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Are We There Yet?

Arts Evidence and the Road to Student Success

Arts Education Partnership
Spring 2012 National Forum



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Forum Report

Prepared by AEP Graduate Student
Volunteers:

Ethan Clark: American University

Jessica Evans: Virginia Commonwealth
University

Sandra Loughlin: University of Maryland
College Park

Catherine Starek: American University

Hannah Taytslin: Carnegie Mellon University

Did They Get it? Measuring the Success of Drama for Critical Literacy in the Building Bridges Early Childhood Arts Integration Program of the Fulton Theatre of Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Presenters:

Jennifer Ridgway: Director of Education and Outreach; and **Cory Wilkerson:** Arts Assessment Consultant and Teaching Artist; Fulton Theatre

Description:

“This interactive session uses data and artifacts from a dynamic early learning program of arts integration to share the story of the development of an assessment tool to measure student growth and learning. Join us as we share the ways in which the process of creating the evaluation tool helped to shape and change the curriculum and instruction. Jennifer Ridgway, Education and Outreach Director for the Fulton Theatre, and Cory Wilkerson, Arts Assessment Consultant will share their experiences in creating effective arts integration. Warning: this session depends heavily on action, dialogue, sharing and cute kids doing some serious learning in the arts!”

Summary:

The Fulton Theatre in Lancaster, PA is the first satellite site of the Neighborhood Bridges critical literacy program devised by the Children's Theatre Company of Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota. Neighborhood Bridges, a recipient of an Arts Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD) grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is a comprehensive program of storytelling and creative drama designed to help children develop their critical literacy skills and transform them into storytellers of their own lives. Classroom teachers and teaching artists collaborate to develop students' abilities to write, speak, and think critically through the use of theatre games, storytelling, improvisation, reading, and creative writing activities. The Fulton Theatre's Building Bridges program adapted the Neighborhood Bridges curriculum for Lancaster-area pre-school students and is supported by a grant from PNC Bank.

The premise of the Building Bridges program is that through drama and dramatic play, students can develop higher order thinking and emergent literacy skills which they can apply to various classroom tasks. Building Bridges defines emergent critical literacy skills as the abilities to actively analyze texts and uncover underlying messages. These skills are developed via dramatic activities based on stories that are read to the children by both the classroom teacher and a teaching artist.

The program begins with a story unit lead by the classroom teacher in week one. The teacher tells a story to the students and complements it with lessons about its setting and its characters. At the end of the unit, the students are assessed on their comprehension of the story via picture-based worksheets and interviews with the teacher. In these interviews, which are recorded, students are asked to discuss the characters and develop an alternative ending to the story. A teaching artist leads additional story

units with a variety of stories that do not include the story from week one. Together, the teaching artist and the classroom teacher engage the students in dramatic activities as they learn about the story's characters and setting, leading groups of students in activities to develop alternative story endings. These sessions also include worksheets that mirror the format of the worksheets used in the assessments. During the final story unit in week ten, the classroom teacher re-tells the story from week one. The same worksheet and interview assessments are administered. The student's worksheets and interviews from weeks one and ten are examined and compared to each other for evidence of change in the comprehension, ability to retell the story and describe characters, and the students' willingness and ability to develop alternative endings.

The presenters showed a video of pre-and post-assessment interviews of students learning the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* after week one. The students completed the worksheets together in groups, and then sat down for individual interviews on camera where a teacher asked them questions about the story. In the pre-test interviews, students' body language revealed that they were uncomfortable and confused, and their answers revealed difficulty in recalling the story. The post-test interviews revealed active, energetic body language and a greater ability and willingness to answer questions. In several cases, students substituted body language where they did not have the verbal language to express an idea, often choosing to act out parts of their answers.

Using the Pennsylvania early learning standards, Cory Wilkerson, Building Bridges' assessment specialist, developed with Fulton Theatre teaching artists a set of initial goals for student learning in the program that directly impact the five developmental domains of an early childhood education (social, physical, intellectual, creative, and emotional). Per the assessments, three- to five-year-olds should be able to:

- Examine feelings and experiences in themselves and others
- express their own ideas through dramatic play
- engage in cooperative, pretend play with another child

Other goals not specific to the PA Early Learning Standards include demonstrating empathy for others, recognizing multiple points of view, imagining alternative endings, and listening and responding. The assessment to measure the program goals and to be accessible and relevant to pre-school learners. It was also designed to be scalable—able to be repeated frequently and with larger groups of students with consistent results. Students' expression of empathy and examination of feelings were assessed via the worksheets. The worksheets displayed pictures of people depicting various emotions and students were tasked with connecting the emotions to story characters. In the video interviews, students responded to questions and prompts about the story and discussed the characters and their feelings. Students also expressed their own ideas and opinions by acting out the alternative story endings they developed in their small groups.

The program's third-party evaluators from the Franklin and Marshall College Center for Opinion Research produced a report showing evidence that Building Bridges has a positive impact on literacy, drama, social, and emotional skills. Student growth was reported in the following outcome areas:

- Students able to name/identify story characters: 41% in week 1; 79% in week 10

- Students able to articulate emotional response to story: 66% in week 1; 90% in week 10
- Students able to identify characters' feelings: 88% in week 1; 98% in week 10

Assessment results showed that students made large gains in some areas, small gains in others, and in other areas, showed high ability in both the pre- and post-test. These results prompted the program directors to re-evaluate their teaching and assessment methods, and several changes were made:

- Learning goals were narrowed and adapted to meet the goals of the PA standards for approaches to learning
- Students were no longer assessed in areas that consistently showed high abilities pre-and post-test; assessments focused on areas where student gains were not strong
- A control group of eight sites was added to the schools participating in the program in 2012

The Building Bridges program continues to grow in Lancaster, PA. In 2012, the program grew to 16 pre-school sites and is able to serve more of the area's early childhood learners.

Driving the New Model: The Next Generation Arts Standards Project

Presenters:

Amy Charleroy: Associate Director, Office of Academic Initiatives, The College Board; **Dennis Inhulsen:** President-elect, National Arts Education Association; **Susan McGreevy:** Past President, National Dance Education Association; **James Palmarini:** Director of Educational Policy, Educational Theatre Association; **Pamela Paulson:** Senior Director of Policy, Perpich Center for Arts Education; **Nancy Rubino:** Senior Director, Office of Academic Initiatives, The College Board; **Scott Shuler:** President, NAFME: The National Association for Music Education

Description:

"The 1994 voluntary National Standards for Arts Education have served as the guide for the creation of state-level standards in 49 states. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS), a partnership of eight organizations, is creating new, 21st century standards that will re-affirm the arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts) as a core academic subject area in the well-rounded curricular education of K-12 students. Join NCCAS representatives for an overview and Q&A about the Next Generation Arts Standards Project. We'll talk about the history of arts standards and the rationale for new ones; the project's foundational research and how it will inform the new standards content and structure; the overarching framework that is guiding the writers; the web-based design that will house the new standards; and the project's work plan, vetting process, and state-level adoption strategy. NCCAS welcomes and needs input, so come prepared with questions."

Summary:

This session brought together National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) representatives for an overview and Q&A about the Next Generation Arts Standards Project. They talked about the history of arts standards and the rationale for new ones.

Susan McGreevy began the session by discussing the next generation arts standards, which will inform curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The standards are being designed to connect with 21st century skills as defined by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) and also with the Common Core Standards. NCCAS believes the new, national arts standards will help states develop and/or refine their current arts standards with the goal of improving student learning and achievement in the arts and shaping policy and research. They will include an organizing framework for the arts, possibly a set of standards for media arts standards, an illustrative assessment, and best practices based on research.

Research conducted by The College Board, a NCCAS member, examined the extent to which current U.S. standards for arts education align with P21's 21st Century Skills Maps in the arts (full report found at <http://nccas.wikispaces.com/>). The research group conducted a full analysis for each standard and each grade level as it compares with each 21st Century Skill and developed summary charts for each discipline. The standards and skills found to be most closely aligned to each other were critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and communication. The researchers found that the least aligned standards and skills were collaboration, information communication, technical literacy, and productivity. The College Board's recommendations include focusing on aligning skills that are related to students' work habits and ethics, including productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility, and initiative and self-direction. Further, The College Board recommended that NCCAS should consider how the standards may address the quality of student learning.

Dennis Inhulsen discussed his work in developing the standards writing teams. In all, 380 individuals applied to serve on five art discipline teams. NCCAS's professional organization chose teams based on the breadth of skills in teaching, standards, and curriculum writing. For a list of writers, visit <http://nccas.wikispaces.com/>.

Dennis discussed the question of why states should adopt standards. The national education standards are voluntary, and each state elects to adopt its own academic standards. NCCAS members The State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE), the coalition of arts education personnel in each state department of education, surveyed its members to assess their interest in using revised national arts standards to help develop standards in their own states. Almost 75% of respondents were willing to postpone the release of new academic standards in their states until the new art standards are available. Respondents also indicated that standards must include and address measurable benchmarks and assessments, 21st century skills, at least four arts disciplines, Bloom's taxonomy, and post-secondary and career readiness.

A representative from each discipline area discussed the standards development process for that discipline and what they hope to achieve for their disciplines. The National Dance Education Organization revised the national dance standards in 2005 using a gap analysis to see what was already

outlined in the 1994 standards and what should be added to them. The new dance standards will build off of this previous analysis.

The music standards writing team consists of preK-12 practitioners or program leaders representing urban, suburban, and rural communities. Most have expertise and experience in research and learning assessment. This team is incorporating research from the Society for Research in Music Education into the new music standards.

The goals of the theater standards writing team include advocating for certified theatre educators in the classroom, acknowledging the roles of teaching artists and arts integration, and building consensus about what constitutes rigor. It seeks to validate both classroom and production work as relevant learning processes, revise pre-service theater instructor training, and increase theater educators' mastery of assessment systems and strategies.

The media arts standards writing team is starting with a blank slate; currently there are no national media arts standards at a national level. Each of the other arts content areas are including media and technology into their standards.

As they continue their work, each writing team will address the following critical questions:

- Can the teams collectively arrive at a framework that will work for all disciplines?
- What are the essential questions and enduring understandings that pertain to education in each discipline?
- Will the virtual online environment of the new standards be an effective resource for all constituencies?
- Will new arts standards align with the common core standards of math and English?

Improving the Assessment of Student Learning in the Arts—Research from the National Endowment for the Arts

Presenters:

Daniel Beattie: Interim Director of Arts Education, National Endowment for the Arts; **Sharon Herpin:** Senior Research Associate, WestEd

Description:

“The NEA commissioned WestEd to collect, analyze, and report information about current practices and professional needs related to the assessment of K-12 student learning in the arts. Results of a nationwide survey completed by nearly 3,750 policymakers, educators, arts and cultural organization staff, and researchers, found that the arts education field is eager to assess student learning. Survey respondents reported using a variety of assessment tools to collect data for multiple purposes. However, the field needs further guidance and assistance to implement high-quality assessment

practices. Other key study findings will be highlighted. A discussion and response to the study's findings will follow the session.”

