Closeout Report

Project Arts for Learning

PROJECT ARTS FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING THE ENGLISH LANGAUGE ARTS ACHIEVEMENT OF MILITARY CONNECTED STUDENTS IN THE CORONADO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT AND TEACHERS' CAPACITIES IN IMPLEMENTING STANDARDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS.

September 01, 2021

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

CUSD	Coronado Unified School District
DoDEA	Department of Defense Education Activity
MCASP	Military-Connected Academic and Support Program
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics
MFLC	Military Family Life Counselors
PIE	Partnerships in Education
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress
RIT	Rauch Unit
PEP	Personalized Education Plan
LCFF	Local Control Funding Formula
MMARS	Multiple Measures Online Reporting System
SBAC	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
ELL	English Language Learner
VAPA	Visual and Performing Arts
SDCOE	San Diego County Office of Education
RtI	Response to Intervention

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Transitioning from one school to another introduces many stressors into a child's life, and military connected children are no strangers to these stressors. From how courses transfer from one school system to another to the social emotional impact of school transitions, military students' experiences moving frequently from one place to another is an enormous challenge for any school district including Coronado Unified (CUSD). These issues are often compounded in Coronado, where the high expectations for school success may be inconsistent with a student's prior learning experiences. Without effective tiered systems in place that support student needs, these high expectations coupled with the stress of school transitions may further perpetuate gaps in student achievement.

In response to these challenges, CUSD created Project Arts for Learning. The goals of the CUSD Arts for Learning Project are to improve the achievement and engagement of military students in the area of English Language Arts through integrated Arts curriculum development and instruction.

EVALUATION METHODS AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Project Arts for Learning is in a mature stage of development. The project addresses the complex problem of supporting military transitioning students at the level of rigor called for by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in ELA. The primary purpose of this evaluation is *to determine whether the program has led to positive changes for program beneficiaries.* This type of evaluation is appropriate for programs in later stages of development, where inputs, activities, and outputs have been established and agreed upon by stakeholders.

Questions

1. To what extent have the program activities been delivered to participants with quality?
2. To what extent have the program outcomes been accomplished?

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The following findings emerged after an investigation of the evaluation questions:

1. Program developers and teachers delivered two of the three major Project Arts for Learning activities to most military connected students in the district.
2. Project Arts for Learning met at least 94% of its interim goals in each program year, except the last two years when state assessment data were unavailable.

Based on these findings, it is the conclusion of the evaluator that CUSD's grant activities have led to improvements in English Language Arts achievement for military connected students. CUSD's emphasis on instructional practice has (a) built the capacity of teachers across the district to implement the CCSS with fidelity, and (b) increased the integration of Visual and Performing Arts and English Language Arts content. In addition, students across the district have benefited from goal setting activities and the integrated arts lessons they have engaged in two primary ways: higher ELA achievement and increased engagement in ELA lessons.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Through no fault of their own, many military connected students arrive to the Coronado Unified School District (CUSD) with gaps in content area knowledge and skills due to the transiency inherent in that unique population. Subject to frequent relocations, students often have significant credit deficiencies, low grades and test scores, acute social and emotional challenges, socio-economic disparity, and face higher than normal local expectations. For many, the incongruity of the rigorous new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) versus their previous states of residence standards presents additional difficulties and pressure. Lower scores on pre- and post- mastery assessments, as well as on formative benchmark assessments, are not uncommon for these students. The resulting challenges to differentiate curriculum delivery often results in lower self-esteem for the non-proficient students and frustration with the slower pace for advanced students. CUSD is a STEAM district in which integration of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics is valued, and for which there are "pathway" opportunities for K-12 students. Arts and integrated Arts instruction in CUSD is the largest identifiable gap in learning opportunities.

The first factor contributing to lower academic achievement for military connected students is the difference in expectations across state standards compared to the reality experienced in CUSD with the CCSS. Differences in expectations create two issues. First, frequent relocations, coupled with stressors unique to military life, often disrupt intrinsic motivation for these students. Military connected students often do not possess the emotional availability necessary for a smooth school transition and focus on learning. Deployed family members have difficulty interacting or remaining highly involved in their children's progress or learning. Second, relocations pose additional difficulties for CUSD teachers to accurately measure where those gaps in understanding exist, as well as how to best provide interventions and monitor student progress. Research on supporting highly mobile military connected students has emphasized the need for schools to understand and respond to the challenges of transferring courses from one system to another, managing the social and emotional impacts of multiple school transitions, and supporting the needs of exceptional children (Military Child Education Coalition, 2017). A real need exists within the CUSD system to address the challenges that emerge in ELA understanding due to frequent school relocations.

