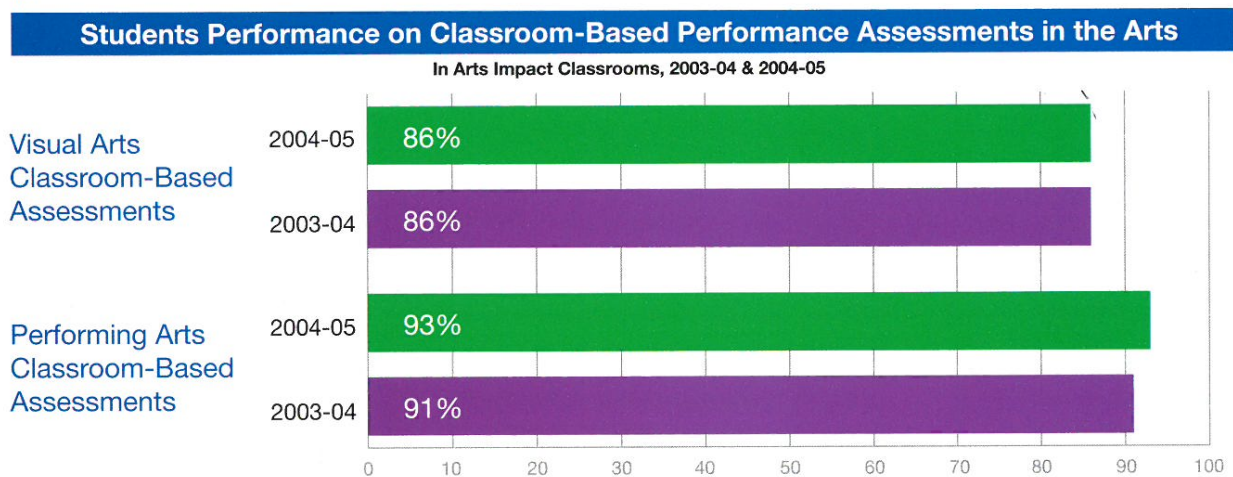
Learning assessments used in the classroom demonstrated student understanding of foundational concepts, skills, and processes in visual art, dance and theater. These assessments used pre-established criteria developed with the guidance of the artist-mentor, vetted by the assessment liaison, and then taught and analyzed by the teacher. Examples of student work were rated against the criteria and then samples were co-rated independently to insure validity in applying the criteria to a performance or visual artwork. Assessment liaisons also sampled student work to compare ratings with criteria.

During the first year mentorships (2003-04), 1,368 students were assessed during a mentored art lesson in 67 classrooms. In the second year

(2004-2005), another 1,203 students were assessed in 57 classrooms. Each assessment worksheet used in the documentation process typically recorded 3-5 criteria, based on the learning targets identified in each lesson.

Figure 1.5 shows that the transfer from teacher knowledge and skills to student knowledge and skills appears to be present. The lessons taught may be based on arts concepts the teachers themselves engaged in during the summer institute, but were constructed as original lessons to address specific arts learning targets. With the assistance of the artist-mentor, the teachers developed the lesson to meet identified student learning needs and planned for the delivery and assessment of student learning against the established criteria. Although the performance

Fig. 1.5



Data compiled by Dr. Deborah Gonzalez.

levels appear at a slightly lower rate than for teachers, this is not unexpected. The continuous work of the teacher to develop a craft and skill in teaching the arts will likely improve along with the ability to teach the arts concepts well with repeated teaching instances. In the second year of the program, teachers chose a different arts discipline for their focus of study and their focus for instruction. This was a significant factor to consider because while student learning appears to be greater in year two of the program, the skill in instruction of new concepts is transferring across arts disciplines with different cohort groups of students.



Summary Conclusions

The various reported measures begin to tell a story of the impact of the Arts Impact teacher training program on increasing teacher confidence, knowledge and skills, and instructional practice, and ultimately how these changes influenced student achievement and participation in the arts.