Summary:

In February 2012, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) released a new report entitled *Improving the Assessment of Student Learning in the Arts*. The NEA commissioned the report and the research was conducted by West Ed, an independent research, development, and service agency that works with education and other communities to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults.

Background

The mission of this study was to collect, analyze, and report on information about current assessment practices and to learn what the arts education field needs to know about assessing K-12 student learning in the arts. The rationale for conducting this study came from recent increased emphasis on assessment and accountability in U.S. education. Also, observations from NEA grant review panelists and staff members revealed that grant applications vary greatly in their student assessment methods and in the quality of their assessments. The NEA also wanted to have a better understanding of the impact of the programs it funds.

The research methods consisted of conversations with assessment experts, a literature review of arts assessment documents, and a nationwide survey on arts assessment that was distributed to policymakers, educators, staff members of arts and cultural organizations, and researchers. Conversations were held with 21 experts of all art forms and various organization types and addressed five topics: assessments, collections of assessments, informational documents, technical reports, and “how to” guides. The literature review included documents from these categories and each was rated for its quality and relevance to the study. Out of thousands of documents, only 148 were included in the final report. The nationwide survey was completed by nearly 3,750 people and all 50 states were represented among the respondents.

Key Findings

Survey respondents reported using a variety of assessment tools such as rubrics, observation protocols, portfolio reviews, and performance-based assessments. Most reported that the tools they found most useful were created by a teacher or teaching artist. About one third of respondents identifying as school or arts and cultural organization staff and 44% identifying as researchers indicated that they used paper and pencil test assessments, which West Ed stated are very difficult tools for measuring a student’s skill level. Survey results found that practitioners inconsistently defined the terms “knowledge” and “skills” and used inconsistent methods for assessing either of these.

The findings also showed that arts educators are using student assessment data for widely different purposes. More than half of the survey respondents identifying as district or school staff members reported using data as part of student grades to provide formative feedback. Data are also being used for program evaluation and to improve programs and academic curriculum. In addition, student

performance data are being collected and applied to various programs as required by these programs' funders.

Survey results showed that staff members of arts and cultural organizations reported the least amount of experience in using assessment tools. However, this group also reported a greater likelihood of collecting data to meet funders' requirements and has a greater likelihood of having its data used in program evaluation.

Findings also revealed that professional development is the primary source of training on assessment of student learning. Fewer than half of respondents received undergraduate or graduate training in assessing student learning, and only 25% of arts and cultural organization staff members reported receiving any training. Such data points to a need for colleges and universities to add courses on assessment and to the need for increased professional development in assessment for all arts education providers.

Through its literature review, West Ed found that there is a lack of publicly available, high-quality assessment tools and resources related to K-12 student learning. West Ed found that few research and technical reports are publicly available and of what is available, not many of these resources are considered to be high quality.

From these findings, West Ed concluded that there is a great need and want among arts education providers to improve their ability to assess student learning in the arts. These providers need access, training, and instruction on using exemplary assessment resources and also professional learning communities where they can share knowledge with and ask questions of their peers. They also need training to understand the difference between assessing "knowledge" versus "skill" as well as tips for locating and identifying valid assessment tools. Arts education providers also have a need for tools to make the case for the arts. Assessment data can be an advocacy tool for demonstrating the value of the arts to schools and district leaders and perhaps can encourage the implementation of high-stakes testing of the arts. Such testing would highlight with policymakers the arts' importance as a core academic subject. Regarding advocacy, over 150 respondents wrote unprompted comments about statewide or high-stakes testing in the arts, which indicates a great need for accountability. High-stakes testing is associated with value and may protect state budgets and resources for the arts.

Recommendations for the Field

West Ed's recommendations include:

- Assemble national advisory committee to connect the assets (ex.: knowledge, experiences, and resources) of various stakeholder groups
- Create an online clearinghouse for high-quality arts assessment materials, similar to the Arts Education Partnership's new resource, www.ArtsEdSearch.org
- Establish online professional learning communities and increase professional development in arts assessment.
- Develop a national arts assessment research agenda and prioritize dissemination of tools and reports.

With efforts combined to achieve the recommendations outlined above, the field of arts assessment will grow stronger, more stable, and more effective.

Next Steps at the NEA

The FY13 NEA Art Works funding guidelines encourage professional development projects for training in how to design and implement high-quality assessment of student learning in the arts. All arts education grantees receiving funds in FY13 must assess student learning in NEA-funded projects. In addition, these grantees will be required to submit their assessment tools with their final reports, including examples of their tools or a description of their assessment methods. The NEA is also starting to develop a process for evaluating and circulating high-quality assessment tools for broad public access. It is now starting work on methods of sharing these tools.

Is it Time for a National Coalition for Arts Integration? A Conversation Between State Programs and a Graduate Research Team

Presenters:

Dr. Sarah B. Cunningham: Executive Director, Research, VCU School of the Arts; **Bethany France:** Arts in Education Director, Louisiana Division of the Arts; **Jean Hendrickson:** Executive Director, Oklahoma A+ Schools; **Kim Whitt:** Arts in Education Manager, Mississippi Arts Commission; **Lauren Austin, Cindy Eide, Jessica Evans, Elaina Fejes, Luke Meeken, and Jesse White:** M.AE. Candidates, VCU School of the Arts

Description:

“This session is intended to spark a robust conversation between graduate researchers, arts-integration program directors, and the general AEP community regarding the role and value of arts-integration as one crucial component of the arts-learning eco-system. While the session is intended to provide substantial information, we will also invite an open discussion on how to strengthen arts-integration through research partnerships while providing compelling evidence for the value of arts in American learning.”

Summary:

Dr. Sarah B. Cunningham, the Executive Director for Research at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and graduate students in VCU’s arts education program wrote chapters of the Arts Education Department’s Arts Integration Think Tank report [Topics in Arts Integration: A National Coalition for Arts Integration](#). This report considers the future of nationally coordinated efforts toward arts integration. Graduate students shared and discussed the research that informed their respective chapters and a brief of this report was provided to session attendees.

Luke Meeken examined the relationship between creativity and arts integration. Advocates of arts integration have often argued that the arts are valuable and necessary aspects of education because they can develop creativity in students; Meeken’s research questioned if this, indeed, is the case. His

literature review suggested that the arts are not universally synonymous with creativity, particularly in light of arts research in East Asian countries where creativity is often more closely linked to the sciences. Moreover, Meeken's review suggests that creativity has not been empirically linked to arts experiences in rigorous research studies. Thus, arts advocates should consider if such a "creativity argument" is a viable and successful strategy for advocating for arts integration. Rather, it may be valuable to closely examine the specific aspects of arts and arts integration that are linked to creativity. For instance, the field should distinguish between the deliberate and technically-focused art-making experience and the poetic or creative dimension of the arts, as the latter form of art may be more closely linked to higher order and critical thinking. With this more targeted approach and rationale, arts integration researchers and practitioners may find a more powerful and persuasive platform for linking arts integration to creativity.

Jessica Evans addressed constructivism and progressive teaching in arts integration. Constructivism is the theory that people create meaning of the world through a series of individual experiences. Evans argued that arts integration may be successful because it takes a constructivist approach to instruction. Recent research on arts integration programs shows a clear linkage between arts integration and academic achievement, particularly for low-performing students and schools. Evans argued that these successes must be considered in light of the fact that arts integration emphasizes students' active engagement and new modes of thinking (e.g., critical, creative and higher order thinking, improvisation). With this emphasis, arts-integrated pedagogy can break the current trend in schools of emphasizing memorization and challenges the limited definition of learning that is resulting from high-stakes assessments.

Jesse White emphasized the need to for arts integrated instructional practices in rural school districts. According to White's literature review, many states are consolidating their rural schools and are creating one school that serves a very large geographic area, instead of having several small schools serve the same area. This practice has not shown to be beneficial to rural students, and White's research found that many of these consolidated schools are yet still impoverished and struggling to meet yearly academic goals. These schools face several challenges: limited opportunities for teacher professional development, high rates of teacher and student attrition, and a general feeling—held by teachers and students—of being largely disconnected from more urbanized areas. White suggests developing arts integration teams that serve multiple schools and the schools' communities. Such a team may bring together the local school communities in support of efforts to increase the availability and quality of arts in the school and to provide arts instruction in schools that, for various reasons, cannot be staffed by arts educators.

Three additional panelists, who were arts integration policy experts from around the country, raised several points critical to examining the possibility of a national coalition for arts integration. These experts agreed that the arts education field needs to move beyond the argument that the arts matter and should focus on better understanding the qualities of quality arts integration—in urban, suburban, and rural areas. They stated that the arts education field also should acknowledge that there are and should be many instantiations of arts integration. The experts also agreed with the graduate students that hitching the wagon of arts integration to creativity is short-sighted; creativity is central to all high-

quality learning endeavors and instructional practices in the arts and elsewhere. Looking for linkages between creative thought in arts and non-arts content areas would be highly beneficial for the field. The Harvard Project Zero's Studio Thinking framework is a place to start this search. The policy experts stressed the need for high quality professional development around arts integration curricula, instruction, and assessment for all arts integration practitioners, be they teachers, teaching artists, school administrators.

In the general discussion period that followed the panelists' presentations, a number of session attendees raised questions about the potential purview and constituency of the proposed coalition. The panelists indicated that this session was intended to test the waters around the issue and identify possible areas of interest or concern, and that no formal or extensive conversations around the issue have yet taken place. In response, the audience made a number of suggestions for consideration, including the role of teaching artists, the need for a largely encompassing definition of arts integration as well as consideration of the many iterations of arts integrated instruction. They also suggested considering the role of folk artists and arts integration practices that emphasize the relationship between arts and innovation.

The Kennedy Center's "Changing Education Through the Arts" Program: Process Evaluation to Prepare for the Future

Presenters:

Ivonne Chand O'Neal: Director of Evaluation; and **Amy Duma:** Director, Teacher and School Programs; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Description:

"The Kennedy Center's "Changing Education Through the Arts" program (CETA) is based on national, state, and local academic standards combined with best practices in the field to create intensive professional learning in arts integration, designed to promote sustained inter-school change in the ways in which teachers teach and students learn. The program works with over 400 educators in 16 schools in Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. The Kennedy Center has commenced a multi-year quasi-experimental examination of the impact of this program across its constituents. This session offers a summary of the first phase of inquiry: focus groups conducted with teachers and principals to discuss such themes as: CETA impact on student learning, recommended changes to current program design, and how to bolster institutional support of arts-integrated instruction."

Summary:

The Kennedy Center's Changing Education through the Arts (CETA) program began in 1999 and is now in its 13th season. CETA is based on the belief that arts integration can have a positive impact on student learning. Currently, CETA is working with 16 public elementary schools and one middle school within five different schools districts from Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Maryland.