Second, a need is also present at the school systems level. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is an integrated framework that focuses on "instruction, differentiated learning, individualized student needs, and the alignment of systems necessary for all students' academic, behavior, and social success" (California Department of Education, 2020). MTSS identifies the necessary supports for students at different tiers of instruction (Tier I for all students, Tier II for some students, and Tier III for a few students). In addition to identification, MTSS ensures the systems providing these supports are effectively aligned to the students' needs. While MTSS identifies a way in which all students receive the supports they need for success, few students experience a fully implemented MTSS framework in their schools. The California PBIS Coalition's recent study on the implementation of MTSS found varied implementation across 818 school districts in the state. The remaining 324 school districts had no MTSS or Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) system in place (California Technical Assistance

Center, 2015). For many students the promise of attending a school with an effective MTSS framework in place has not been fully realized. There is a need to ensure students have a supportive environment in which they can thrive.

Third, a real need exists for all teachers to receive sustained professional development in order to deliver instruction. Funding from this potential grant will enable CUSD to provide professional development delivered by professional curriculum and teaching artists to general education teachers throughout the students' day. Research has questioned the efficacy of teacher professional learning for decades, often suggesting that professional learning events have a minimal impact on an educator's practice, especially in contexts that lack a shared vision, time for implementation, and have dysfunctional school cultures (Tooley & Connally, 2016). In order to be successful, Arts for Learning must leverage the elements of effective professional learning. Participants must work in collaborative, job-embedded environments with coaching support sustained over multiple years. Teachers must receive feedback from district and Arts for Learning coaches and be provided opportunities to reflect on their practices. For Arts for Learning to succeed, the project needs to provide high quality professional learning opportunities for adults that have the greatest benefit for their students.

The needs to focus on achievement and engagement for military connected students in the arts are clear in CUSD. First, CUSD has a highly mobile population that transfers into the district with prior learning experiences that are often not congruous with CUSD's expectations. Second, CUSDs multi-tiered system of support is in varying stages of implementation, which creates gaps in support for students. A lack of fidelity to the elements of an effective intervention system produces variation in schools and student level outcomes in ELA. Third, teachers need high quality professional learning experiences to support students' understanding of English Language Arts.

In response to these needs, CUSD created Project Arts for Learning. The overarching goal of the CUSD Arts for Learning Project are to improve the achievement and engagement of military students in the area of English Language Arts through integrated Arts curriculum development and instruction. Teachers will team with a teaching artist, develop curriculum, and co-teach Arts experiences. Project Arts for Learning is driven by a theory of action that hypothesizes if district teachers co-plan and co-teach Arts and English Language Arts integrated lessons with residential teaching artists, and collaboratively track and monitor student achievement regularly, CUSD will increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding rigorous English Language Arts outcomes (see APPENDIX II).

EVALUATION METHODS & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND METHODS

Traditional program evaluation efforts focus on the processes and outcomes of a program in order to determine whether the program has led to positive change for program beneficiaries.

These types of evaluations are appropriate for programs in mature stages of development, where inputs, activities, and outputs have been established and agreed upon by stakeholders.

The Arts for Learning evaluation was designed to ensure that: a) implementation will be monitored systematically and on an on-going basis; b) specific progress measures will be used to assess the quality and completeness of project activities; and c) specific progress measures will be aligned with the goals, targets and expected outcomes so that progress towards achieving these outcomes can be accurately assessed.

The evaluator designed the evaluation to provide both summative and formative activities including monitoring, fidelity checks, development of summative evaluation reports, development of progress reports, and the establishment of the formative evaluation system. The evaluator collected and analyzed all project data on a quarterly basis. Each quarter the evaluator and project director met to make formative recommendations to project stakeholders including teachers, school principals, and district administrators on any modifications that were necessary.

