

The Creative Advantage Community Arts Partnership Report

YEAR 7 & 8 EVALUATION REPORT

Stacy Mehlberg, Ph.D., Ronak Patel, Ph.D., & Duane Baker, Ed.D.
THE BERC GROUP

The Creative Advantage

Community Arts Partnership Report

Introduction

The Creative Advantage is a city-wide initiative to establish equitable access to arts education for every student in Seattle Public Schools (SPS). It is a collective impact partnership between Seattle Public Schools, Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture, Seattle Foundation, and 100+ community arts partners and teaching artists.

Since 2007, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) Visual and Performing Arts Program and Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS) have collaborated to increase student access to quality arts learning in high-need schools. In 2012, with funding from The Wallace Foundation, the district conducted a needs assessment on the state of arts education in SPS. The report showed access to an arts education is predictable based on race and ethnicity, Free and Reduced Lunch, Special Education, and English Learner status. To address these inequities, the Seattle K-12 Arts Plan was created, which laid out specific strategies for all students to receive a comprehensive, sequential, and predictable arts education. To realize the plan, The Creative Advantage was born—solidifying the collective impact partnership between SPS and ARTS as the “backbone” management structure, The Seattle Foundation as the fiscal agent, and high leverage partners to support essential goals of the arts plan. As of 2020-2021, the initiative is in 81 schools (out of 104) and will expand to the entire district over time, supporting a total of 55,000+ students.

The Creative Advantage approach includes prioritizing increased arts access in the schools, addressing issues of racial equity, engaging in regional and school arts planning with K-12 pathways, building community arts partnerships, providing comprehensive professional development, and conducting rigorous evaluation of the program to address emerging promising practices and continuous improvement. The goals of The Creative Advantage are to ensure that every student in every school receives:

- High quality arts instruction that teaches sequential arts skills and techniques, develops 21st Century Skills, and is culturally responsive
- Instruction from certified arts teachers
- Integrated arts instruction
- Arts partnerships with community-based organizations and teaching artists
- Opportunities to connect arts to careers in high school

The Creative Advantage has worked with a local evaluation company, The BERC Group, to provide a comprehensive annual report on the implementation and impact of the initiative on student and community outcomes. Research questions were developed in 2013, and BERC researchers worked with The Creative Advantage leaders to refine those questions over time.

Previous evaluation reports can be found on The Creative Advantage website (<https://www.creativeadvantageseattle.org/>).

The 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years presented unique challenges and opportunities for The Creative Advantage. Program leaders, district, and organizational partners needed to quickly pivot and adjust programming in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to these changes, BERC researchers and program leaders worked together to determine the best way to proceed with an evaluation that would highlight efforts The Creative Advantage team took to continue supporting students and community members despite pandemic related challenges. One program leader shared, “the pandemic puts us all in a community in a different way, where we are focused on the students *and* the adults.” New research questions were conceived, and program leaders and researchers developed a plan to conduct a qualitative case study evaluation of The Creative Advantage community partnerships, one of the goals of The Creative Advantage, and an area of targeted investment during the pandemic response.

The Creative Advantage continued to offer programming and support in addition to community arts partnerships during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. Each of The Creative Advantage priorities was addressed through continued policy and process decisions. The Creative Advantage leaders shared a comprehensive list of strategies related to initiative goals. General successes related to The Creative Advantage programming can be found in Appendix D.

Community Arts Partnerships

Community arts partnerships have been a core component of The Creative Advantage since its inception. Individuals and organizations working in Seattle are eligible to be included on the Community Arts Partner Roster, which is housed on The Creative Advantage website. Artists and arts organizations participate in a rigorous application and vetting process, and once selected can receive funding from CA to provide services to CA schools. These community arts partnerships offer students and teachers opportunities to observe and learn from artists working in a variety of mediums, including visual arts, performing arts, poetry writing, music, and media arts.

Community arts partners offer residencies and professional development, including:

1. Integrated arts residencies – arts residencies that deepen learning in both the arts and other content areas (e.g. language arts, science, or social studies).
2. Cultural arts residencies – arts residencies that increase students’ cultural awareness.
3. Professional development for teachers and staff in arts integration and culturally responsive teaching

Additionally, all partners are required to have at least three years of experience working with K-12 students and integrating arts and culture.

Funding and Sustainability Grants

As part of the initiative, CA schools receive funding to engage in arts partnerships and professional development to build and maintain an arts-rich culture. Over a three-year period, CA schools receive a total of \$15,000 for partnerships. Once the original investment is spent, schools are eligible for Arts Sustainability Funds (ASF). These are non-competitive grants for planned partnerships between a school and a community arts partner from The Creative Advantage Roster. As part of The Creative Advantage strategy toward racial equity, more funding is provided to schools based on their Equity Tier, a system developed to “identify schools that serve a large number or high proportion of historically underserved students and for which the achievement of these student groups is below district averages.” The Equity Tier calculation includes multiple data points for six student groups including African American males, students of color furthest from educational justice, low-income students, English language learners, immigrant students, and homeless students. Schools in Equity Tiers 1-3 are eligible to receive up to \$10,000, and schools in Tier 4 may receive up to \$5,000.

Methodology and Research Questions

Researchers utilized a mixed-methods evaluation approach to understand trends and patterns that emerged through qualitative and quantitative data collection. The use of qualitative research methods and tools such as focus groups, interviews, content analyses, surveys, and observations allow researchers to collect rich data and triangulate sources to ensure validity. Descriptive data, including program counts, fiscal analysis, and demographic disaggregation help to make meaning and connect qualitative perspectives to implementation and impact.

During evaluation planning, program leaders and researchers collaborated to develop questions to guide and focus the evaluation. The team engaged in an iterative process, with all stakeholders contributing to the discussion. The research questions include:

1. To what extent are SPS schools utilizing arts partnerships?
 - a. Type and duration
 - b. By Population Demographics
2. What do arts partners perceive as the benefits of collaborating with Seattle Public Schools?
3. What are the perceived strengths and successes of the partnerships?
4. What are some indications that arts partnerships have impacted interest and engagement in arts/class/school?
5. How do teachers perceive the arts partnerships have impacted the culture of the school/classroom?

6. To what extent have the art partnerships had a perceived impact on the way teachers deliver classroom instruction?
7. To what extent did these arts partnerships support students and teachers during the transition to on-line learning?
8. To what extent has there been a perceived impact of the arts partnerships on culturally responsive instructional practice?
9. In what ways did arts partners and teachers measure/ assess the success of their partnerships?

Data Sources

Between April 2020 and July 2021, BERC researchers met with CA leadership, community arts partners, and SPS classroom teachers and administrators to gather data related to the research and evaluation questions focused on community arts partnerships. Additionally, researchers observed 12 lessons by arts partners to better understand how the partnerships manifest in classrooms and with students. Overall, researchers spoke with twenty-five community arts partners and teachers that received funding during the 2019-2020 and/or 2020-2021 school year.

In addition to interviews and observations, researchers participated in professional development offered to arts partners and teachers, and in March 2021, administered a perception survey for community arts partners. CA program leaders compiled a folder with artifacts related to community arts partnerships which helped provide quantitative data points. Finally, minutes from monthly meetings with The Creative Advantage project manager were reviewed and included in the analysis.

Research on Community Arts Partnerships

Research on the benefits of Community Arts Partnerships suggests that those involved gain a sense of empowerment, a connection to place, and an understanding of how communities can build resilience and heal (Sonke et al., 2019). Studies have also shown that artist-in-residence programs create a community partnership between teachers and artists, thereby “creating a transformative culture within the school to integrate real life experience and expertise into the educational space” (Lee, 2013; Pringle, 2009; Rabkin & Redmond, 2004; Stephens, 2001). One author noted, “By using available resources to hire performers from the neighborhood, schools not only provide financial resources to the local artistic community, [but] they also provide students with accessible role models, a sense of place, and a means of understanding themselves.” (Van Dyke, 1999, p.39). Professional artists bring unique perspectives and expertise to schools, often allowing students to see themselves in opportunities that might not have previously seemed possible.

These partnerships require planning, collaboration, and commitment from all involved, and can vary in scale and scope. In a recent example of a community arts partnership to develop a graphic novel focused on public health initiatives, a member of the collaboration shared, “Our

experience identified that cross-collaboration with an artist requires early engagement, substantial funding, artist education in appropriate content, and member checking to establish community acceptability...” (Febres-Cordero et al., 2021, p.40). In another example, community members and arts partners shared their belief that a successful partnership requires buy-in from all partners, and should be reciprocal, with responsibility for planning and execution falling on the artists and the school partner (Kenny & Christopherson, 2018).

Ultimately, engaging in community arts partnerships can be one component of offering high quality, equitable arts instruction to school-aged students, while also benefitting the local community. Researchers have found, however, that “partnerships with artists can lead to significant benefits for teachers and their students, but are not necessarily sufficient means for ensuring that students gain quality arts educational opportunities” (Kenny & Christophersen, 2018). It is incumbent upon school districts to continue to hire certificated arts teachers and embed opportunities for the arts throughout the school day as part of basic education.

CA COVID Response

Covid Pivots

In March 2020, schools across the nation closed their doors in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although districts were given guidance for temporary closures, many decisions regarding district operations and community support were left unclear. Priorities shifted from academics to a focus on the physical and emotional health and well-being of students, staff, and community members. In discussing the pandemic, one community artist shared, “The narrative is changing. We now recognize the value of the arts for healing, social justice, healing from trauma; school is so much more to kids than academic.” In SPS, CA leadership worked to quickly pivot and provide support for the immediate needs of schools and community partners. Arts partners who were already working in schools prior to school closures were contacted and encouraged to submit invoices for work already completed. Schools were given reassurances that unspent funds from 2019-2020 would be available during the following year. One program leader shared that she initially “made the assumption that schools would not be able to do their partnerships remotely,” and wanted to be sure that the community partners received compensation as quickly as possible. In a June 2020 interview, one arts partner shared that his company had been “decimated by the pandemic,” still trying to make sense of the new virtual world. He noted that they were “unwilling to quit, however, and excited to learn new skills for teaching online.” When community arts partners were asked in May 2020 how they were responding to the pandemic, 75% of artists engaged in current partnerships acknowledged that they were “sustaining,” (Figure 1) while 40% of non-active arts partner respondents shared that they felt they were just “surviving” (Figure 2).