Understanding that there are different approaches to arts integration, CETA has identified three ways that the arts are taught in schools. The first approach is arts as curriculum, where the arts are taught for their own sake, meaning that the students are involved in singing, dancing, painting, and creating visual art. Though the CETA program does not intend to provide art instruction, it recognizes the importance of teaching art for its own sake, and almost all of the schools in the program have a visual arts and music teacher. The second approach utilizes an art form to help teach curriculum in other areas. An example of this is singing the ABCs. Here, there is no learning of the art form (singing) taking place, but the students use singing as a memorization strategy. The third approach is what CETA considers to be true arts integration, where objectives in both the subject and the art form are present and meaningful connections are found between the two. Additionally, CETA addresses the importance of arts learning and arts experiences, such as attending a performance or visiting a museum, which provides students the opportunity to see professional work. While CETA supports all forms of teaching the arts in schools, the focus of the program is on the third approach, arts integration.

Amy Duma, Director of Teacher and School Programs, identified these key features of the program:

1. A shared definition of arts integration
2. Whole School Implementation
3. Professional Learning
4. Partnerships
5. Ongoing Evaluation and Assessment

When CETA began, many of the program participants had different definitions of *arts integration*. Consequently, CETA realized that effective communication would require a shared definition of arts integration. It spent over a year researching the practice and decided to develop its own definition of arts integration so that all of its program participants would have a common understanding of it to guide their work. CETA's definition is as follows:

Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.

In this definition, art is not a stand-alone activity, but it is interwoven throughout a teacher's teaching practice and is based in constructivist principles. Integrating the arts allows students to learn through many modalities such as visual, oral, and kinesthetic learning, so that they are able to construct and demonstrate their understanding. As academic content increases in depth, students are also developing a deeper understanding about the art form.

The second key feature of CETA is whole school implementation and reform, meaning that the program involves the entire whole school in arts integration, including the principal, assistant principal, administration, counselors, teachers, and arts specialists.

The third key feature, and the one CETA spends most of its time on, is professional learning. This part of the program is the most extensive because it needs to be sustainable and intensive. CETA aims to

empower classroom teachers to integrate the arts into what they are already teaching. CETA's professional learning is offered through many different formats including: workshops and courses, study groups, demonstration teaching, and arts coaching. Workshops introduce teams of teachers to arts integration by engaging them in the art form and showing them how to use it with other subject areas. In the study groups, the teacher teams plan lessons, reflect upon successes and failures, and address documentation of student learning. With demonstration teaching, art specialists teach a lesson to a group of students while the classroom teachers observe. In arts coaching, art specialists work one on one with the classroom teachers by observing their teaching practices and coaching them with feedback.

The fourth key feature of the program is the partnership between the Kennedy Center, the schools, and the school districts. Each partnership is formalized through a letter of agreement that spells out the roles and responsibilities for each organization, which proves very helpful in making sure everyone is working toward the same program expectations.

The final key feature is ongoing evaluation and assessment. CETA looks at the evaluation of program implementation, as well as program impact, in order to know if the program is being implemented effectively and consistently with CETA's vision. CETA examines how the program is impacting teachers' instructional practice, student learning, and school culture. The assessments also indicate ways that CETA can provide schools support to reach their goals while also allowing schools to find their own path towards these goals..

Ivonne Chand O'Neal, Director of Evaluation, addressed a new evaluation that is being developed to answer the following questions: "What influences happiness in learning?" "How does it change the way students are impacted by work when they feel good about what they are doing?" "What is engagement and how is it measured?" In collaboration with the University of Georgia's Institute of Creative Studies, CETA designing an assessment to measure the aspects of engagement, such as the concept of thrill—what it is in a student that makes him or her really captivated and engaged. Assessments will also focus on creativity, which is currently measured in three ways: fluency, originality, and flexibility. Additionally, CETA aims to address real world, creative tasks in which students generate options and solutions to problems. CETA anticipates that students involved in the program will score much higher on evaluations of fluency than non-CETA students.

In regards to evaluation, CETA is still in its first phase of inquiry at the Kennedy Center and plans to triangulate its research by looking at creativity from the parents,' teacher's, and student's perspectives, which will provide a unique viewpoint and a more thorough form of measurement. Furthermore, engagement will also be measured from the teacher's perception of the student, as well as the student's own perception on how engaged they are with their class work and their willingness to try new things. More information will be available once these assessments take place in the fall of 2012.

Other Resources:

- Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA): Professional learning for educators and teaching artists: (<http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/ceta/>)

- ArtsEdge is the Kennedy Center’s digital resource for teaching and learning in, through, and about the arts: (<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators.aspx>)
- Three formal evaluation studies of CETA done by Anne Kruger, Realvisions, and George Mason University can be found at: (<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/arts-integration-beta/changing-education-through-the-arts-beta/evaluation-studies-beta.aspx>)

Perspectives from the Arts-based i3 Grants: The Critical Role of Evaluation Research

Presenters:

Thomas Cahill: President & CEO, Studio in a School; **Don Glass:** Independent Education Consultant; **Susanne Harnett:** Evaluator, Metis Associates; **Rob Horowitz:** Evaluator, ArtsResearch; **Paul King:** Director of Arts Education, NYC Dept. of Education; **Nancy Kleaver:** Executive Director, Manhattan New Music Project; **Kathy London:** Project Manager, District 75, NYC Dept. of Education; **Jan Norman:** National Director of Education, Research & Professional Development, Young Audiences/Arts for Learning

Description:

“In the current funding and accountability climate, increasingly rigorous program research and evaluation is becoming an expected part of educational program designs. This session will share program and evaluation knowledge and practices from the large-scale arts education initiatives funded by the USDoE’s Investing in Innovation (i3) grant program. The panel and integrated group discussion will explore the initial challenges in developing a successful proposal, and then highlight factors about the innovative program and research designs that may help build capacity for other organizations to this level of work.”

Summary:

The U.S. Department of Education’s Investing in Innovation (i3) grant program funds innovative practices and partnerships in education. The amounts of these grants vary based on the level of research and resources involved in the proposed programs. Breakout session presenters discussed various details of their three different i3 programs.

Tom Cahill, President and CEO of Studio in a School (STUDIO), shared his experience with the Arts Achieve program established under a \$4.4 million i3 grant for New York City public schools. STUDIO received this 5-year grant in 2010 as the lead partner of a group of New York City organizations at the forefront of arts education services for the city’s youth. Arts Achieve addresses the following issues: improvement of student achievement in the arts, identifying arts programs’ impact on academic achievement, and using technology effectively to facilitate cross-school communication and the administration of assessments.

Arts Achieve incorporates what it calls Innovative Performance Assessments into the art classroom curriculum. These assessments are applied to students' creation and/or performance of art and their response to art. Evaluations of student performances and student writing showed that students demonstrated a sound understanding of the classroom subject matter and increased levels of engagement. Students also benefitted from an increase in school-wide arts instructional hours.

Nancy Kleaver spoke about Everyday Arts for Special Education (EASE), a major research initiative of the Manhattan New Music Project (MNMP), a multidisciplinary arts education program which has involved both the general and special education system in New York City public schools. The MNMP and District 75, New York's special education district, received a \$4.6 million i3 award for EASE which, combined with a \$500,000 contribution from the National Philanthropic Trust, is funding the program for five years (2010-2015) to develop arts programs for special education students in New York City. EASE uses movement, music, theater, and visual arts to improve these students' communication, socialization, academic learning, and arts proficiency. Teachers involved in the program are provided with a toolbox to guide their students in arts instruction. Sixty teachers from District 75 will join EASE each year of the program so that by 2015, there will be a total of 300 teachers in the program. Some of MNMP's research questions include:

- Does the program increase teachers' ability to effectively apply multidisciplinary arts-based strategies for students with special needs?
- Does the program improve students' arts and/or academic proficiency?
- Are there different effects among students on the autism spectrum, students with intellectual disabilities, students with emotional disturbances, and students with multiple disabilities?

Such arts education research and observation of student learning is important because it takes into account that each child has a different learning style and learning process. Overall, EASE teachers have reported that they and their students are improving in the above areas of inquiry.

The Beaverton School District in the cities of Beaverton and Portland, Oregon, received an i3 grant for the Arts for Learning (A4L) Lessons Project to improve students' literacy skills. The project also seeks to promote students' academic and life skills through learning and arts integration strategies. A4L Lessons Project provides professional development to classroom teachers, lead teachers, and resident artists, encouraging leadership and teacher support. Evaluation of students' literacy skills involves formative and summative components and a multi-method approach. Overall, results from student assessments have shown that A4L has been effective: students that were reading below grade level have made statistically significant literacy gains.

Student Success: Where Are We Going?

Presenters:

Jessica Mele: Executive Director, Performing Arts Workshop; **Louise Music:** Arts Learning Coordinator, Alameda County Office of Education Project Director, Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership; **Dr. Larry Scripp:** Founder and Senior Researcher, Center for Music in Education, and Co-Principal Investigator for CAPE's PAIR project

Description:

“When it comes to student success, how will we know we are there yet, if we are uncertain of where we are going? Three programs that have collected a decade’s worth of data on the impact of arts learning and arts integration on student achievement have begun to re-examine our destination. Is success defined by test scores alone an adequate measure of student growth? As education reform advocates move toward alternative assessments of student growth, arts education researchers are also exploring new ways of defining and measuring student success. Participants will hear about three model programs, their data, and alternative assessments; consider how what we have learned can inform data collection in arts learning and new common core standards and assessments; reveal new models of multivariate analyses appropriate for judging the impact of arts integration on school performance; and explore the policy implications of this research.”

Summary:

The session opened with three questions that the panelists posed to the attendees:

- What are the real benefits of the arts beyond the products created?
- How can arts assessments shine a light on arts learning?
- How can the arts impact learning?

In this presentation, each organization discussed how its arts learning programs are answering these questions.

Jessica Mele of The Performing Arts Workshop discussed the organization’s newest initiative, Performing Arts Create Thinking for 21st Century Skills (PACT-21). The Workshop is a teaching artist program in the San Francisco bay area focused on teaching the creative process, not just the arts. The Workshop is now thinking more about how the process of arts learning relates to students’ non-arts test scores. The goals of PACT-21 are to increase students’ aesthetic sensibility, critical and creative thinking skills, communication skills, and strength of character. PACT-21 is a teaching artist residency program where a performing artist works once per week with students grades 3-5 and meets regularly with the classroom teacher to plan lessons and examine student work. The program places a strong emphasis on professional development and the documentation of the cooperative planning process between teachers and teaching artists. PACT-21’s measurement design is quasi-experimental and includes treatment and comparison schools. The 2011-2012 school year is the first year of the program.

To reach its goals, PACT-21 examines in-process projects and student work, or “artifacts” that document students’ thinking and progress. These artifacts include paper and pencil tasks, photographs of projects, and videos of student performances. Through collaborative planning and examination, the classroom teacher and the teaching artist examine these artifacts of student learning and compare them against desired academic outcomes. They make plans for future instruction and lessons that will be taught individually by the teacher or artist, or taught as a team with both together. Building on this platform, PACT-21 plans next year to develop authentic assessments of student learning. Through this collaborative, learning-focused approach, PACT-21 hopes to demonstrate the impact of arts on student, teacher, and artist learning; deepen student learning; and improve teacher practice.