The evaluation included formative (process) and summative (impact) performance measures. The evaluator supported the project partners to collect the required data regarding program measures. Formative evaluation methods related to the effectiveness of the project's procedures, practices and activities in implementing the project and in meeting project milestones based on proposed timelines. A key purpose of the formative evaluation process was to collect, analyze, and disseminate data over the course of the project to help the project partners and staff to stay "on track" in implementing project activities and to promote ongoing project improvement. Summative evaluation activities examined the impact of the project on academic achievement, in addition to an analysis of behavioral factors including motivation and engagement.

This Closeout Report focuses on all the two major evaluation questions and the evidence gathered to answer these questions

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

For the first question, "To what extent have the program activities been delivered to participants with quality?" we examined a number of milestone accomplishments including the percentages of teachers trained, the extent to which all students were assessed, and others. We also examined teachers' perceptions of satisfaction with the activities of the program including the trainings. We observed co-taught lessons to determine the extent to which teachers and teaching artists delivered quality English Langauge Arts lessons. Finally, we examined assessment data and annually to determine the extent to which students were responding to supports.

The second question was, "To what extent have the program outcomes been accomplished?" To answer this question, we examined English Langauge Arts data from the Smarter Balanced assessment. Students in grades 3-8 and 11 take these assessments annually, and they inform teachers, schools and students about their progress mastering the CCSS. Each year, we disaggregated the data for both military and non-military students and gauged the progress of military-connected students to the expectations established in the grant application.In addition to the achievement data, we also examined survey data related to students self-reported motivation

and engagement in ELA and Arts integrated lessons.

These evaluation questions serve to provide formative feedback for program developers so they could improve and scale the program throughout the district as well as to provide summative reports to key stakeholders around longer-term outcomes.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

FINDINGS

The Closeout Report findings covers the 2016-2017 through 2020-2021 calendar years. These program findings emerged from the two questions investigated and are arrayed below.

To what extent have the program activities been delivered to participants with quality?

Finding: Program developers and teachers delivered all <u>two of the three</u> major Arts for Learning activities to most military connected students in the district.

For the purposes of program fidelity, we report on three major activities: providing professional development in integrated arts, co-developing integrated arts lessons with teaching artists, and assessing integrated arts products.

First, CUSD provided multiple opportunities for teachers to learn about integrated arts instruction. We developed professional development surveys and captured data on teachers experiences and confidence with delivering integrated arts instruction. On average, teachers were "Satisfied" or "Highly Satisfied" with the professional development offerings. Secondly, teachers co-designed and co-delivered quality arts integrated lessons monthly. On average, military connected student engaged in 5-12 arts integrated lessons annually. These lessons prepared students for the rigor of the CCSS by integrated English Langauge Arts and Visual and Performing Arts content into a single lesson. Students completed tasks that demonstrate understanding of standards in both content areas. Finally, while teachers and teaching artists provided students with genuine, real world arts integrated lessons monthly, there were no systematic methods developed for assessing whether students had mastered the ELA and art content. Most classrooms required a demonstration or product of the learning in real time. For example, some students performed a dance they had learned by integrating dance instruction with knowledge of Greek Mythology. Others developed political cartoons for a novel on the Civil War. In every classroom observation, students engaged in high quality real world tasks. However, developing a means of determining whether students mastered the content standards in ELA and the Arts proved to be an elusive and daunting task. When the pandemic interrupted schooling, rather than focusing time on designing rubrics, both directors devoted their time to increasing collaboration between teachers and teaching artists and curating integrated arts lessons.

To what extent have the program outcomes been accomplished?

Finding: Project Arts for Learning met all its interim goals in each program year, except the last two years when state assessment data were unavailable.

Arts for Learning established the following goals during the planning year of the grant.

Goal 1 Annual Summative Measures
- By June 2021, 85% of military dependent students grades 3-8 and 11 will meet or exceed standards on the Smarter Balanced Assessment in English Language Arts, an increase of 8% over 2015 baseline

Goal 2 Annual Summative Measures
- By June 2021, 63% of military dependent students grades 3-8 and 11 will indicate high levels of engagement in English Language Arts and Visual and Performing Arts

The outcome data for each grant year is arrayed in Table 1 (APPENDIX I). Across both measures, CUSD achieved at least 94% of the outcome every year. As implementation of all grant activities deepened over time, military connected students continued to grow in their understanding of the CCSS, which was demonstrated on these assessments. The goals and timelines established by Project Arts for Learning have proven realistic, relevant, and achievable. Program monitoring methods have provided timely feedback to ensure continuous project improvement. Additionally, the necessary resources to carry out Arts for Learning services and actions have been consistently sufficient.