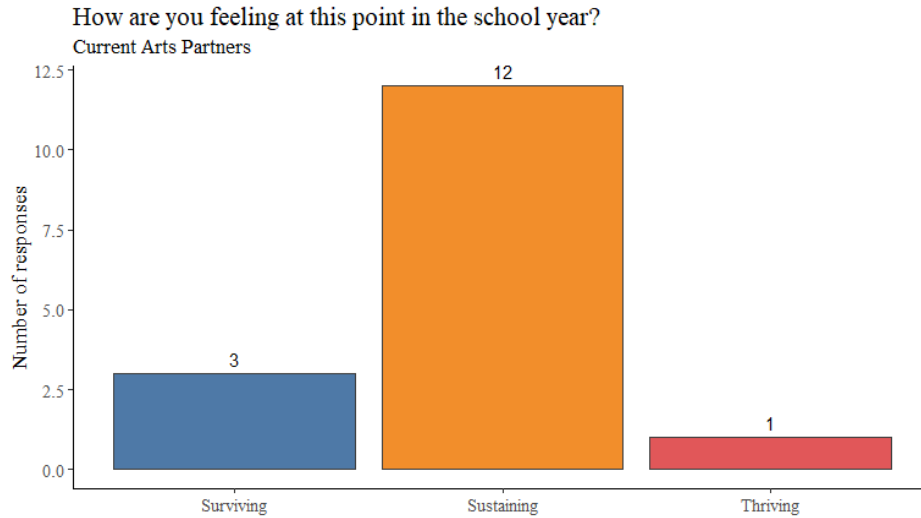


Figure 1

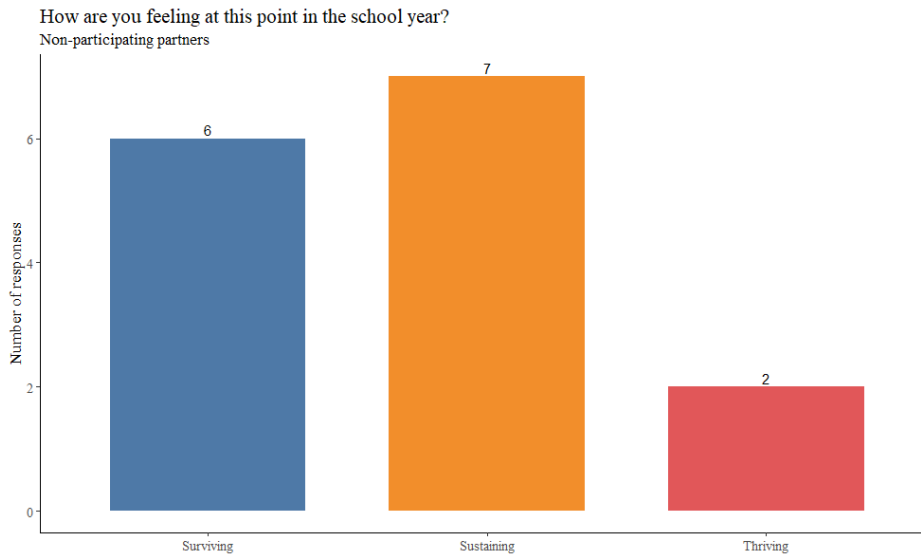


Figure 2

Within weeks of the initial school closures, CA leaders began to identify the needs of their communities and develop actions plans to address those needs. To successfully transition to distance learning, The CA team collaborated to define parameters and possibilities. Initial considerations included understanding what schools might want in terms of partnerships, how online partnerships would work from a legal standpoint, what safety precautions would need to be implemented, and how partners would gain access to technology needed to engage with students through Microsoft Teams, the approved platform within SPS. While these policies and practices were being explored, The Creative Advantage team continued to identify ways they could use the arts to support student emotional well-being while also providing income for community arts partners.

One of the first pivots was to develop *Creative Advantage Online Arts (CAOA)*, a way to help artists maintain employment as essential workers during the pandemic. The CA team partnered with 30 teaching artists, many of which had residencies that were cancelled due to school closures. These artists made a series of approximately 10 to 15-minute arts educational programming segments featuring a variety of artistic disciplines for a range of grade levels. The online art videos were a collaboration with individual teaching artists, Seattle Public Schools, community partners and youth, as well as production partners National Film Festival for Talented Youth (NFFTY), Northwest Film Forum, and Reel Grrls Pro. The series was available on SPS TV, KOMO 4, Seattle Public Library, Seattle Channel, and [Seattle Office of Arts & Culture YouTube](#) channels (www.artbeat.seattle.gov). To help families and teachers gain easier access to content, CA leadership also created links to Schoology, the Learning Management System (LMS) used throughout the district. These CA videos were generated in addition to a series of SPS videos created by Visual & Performing Arts certificated teachers to provide access to arts learning for students and families. An advisory group of teaching artists and teachers collaborated to help align curriculum and provide guidance for families and students hoping to incorporate the videos into asynchronous learning, so students could watch lessons on-demand. There were a wide variety of offerings, including African dance, percussion, Islamic geometric art, poetry, playwriting, singing, comics and zines, observational drawing, and collage.

In addition to the asynchronous videos, The Creative Advantage developed *Creative Advantage All Access Arts Streaming (CAAAAS)*, a series of synchronous, live-streamed classes designed to support students outside of the regular school day. Because of remote learning schedules, opportunities for student residencies during the school day became more challenging. The Creative Advantage chose to create a program particularly for out-of-school time for the first time, and pioneered a cross-sector partnership with SPR, SIT, SPL, and community arts partners to pull it together. This choice to blur the in-school and out-of-school time was a new one, and particularly important for racial and social justice implications on arts education access during the pandemic. The Creative Advantage paid teaching artists, while Parks offered their proprietary registration system and WebEx classroom spaces for these free city-wide offerings from partner organizations. Additionally, The Creative Advantage was able to pay young people to learn how to stream content and host online spaces via youth development partner The Vera Project. Researchers visited synchronous classes, including a dance class and a poetry class. Students were able to express themselves through movement and spoken word, and were encouraged to develop 21st Century skills, including communication, persistence, and problem solving. During virtual observations, students were engaged in meaningful interactions with the teaching artists, and appeared excited to share their learning, take risks and try new things.

While classes provided opportunities to virtually connect students with arts learning during the pandemic, The Creative Advantage team partnered with the city to place community artists in Teen Hubs, where they could engage with students in person and build relationships to address the mental-health and well-being of teens, a particularly vulnerable population during school

closures. These free, safe community spaces established in 8 locations across Seattle provided space, internet access, and community to students in need. The CA vision was to support youth and families while also assisting local artists in economic recovery. Artists were invited to take up multi-week residencies and work with students on creative projects, including cooking, vocal warm-ups, theater, and recycled art making. A main goal of the program was to provide consistent adult mentors to students who had been isolated and disconnected from others, and who needed an opportunity to express themselves. In addition, the program provided high speed internet for online learning and first responders could drop off their school-aged students.

The CA also worked to provide art materials for students to pair with their virtual arts opportunities. During the COVID pandemic, two rounds of high-quality art kits were delivered to SPS students. All elementary students, and all students taking arts courses in secondary grades received materials between Spring 2020 and Spring 2021. These kits were funded through multiple sources, including SPS curriculum, Assessment and Instruction, Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture, Seattle's Department of Education & Early Learning, National Endowment for the Arts, The Seattle Seahawks Foundation, and Dick Blick Art Supply. One teacher shared that the kits helped to address equity, and reach "our highest need students during a vulnerable time."

Finally, a continuing priority for The CA team was providing professional development (PD) for community arts partners and teachers as they navigated the transition to virtual instruction. In collaboration with the Seattle Art Museum, arts educators were surveyed to determine their most pressing needs. Several artists shared an interest in learning about Social Emotional Learning (SEL), instruction for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, (BIPOC) students, and strategies related to online instruction. CA leadership responded with a robust professional development schedule, including 17 workshops, and serving over 1000 participants. Figure 3 shows responses from the Arts Partner Survey (n=41), administered in Spring of 2021 by The BERG Group, regarding partner participation in PD. A complete list of professional development offerings is included in Appendix A.

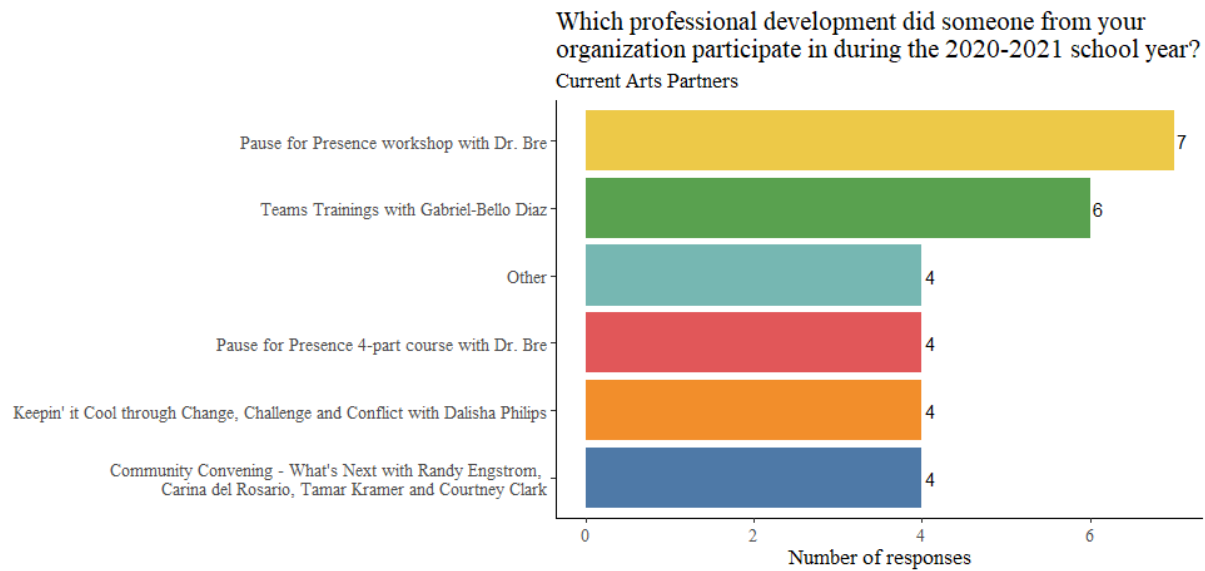


Figure 3

Although Figure 3 represents only a sample of perspectives from community arts partners, it does highlight trends in participation, and offers insights into participants’ reactions to the PD offered. The focus of PD during the pandemic was to support educators with technology and healing centered social justice for both the educators and students. Overall, arts partners responded positively to PD during this transition year. One participant shared that they had learned about “reflection, community-building, self-care, art as a way to process trauma and events, and art as a way to identify priorities and connections.” Several respondents commented on the selection, timeliness, and quality of the PD offerings. Responses were also directed at specific topics, including PD on navigating technology during the pandemic. One survey participant wrote, “The support with an introduction to MS Teams at the beginning of the year was really valuable as a jumping off point to think about how to partner with schools and what interacting with students could look like.” When asked what PD they might like to see offered in the future, several participants suggested more training on anti-racists practices, disability justice, and networking with schools to increase and strengthen partnerships.