The second presentation was offered by Louise Music of the Alameda County Office of Education in California. Alameda County has been working on bringing arts into schools for over a decade, and has found strong long-term partners in Harvard Project Zero. Together, the two organizations decided to dig deeper into what is happening within arts learning contexts using Project Zero’s Studio Thinking, Teaching for Understanding, and Making Learning Visible frameworks. Specifically, Alameda County uses Studio Habits of Mind (Studio Thinking) to address what kids are learning in the arts, the Teaching for Understanding framework to explain how the arts support learning across academic content areas, and the Making Learning Visible framework to address issues of assessing student thinking in the arts.

One way that Alameda County has channeled these efforts is through its Arts Learning Anchor Schools initiative, which is a consortium of arts integration-focused schools that build and rely upon collaborations between instructional leaders, classroom teachers, teaching artists, students, parents, and the local community. To build capacity in these schools and elsewhere in the district, Alameda County has also created an innovative arts integration training and certification program for in-service teachers which includes core courses related to the Project Zero guiding frameworks. Alameda County also works in partnership with arts organizations in the Greater Bay Area and with institutes of higher education to build capacity around arts integration practices in the Anchor Schools and throughout the district. Currently, it is making a deliberate effort to map its arts integration practices throughout the district onto the Common Core State Standards.

The third presentation was given by Dr. Larry Scripp of the Center for Music in Education (CMIE). He reported on a research project conducted in collaboration with Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) examining the impact of arts instruction on student achievement in a quasi-experimental design that included control and treatment schools. The program, PAIR, consisted of an arts-based intervention in six schools (grades 4-6), wherein two teaching artists taught 20 lessons to students per year. At the end of this three-year intervention, researchers from CMIE and CAPE examined the relationship between teacher professional development and student achievement data (ex.: standardized test scores). The researchers created a portfolio assessment system which was administered to both treatment and control students. The students’ portfolio questions required self-examination and self-reporting on their own learning in arts classes and their own learning through arts integration. It also allowed researchers to evaluate students’ abstract and conceptual thinking abilities.

Results of the study showed higher portfolio assessment scores in the treatment schools receiving the arts instruction than in the control schools. Also, a comparison of treatment and control schools revealed a different picture of the relationship between standardized tests and portfolio assessment scores. Data from the control schools showed that students who did not perform well on standardized tests did not perform well on the portfolio assessments. However, data from the arts treatment schools showed that students who did not perform well on the standardized tests often performed well on the portfolio assessments. The researchers concluded that the portfolio assessment tool was a better way of measuring academic achievement than were the traditional standardized achievement tests. The researchers suggested that arts instruction and portfolio assessment might have an impact on reducing the achievement gap. As a tool for future research and practice, the researchers suggested that the scoring guides developed in the portfolio assessment processes could be used in other arts and non-arts learning contexts.

Transforming Middle Schools Through the Arts: A School Arts Support Initiative

Presenters:

Russell Granet: SASI School Coach and Independent Consultant; **Dr. Jerry James:** Director of Teaching and Learning; and **Dr. Eva Pataki:** Project Director, SASI/School Projects; The Center for Arts Education; **Laura Mann Hill:** Teacher, Middle School 57, Brooklyn, NY

Description:

“The story of the School Arts Support Initiative (SASI) serves as an exemplar of dynamic urban middle grades communities that seek to build and sustain a rich and holistic education for all their students in an era defined by high-stakes accountability. In 2008, the Center for Arts Education (CAE) was awarded a USDOE Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination grant to launch a multi-year research project in four Title 1 New York City middle schools with little or no arts education.

SASI was created to: help underserved schools develop, enhance, and sustain instruction in and through the arts; gauge the impact of sequential arts education on student learning, teacher performance, school climate, and community involvement; and disseminate emerging promising practices. The results presented here include: improved student attendance and behaviors, greater proficiency on local and standardized tests, enriched teaching and learning, and transformed school environments.”

Summary:

Russell Granet began the session with an overview of the School Arts Support Initiative (SASI), which was created to help underserved middle schools in New York City develop, enhance, and sustain instruction in and through the arts. SASI gauges the impact of sequential arts education on student learning, teacher performance, school climate, and community involvement; and it also disseminates information about emerging and promising teaching practices that include the arts.

Granet discussed the challenges The Center for Arts Education (CAE) faced in creating a quality arts program and partnerships with local middle schools. These challenges included engaging middle school teachers that were entrenched in their individual subject areas, scheduling the arts into the school day, and issues regarding student development. He also addressed the funding challenges of the federal budget for the Department of Education which has eliminated dedicated funding for arts education programs and incorporates arts into a fund where they will have to compete for grants against other academic subjects. In addition, Granet cited challenges in obtaining buy-in from various stakeholders in creating change (e.g., students, teachers, community, district, funders), making arts learning a priority with school administration, working with different sets of students each day, and students' dissatisfaction with their own artistic and academic abilities.

Granet stated that the specific challenges CAE experienced in NYC were budget constraints and cuts and the scheduling of arts classes. In regards to personnel, CAE was challenged in hiring certified arts teachers and developing partnerships with teaching artists. This task proved difficult: it was hard to find teaching artists with the appropriate skill level a particular art form and the appropriate level of understanding of student development at the middle school age. The lack of administrative involvement, planning time for teachers, and staff appreciation and understanding of the arts were also challenging.

SASI's original mandate was to find arts poor schools. They were looking specifically for schools with the challenges outlined above. Russell described the SASI timeline, which began with a 2007 NY Times Foundation SAI Program. The first US DOE grant was issued in 2008 to five schools, one of which was later defunded because it did not fulfill its responsibilities within the program. In 2010, the second US DOE grant was issued to six additional schools.

Mann Hill described her specific experience at school MS 57 K, a SASI participant. When she started teaching at the school it was failing and the arts program was not strong. The school lacked quality arts education, scaffolded curriculum, school-wide assemblies, and staff or student commitment to the arts. Only 60% of the students were exposed to some form of the arts and there were a limited number of low-quality 6th grade art classes being offered in dance and visual arts. She described the school as "chaotic" before the SASI grant: the school had an 85.7% attendance rate, there were student riots and there was a lack of collaboration and cohesion among staff when it came to implementing arts programs. In 2012, four years after the implementation of the SASI program, MS 57K boasts a 91.9% attendance rate and strong principal leadership over the arts programs. Every student in grades 6-8 has weekly art classes which are designed with curriculum maps and scaffolded programming for theater and dance. The arts teachers are more included as an important part of the school community and they are able to offer a full curriculum of arts forms, including visual, dance, vocal and theater arts. In addition, the school proudly reports that six of its students were accepted to arts specialized high schools and, in the 2012-2013 school year, special master classes for students interested in applying to arts specialized high schools will be offered.

The session featured a video of an interview with Bob Tobias, Clinical Professor and Director of the Center for Research at the State University of New York who evaluated the program. Tobias described the quantitative outcomes of the program and stated that his evaluation found that the SASI grant program indeed had measurable, significant, quantitative impacts on the students who were reached. Tobias compared each group of students' 2011 state standardized test scores and found that the SASI students' ELA and math scores increased 8.5% and 9.5% respectively over their previous state standardized test scores. These increases were greater than those of students in the control schools.

Dr. Pataki discussed the various student outcomes that were achieved. In addition to improved academic performance, Pataki described increased collaborative interaction between educators, including administrators, teachers, and teaching artists. This was evidenced in the development of school-wide arts committees, school-wide professional development for all staff in the arts, and the development of school-wide arts retreats. A third outcome was the deepening of relationships between schools in the SASI network. This was evidenced by the establishment of four network meetings per year, two two-day paid institutes for teachers per year, individual principal meetings and brainstorming sessions, and full-day professional development for all content development areas. A fourth outcome was a more positive relationship between families and schools, as evidenced by an increased number of assemblies in each school. Also, arts education had become a priority for parents: the schools requested funds to create programs with CAE for students and parents to make art together and the schools' PTA used its funds to make more art programs available.

Granet closed the session by outlining how SASI was able to fulfill the outcomes described above, and SASI School Coaches were prominent in this achievement. The coaches worked with principals to help them design and implement a comprehensive arts education program. They brought years of experience as school supervisors and seasoned art educators to help schools make plans, identify their priorities and desires, and to assist them in realizing those desires. The coaches held monthly meetings to address and respond to challenges. Each coach was responsible for two schools and spent about one day per month interacting with his or her assigned schools. In addition to the coaches, CAE trained school arts liaisons to make the link between the Center for Arts Education, the principal, and the school staff in order to ensure optimal implementation of the program. These liaisons were a crucial component to the project's success; given that principals have busy schedules, the school liaisons have more time to make connections between the teachers, coaches, and the Center for Arts Education.

Zero to Fifty: Creating Policy for Effective Change (Speed Dating with Policy Wonks)

Presenters:

Richard Baker: Louisiana SEADAE member, Louisiana Dept. of Education; **Robert Duncan:** Arts and Humanities Consultant, Kentucky Dept. of Education; **Christie Lynch Ebert:** North Carolina SEADAE member, NC Dept. of Public Instruction; **Marcia McCaffrey:** SEADAE President-elect, New Hampshire Dept. of Education; **Lynn Tuttle:** SEADAE President, Arizona Dept. of Education

Description:

“This interactive session will investigate how policy drives educational practice at the local, state, and national levels and how language dictates policy interpretation, implementation, and compliance models. Come speed date with state policy wonks who know the ins and outs of policy development. Learn how policy is developed and how ideas can be turned into policy statements. This session is organized in three parts: “speed dating;” large group discussion with key points delivered by speakers and questions from the audience; and a role-reversal opportunity where five participants present an idea to a small group of attendees, one they see as potential policy. During this last segment, small group discussion will be led by presenters. By using small group and large group configurations, this session is sure to engage your inner policy wonk and your outer connections to the world of policy.”

Summary:

Presenters adopted the idea of speed dating, and as “policy wonks” with a keen understanding and interest in policy, they spent a few minutes rotating between groups of attendees discussing various policies and policy language relevant to their state. Lynn Tuttle, for example, started a discussion of the strongest arts programs in Arizona schools: dance and theatre. She shared that student enrollment in Arizona’s high school dance programs is currently higher than student enrollment in the state’s high school marching band programs. Tuttle stated that this is due in large part to Mormon religious values (there is a large Mormon community throughout the state) and the prominent role of dance within that community. Another conversation discussed North Carolina education policy, which since 1985 has been based on the Basic Education Program (BEP). BEP is a policy that describes the common core of knowledge and skills that every student in North Carolina shall command when he or she graduates from high school. It includes instruction that is fundamentally complete and gives the child a thorough grounding in arts education, English language arts, information and computer skills, second languages, healthful living, mathematics, science, social studies, and vocational education.

Following the round of “speed dating,” the presenters discussed some aspects of the creation and implementation of education policy and how this relates to arts education. Presenters discussed how arts education policy is set at the state level, the difference between policy and implementation, and opportunities for policy to be enforced. They stressed the importance of looking at the “fine print” of education policies, especially when it comes to the use of allocated funds (ex: Title I funds) for arts programs.