In summary, Arts for Learning accomplished at least 94% of its interim goals from 2017-2018 to 2020-2021. The final two year of the grant, Arts for Learning was unable to determine the extent to which it met the summative grant outcomes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The state of California paused state testing and accountability due to the school shutdowns that resulted from the virus. If it were not for these events, Project Arts for Learning was on track to accomplish its ambitious, long-term outcomes of increasing ELA achievement across every year of the grant in each of the grade spans targeted.

LESSONS LEARNED

The following lessons learned reflect program successes. The Arts for Learning approach has led to the following strengths:

- CUSD has learned the importance relationship building. The collaboration between the classroom teacher and the teaching artist is key to a successful arts integrated lesson. Project developers built structures to support the collaboration of the teacher and arts and continued to maintain those structures throughout the life of the grant.
- CUSD has learned the importance of curating work. Project designers curated hundreds of lessons and hours of video for this project, showcasing student work, demonstrations, teacher/artist lesson plans, and other helpful information. This repository will provide years of important support for any teacher teaching integrated arts lessons.
- CUSD has learned how to coach teachers. Project developers recognized the importance of coaching teachers and teaching artists. Most teachers are not naturally talented artists

and for most artists teaching a class of 25 students is not normal. Having a project developer help coach each of these individuals was part and parcel to the success of this program.

- CUSD has learned about the challenges in assessing arts integrated products and demonstrations. While most of the education system is directed toward a specific end result, art in itself is very open ended. In ELA, teachers are driven to teach very discrete skills whereas an arts project may deal with a larger concept that can be expressed in various ways. Inherent in these challenges are the ways in which teachers and artists assess the quality of the art products. While the grant was unable to engage deeply in the assessment aspects of this work due to COVID-19, everyone in the project realizes that evaluating student learning in the arts is an often missing element.

CHALLENGES

Current areas of challenge include the following:

- Interrupted schooling, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, increases the burden on this project by creating additional issues related to learning loss, social-emotional learning, economic inequities, and others. COVID-19 presents an unprecedented set of challenges, including the potential amplification of disproportionality outcomes. COVID-19 also paused California's statewide testing and accountability system, which prevented the Arts for Learning program evaluation of determining the extent to which the program reached its summative outcome targets.
- Assessing integrated arts lessons. Due to the interrupted schooling, the grant was unable to develop rubrics for assessing the quality of student art products and demonstrations. Many of these products have been curated and work will continue in designing rubrics to assess their quality.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a true bright spot for this grant. Karrie Jackson with Arts for Learning personnel have curated the curriculum materials and uploaded videos to the PowerSchool Arts Integration Curriculum Resource Website available to all teachers. Efforts are ongoing to curate all the video evidence collected over the life of the grant. Additionally, Karrie Jackson continues to meet regularly with all sites supporting teachers with the curriculum materials standardized by Arts for Learning San Diego. Teachers will continue to use the lessons in arts integrated lessons in the coming years. Furthermore, Coronado has recently reviewed its strategic plan and arts integration is a major initiative moving forward. This grant will prove to be a vital resource for the next 5 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are for DoDEA personnel and future grantees.

- Since schools and districts that have a military-connected population will continually need to support students transitioning from various states and academic standards, grantees must invest time and energy into instruction and instructional support. Additionally, DoDEA should prioritize grants that focus on classroom instruction versus supplemental supports and tools.
- Grant directors must have an active role in the project communicating and coordinating professional development, data collection and management, and supporting teachers, administrators, and students. Furthermore, grant directors must have the autonomy to make decisions that are in the best interest of the program so that it continues to grow and mature and reap long term benefits for students.
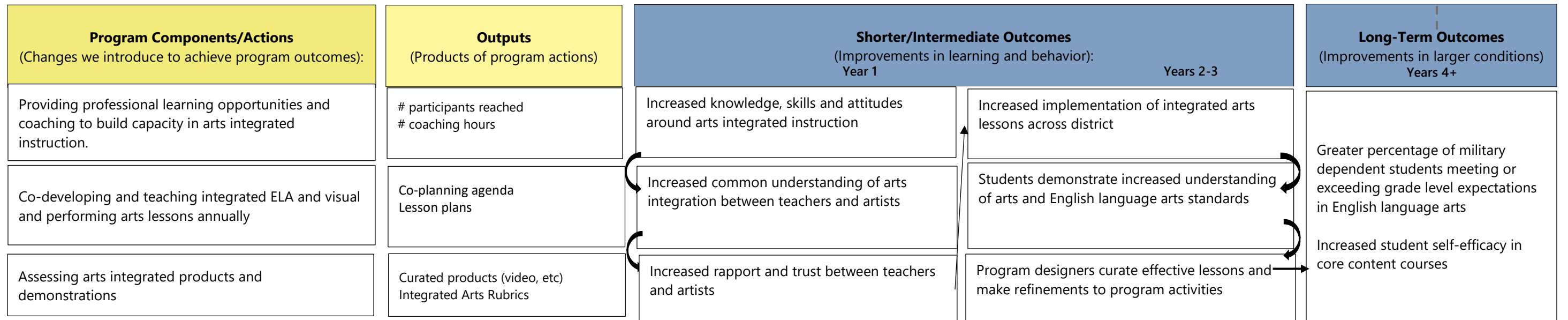
APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: TABLES