By asking arts partners what they needed, The Creative Advantage team gave voice and validation to the experiences of community teaching artists and SPS teachers. This pattern of stakeholder engagement was evident throughout the pandemic response. CA leaders worked to provide opportunities for community arts partners, teachers, and students to communicate their needs and share their perspectives. One additional example of this was the decision to create an advisory body to help with the shift to remote instruction. CA leaders paid a group of advisors, comprised of teaching artists and cultural partners, to act as a sounding board for new ideas.

When asked to share some learnings from the pandemic that teaching artists would like to integrate into their practice, several respondents noted that their improved digital literacy and organizational skills would be useful in-person or remote. One artist commented, “Remote

learning provided opportunities to reach communities we normally couldn't accommodate due to location and the number of student impact was greater due to the virtual platform allowing more students.” A few teaching artists also mentioned how adaptable they became, which increased their self-efficacy as educators. There was a sense of possibility amongst the artists that was evident in the conversations and reflections on their work during the pandemic. Several teaching artists increased their presence online, and built out their resources for students to have increased access.

COVID Challenges

In the Spring 2021 Arts Partner perspective survey, researchers asked community arts partners to share challenges they faced with delivering their instruction online (Figure 4). Of the partners that engaged in partnerships during the pandemic, several shared that they had trouble accessing Microsoft Teams, the platform used throughout SPS. Arts partners also noted that finding time to collaborate with teachers was a struggle, and student engagement was more difficult to assess.

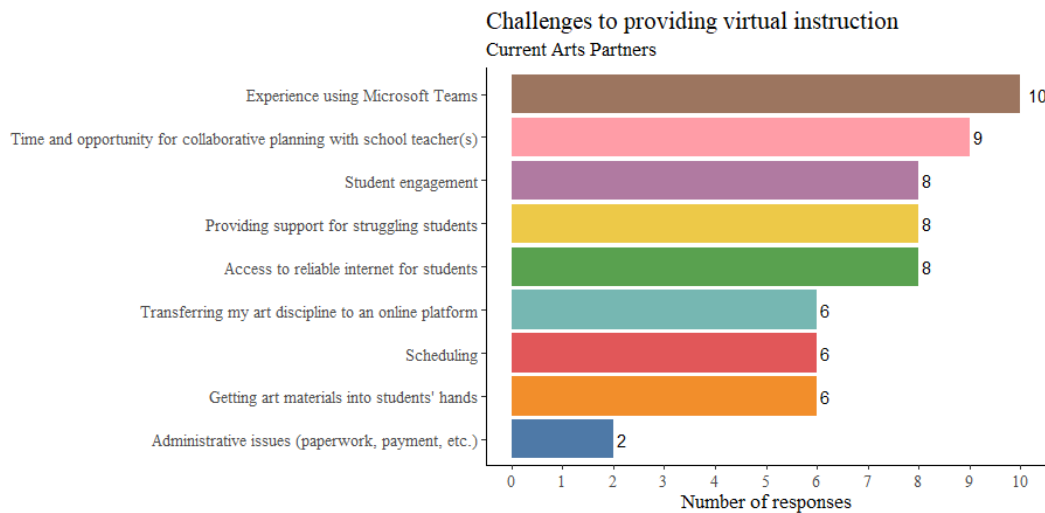


Figure 4

In addition to engagement, arts partners found that it was much more difficult to support student needs in the virtual classroom. Many artists talked about their typical hands-on approach to support, using proximity to assist struggling students. They expressed frustration at the limitations of the virtual classroom to provide the level of support they could provide pre-pandemic and in-person. Several artists noted that they could not feel or experience the energy of the students, which stilted the group’s creativity at times. Artists also shared their concerns about inequitable access to technology and available space for students to stretch out and be creative. During one observation, several students could not perform their music because parents and siblings were working in the same space. In another, one student could not find their art materials, and without a parent or sibling to help them, they were left to sit quietly while other students worked.

Arts Partnership Activity and Engagement

Table 1 provides a summary of partnerships and funding during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. During this time, many schools engaged in community arts partnerships, on site and during remote learning. These partnerships represented a wide range of offerings, from poetry and painting to theatre and dance. All community partners were approved providers on The Creative Advantage Community Arts Partner Roster. CA schools with available funding, or those that had requested arts sustainability funding, were eligible to contract with community art partners. Figure 5 shows the number of partnerships, by cohort, that were supported by CA funding, not including district level partnerships. In 2019-2020 there were 63 partnerships, while in 2020-2021 there were 62 partnerships.

Table 1. Partnership Summary Counts (based on CA Team reports)

Partnership Summary	2019-20	2020-21
Number of schools with access to CA funds (new, underspent or sustainability) during the year	64	72
Number of schools eligible to apply for Arts Sustainability Funds (ASF)	24	24
Number of schools that received ASF	18	17
Number of schools that had partnerships	46	40
Total number of partnerships	63	62
Number of PD partnerships	7	3
Number of Residency partnerships	47	59
Number of schools with funds that that did NOT have partnerships	28	36
Cohort Summary by Number of Partnerships		
Cohort 1 / Central / Meany & Washington - 14 schools	15	12
Cohort 2 South-Southwest / Denny - 10 schools	12	7
Cohort 3 – Southeast / Aki & Mercer – 21 schools	17	18
Cohort 4 – McClure & Madison – 10 schools	15	14
Cohort 5 - RESMS/JAMS – 17 schools	1	9
District Partnerships	8	2

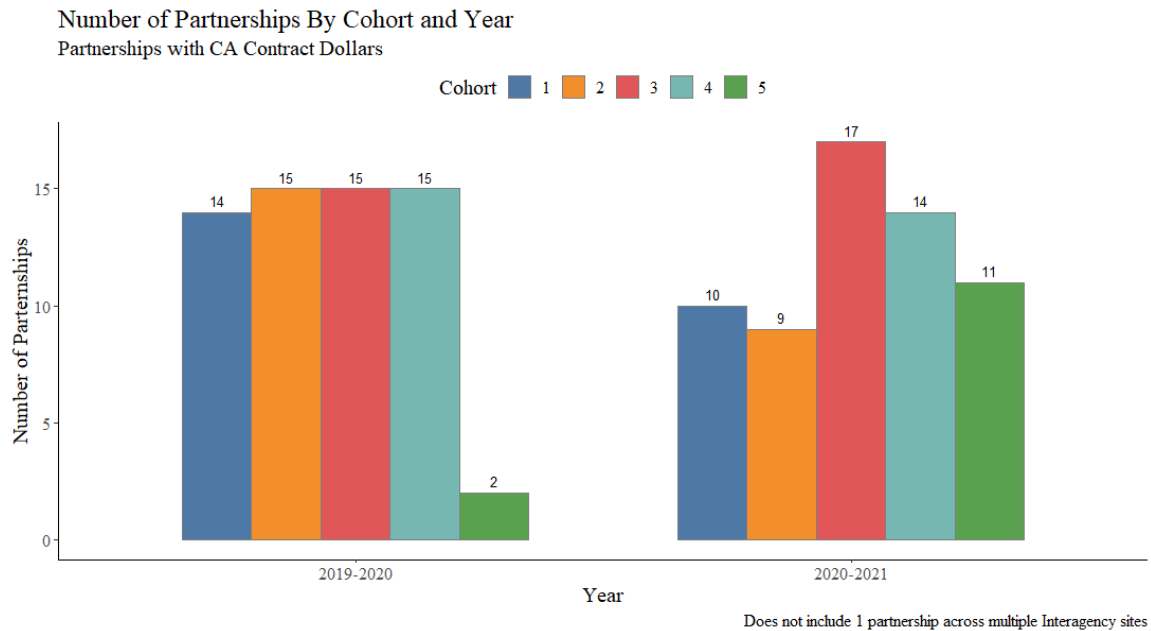


Figure 5

Researchers conducted interviews with teachers, community arts partners, and program leaders to understand partnerships through the lens of multiple stakeholders. While empirical evidence supports the benefits of collaboration for arts learning and community development, program leaders were interested in understanding how community arts partners, teachers and students in Seattle experienced the partnerships, from the logistics of connecting, organizing and planning, delivering lessons, and assessing and reflecting on the learning. Initially, researchers asked CA leaders to talk about what they looked for when choosing community arts partners to join the roster, and what successful partnerships looked like from their perspective. Leaders expressed similar ideologies; partners should have experience working with schools, racial and cultural representation, passion for their craft and the students, flexibility, and willingness to collaborate and share ideas. One CA leader noted,

[During] this year, it has been about pivoting. So many of our partners have had to pivot, try again, pivot... [they showed a] willingness to experiment, reflect and revise. On the base level, people who you can tell are passionate about the work and are accountable to themselves for it [have] a get it done attitude, [creating a] solutions-oriented culture. [Our partners] make sure young people are really ready to be involved in a process or product... integrity is huge, and [there is] transparency about what is needed to get things done.