Some common threads in arts education policy between the presenters’ states are site-based management and local control where policy is created and administered locally and not by one centralized governmental authority. They noted that the language of arts education policy is reflecting a greater emphasis on factors aimed at increasing a student’s employability in a fast-paced, technological society. This language positions the arts as a vehicle to increase students’ global competitiveness and enhance their 21st century skills.

The presenters discussed that policies are not always properly monitored and effectively carried out, which prevents consistent application of arts education policy in schools. They stated that participating in policy development is important to counteract these tendencies. They also consider policies to be the

beginning place for building an infrastructure for compliance and enforcement of educational standards and values, as well as for understanding the intent of political leadership and for showing that arts education *is* valued.

Lunchtime Roundtable Discussions

Cross-Site Reflections: Lessons from the Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant Outcomes

Presenters:

Christine Leow: Senior Research Associate and **Stephanie Saunders:** Research Associate; Branch Associates, Inc.

Description:

“The AEMDD grant program provides support for education models that strengthen and integrate arts into elementary and middle school core academic curriculum. AEMDD grantees are required to document outcomes and disseminate the results of their arts-integration models over the three years of their grant cycles. Grantees report students’ standardized test scores and other outcome data specific to their projects’ objectives. Outcomes for the 2001 to 2006 grantees (N=105) were systematically analyzed. This session will review key findings from this cross-site analysis, outline areas in need of further investigation, offer suggestions for improving the evidence-base and provide leaders in the field an opportunity to reflect on the path forward. Findings and recommendations in this session can serve as a guide for improving future arts-integration research and programs.”

Summary:

Branch Associates shared findings from its systematic evaluation of the first three cohorts of AEMDD grantees. For this evaluation, data were collected from grantees about student academic outcomes (i.e., test scores, grades), cognitive outcomes (e.g., critical and creative thinking, art and technical skills), affective and social outcomes (e.g., school engagement, motivation, self-esteem, school skills and relationships), and school behaviors (i.e., attendance, disciplinary analysis, and on-task behavior).

Several trends in these data were evident: students served by the grantees’ programs earned higher standardized test scores and the data reflected positive findings for cognitive, social, and school behavior outcomes for these students in contrast to control groups. However, it was very difficult to report these trends with confidence across the grantees or even across grantee cohorts, as each grantee used its own measures, definitions, and reporting scales. For instance, if two grantees in a cohort both reported improvement in students’ critical thinking skills as compared to control schools, the measures of critical thinking may have been dissimilar. This was identified by Branch Associates and officials from

AEMDD as a significant challenge to drawing generalizable conclusions across AEMDD sites and across cohorts, limiting the confidence with which these findings could be reported.

After presenting this summary of the cross-site comparison, the presenters opened the floor to an extended conversation with those in the room on next steps for AEMDD grantees and suggestions for the path forward.

How does Branch work with grantees? An official from Branch stated that the organization offers assistance with the grantees' evaluation plan and with developing a logic model in relation to the program outcomes. However, Branch's help is often dependent on receiving timely data from school systems, which is often a challenge. This can be aided by having a consistent point person at each school for data transmission.

What is the DoE perspective on recommending tools for evaluation so that there is more consistency across settings? An official from DoE stated that the department would welcome high-quality tools, but has received very few suggestions about what these tools might be.

What are some high quality tools? What ideas are around the room? Session participants suggested that it was critical to keep in mind that every tool needs to be adapted to the context of each program. One idea is to consider consistency with respect to methodology. Before effective tools can be made, it is necessary to have a clear sense of definition or agreement about what the grantees mean by the terms "creative thinking," "arts integration," and the like. Without these shared definitions, generalizable tools cannot be made.

What can the DoE do to support the grantees? It was suggested that the DoE consider developing an evaluation toolkit for grantees and the field more broadly. This would support the grantees as well as the evaluators. Another idea would be publishing definitions of key terms that have been utilized by previous grantees, so that there is some hope of similarity between sites (e.g., what is "art appreciation" and how have programs measured it?). There was also the suggestion that DoE might consider having multi-site calls so that several programs can interact, as well as a listing of what grantees have been and are looking at and what instruments are they using, so that other grantees can consider using or adapting those tools.

Many of the AEMDD grantees and their control sites have multiple interventions and reform efforts being performed at once. How can grantees show that the arts made the difference over and above the other interventions? This is a significant limitation of research in the complex and messy real-world of schools. Theoretically, the control-treatment comparison is supposed to address this, but the reality of multi-intervention efforts in education makes this impossible.

Can the AEMDD grantees come together and agree to develop common or similar outcomes, measures, or definitions? This suggestion was met with widespread support, along with a sense of urgency. An official from DoE noted that this needs to take place quickly, as the programs of the final cohort to be funded are coming to an end. It was decided that a "communities of practice" call would be initiated with those interested to begin to address this issue.

Driving Community Leadership Around 21st Century Learning in Arts Education

Presenters:

Mike Blakeslee: Deputy Executive Director, National Association for Music Education (NAfME); **Barbara Stein:** Director of Strategic Partnerships, Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21)

Description:

“A profound gap exists between the knowledge and skills most students learn in school and those needed for success in their communities and workplaces. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) recognizes that educational transformation—which can bridge this gap—requires the commitment and involvement of a broad range of community stakeholders. This session explores how arts-based organizations can play a leading role in driving community conversations around 21st Century Skills. Additionally, it will focus on leveraging the resources of arts educators and organizations to foster new connections that bring creativity and innovation to the forefront of 21st century readiness for every young person. Participants will tackle the following questions: What kinds of creative & collaborative partnerships are necessary to keep arts education strong in our schools for their essential and intrinsic value in building 21st Century Skills? What is the role of community and arts organizations in implementing and supporting 21st century learning?”

Summary:

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) is a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student. As the United States continues to compete in a global economy that demands innovation, P21 and its members provide tools and resources to help the U.S. education system keep up by fusing the 3Rs and 4Cs (Critical thinking and problem solving, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity and innovation). While some districts and schools in the nation are already doing this, P21 advocates for local, state and federal policies that support this approach for every school.

P21 began 10 years ago with a Washington, DC-based coalition of corporate, government, nonprofit, and education leaders that were interested in moving the current education system to meet the current demands of our world, including technology, globalization, competition, and civic life. The coalition believed students needed specific skills in the areas of life and career; learning and innovation; information, media, and technology; core subjects; and 21st century themes to meet these demands. It concluded that the education system was not addressing these demands appropriately, and began meeting with practitioners about their idea of mapping these skills—21st Century Skills—into K-12 curriculum.

The coalition began to develop curriculum maps, a snap shot at the various grade levels of what it looks like to practice 21st century skills. Each map was created in partnership with educators and organizations representing the academic subjects. Each map represents a real life vision of what 21st

century skills should look like in the classroom. P21 is now working towards getting standardized assessments and academic standards to address 21st century skills. Over the next year, P21 will be working with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities' Turnaround Arts Initiative that will provide intensive arts instruction, professional development and support to select schools receiving U.S. Department of Education School Improvement Grants.

Mike Blakeslee of the National Association for Music Education (NAfMe) added to the discussion that teachers already have a lot on their plates which might bring to question the necessity of a skills map. Blakeslee explained that P21 is the intersection of businesses and educators, but it is not an industrial model for education which would have inputs, activities, controls, outputs measures, and rejected products. Blakeslee stated that in the "factory" of education, the inputs are students; the resources are curriculum, materials, and teachers; and rejected products are not allowed. This factory must be able to measure its outcomes according to factors that will matter now and in the future. These factors are confidence, creativity, and all the 21st century skills, which will have more longevity than standardized test scores.

Blakeslee spoke on behalf of the National Coalition of Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) of which his organization is a member. NCCAS is currently revising national voluntary standards for the arts and The College Board, another member of NCCAS, is conducting a gap analysis between P21's 21st Century framework and the most recent set of arts standards that were written in 1994. Thus far, the analysis has shown that there is some correlation between 21st Century Skills and arts standards for communication and creativity. Currently, NCCAS is ensuring that the new arts standards correlate with the P21 skills framework, thus ensuring that the arts are a part of the development of students able to meet the demands of our global, technology-driven society.

Audience Q&A Session

How do we infuse 21c skills in communities that have very strict standards?

"The vast majority of school districts are somewhere between very strict and very free. Teachers should be as inventive as they can in meeting the standards, using ways to be creative and collaborative with each other and thinking critically about what they're doing. The standards say what the students are supposed to know – they don't tell you how to teach it. If you teach using this process – that calls for collaboration – it's a way to approach the standards. We should think about it as aggregation of bright minds, educators, teachers, and researchers. The P21 tool kit aligns the skills with common core standards and brings a unique approach to achieving those standards. The P21 skills are not meant to replace academic content, but rather are meant as a way to present academic content in ways that are 'sticking' via the curriculum maps and other resources."

What are the arguments that are most applicable to the people we're talking to? Are they more worried about the creativity of our kids?

"The P21 Skills Maps can help advocates design an approach to talking to their educational decision makers. Provide these decision makers with statistics, a compelling story about the benefits of arts

education, and an ‘ask.’ P21 also has materials on how to be an effective advocate; the elements of this are being concise, compelling, collaborative, and planning the change you want to see.”

Hartford Performs: Inspiring Students’ Success through the Arts

Presenters:

Sharon Bailey: Art Teacher, Hartford Public Schools; **Jackie Coleman:** Interim Executive Director, Hartford Performs and Senior Executive Advisor for the Arts, Hartford Public Schools; **Jaclynn Hart:** Arts Education Specialist, Hartford Performs; **Khaiim Kelly:** Rapoet; **Emily Pacini:** Assistant Museum Educator for Community Programs, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Description:

“Hartford Performs: Inspiring Students’ Success through the Arts will be an interactive session focused on understanding the re-imagining of arts education in Hartford, CT’s schools. Recognizing the potential of the arts to support student achievement, in February 2009, the Superintendent convened the Hartford Public Schools Task Force on the State of the Arts, composed of stakeholders that included principals, parents, Board of Education members, teachers, a state-level representative and arts organizations. The Task Force presented a report that focused on the arts as an integral part of students’ academic development and outlined a major community partnership model. This session will model Hartford’s collaborative approach to arts education; a rap artist will outline the system build of Hartford Performs in a rap performance; an arts organization representative will share thoughts on the capacity build; and an art teacher will talk about the culture build at the school level.”

Summary:

Hartford Performs (HP) is an arts education collaborative that is committed to inspiring students’ success through the arts. Spearheaded by Jackie Coleman and Jaclynn Hart, HP’s mission is to “ensure that all Hartford Public School students have access to quality arts education delivered through in-school teaching staff in partnership with the city’s vibrant arts community.” HP works in collaboration with local arts organizations, preK-8 public schools, and independent freelance artists in Hartford, CT to provide arts learning through arts integration, in-school arts, and out-of-school programing.