Table 1. District-wide performance on interim measures over time.

	2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	Result	Goal	% Achieved	Result	Goal	% Achieved	Result	Goal	% Achieved	Result	Goal	% Achieved
Military-connected meet ELA standards	74%	79%	94%	78%	80%	98%	NA	81%	NA	NA	81%	NA
Military connected students engagement in ELA and Visual and Performing Arts	72%	53%	135%	62%	56%	111%	NA	59%	NA	NA	62%	NA

Problem Statement (Situation): Military dependent students transfer to Coronado Unified School District with gaps in their understanding and are more likely to disengage from the learning environment as the year progresses because these gaps are not addressed.

Project Goal: To improve academic achievement and engagement for military-connected students in English language arts.

Program Components/Actions (Changes we introduce to achieve program outcomes):	Outputs (Products of program actions)	Shorter/Intermediate Outcomes (Improvements in learning and behavior): Year 1	Years 2-3	Long-Term Outcomes (Improvements in larger conditions) Years 4+
Providing professional learning opportunities and coaching to build capacity in arts integrated instruction.	# participants reached # coaching hours	Increased knowledge, skills and attitudes around arts integrated instruction	Increased implementation of integrated arts lessons across district	Greater percentage of military dependent students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations in English language arts
Co-developing and teaching integrated ELA and visual and performing arts lessons annually	Co-planning agenda Lesson plans	Increased common understanding of arts integration between teachers and artists	Students demonstrate increased understanding of arts and English language arts standards	Increased student self-efficacy in core content courses
Assessing arts integrated products and demonstrations	Curated products (video, etc) Integrated Arts Rubrics	Increased rapport and trust between teachers and artists	Program designers curate effective lessons and make refinements to program activities	

APPENDIX III: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Instrument	Description
Attendance Log	A list of participants from each workshop session.
Arts for Learning End of Workshop Survey	Survey completed by participants at end of workshop sessions.
Arts for Learning Co-Planning Tool	A document completed by all classroom teachers and artists supporting the implementation of arts integrated lessons.
Arts for Learning Observations	An observation tool for examining arts integrated instruction emphasizing the use of the visual and performing arts to support ELA content.
Arts for Learning Rubrics	An tool used in classrooms where arts integrated lessons occur to determine the quality of the lessons products and/or demonstrations.
Student Outcomes	Arts for Learnings long-term outcomes include (1) increasing the percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards in ELA, and (2) increasing engagement in the learning environment.

APPENDIX IV: SCREENSHOTS OF ARTS INTEGRATION WEBSITE
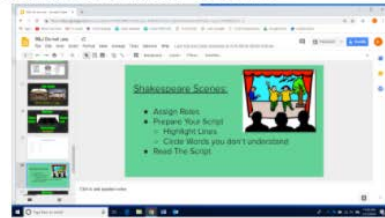
A4L Program Improvements