Teachers expressed similar thoughts when asked to share perceptions of what made partnerships successful. One teacher commented on the value of listening during the planning, while several others discussed the importance of having lessons that align with content happening in the class, whether academic or social-emotional. During one interview, a classroom teacher shared, “I

really like when there is a tie into what we are talking about in class. It gives context, and helps the kids grow in the academics.” CA leadership agreed, noting how important it is when “the lesson and the work or art making aligns with other things happening in the classroom or the school, [including] academic things, social emotional, school culture.” They continued by sharing, “When students are making those connections through the arts it makes things sticky for them. And when kids are getting to do something new and view a topic in a different way through the arts. You can see them being engaged in a way that they weren’t being engaged before.”

Teachers also talked about the importance of partnerships that were mutually beneficial, with follow through and commitment from the artists. One teacher shared, “[Our partner] supports what I do, and what I do supports him...Our skill sets balance each other out.” Community arts partners shared that their most successful partnerships occurred when there was clear communication with the teachers, and when it was evident that the community wanted to be engaged in the partnership. One artist stated, “Desire. They have to want us there, and it’s really cool if the teachers hype the fact that they have art.” Another noted, “To me, it is when we plan together and look for common goals. It is important that the teaching artist understands what the community is looking for...an ideal balance of trust and respect...”

In addition to talking with teaching artists, teachers and program leaders, researchers conducted virtual observations to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the processes and practices artists used to build relationships and engage students in meaningful learning experiences.

Virtual Classroom Observations

Researchers observed twelve community arts partner lessons in virtual K-12 classrooms throughout the SPS in Spring 2020 and Winter 2021. These artist residencies included music, theater, poetry, drawing, drumming and dance. While the content and methodology varied across lessons, there were several trends observed that aligned to the overall goals and objectives of The Creative Advantage , particularly in relation to 21st Century skill development, culturally responsive practice and equitable access to arts learning.

In the majority of partnership lessons observed, students were welcomed into the virtual classroom in an inclusive, engaging, and participatory way. One artist spoke to the importance of making quick, meaningful connections with students built on authenticity. He noted, “The first thing you have to do is let them know it is a cooperative experience...I have some experiences, and they have perspectives that I do not, so it is always a learning experience for me as well.” This, he shared, helped to eliminate nervousness, and encourage risk-taking. In another example of creating a welcoming space, the arts partner commented on her methods for building relationship with students, sharing that she “starts with the story of how my poems came to be and helped me to survive.” She followed by asking students to make a verbal contract to respect

one another. Overall, she noted, “You have to be authentic- never pretend...and really, really hear what the students want to say.”

During one elementary lesson, the artist was playing music as students logged into class, and he encouraged students to dance and create a beat as they joined. This, he shared, helped students to “feel loose and less resistant.” In another example, the artist began the class with a simple meditation, providing an explanation for the importance of calming and centering your mind before beginning creative explorations. She made time to ask students to reflect on the experience, and listened to their responses without expectation or judgement. With a group of elementary students, one artist began the lesson by asking students to talk about themselves, and then helped them to identify objects around their own homes they could incorporate into their art making. These moments of connection were opportunities for relationship building, but also provided context around the learning, and allowed students to participate at their own pace and comfort level. The artists did not require students to turn on cameras or microphones, but did provide multiple opportunities for student voice, and seemed comfortable making time and space to build classroom culture and create student centered norms for the lessons. One teacher shared that her arts partner “spent time building community and making the opportunity joyful,” which was something her students really needed during virtual learning.

After creating a welcoming space for students, many of the artists spent time talking about the learning for the day. In some instances, the observed lesson was a continuation of prior sessions. The artists reflected on the work they had done, and then explained where they were going next. One example was a theater class in which students had shared their writing with the artist. He made general comments to the group, and prepared them to receive his feedback and make edits. In an elementary poetry lesson, the artist asked if she could share some of the poems that students had created from other classes, so they could hear and experience what they would be working on. Each of the artists brought a unique perspective to their students, and in some cases worked closely with the classroom teacher to establish learning goals and objectives for their time together. One teacher noted that the set up for learning during his arts partnership was critical to gaining student engagement, particularly during virtual learning. He continued by explaining that the time he and his arts partner spent preparing for the lessons was also critical to the success of the work. One challenge noted during interviews was that students, particularly secondary students, did not want to turn on their cameras, making relationship building and engagement more difficult. In approximately half of the lessons observed students had their cameras on, while in the other groups student relied on the chat feature to engage. Despite this, engagement in the art lessons remained high, and in a few circumstances more cameras were turned on throughout the course of a lesson as students became comfortable or more engaged in the activity.

Arts Education and 21st Century Skills Attainment

In each lesson observed, there was clear evidence of 21st Century skill development. The 21st Century Skills, as defined by SPS, are skills and learning dispositions critical to success in school, career, and life. These include Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Collaboration Skills, Perseverance, and Growth Mindset. In one partnership lesson, the artist gave a “pop quiz” to help students think critically and understand the difference between fact and assumption. He shared a brief story with students, and then asked them 10 true or false questions, which they answered in the chat. He followed by explaining how only a few of those questions were actually answerable with the information presented in the story. He proceeded to read a longer version of the story which provided more definitive answers. Students then discussed what making assumptions could mean to their own creative process, and to how others might interpret or experience their work. The artist shared that “Writing clearly is important everywhere, so this is practice for all of it.” He noted that, “Students started to understand that and become more comfortable with it” as the lessons progressed.

During one play writing lesson, the artist helped students to explore creative thinking by approaching their writing from a more open, expressive place. She prompted students to, “Think of a story- a story that you are in – a story about a specific point in your life- I want to leave it a little bit free- what is a story you haven’t gotten to tell yet. It doesn’t need to be complicated.” She continued by explaining that you write your own story, “so others will not put you in a box, or try to tell you who you are.” After providing time for students to write independently, the artist then gave them time to share their work with their peers, and discuss the experience together.

In addition to critical and creative thinking, communication and collaboration were evident during several observations of arts partner lessons. In one poetry writing class, students read their own poems to their peers, and in a visual arts class students held their artwork up to the screen for the artist to take a collective picture. Finally, in another example of collaboration, students in one class turned on their microphones and played music together, using a beat created by the artist and “instruments” made from household objects. During observations, the students did not all participate; however, the opportunities for them to connect with others were present and accessible, and artists and teachers were clearly focused on providing safe spaces for students when they did feel ready to engage more fully.

Culturally Responsive Practice

A specific area of focus for The Creative Advantage is strengthening culturally responsive arts instruction for all SPS students. Culturally responsive teaching is a research-based approach to teaching. It connects students’ cultures, languages, and life experiences with what they learn in school. These connections help students access rigorous curriculum and develop higher-level academic skills. Arts partners, teachers and program leaders spoke candidly about efforts to build

knowledge and experience in this area. One artist shared, “We talk a lot about race and equity, which informs everything we do in the classroom. The writers work really hard to model vulnerability during their first lesson. They unpack the idea of judgement and get creative with creating norms, habits of mind, and agreements with students early on in their residencies.” Another artists noted, “because we use a book as the jump off point, I try to do a text to text, text to self, and text to world questions. I do active reading, and say, ‘That really makes me wonder...’ [I] try to make relevant connections, and ask questions about who they are.”

During observations, researchers saw several opportunities for students to make deep, personal connections to their learning. In almost every lesson, students were asked to share their thinking, discuss their process, and reflect on that process. When asked to write a poem or story, the artists provided examples or modeled for students, and then encouraged them to use their own experiences to guide their work. One teacher noted, “A lot of our students have a different style of learning. These opportunities allow them to show their strengths and assets. They can sing it, play it, and dance it.” Another teacher shared a story about a student who was struggling in academics, but built an immediate connection to their community arts partner. Once the relationship was built, the student was able to identify areas of strength and build his sense of self-efficacy. The teacher noted that the individual attention the student received from the artist partner was something he couldn’t do with a class of 40 students, but was the one thing that particular student needed to thrive.

Community arts partners demonstrated skill and creativity to ensure their instruction was culturally responsive and engaging for every student in the remote environment. Without the opportunity to be in-person, teachers and arts partners acknowledged the challenge of building trust, which is necessary for students to allow themselves to be vulnerable and take risks in their learning. One artist discussed how much she missed being able to sit with students, look at their work together, and just talk about who they are and what makes them unique. She explained that it became even more important to take time to build relationship at the beginning of her lessons, and that her partnership with the teacher helped to make this happen. Another artist shared that she has seen a “lessening of resistance” from teachers over her tenure with The CA, and noted that “once we show them how things can be relevant and connected to their curriculum, it helps them to see what’s possible...”

Several arts partners recognized the need for additional professional development focused on instruction for every student. Program leaders shared that they were committed to hiring a diverse group of artists, and supporting those artists in developing and honing their skills. Classroom teachers also noted the value of the arts partnerships in increasing their knowledge and understanding of culturally responsive practice.

Equity and Access

The CA Initiative has focused on increasing equitable access to the arts for every student in SPS. Community arts partnerships are one piece of a comprehensive plan to address equity. One CA

program leader noted that “racial justice is about access,” and providing opportunities for students to work with artists that look like them is critical to establishing equity across the district. She continued by explaining that “more schools have said they want to focus on bringing in teaching artists of color and those who represent different cultural groups in the school.” Additionally, a significant effort has been made to include artists of color on the arts partner roster, and many teachers shared that they specifically seek out residencies with artists that their students might relate to in new ways. CA leaders have also increased their use of data to help schools better understand inequities and address the needs of their students. During data discussions, CA leaders share school level data with administrators, and facilitate a conversation around what the data shows and how schools can use the information to drive decision making.

Figure 6 displays the amount of CA funding used by cohort during each school year, not including district level partnerships. Most cohorts spent more CA dollars on partnerships during the 2020-2021 school year. Not included in Figure 6 is \$43,537 spent at Interagency sites, which are spread out among the cohorts. In addition to dollars spent, CA leaders tracked the racial diversity of artists hired by schools as arts partners. For the 2020-2021 school year, 26% of the community arts partnerships were led by artists who identified as white, 32% by white artists who were supported by artists of color, and 42% by artists of color.