The collaborative is currently working with 12 schools, approximately 20 freelance artists, and about 50 arts organizations with over 100 programs. As the collaborative continues to grow, it will expand to the high school level in the 2013 academic year. The organization has a Governance Board and an Advisory Council made up of representatives from the school district, the arts community, Hartford community members, and local families. Part of what has made the HP collaborative successful and sustainable are: quarterly meetings where arts providers discuss the effects of their involvement in the collaborative; the flexibility of HP staff, allowing organizations to call at any time and work through issues; and the beneficial outcomes seen in the students’ work. Additionally, HP supports the arts by advocating for arts learning; forming partnerships with schools and community arts providers; providing opportunities

for the students to express their voices; and creating pathways for families to enjoy arts experiences that enrich arts learning.

Freelance artist and “rapoet” Khaiim Kelly started the “show” with an interactive rap performance describing how HP works with Hartford public schools to advocate arts learning and implement an arts integrated culture throughout the whole school. As explained by Kelly, HP defines arts integration as learning in the arts alongside learning in literacy, numeracy, history, and science. It is important to note that in the HP program, arts integration is implemented in addition to the school’s general arts classes, not in place of these classes. Arts integration in this program is intended to ensure that as the students rise from one grade to the next, the arts learning and core subject concepts build upon each other and become united. Arts integration is incorporated into the schools through the training of classroom teachers, who must all agree to participate in professional development around arts integration in order to join the collaborative. Furthermore, community art providers, such as artists and art organizations, go through an extensive application process to become part of the HP database of community arts partners, from which grade level teachers select programs from which to develop lesson plans. In addition to in-school arts learning, each student experiences a minimum of two professional arts experiences, including live performing arts experiences and museum visits.

Jaclynn Hart, Arts Education Specialist, and Emily Pacini, Assistant Museum Educator for Community Programs at Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, put on a live audience talk show skit, “Hartford Arts Ed Talk,” to describe how HP works in conjunction with a community arts organization. Pacini gave a brief background on the history of the Wadsworth Atheneum explaining that it is the oldest continuously running art museum in the country with a collection of over 50,000 works of art. It has a five-pronged community engagement initiative, which involves providing greater access to the museum, being more welcoming to visitors, creating greater relevance to the community through exhibitions and programs, building awareness, and engaging with the community.

Wadsworth joined the HP collaborative in 2008 as part of its community engagement initiative and developed a pilot program based on arts and literacy for fourth grade students. Art teachers and classroom teachers from HP schools worked together with the museum staff to develop the “Museum on the Move” program to bring the museum to the classroom. In this program, classroom teachers receive professional development training in visual literacy, museum representatives visit the classroom to teach arts and literacy lessons, the students visit the museum for a tour to expand their art learning, and then there are follow-up lessons to check for understanding. The program has been successful because Wadsworth places great importance on the professional development of both the classroom teachers and the art teachers, so that when schools are no longer working directly with the museum, the integration practices continue.

Pacini explained that being part of the HP collaborative greatly benefits arts organizations because its extensive database of art programs brings a greater awareness to teachers about how arts institutions can support curriculum. Consequently, HP is creating a community where teachers know what arts organizations are doing, and arts organizations know what other organizations are doing, so know they

are all working together. Finally, the greatest benefits, according to Pacini, are seen in the growth of student learning and the connections that are built between Hartford students and their community.

To close the session, Hartford art teacher, Sharon Bailey told the story of how her entire school culture was transformed by the HP collaborative. Bailey described her school as a typical K-8 school and stated that she felt “trapped” by standardized testing. She received an email about HP, and in one day convinced the entire school to give the organization a try by visiting each teacher personally and informing them about the opportunities that HP provides. Through professional development, visiting artists, and excitement and dedication from all teachers, Bailey’s school embraced arts learning and has seen phenomenal changes in student engagement, student achievement, and overall school culture. To exemplify their progress, Bailey shared stories about her students, and how through art, poetry, literacy, drama, and music she has seen significant changes in their engagement – showing genuine excitement and measurable improvement and growth in their work.

However, one of the biggest changes Bailey saw was in her principal, who was completely transformed by the success of the program after witnessing the changes in the school and seeing how excited the teachers and students were to be doing something meaningful and to be working together. The principle proclaimed that arts integration was making the standards accessible and that she had never seen engagement so high. Bailey started out at a school where the arts were undervalued. Her art classes were often cancelled so that she could substitute for teachers who were absent or so that other teachers could have planning time. Since joining HP, the entire school has transformed and highly values the arts. There are now two full time art teachers—instead of just one for 700 students—and Bailey is teaching a special integrated program for the middle school where she sees the students for 90 minutes, every day for a trimester. Consequently, the students have gone from receiving 27 hours per year of art to 90 hours per year. In conclusion, Bailey sends the message that arts integration can work in any school, but the school has to fully embrace the change and it must be a collaborative effort.

For more information, contact Jackie Coleman (colej002@hartfordschools.org) or Jaclynn Hart (jhart@letsgoarts.org). Visit www.Hartfordperforms.org.

Pennsylvania’s Arts and Education Initiative: Building Public and Policymaker Support for Arts Learning

Presenter:

Ronald Cowell: President, The Education Policy and Leadership Center

Description:

“The session informs participants about the Arts and Education Initiative (AEI) in Pennsylvania – its purpose, process, February 2012 report, and subsequent advocacy activities. AEI, a project of The Education Policy and Leadership Center, is unprecedented in Pennsylvania and is a model for other states. While Pennsylvania has a rich history of public and policymaker support for the arts and arts

education, the past decade bore policy decisions that undermined previous efforts. Participants will 1) learn how AEI has highlighted the relationship between the arts, education, public policy, and advocacy; 2) become familiar with the complex web of arts stakeholders impacting arts education at the state and local levels; 3) better understand the potential of effective public policy and the necessity of effective advocacy; 4) discover elements of EPLC's model for building support for policies that enhance quality arts education; 5) participate in productive discussion about recommendations for policymakers and other audiences.

Summary:

The purpose of the Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC) is to improve the development and implementation of state education policy. Through its local, state, and national partners, EPLC achieves this via three strategies: 1) getting better information into the hands of policy makers; 2) developing and nurturing lay leaders and policy leaders to become champions of education issues; and 3) building a public climate for holding state policy makers accountable for how they handle certain issues in education and working with partners to build advocacy capacity for both individuals and organizations. Some of the organization's goals are to increase the effective operation of schools and enhance educational opportunities for citizens of all ages. EPLC is independent, non-profit, non-partisan, and is based in Harrisburg, PA.

EPLC believes that policy and advocacy should address the arts and arts education because the arts are valuable for all citizens and are core K-12 academic subjects. It also believes that the arts are essential to human development, creativity, and imagination, and as such, arts education in schools supports student success. From these beliefs stem the three main goals of EPLC's Arts and Education Initiative (AEI):

- strengthen public and policymaker support for the arts in Pennsylvania,
- improve partnerships between the arts and the education communities across Pennsylvania, and
- enact public policies that support the arts in schools and communities and the learning opportunities they afford to people of all ages.

The purpose of this initiative was to connect arts education to public policy and to encourage both the arts and education communities to collaborate in advocating for public policy. EPLC discussed the idea of AEI with several funders in Pennsylvania and received support from three foundations to do this work. In 2011, it convened a 32-member focus group which met in person four times over the course of a year to discuss the shape of AEI and incorporate the interests of the arts and education communities. This group included representatives from the state teachers unions, the Fine Arts Caucus of Pennsylvania state legislature, and some organizations that were concerned about the arts in general but not necessarily arts education. EPLC also convened a 13-member advisory committee that was a mix of both Pennsylvania-based and national organizations, including the Arts Education Partnership and Americans for the Arts. Some organizations suggested that AEI focus only on arts education, but EPLC deliberately chose to use the language "arts and education" to look at all the places where the arts and education intersect, which is not necessarily just in schools.

The 32-member focus group contained a mix of people identifying as artists, advocates, policymakers, and educators. Being that the conversation addressed policy, some thought their participation was not relevant. EPLC worked with this group to take an inventory of relevant education policies in the state as a way of helping group members understand what is meant by “policy,” how it affects their work, and how they can affect it. They also discussed policy levers, noting that money is not the only factor that causes policy to be implemented and effective. This inventory brought to light several challenges about policy in Pennsylvania:

- There are too few arts policy “champions” in the state legislature; when they leave office, they may or may not be replaced by another “champion.”
- Some policies, such as arts-related high school graduation requirements, had been ignored or repealed. This indicated that the education field either needs more effective advocates or larger advocacy efforts.
- In FY12, \$900 million dollars was cut from the state education budget resulting in 10,000 lost jobs, most of which were arts educators. This created an opportunity for community artists to partner with schools, but some arts educators who remained in their jobs saw this opportunity as a threat.

To continue discussing these challenges and to develop policy recommendations to address them, EPLC held regional community meetings and online forums asking the public for its opinions. Discussion topics included public and policy maker support for the arts, partnerships across arts and education communities, and the availability of arts learning opportunities. AEI developed a newsletter about these issues and made them the focus of a fall 2011 symposium in Harrisburg. Attendees stated that this was one of the few convenings in the state that facilitated the cross-fertilization of perspectives on the arts and education. EPLC was very deliberate in choosing the subject matter for the symposium so that the conversation would inform the specific policy issues to be addressed in the final AEI report. Arts educators, superintendents and cultural organizations participated in the symposium.

From the symposium, communities meetings, focus group discussions, and with the leadership of the advisory committee, EPLC developed 40 recommendations for aligning arts education to public policy. They are intentionally crafted to address legislators, school boards, arts organizations, the philanthropic community, and state policymakers. The 40 recommendations are framed by five goals:

1. Making high-quality arts opportunities available for all,
2. Impressing the need for comprehensive, standards-based P-12 arts education
3. Highlighting the need for high quality teachers properly prepared and supported by high quality professional development
4. Encouraging ongoing collaboration between artists, arts organizations, schools, and arts educators
5. Encouraging effective collaboration between the arts and education sectors

The 40 recommendations can be found online at: <http://www.eplc.org/eplc-arts-and-education-initiative/>.

EPLC has given the AEI report to every school board president, dean of colleges of education, legislator, superintendent and key lawmaker in Pennsylvania. In the future, it plans to work with lawmakers interested in drafting statutory or regulatory policy language based on the recommendations. EPLC plans to be a resource and partner for other policy advocates and organizations, and will continue to hold convenings—including a symposium in fall 2012—to encourage collaboration between the arts and education sectors. The full AEI report can be found on the Initiative’s website: www.aei-pa.org.