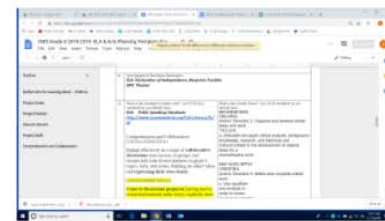## Repository for arts-integrated lessons:
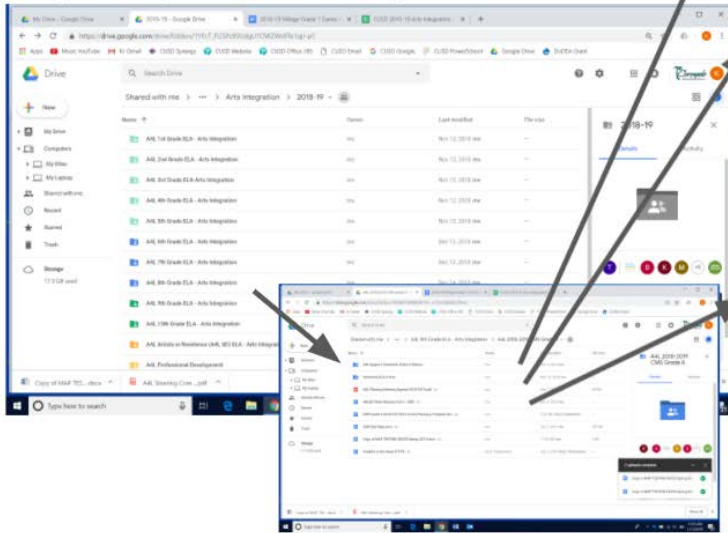
ELA & ARTS STANDARDS

INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS

LESSON PLANS

APPENDIX V: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Source of Evaluation Information	Date Accessed
Arts for Learning Grant Documents (Application, Metrics, Theory of Action)	7/9/2021
Arts for Learning Evaluation Contract	7/9/2021
Arts for Learning Marketing Materials	7/9/2021
Arts for Learning Training Materials	8/11/2021
Arts for Learning Training Archives	8/11/2021
Arts for Learning Prior Evaluations (2016-2019)	8/12/2021
Arts for Learning Leadership Meeting Notes	8/12/2021
Arts for Learning Project Director Interviews	8/15/2021
Arts for Learning Fidelity Tools (Lesson plans, agendas, rubrics)	8/15/2021
Arts for Learning Field Observations	8/16/2021
Arts for Learning Field Notes and Interviews	8/16/2021
Arts for Learning Email Archives	8/20/2021
Arts for Learning Data Archives	8/20/2021
CUSD Board Meeting Minutes	8/20/2021
DoDEA Professional Learning Sessions/Materials	8/20/2021

APPENDIX VI: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Name	Shannon Coulter
Title	Director Research and Evaluation
Organization	San Diego County Office of Education
Evaluation Position?	Team Leader
Project(s) Evaluated *(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)*	Arts for Learning
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: *Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:* *1. Close family member who is an employee of the CUSD operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.* *3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.* *4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the CUSD operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.*	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	08/30/2021

Bibliography

Algozzine, B., & Algozzine, K. (2009). Facilitating academic achievement through schoolwide positive behavior support. In W. D. Sailer, *Handbook of Positive Behavior Support: Issues in Clinical Child Psychology*. Boston: Springer.

California Department of Education. (2020, March 2). *Definition of MTSS*. Retrieved from Department of Education: https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/mtsscomprti2.asp

California Department of Education. (2020, July 29). *Annual Performance Report Measures*. Retrieved from Department of Education: https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ds/leadatarpts.asp

California Technical Assistance Center. (2015). School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in California: Past, Present, and Future. Tustin: CalTAC-PBIS, Inc.

Dunn, K.E., Airola, D.T., Lo, W.J., & Garrison, M. (2013). What teachers think about what they can do with data: Development and validation of the data driven decision-making efficacy and anxiety inventory. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 87-98.

Faria, A.M., Sorensen, N., Heppen, J., Bowdon, J., Taylor, S., Eisner, R., & Foster, S. (2017). Getting students on track for graduation: Impacts of the early warning intervention and monitoring system after one year. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.

Gallimore, R., Ermeling, B.A., Saunders, W.M., Goldenberg, C. (2009). Moving the learning of teaching closer to practice: Teacher education implications of school-based inquiry teams. *Elementary School Journal*, in press.

Garcia, E., & Weiss, E. (2017). Education inequalities at the school starting gate. Washington, D.C.: Economic Policy Institute.

Schildkamp, K., & Lai, M.K. (2013). Data-based decision making: Conclusions from the data use framework. Dordrecht: Springer.

San Diego County Office of Education
6401 Linda Vista Road
San Diego, CA 92111