- Teachers demonstrated success in learning foundational arts concepts, skills and processes in dance, theater and visual art.
- Increased teacher confidence combined with increased knowledge and skills transferred to improved student achievement.
- Mentoring and ongoing professional development improves teaching in the arts, and also improves teaching practice overall.
- Students demonstrated success in learning foundational arts concepts, skills and processes in dance, theater and visual art.
- Teachers gained confidence in their ability to independently plan, teach and assess the arts.

Key Features of the Project

Arts Impact staff considers the following as potentially sustainable and transportable key features of the project.

The key features are not presented as a hierarchy, but rather as overall project dynamics.

Project Personnel Support

- Project development team including a project manager, curriculum and assessments director, development officer, administrative assistant, and liaisons from cultural organizations and school districts
- Experienced artist-mentors
- Assessment liaisons with expertise in classroom performance-based assessments
- Cultural educators and directors as active program partners
- Artist-mentor in-service and professional development
- Artist-mentor/staff planning and evaluation meetings and retreats
- Grant writer
- Archivist

Professional Development Traits

- Hands-on teacher institutes
- Focus on arts knowledge and skills with subsequent study in arts-infused learning
- Modeled and analyzed instruction by artist-mentors
- Documented arts lessons in a common format
- Instruction in performance-based arts assessments
- Teacher-to-teacher opportunities for study and sharing
- National and state education standards alignment
- Arts instruction in lesson writing, assessment development, making cultural connections, arts criticism, and classroom management
- Co-rating and scoring of assessments between teacher, artist-mentor and assessment liaison
- Documentation of crucial lesson prompts
- Specific contracted roles for and meetings with principals
- In-service clock hours or college credit

Resource Support

- Summer institute and mentorship lesson plan handbooks
- Transparencies of cultural objects available for classroom study
- Quality art materials for summer institutes
- Ongoing workshops for sustaining graduate teachers in arts teaching
- Project marketing tools including videos, website, and brochures
- Centralized mentorship schedule coordination

Overall Financial Support

- Outright and blended funding
- Reduced study-trip entry fees
- In-kind support from cultural organizations and school districts
- Organizational and personnel support from education service districts
- In-kind school district instructional support from arts supervisors and curricula personnel



About Arts Impact

Recognizing the importance of the arts for every child, Arts Impact continues to ensure that teachers understand core concepts of visual art, dance, and theater. Since 1999, Arts Impact has trained more than 200 Kindergarten through fifth grade classroom teachers to teach dance, theater and visual art. The project empowers classroom teachers with the competence and confidence to teach foundational arts skills and concepts to all students, including those at-risk educationally and to those most in need economically. Arts Impact is specifically aligned with Washington state arts standards and classroom performance-based assessments that are centered on clear expectations and criteria relevant to learning and to students.

To date, this project was recognized by a 2002 three-year United States Department of Education (DOE) Arts Education Model Development and Dissemination grant (AEMDD) and is

acknowledged as a "success story" by the DOE. Arts Impact has been awarded consecutive National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grants from 2002-2005. Additional funding was received from private and corporate foundations. Arts Impact is a top-rated grantee of the Washington State Arts Commission.

After six years of successful program implementation, Arts Impact is able to show it has sustained over time and grown in its capacity and quality. Eighty-four teachers are currently enrolled in the 2005-2007 training cycle and more than 100 teachers are on a waiting list to participate. Based on research that examined various components of the project, Arts Impact is able to show that classroom teachers are teaching arts lessons steeped in foundational arts concepts, vocabulary and processes and students are demonstrating arts understandings at high rates.



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The art images were created by teachers and students from the Arts Impact Program. Photos on the cover, inside cover, pages 1, 4, 6, 7, 8 upper right, 9, 12, 15, 18, 19, 21, and back cover by Dan McCormack. Photos on pages 2, 3, 8 lower half, 17 by Arts Impact.



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