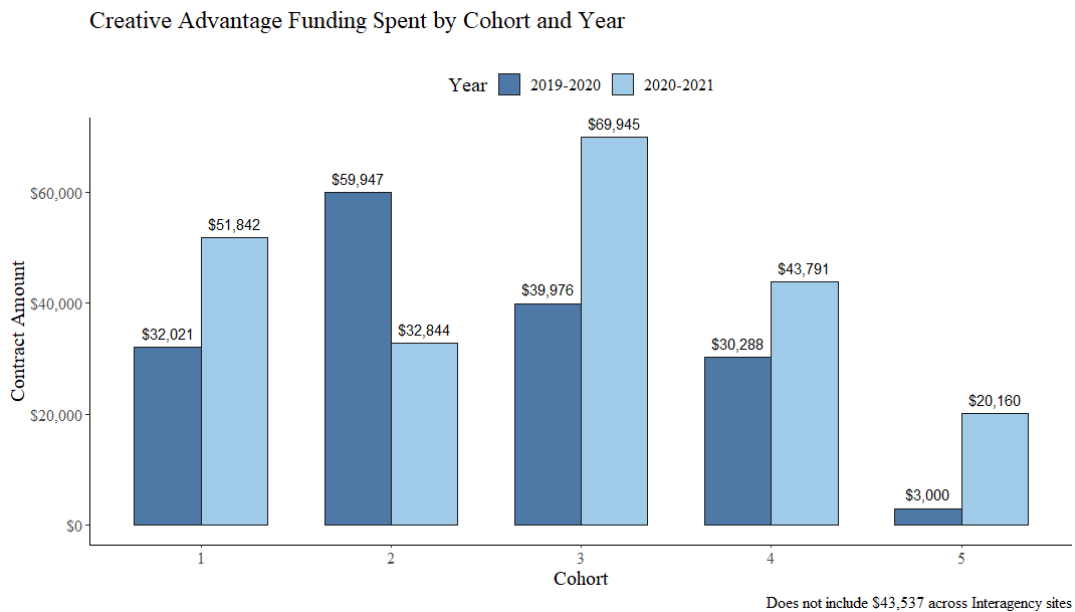


Figure 6

Seattle Public Schools is committed to equity and eliminating opportunity gaps for underserved students. To help protect and support highly impacted schools during school budgeting, SPS developed an equity tier system to identify schools that serve large numbers and/or high proportions of historically underserved students, and for which the achievement of these student

groups is below district averages. The Seattle equity tiers account holistically for the effects of race, poverty, language and culture on historical opportunity gaps (www.sesecwa.org). Schools identified as Tier 1 schools have the highest percentage of underserved students from a combination of 6 categories, while Tier 4 schools have the lowest percentage of underserved students. Figure 7 and Figure 8 disaggregate community arts partnership spending by school and equity tier. Ideally, schools in Equity Tiers 1 and 2 would utilize more of their CA funding to support the arts in their communities. During the 2019-2020 school year, twice as many schools in equity tiers 3 and 4 used their CA funds as schools in tiers 1 and 2. Of the ten schools that spent the most, five schools were in equity tier 2 while five schools were in equity tiers 3 or 4. During the 2020-2021 school year, of the ten schools that spent the most funding, five schools were in equity tiers 1 or 2 while the other five schools were in equity tiers 3 or 4. This does not include the \$43,537 attributed to Arts Corps poetry workshops at various Interagency sites, as the funds were spread to different school sites across the Interagency system unevenly.

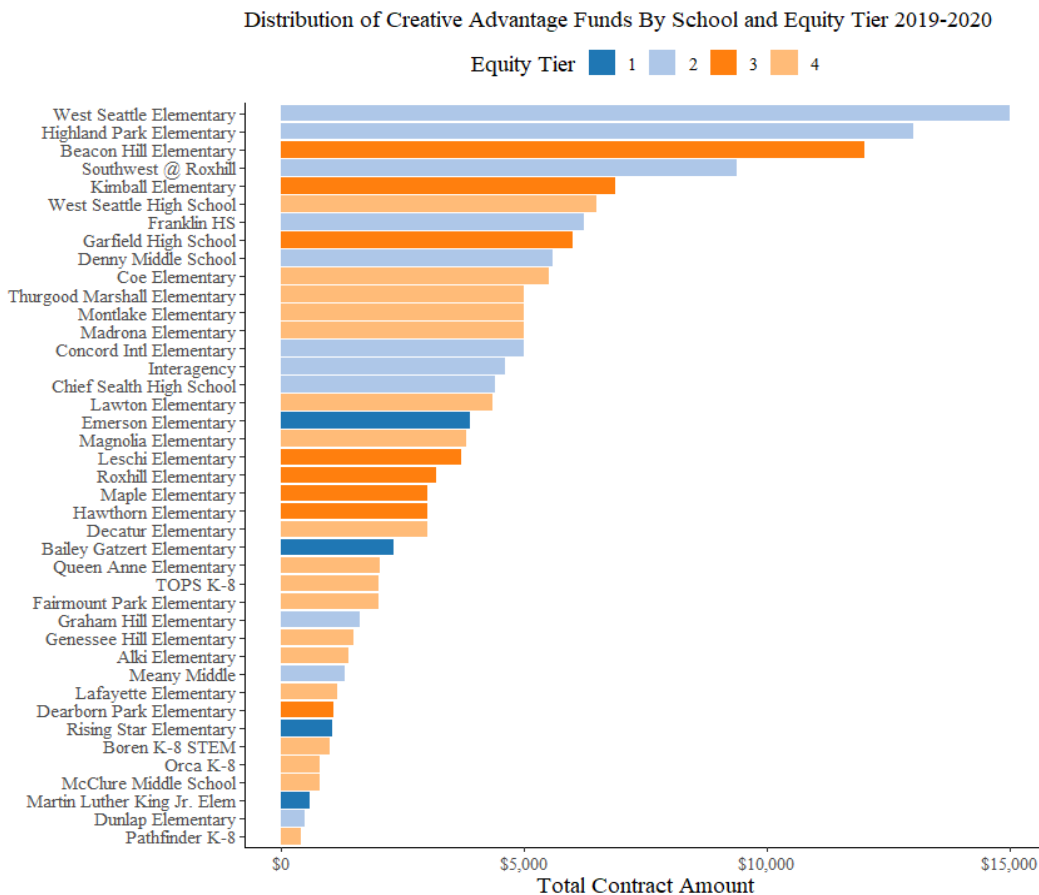


Figure 7

Distribution of Creative Advantage Funds By School and Equity Tier 2020-2021

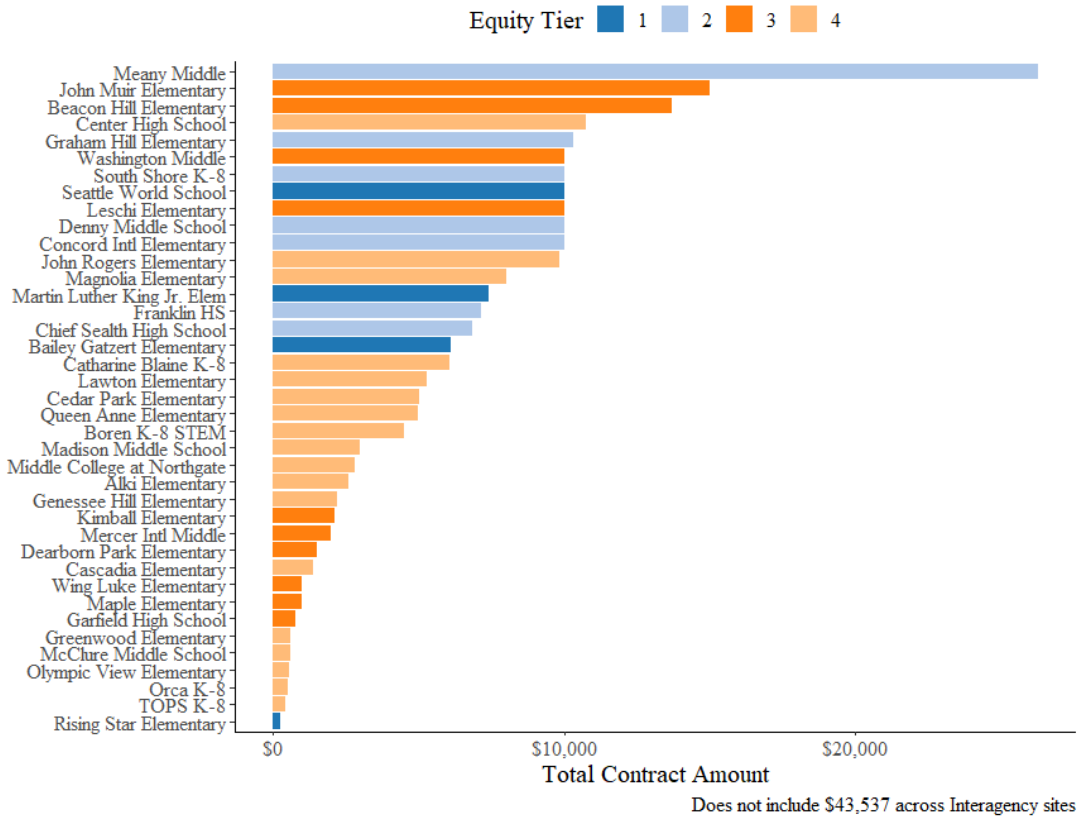


Figure 8

Community artists and teachers discussed equity and access during their Spring interviews, exploring their work with students of color furthest from educational justice (SOCFFEJ). One arts partner shared, “[It is] such a joy to see so many different classrooms across the city. So much variability in experiences but there can be greatness that can take so many different shapes and forms. It’s incredible to see the different resources in our schools depending on the neighborhoods and how the writers respond to those circumstances.” Another arts partner discussed how working with The CA gave them the opportunity to purposefully select schools with fewer resources and more diverse students.

When asked to share specific examples of their equity work, one artist spoke at length about the work their organization did to provide access to arts learning for their medically fragile students. She shared a story of a student who was fairly isolated at school, but through a partnership with another class, developed a friendship on campus. Additionally, the student from the general education classroom moved outside of his comfort zone, and as she described, “tried new things, shared stories, and connected with [his peer]. He learned to better understand the human condition.”