Plenary Sessions

Opening Plenary Session: Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Using Evidence-based Arts Research to Inform Education Policy and Practice

Introduction:

Doug Herbert: Special Assistant, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education

Moderator:

Virginia Edwards: President, Editorial Projects in Education and Editor-in-Chief, *Education Week* and edweek.org

Panelists:

John Q. Easton: Director, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education; **Rachel Goslins:** Executive Director, President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; **Jean Hendrickson:** Executive Director, Oklahoma A+ Schools; **Cassius O. Johnson:** Associate Vice President, National Policy, Jobs for the Future

Description:

“Recent research is shedding new light on the status and condition of arts education in America’s public schools. Meanwhile evidence continues to mount about the educational benefits of learning in and through the arts for all students. What impact has this research had on informing federal, state, or local education policy and practice decisions, and what are its implications for future decisions? How can arts education research be better aligned to address some of education’s most challenging issues, such as reducing high school dropout rates and ensuring that all students leave school ready for college and careers? What are the priority areas to investigate that new research in the arts should address? Hear the perspectives of national leaders and join the discussion that is taking place at the intersection where research meets policy and practice.

Summary:

Doug Herbert began the session by addressing data gathering in the arts, acknowledging the gap between policy and practice and that it needs to close. He stated that more than 40% of public high

schools do not have an arts graduation requirement, adding that statistics like this do not send a strong message about the value of arts education in our schools. Herbert said that while the growth of arts education in schools can be quantified, measuring the quality of arts instruction and the overall education of students has been more difficult. This measure of quality can bolster legislative support for arts education. He encouraged arts professionals to learn about current research related to arts education, build collaborations with researchers in other education fields, and build better intersections with non-arts researchers.

Moderator Virginia Edwards began the panel discussion encouraging arts educators to communicate in terms that are understandable by the general population and to maintain a focus on better outcomes for students. She challenged advocates to think about how they can change their rhetoric and frame their conversations to relate to the general population, and to think how they can help form the public and political will to focus on student outcomes. Edwards stated that the arts exist in great supply, but there is not a great demand for arts education.

John Easton of the Institute of Education Sciences continued the conversation by addressing the increasing importance of research evidence in our current educational climate, the value of different kinds of educational outcomes in the arts, and the need to build a theory of action around the arts. Easton stated that arts-based evidence has become a critical consideration in the allocation of federal government funding and that there is more funding available for programs that show effective evidence for positive educational outcomes and less for programs presenting casual evidence. An example of such funding is the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation Fund (i3), an initiative that encourages innovative practices in education and public/private partnerships. This program's resources are awarded based on evidence of improvement in student achievement in education. Easton stated that connecting the arts to evidence-based funding would help solidify the link between arts education and academic achievement and bolster support for the arts. Easton concluded by calling for a "theory of action" around the arts, which involves the continual improvement of arts-in-education program models, testing, and building evidence that will survive under scrutiny, all of which are necessary for improving students' educational experience.

Rachel Goslins' discussed the DOE's School Improvement Grant (SIG) program and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities' new Turnaround Arts Initiative. Goslins encouraged more intentional, targeted research and acknowledged the arts' ability to powerfully and uniquely reform some of the nation's lowest performing schools. Goslins encouraged arts education researchers and arts educators to define the educational challenges they want to respond to and to define the educational problems they would like to solve.

Goslins spoke briefly about the President's Committee's new Turnaround Arts Initiative that will operate within SIG schools. These grants are given to the lowest performing 5% of schools in a state (typically schools with a graduation rate of 6%), and assist the schools with reform methods. The SIG schools selected to participate in Turnaround Arts will become arts education laboratories: the program will implement new resources, provide professional development in arts education and support to teachers and administration, and help the schools' leadership build a new vision for education that includes the arts. Turnaround Arts will provide participating schools with arts supplies and instruments, connect the schools with community arts professionals and organizations, and bring national attention to each

school by having it “adopted” by an artist serving on the President’s Committee. The academic progress of these schools will be compared against a control group of schools not a part of the initiative. The program results will be compiled into an educational impact study for dissemination.

Jean Hendrickson, Executive Director of Oklahoma A+ Schools, shared information about the A+ Schools program that is reforming education in her state. The A+ Schools are based on a framework of eight core commitments, The A+ Essentials, one of which includes daily instruction in the arts. The program is one that schools can commit to, in her opinion, because it focuses on the individual students in each school. According to Hendrickson, the solution to the challenge of keeping the arts a part of the school experience has to be systematic: commitment to arts education needs to be present in the school administration, the school leadership, and in the classroom. Seventy A+ schools have now been established across the state of Oklahoma, and although each school is different, all are committed to the A+ framework and Essentials, and believe that the arts play a significant role in educational success.

Cassius O. Johnson, the final panelist, spoke about the creation of education policy, stating that it is determined by core curriculum and Department of Education standards. This is a challenging environment to move the arts education policy agenda with the federal and state governments being focused on college and career readiness. In spite of this, though, there are several drivers of education reform that can be applied more broadly or specifically to the arts. Drivers include state-led efforts for policy change or implementation, and also school improvement or innovation grants within which the arts can be incorporated. Johnson said that the political standing of arts education is determined by its place in the federal education budget and the effect of advocacy efforts. He said that it is unfortunate that the federal budget has been set in a way that is unlikely to see an increase in and expansion of funding for arts education. Local advocates, however, have the ability to expand capacity for the arts in the national budget with the help of community intermediaries.

Shifting Gears: The Accelerated Pace of Education Reform and Implications for the Arts

Moderator:

John Merrow: Education Correspondent, PBS *Newshour* and President, Learning Matters, Inc.

Panelists: **Dennis Inhulsen:** Principal, Patterson Elementary School, Holly, MI, and President-elect, National Art Education Association; **Valerie Strauss:** Education Writer, *The Washington Post*; **Gene Wilhoit:** Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers

Description:

“Speed up or slow down? Many people—including policymakers, administrators, educators, parents, and students—are not quite certain how best to navigate the twists and turns of today’s complex education reform agendas. But what most people are certain of is that the pace of change is constant and the consequences significant. What are the major demographic, political, technological, and

economic forces shaping today's education environment? Will the current emphasis on innovation in education help close achievement gaps and ensure that all students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in school, life, and work? Will the road lead to a complete and comprehensive education for every child that includes the arts? Listen to a variety of perspectives on the issues and come away better prepared to take the wheel for the journey ahead."

Summary:

John Merrow, Education Correspondent for PBS *Newshour* and President of Learning Matters, Inc., opened this discussion by stating that it is important that the benefits of arts learning be translated into those that are more widely valued in society. Merrow shared his concerns for the current state of arts education and posed thought-provoking questions, valuable insights, and potential solutions for the future of American education. Responding to the notion of accelerating education reform, Merrow suggested that "reform" no longer has any meaning in the educational context, because the word seems to be used to describe any kind of change being made to education. He continued by stating that reform is not a term used by classroom teachers, and from his experience, teachers use the term "change" instead. He then shared his thoughts on the meaning of authenticity in education.

Merrow discussed student engagement as a means for truly authentic learning, when students are genuinely and psychologically invested in learning. He acknowledged, however, that rather than seeing this engagement as a benchmark for success, the standard measurement of student achievement in American schools has centered on standardized test scores. Merrow stated that one type of assessment is not effective for every student. He said that No Child Left Behind (NCLB), is an example of this. In his opinion, NCLB leads to standardization and capitalization, as well as frustration and distrust in teachers and schools as test scores continue to threaten teacher employment. He acknowledged the need to measure and map, or "triangulate," data to capture the full picture of every child's learning experience. Merrow felt that if the goal of the U.S. education system is to produce happy, healthy, and productive citizens, students will need to spend time learning more than the subjects that are tested. He also suggested the need for more project-based learning in schools and offered that engaging students in the arts would be key to educational funding. Panelists continued to discuss the issues surrounding NCLB and the state of education across the nation.

Panelists expressed the fear that education in the U.S. might be shifting away from state systems towards a national system without anyone willing to stand up against this shift. Unfortunately, students have been constrained by rules and teachers are forced to function within educational environments facing increased influence and control by the U.S. government. This is making it difficult to close the various achievement gaps that exist. Panelists suggested that closing these gaps requires that students' imaginations must be engaged (a natural component of arts participation), lessons must be fun for them, and risk-taking at all levels (encouraging students of all ages to identify and find solutions to more complex problems) must be allowed. Teachers must be able to create educational environments that can facilitate these things.

According to Merrow, the education system has not evolved over time with the needs of society. He questioned if children should start school at age five, noting that some are not developmentally

prepared at that age. He also questioned if the school year still has reason to begin in September and end in May. He spoke his concerns about the lack of recognition of teachers as educational professionals.

Also addressing the evolution of the education system, panelists suggested the need for teachers and administrators to learn more about how students progress through learning. This progression includes learning sequences, content acquisition, the development of high-level cognitive functioning, and also students' developmental processes. Panelists also challenged the charter school design: they agreed that charter schools may be an avenue for innovation but should not be seen as the primary solution to the nation's educational problems.

Morrow directed the conversation to communicating the benefits of arts learning to those outside of the school. The panelists suggested that tools such as social media and blogs may be effective for communicating with various constituencies. Organizing community members for advocacy and activating national networks of teachers are also effective methods. The panelists implored teachers to view parents as their partners and to communicate with them online and in person about how the arts are working in their children's schools. Panelists also posed a leadership challenge for teachers, suggesting that they should approach their position with a service mentality, with the subjects of their service being children and their parents.

Morrow and the panelists discussed the role of foundations in supporting arts education. They encouraged foundations to examine the various needs of schools that are potential grantees. These needs may include helpful tools for principals to communicate the impact of the arts and assistance in incorporating the arts in to the curriculum.

The panel discussed that arts-based learning projects and the integration of technology and the arts into the core curriculum can have many positive implications for student engagement, dedication, learner independence, creation, and the role of teachers.

Closing out the conversation, Morrow offered this statement about student engagement in arts learning: "Students don't know they're learning, they're just having fun. It's the idea that kids are creating knowledge, that's why the arts are so marvelous."

Q&A Session with Moderator and Panelists:

Is "education reform" how you would describe what's going on right now?

- Valerie: "Reform" no longer has any meaning. At one point, this word meant that we were trying to make things better but now, it is used for everything. We should come up with something else.
- Gene: There are very exciting things going on in the country. There is a transformation conversation going on and people are challenging the tenants of school. We have a responsibility to those kids to push them to the highest level of being creative and motivated to learn. We need to individualize their learning but this can't happen without changing this system.

- Dennis: I think the right word is “change.” “Change” is being done to students, not for them.

Is the direction we are moving toward “authenticity” in student learning?

- Gene- Yes; I think we’re done with reform that doesn’t work.
- Valerie: I don’t think we’re done with “reform that doesn’t work.” I think we’re moving toward it. Every day, teachers do spectacular things, but education reform has put us in a spot where we were fundamentally looking at education as an institution. Now we look at it as a business. We’re adopting all kinds of models of business that don’t belong in schools. Everything is being based on the test score with formulas that are not valid or reliable. Education is a labor-intensive process; we can’t pick one way of doing things and say it’s good for everyone. I think we’re moving in the wrong direction. Why don’t you talk about what works first? Because we have to put out the fire.
- Gene: Society looks to the education system as the hope that will turn around the economic crisis, but it sees no good news. It’s right for society to say that we’re not getting the job done. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is probably the worst designed law because it is very prescriptive. We don’t trust educators to give us the solution. Federal policy is not a positive contributor to education.