A high school teacher commented on the work his arts partner was doing with students that had struggled to engage and participate in school. He shared:

[Our partner] has been really successful working with African American boys that we haven't seen participate otherwise. It's not just the music. He works with the whole kid. He has them set goals, and when they aren't doing what they are supposed to, or meeting expectations, he lets them know. [He asks] why? What's your plan to get back to meeting those expectations? And when they meet those expectations, they see the benefits.

Another teacher considered the ability to focus on individual student needs a “silver lining” of COVID. She noted the importance of giving students voice, and allowing them to shine and build confidence in school by “finding that one thing they are good at that no one noticed before.”

Partnership Perceptions

In addition to understanding the “what” and “how” of community arts partnerships, researchers were interested in understanding the perceived impact of these partnerships on students, the school community, and the community arts partners. Specifically, researchers asked teachers (n=6) and arts partners (n=9) to share their thoughts about student engagement and outcomes, collaboration with schools and teachers, and overall impressions of participating in The CA.

When asked to characterize the experience of working with SPS, 53% of the artists who had engaged in a partnership in 2020-2021 noted the experience was “very enjoyable,” while only 1 (6%) shared that their experience was “satisfactory” (Figure 9). None of the arts partners noted that the experience was poor.

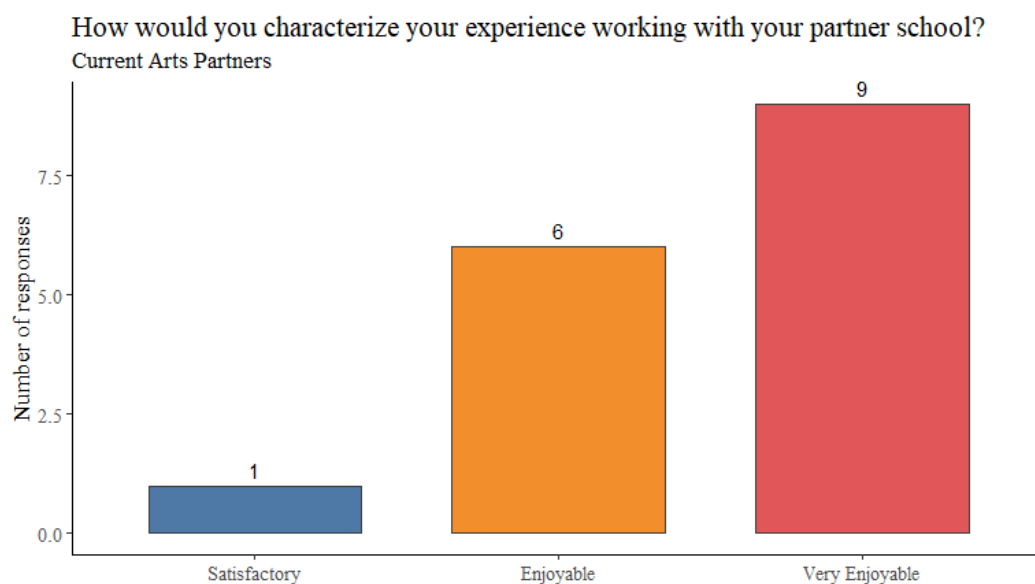


Figure 9

Survey participants were also asked to share characteristics of their partnerships that they enjoyed. Of those that engaged in partnerships in 2020-2021 (n=16), fifteen noted that collaborating with the teachers was something they enjoyed, while working with students, having the opportunity to teach, and being part of the school community were also listed (Figure 10).

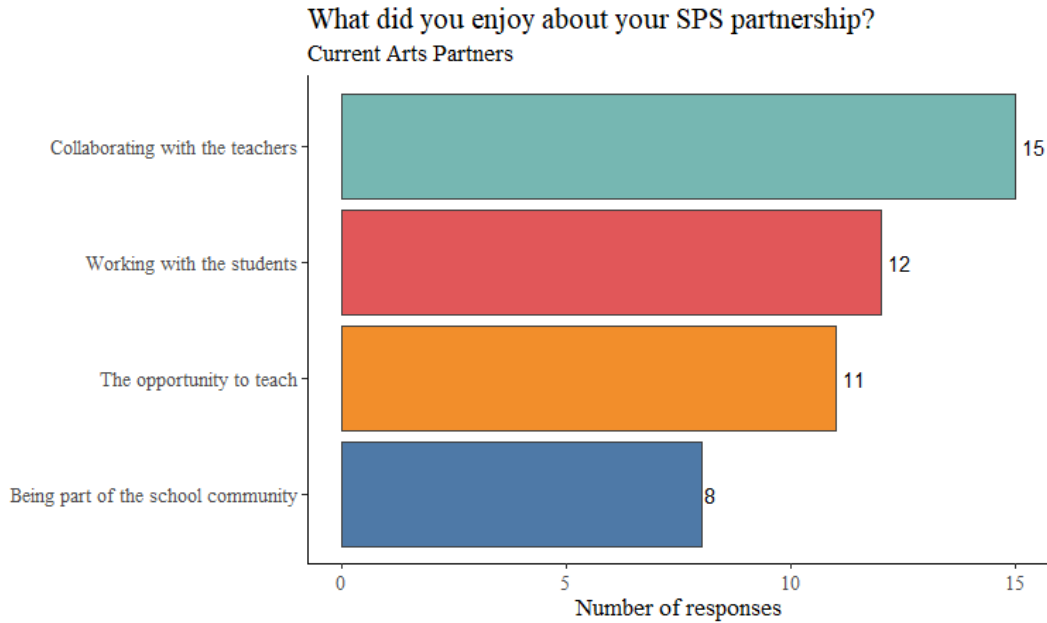


Figure 10

Collaborating with Teachers

During interviews with artists and teachers, one common theme was the importance of building relationships to create and sustain strong partnerships. Artists spoke candidly about their need for a collaborating teacher who was invested in the partnership, and teachers shared that the level of commitment and follow through from their arts partner increased their chances of success. One noted, “The relationship with teachers and their relationships with the writers is the key to everything going well.” These relationships were built through opportunities to connect and plan, and through expectation setting early in the collaborative process. One community arts organization leader commented,

Planning is critical. I avoid jumping in without sitting together with the teacher and the group involved in the project. We start our relationship here. All my classes I want to make sure we have time to sit down together and see what the partner is looking for and explain our style. This has been working well for both of us; the artists feel validated, and the partner can see that the teaching artists care about the program.

Similarly, another organizational leader noted, “I need to work with someone who can be there despite all of the issues. Being able to have a core group of teachers and teaching artists that have a relationship of mutual trust is critical. It is not always right for everybody; they need to be ready to dive in, commit, make this happen. The other side is that if the teachers need something, they will trust that I can come up with a project.” Through mutual respect and commitment, partnerships became stronger over time. Several artists discussed continued partnerships with one teacher, or a specific school, because of their relationship, which helped them to feel valued, and which yielded more positive outcomes for students. They also noted that these relationships helped them to network, increasing their business.

Artists also discussed the importance of helping teachers to feel that the lessons they were integrating were an important part of their instructional time, not an ad in or filler. One artist shared that it was a necessary challenge to “just try to show that our program can fit into their classrooms in a lot of different ways, and to help them build capacity and not add to their plate...” Another artist discussed her experience with a teacher that was not involved in the lessons, and would leave the space during the partnership. She expressed feeling frustrated and disappointed that the students were not getting the benefit of the artist/teacher collaboration, which would have made the lessons more robust, and built more relevant connections for the students. A peer similarly shared, “I make a big point with teachers that these are not old-style partnerships. Our best school partnerships are the ones where the teachers get it; where they believe in it, and we become part of their programs. [It is] not an extra. This needs to be integrated.”

Working with Students

The opportunity to spend time with students was identified as a strength of the community arts partnerships. Community arts partners and teachers discussed the importance of having additional adults modeling and building trusting relationships with students. Most of the partnership lessons that researchers observed incorporated opportunities for the artists to get to know their students, including informal chats, and opportunities to share their own stories and artwork. The lessons were structured, but student-centered, and allowed student voice to fill the space. In discussing how she started her work with students, one artist noted that “the most important link is to show them why this important.” Another artist shared, “[I] get to know them as much as possible through art...Build it into the assignments, like favorite color or best friends name... And they get to share and work on their verbal skills, even online. It’s something they can look at and see that it’s a happy time, following direction and making something and sharing.”

In addition to building relationships with students, several artists suggested that by taking time to encourage student voice, students were able to engage in the art more fully, using the materials in authentic and expressive ways. One artist noted the steps to help build capacity for students to engage in their partnership lessons:

First [I need] to make sure they are feeling themselves, giving them the freedom to pick up their drums, or anything around them. [This] gives them a sense of belonging...they could use a pen, paper, a bucket. I allowed them to create, and gave them time to create their own rhythms. All students were participating, so I could tell they felt a sense of creativity using anything, which gave them confidence.

A few artists also discussed helping students to connect to art careers by showing them what is possible. Many began their partnership lessons by sharing their stories with students, exploring how the arts were healing, or motivating, or helped them to engage in school more authentically. One artist shared, “it’s important to have teens talk about art and get it out there. As an artist and a professional writer, I have noticed a lack of that in our culture. The other thing for me personally is modeling behavior as a professional writer also. To give them the experience to do the thing we are talking about in class, a practical look at how we do things. I don’t think they get to see people, especially people of color, who are active critics.”

Building Community Arts Partner Capacity to Teach

Approximately 75% of survey participants who engaged in partnerships during the 2020-2021 school year noted that the opportunity to teach was a benefit of participating in The Creative Advantage. Throughout the years, The Creative Advantage has developed, and delivered robust professional development opportunities for teachers and community arts partners. Many of these have been focused on 21st Century instructional strategies and culturally responsive teaching. Artists have expressed their interest in these topics, and have shared that they continue to grow and improve because of their participation in CA PD. As the artists become more competent, the partnerships seem to thrive. One school administrator shared, “it’s important to continue to have their knowledge and perspectives actively teaching in a classroom. As an administrator it is part of the equity and access process. Being able to provide these teaching opportunities to various artists of intersecting identities so they can go into the classrooms and do this, and having them connect with students in different ways, is critical.” Artists shared that through their CA partnerships, they have learned how to simplify their instruction to address the age-appropriate needs of students. They have developed lessons that give students more voice and choice, and have learned to be flexible and provide time for creative thinking and exploration. Teachers have also commented on how the arts partnerships have impacted their instruction. Several shared that watching the artists work with their students was “inspiring,” and gave them ideas for how to make their instruction more “personal and relevant.” Several teachers also noted the use of student reflection as a strategy they would like to integrate into their lessons.

Being Part of the School Community

Approximately 50% of survey respondents shared that being a part of the community was a benefit of their partnership with SPS. For some of the artists, being on The CA roster increased their visibility and helped them to network. For others, their partnerships allowed them to feel more connected, a challenge during the 2020-2021 school year. One teacher shared, “The

partnerships are such a critical piece of our community building- it is amazing to witness the growth and see where things with The Creative Advantage are today- it gives artists in the community validation and respect- lets us know the arts are valuable.”

Partnership Challenges

While perceptions of partnerships were predominately positive, artists and teachers did share some concerns and challenges related to logistics and planning. Additionally, the pandemic created some situational challenges and barriers to engagement during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

One persistent and widespread challenge has been the process for payment with SPS. While The Creative Advantage is well funded, all funds need to be processed through SPS. One artist explained:

Getting personal service contracts approved with SPS is quite difficult. Even if its CA funding it has to be approved by central office to get access to the money. That process of getting the signatures and waiting for the money is hard. There is no way to track the application online, [and] only one person is really responsible for moving the contracts through at SPS. You can't start instruction until the approval process has finished. I have tried to get meetings and push it along but it's an opaque, bureaucratic process.

Several artists also identified communication with schools as a challenge. While all of the artists acknowledged that school administrators are busy and have many competing priorities, they felt frustrated with the perceived lack of responsiveness. Artists also shared that although they are on the roster, very few schools reach out to them unless they have a connection. Additionally, a few teachers noted that The Creative Advantage roster is intimidating, making it difficult to decide who to reach out to. One survey respondent who did not engage in any partnership during the 2020-2021 school year shared, “I didn't have time to reach out to schools, nor did any schools approach me.”

The pandemic created additional barriers to communication and connection. Artists struggled with Microsoft Teams, break-out rooms, and student engagement, and working with schools was more difficult due to unusual scheduling and remote meeting fatigue. Artists also felt the loss of being with students in person. One artist shared, “I just miss being with the kids. They are so bright and sincere. I really miss when I give the lesson normally in the school, I circle around the room at least 3 times and provide encouragement, help when they are stuck. I get to help each one be successful. Online I wait here, just sitting, and I can't go help them individually. This is a huge loss.”

Outcomes

Although it is difficult to quantify the benefits and outcomes of community arts partnerships, CA leaders, teachers and artists shared their perspectives on how these opportunities are supporting students, artists, and the community. By focusing on 21st Century Skills and culturally responsive teaching, arts partnerships are providing resources for underrepresented students while helping them to feel connected, empowered, and efficacious. At the same time, the opportunity for working artists to make money doing what they love helps to energize the community, and shows students that it is possible to find passion and joy in your work. One teacher, who has been an active participant in The CA from early in its development, shared, “we are so lucky to have it in the city and speaks to the values of our city. If you have an idea for a great project to do at a school, there is a possibility to get paid to do that work and give to the community. As an individual, you don’t have to be a part of a nonprofit to do something with your local school.”

When it became apparent that the pandemic would impact school operations, SPS teachers reached out to CA leaders and artists with whom they had built relationships, to try to identify ways to support one another during the crisis. Having a strong foundation built on trust in partnership was critical to these partnerships moving forward, despite shifts in priorities and needs. One artist shared, “We were talking with teachers a few weeks ago, [and] one of the teachers said when the school shut down the first thing I thought about was [you] because kids need something to process their emotions at this time. So, we will need the arts if or if not the schools come back in the fall for the kids.” Another teacher commented on the value of her partnership during remote teaching, as student excitement and engagement was heightened when their artist came to join them. She discussed how much she knew the students needed something to look forward to, and a way to express themselves safely during the chaos and confusion of the pandemic.

Another noted outcome of the community arts partnerships was the opportunity for teachers to see their students through a different lens. The artists all approached their work from a strengths-based perspective, helping students to identify places in their learning where they could experience success. For many students, academic struggles have impacted their sense of efficacy, leading them to withdraw or disengage from learning. This was particularly true during the pandemic. Through these arts partnerships, the artists helped students identify areas of strength, and connect those strengths to classroom learning. Classroom teachers were able to witness the process and learn new strategies to support those students. Teachers shared several examples of this process. One teacher commented on a student that rarely participated in class, but after working with their artist over a few sessions, demonstrated confidence and willingness to try new things and participate more actively. The artist agreed that this student just needed an opportunity to “feel good about something, which led him to see more possibilities.” Another teacher expressed surprise after watching several students play music out loud and take the risk of creating their own musical compositions. These were students, she shared, that rarely engaged in classroom discussions. She noted that she would like to try some open ended, playful

opportunities for expression during virtual learning, to help increase engagement in other content areas. An artist commented, “it is amazing to watch this experience open up, watching teachers learning new things about their students. Can be a gateway to decreasing your own sense of limitations about yourself.”

A few artists also identified the classroom teachers as resources for their students. Since they often have already built trusting relationships, the students may be more comfortable participating if their teacher is also there engaging in the new learning, taking risks and exploring. One artist explained, “The teachers are modeling the ‘unknown’ and the students see that and are more likely to say, ‘it’s ok that I don’t know or that I am unsure.’ I attempt to make sure that students are expressing uncertainty, that imperfections are present, and they aren’t scared of it. A model participant is not perfection but actually showing imperfection.”

In addition to teachers seeing their students differently, students were able to see themselves through a new lens. Several artists identified this as their most sought-after outcome. When students became less resistant, experienced their first creative success, or tried something new, the benefits were felt throughout the classroom. One artist spoke at length about a partnership success: “When we have a final performance, the kids feel so proud of their accomplishments, and the artists are so proud of the kids. One year we had a student that would never participate, and then in the final performance he jumped up and danced. It was amazing!” A teacher noted that when they are assessing their partnerships, they consider several aspects of the experience from the student perspective. She shared, “We definitely look for engagement. Are the students looking forward to our time with the artist? If they are able to bring what the artist is teaching us back into the classroom, and if they bridge the gap between arts partnerships and classroom. This is a success.” Another artist commented, “Kids can find a place to shine, and can experience new things. The combination gives kids a way of looking at things that is much broader.”

When asked to discuss assessment, responses from artists and teachers were varied and inconsistent. Some organizations and partners used surveys to understand student and teacher perceptions of success. One organizational leader shared that they do feedback surveys after each workshop, collecting demographic information to see who they are really serving. They also ask participants about the relevancy of the lesson, what they liked, and what they didn’t. A few programs worked with classes on school-based projects, and outcomes were measured through grades on completed assignments. One teacher shared, “I look at the kids in my program. I can listen to them and hear the difference from before and after. [This is] performance assessment. I might informally talk with my kids, and ask them how things are going. I have never had any of the kids skip their time with [our partner].” Several artists and teachers shared that their assessments were anecdotal; they noticed changes in behavior as a result of the partnership experience, or they dedicated time for students to reflect on their experiences, and used those reflections as evidence of impact.

Of the quantitative analyses available, we found that there was a weak, but statistically significant relationship between the contract dollars spent at schools and the free or reduced priced lunch percentage of a school during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. There were no statistically significant relationships between the contract dollars spent at schools and the percentage of SOCFEJ. Although all schools received the same initial funding amount, one hope is that schools with fewer resources would access more, or all of their funds to provide equitable access to the arts. This does not appear to be happening consistently at this point in the initiative, although a few higher need schools do appear to be taking advantage of what is offered.

Recommendations

Although The Creative Advantage has been implemented for several years, researchers asked teachers and community arts partners to share suggestions or recommendations for improving the partnership process and experience. Their ideas are included, with additional recommendations based on the evidence from this study.

Specific and Focused Professional Development: One artist shared, “My partnership with Middle College HS involved coaching the visual art teacher in developing her curriculum, rather than teaching her students directly. This was a really satisfying partnership, and I hope it's an option that other schools consider. Professional Development doesn't always need to happen through a big training for a whole school, which may be logistically challenging for schools; however, working with individual or small groups of teachers might be more practical and impactful.”

Increase Awareness of Opportunities for Artists: A few artists talked about the non-teaching opportunities they participated in through The Creative Advantage, which helped them to feel more connected to the community, and to understand the initiative more fully. One artist shared, “I really appreciate the non-teaching opportunities that I was able to participate in. I sat on the panel for the roster in 2020 and was in an advisory group too. These were awesome!”

Artist Spotlights: A few of the teachers we spoke with shared that the arts partner roster was somewhat intimidating, or overwhelming. One suggestion was to have The Creative Advantage spotlight a few partners for each region on their website, and rotate those out periodically, so school personnel might find a match more easily.

Advertising Community Arts Partners: Several community arts partners shared that they were rarely, if ever, contacted by schools to initiate partnerships. A few noted that the work they were able to secure was based on existing relationships within the district. One recommendation was to consider new and more expansive ways to advertise the roster, so teachers and school administrators would be more likely to consider partnerships when planning their calendars for the year.

Partnership Coordinator: In a few schools, there was a contact person or liaison that helped teachers to connect and build partnerships. This was seen as an effective way to make partnerships happen. One recommendation is for The Creative Advantage to hire a partnership coordinator, for the initiative, or by region, to help facilitate these opportunities. Particularly for schools that are not as resource rich, and where staff is often overwhelmed, having a person to drive community partnerships could increase access for students.

Authentic Assessment: As The Creative Advantage continues to seek funding to build capacity for partnerships and sustain the work, one recommendation would be to develop or adopt an authentic assessment tool or rubric for arts partners and/or teachers to use to better track outcome measures for students who participate in partner lessons. While the anecdotal evidence clearly supports the perceived benefits of the arts partnerships, an assessment tool that is aligned with the values and mission of The Creative Advantage could help to guide future decision making around implementation and funding.