Do you feel pressure from the federal government to improve education?

- Dennis: Yes, we do. The policy comes down to two kinds of tests and that’s how we’re assessing the whole child. It’s not working. All of our big thinkers know that 21st century skills involve creativity, innovation, and problem solving. As a building leader, I’m hoping to produce happy, healthy, collaborative citizens. It takes more than two tests to do that.
- Valerie: The arts should be in schools, but to sell the arts today you have to prove that they improve test scores. It’s getting worse. The things required for states to get federal money require test scores. So you have to test every subject; you can widen the curriculum as long as you can test it. The whole thrust of education in some places is test preparation.
- Gene: Some of this is policy and some is very poor practice. I can’t believe the things that go on in the schools just to get accreditation. We’re too compliant to regulations. We’ve told our teachers they’re not professionals, they think they’re just there to follow the rules. It’s not a healthy environment. We’re going to have more states operating under state waivers than federal law because they’re so desperate to get out from under NCLB they’ll do what they have to do. Research shows that the worst thing you can do is test preparation. A school that is rich in curriculum and experience is much more effective.
- Valerie: One thing the research really shows is that kids who live in wealthier school districts do better. A lot of data is wrong. Most of it isn’t done methodologically.

The Common Core has been adopted by 46 states. Is this a runaway train that no one person can stand up to?

- Gene: I don’t know if you want to stand up to it. I think the states coming together the best they can right now is a good thing.

- Dennis: The Common Core is a common language that benefits kids who move around to different schools. It won't hurt us.
- Gene: If you get into the Common Core you'll find that there is a huge emphasis on higher level cognitive skills. However, standards without implication are going to be hollow.
- Valerie: We go from one thing to another. I don't think we will ever not have standards because states' rights are too important. You have to adopt the Common Core to get Race to the Top funding. It's not a bad thing but now we'll spend more money on new tests. It always comes back to the test. As long as kids do well, you can try any movement you want and we'll still have what we've always had.
- Gene: I think we can make adjustments around NCLB but I think we're still in trouble. Does it make sense that they go to school at five years old regardless of their academic level? This has got to be a much deeper conversation about this institution that we created that once fit us quite well, but not now.
- Valerie: As long as a teacher's job is dependent on a test score, they're never going to feel free to innovate.

The Road Untraveled: The Launch of ArtsEdSearch.org, the Nation's New Digital Roadmap for Research and Policy

Presenters:

Ethan Clark: AEP Graduate Intern, American University; **Rebecca Kirk:** Independent Consultant; **Andrea Kreuzer:** Program Associate for Research and Policy, Arts Education Partnership; **Sandra Ruppert:** Director, Arts Education Partnership; **Dr. Lauren Stevenson:** Independent Consultant

Description:

“Undoubtedly, there is a plethora of good arts education research out there, but one must search far and wide to obtain it AND make sense of it...until now. Imagine a one-stop shop designed to meet your arts education research and advocacy needs and help you tackle some of the biggest challenges facing students and educators today. Come learn about AEP's new ArtsEdSearch.org—the nation's first digital research and policy clearinghouse focused entirely on student and educator outcomes associated with arts learning in and out of school. Get ready to test-drive this unique resource and explore its complementary 2012 State Policy Database to see how you can use evidence-based research and state policy information in your work.”

Summary:

The genesis of ArtsEdSearch.org began a long time ago at the Partnership with the research compendiums that AEP published over the years that brought together high quality research in addition to setting research agendas for the field. About two and a half years ago, AEP convened a research and policy task force of primary researchers to ask them about the next iteration of a research agenda for the field of arts education. As the group began talking, there was an interest in bringing together the

research that currently exists along with setting a research agenda for the future. Written, printed reports often have a very short shelf life: often times the info sits on a shelf or is out of date as soon as it is released. AEP knew that it needed something that would be much more dynamic and interactive.

Four basic principles undergird the work of ArtsEdSearch and its complementary components:

1. Advocates and stakeholders need to make a more compelling case for the arts.
2. The field needs to support best practices for teaching in and through the arts.
3. There needs to be strong advocacy for public policies that can secure the place of arts in the curriculum.
4. Targeted research is needed to explore what works to help close the opportunity gap to a quality arts education.

There are decades of research showing that the arts can help all students, not just those designated as gifted or talented, but all students, to create, learn and achieve. New research studies have confirmed that the benefits of arts education are greatest for underserved students, but these students who stand to gain the most get the least. Currently, this body of knowledge and research evidence is scattered in various places and is often written in a technical or academic language that does not speak to all audiences. ArtsEdSearch is the one place on the internet that houses this information and explains it in a language that is jargon-free and accessible to those outside of the arts, education, and research communities. The research has been vetted to ensure that it is accurate, compelling, and reliable.

ArtsEdSearch is dynamic and interactive. The public is welcome to submit the research to be reviewed for inclusion to the site. The review criteria for ArtsEdSearch were developed in consultation and conjunction with the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the American Evaluation Association (AEA). AEP believes that the arts should not be held to a different standard; research that informs the work done in the arts should be of high quality, just as the research is in any other academic subject area.

[ArtsEdSearch] is an outcomes-based research database and as such, it does not include research on how to teach the arts well (pedagogy methods) or how to assess student learning in the arts. While AEP believes these topics are extremely important, this kind of research is already available in clearinghouses that focus on research on teaching and learning in the different arts disciplines. ArtsEdSearch acknowledges that through arts education, students not only develop the technical capacities to create, perform, and respond to works of art, but they also learn about and engage the arts as media for individual and collective expression, communication, connection, and for bringing into the world something that did not previously exist. Studies that examine these and related facets of the arts learning experience are included in the database. There are currently 200 studies in ArtsEdSearch that focus on these issues across all grade levels from early childhood through adult learning, and it provides individual detailed information about the studies' methods and findings, as well as overviews that synthesize the findings across topics and across studies.

ArtsEdSearch also unpacks the implications of arts learning on policy. The field of arts education knows an enormous amount about how to create learning opportunities that yield the outcomes in

ArtsEdSearch, and as such, arts educators have a lot of knowledge to share with education researchers and policy makers concerned about creating the classroom environments that can produce these outcomes. Additionally, ArtsEdSearch also addresses educator outcomes, specifically what happens when educators integrate the arts into their classrooms and what happens when the arts are integrated into their professional development and training. The research shows many positive outcomes in terms of re-engagement in the teaching profession, overcoming burnout and desire to leave the field, and also feeling more effective in practice and in reaching the students in their classrooms. This is another example of how ArtsEdSearch can connect to some of the larger education policy conversations.

AEP's state policy database has also been redesigned along with the AEP website. The state policy topics and questions for the state policy survey have been revised with the help of State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) members. A new feature of the state policy database is a state policy report generator that can be used to search a specific state's policies. There is also a summary of all the states that can help guide you as you explore the database. There are three options for generating state reports on the database: 1) reports for individual states, 2) 50-state reports on an isolated policy, or 3) a full report allowing for state-to-state comparisons. Also included in the database is AEP's "State of the States" report with research from SEADAE and additional sources. The State of the States report information is based on the 2012 state policy survey. New this year on the report is the policy area of arts as a core academic subject. This document can be a helpful point of reference while exploring the database.

AEP encourages users to share how they are using the state policy database and ArtsEdSearch to inform their work. Stories, ideas, and/or questions can be submitted to AEP at artsedsearch@ccsso.org.

All Together Now: "Energizing the 80" to Support Real Innovation in America's Schools

Keynote Presenter:

John Merrow: Education Correspondent, *PBS Newshour*; President, Learning Matters, Inc.

Description:

"John Merrow sheds new light on America's state of education and urges collective action to "energize the 80"—the estimated 80 percent of U.S. households without children in schools whose influential voices and votes have the power, he believes, to alter public education and strengthen arts programs in our nation's schools. Drawing from decades of work in classrooms across the country and education policy debates on Capitol Hill, Merrow will share his perspective on what real innovation looks like in America's schools and the formula for ensuring that all children have a level playing field to truly excel."

Summary:

In his keynote address, John Merrow conducted a self-interview within which he discussed his opinions on arts education and education policy—opinions which have been formulated over the course of his

lengthy career as an education journalist. He spoke to the audience about “energizing the 80,” his call to connect public school students and programs to the 80% of U.S. households that do not have children in schools. Energizing this sector of the population can create arts education advocates within the community.

Merrow believes that schools are teetering on becoming obsolete because the reasons for the existence of schools have changed. Schools, in his opinion, used to be about gaining knowledge, new information, and the socialization of students. Schools also used to exist as a source of custodial care and extra-curricular activities such as athletics. Merrow suggested that today’s schools must recognize their new role in filtering information and helping students ask questions such as “what do we need to know?” and “how do we know what we know?” Students need to learn how to harness technology in positive ways, create their own knowledge, and make connections between different subjects and different ideas.

Merrow stated his belief that the arts are fundamental and showed a video clip of the El Sistema inspired Harmony Project program in New York City as an example of this. The Harmony Project offers free music instruction to children from underserved communities and one of its primary goals is for the students in the program to develop self-motivation through the study of music and learning to play an instrument. Music also becomes a tool that teaches the students to listen to each other, develop a sense of belonging and self-confidence, and the program creates a social learning environment where children are learning to commit to something and come to believe that it is worthwhile.

Merrow also discussed his opinions on accountability and on the way schools assess the educational requirements of the No Child Left Behind act and provide justification for their actions or decisions. Merrow feels that the assessment tests schools use often create more problems than they solve, stating that instead of focusing on nurturing the individual learner, the U.S. education system has become “assessment obsessed.” More complicated and in-depth assessments are being developed, but the high cost associated with these tests prohibits use by lower income schools. Also, the rate of cheating on these tests presents a barrier to achieving accurate assessment of student performance and appropriate accountability of the schools. Merrow believes that too much money is being spent on standardized tests and funding should be shifted towards improving teacher performance. He recognized the importance of national standards for core subjects and testing, but because of the nation’s assessment obsession, he considers it unlikely that school administrators would give arts education the proper consideration and attention it deserves as an indicator of student performance.

To keep the arts alive in education, Merrow suggested that the arts education field figure out ways to mobilize or “energize” the 80% of households without children in public schools and connect them to their local schools. He feels that the best ambassadors for these schools are their very own students; public school students are doing interesting work that can capture the attention of a group other than their parents, and can remind this group that local schools are a part of the fabric of their community. An example of how to connect students and the 80% is the Learning Matters Poetry project which develops students’ writing and creative skills and engages them with a variety of adults in their communities. In this project, students ask adults to read and recite poetry. The students film and edit

these recitations and post them to the Project's YouTube page creating a sort of digital poetry library. Introducing these adults to the students who are served by public schools can energize them to eventually become vehicles for advocating for arts education in those schools.

Merrow gave this directive to the audience members for their advocacy efforts: "don't plead, lead." He asked advocates to think about the aspects of education in their communities that they consider to be non-negotiable and encouraged arts educators to be a part of the national conversation about educational direction and assessments.