Elevate Awareness of Partnerships: One arts organization leader expressed a thought shared by a few partners during interviews. She noted, “Sometimes the bureaucracy at the school is not always connected. I try to talk with the administration, but maybe CA could do outreach to the administrators. They could communicate, celebrate, and acknowledge the partnership to keep the communications open. Something that is not just coming from our organization...Anything that raises the integrity of the work we are doing coming from someone outside of us. Elevate the awareness to the families and the communities, giving a higher profile.”

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Appendix A - 2020 - 21 School Year Professional Development

Total workshops: 17

Total attendance: 1,113

Goals:

- Create space for community building and self-directed learning
- Invite new speakers and perspectives to deepen Seattle-based conversations
- Provide specific skills related to timely needs for TAs and educators
- Continue to include and highlight youth voice

Model:

- Monthly community convenings August - December
 - Speaker or panel + breakout session
 - Virtual art workshop
- Speaker/topic suggestions:
 - Art & Meditation workshop
 - Maryland Public Schools speaker
 - What Young People want to see: Youth Panel
 - Screening Party- invite people to share their favorite virtual art they have experienced and watch it together
 - Resource Swap Meet: Bring the anti-racist best tool, reading or resources you have used this summer and share it with the group (could include prizes like raffled books)
 - Covid-19 trauma informed practice workshop
 - How to use Microsoft Teams for teaching
 - Updates on SPS contacting and TA policies
 - Financial resources for TAs
 - Advocacy workshop with Arts WA

June

6/25: A Time for Change: An Arts Education Community Convening

Attendance: 98

Speakers: Audrey Querns, Daniel Pak, Toyia Tayler, Sheely Mauck, Heleya de Barros, Chris Alejano, Tamar Krames, Kirk Mead

August

8/25: Community Convening 1: So What's Next?

Description: School is online. Covid-19 continues. Protests are ongoing. Elections are coming. So what can and should creative learning look like now? Join us for updates from SPS and CA leadership followed by a creative mindfulness session to help reimagining the next school year. This session is designed to help you feel informed, realistic and hopeful.

Attendance: 54

Speakers: CA: Tina/Ashraf

SPS: Audrey/Gail/Kirk

Art + Mindfulness: Dalisha Philips

September

9/22 & 9/29: CA Workshop: Teaching with Microsoft Teams

Intro Workshop:

This beginners professional development workshop is focused on using Microsoft Teams for classroom set up. It includes how to manage your day to day focus with students on information, breaking up classroom time with resources and activities, managing student work and testing, one on one communication and how to include specific add-ons into the class experience. Information is geared to instructors who are new to Teams for setting up an online classroom for K-12. At the end of the session there will be time to answer specific questions from participants.

Intermediate Workshop:

This intermediate professional development workshop is focused on how to utilize Microsoft Teams beyond the basics. Participants will take a deeper dive into the add-ones useful to creative a dynamic classrooms. They will also receive insight into what virtual field trips could look like and tip on what to check when troubleshooting with students. Information is geared to instructors who are familiar with Teams or have already run a class in Teams. At the end of the session there will be time to answer specific questions from participants.

Attendance:75

Facilitator: Gabriel Bello-Diaz

October

10/9: Pause for Presence: Allowing Education to Heal

SPS In-Service Workshop with Dr. Bre

Art has power...and when art meets people where they are; it has the power to heal and transform society. In these unprecedented times, we are ALL experiencing varying degrees of trauma and uncertainty. In order to effectively tap into this healing agent, educators must have a moment to pause for presence and reflect on how trauma impacts both teaching and learning.

In this interactive and experimental workshop, participants will center their own wellness to learn how to apply trauma-informed principles to use art as an agent of healing and a catalyst for positive social change.

This is a very special opportunity for participants to join this workshop for free and we expect it will sell out. Please do not register unless you plan to attend and cancel your spot if plans change. Pre-registration required. Free and open to educators, Teaching Artists, school administrators and community arts organizations. Three Washington State Clock hours provided on request.

Attendance: 260

Facilitator: Dr. Bre Haizlip

10/12 - 11/16: Keeping it Cool Workshop Series

Join CA for a special four-session workshop series facilitated by Art Therapist Dalisha Phillips where participants will engage in art-making and creative experientials intended to develop coping strategies for engaging in change, challenge, and conflict.

Workshops are free and open to teaching artists, teachers, educators or community organization members. Workshop spots are limited- please make sure you can attend all four workshop dates before signing up.

Attendance: 68

Facilitator: Dalisha Phillips

November/December

12/1: Community Convening: Election Reflection

The election happened and 2020 is coming to an end. What does it all mean for arts education in Seattle, Washington and beyond? Join us for a informative and highly opinionated panel looking at the current state and possible future for arts education in all our communities.

Open and free to all educators, teaching artists, community members or cultural organizations.

Please register in advance to receive the zoom link.

Attendance: 32

Speakers: Courtney Clark, Arts WA; Randy Engstrom, OAC, Tamar Krames, WA state arts commission

12/14: Creative Teaching that Matters: A Youth-led Panel

Description: You've mastered zoom, you know the learning standards, you have adopted your art materials to work online. But how do you know if the work you are teaching aligns with needs of young people? This youth-led panel will share best practices for creative teaching online, with examples of do's, don'ts and don't cares. This session is designed to help you center youth voice in your teaching practice.

Attendance: 62

Facilitators:

KEXP: Sharlese Metcalf, Kennady Quille

Seattle Art Museum: Rayna Mathis, John McShea

5th Avenue Theatre: Orlando Morales, Gavin Bradler
TeenTix: Mariko Nagashima, Chelsea Nguyen

12/15: Pause for Presence II: The Art of Healing-Center Social Justice.

Art has the power to heal. At a time when we feel most divided and suspicious of one another, we need one another to reconcile with, and heal from, the compassion deficit accrued from campaigns that weaponized our fears as political arsenal.

Now more than ever, we must PAUSE for PRESENCE – and reflect on how trauma impacts both living and learning.

In this interactive and experiential workshop, participants will center their own wellness to learn how to apply trauma-informed principles to use art as an agent of healing-centered social justice in education.

Attendances: 104

Facilitator: Dr. Bre Haizlip

**1/19: Pause for Presence Course Series: The Art of Allowing Education to Heal
Session 1**

Art has power and when art meets people where they are; it has the power to heal and transform how we teach and how we learn. In these unprecedented times, students and teachers alike, are experiencing varying degrees of trauma, stress and uncertainty. The purpose of this 4-part course series is to provide a cohort of teachers with relevant awareness, knowledge and skills that center artistic teaching and healing-centered social justice modalities. In order to effectively tap into the healing agents of artistic teaching, educators deserve a moment to pause for presence, reflect on their own well-being and learn how to effectively navigate trauma in teaching and learning environments. The 4-part course series is intended for participants that can attend every session as part of a cohort.

Attendance: 110

Facilitator: Dr. Bre Haizlip

**2/9 Pause for Presence Course Series: The Art of Allowing Education to Heal
Session 2**

Art has power and when art meets people where they are; it has the power to heal and transform how we teach and how we learn. In these unprecedented times, students and teachers alike, are experiencing varying degrees of trauma, stress and uncertainty. The purpose of this 4-part course series is to provide a cohort of teachers with relevant awareness, knowledge and skills that center artistic teaching and healing-centered social justice modalities. In order to effectively tap into the healing agents of artistic teaching,

educators deserve a moment to pause for presence, reflect on their own well-being and learn how to effectively navigate trauma in teaching and learning environments. The 4-part course series is intended for participants that can attend every session as part of a cohort.

Attendance: 95

Facilitator: Dr. Bre Haizlip

3/2 Pause for Presence Course Series: The Art of Allowing Education to Heal Session 3

Art has power and when art meets people where they are; it has the power to heal and transform how we teach and how we learn. In these unprecedented times, students and teachers alike, are experiencing varying degrees of trauma, stress and uncertainty. The purpose of this 4-part course series is to provide a cohort of teachers with relevant awareness, knowledge and skills that center artistic teaching and healing-centered social justice modalities. In order to effectively tap into the healing agents of artistic teaching, educators deserve a moment to pause for presence, reflect on their own well-being and learn how to effectively navigate trauma in teaching and learning environments. The 4-part course series is intended for participants that can attend every session as part of a cohort.

Attendance: 80

Facilitator: Dr. Bre Haizlip

5/25: Pause for Presence Course Series: Follow-up session

Art has power and when art meets people where they are; it has the power to heal and transform how we teach and how we learn. In these unprecedented times, students and teachers alike, are experiencing varying degrees of trauma, stress and uncertainty. The purpose of this 4-part course series is to provide a cohort of teachers with relevant awareness, knowledge and skills that center artistic teaching and healing-centered social justice modalities. In order to effectively tap into the healing agents of artistic teaching, educators deserve a moment to pause for presence, reflect on their own well-being and learn how to effectively navigate trauma in teaching and learning environments. The 4-part course series is intended for participants that can attend every session as part of a cohort.

Attendance: 75

Facilitator: Dr. Bre Haizlip

Appendix B – List of Partnerships and Schools

2019-2020

School Site	Partner
Garfield High School	ACT Young Playwrights Program / Tracy Hyland
McClure Middle School	Amina Quraishi
Emerson Elementary	Art Maranth - Amaranta
District Partnerships	Art With Heart
McClure Middle School	Arts Corps
TOPS K-8	Arts Corps
Highland Park Elementary	Arts Corps
Southwest @ Roxhill	Arts Corps
Queen Anne	Arts Corps
Kimball Elementary	Arts Impact
District Partnerships	Arts Impact
Chief Sealth High School	Bayfest
Meany Middle	Big World Breaks
Washington Middle	Big World Breaks
Bailey Gatzert Elementary	Big World Breaks
Thurgood Marshall Elementary	Big World Breaks
Seattle World School	Big World Breaks
Queen Anne Elementary	Book It Reperatory Theatre
District Partnerships	Book It Reperatory Theatre
Chief Sealth High School	Bureau of Fearless Ideas
District Partnerships	Daemond Arrindale
John Muir Elementary	Gary Reed
Madrona Elementary	Greg Thornton
Seattle World School	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Lowell Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Denny Middle School	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Concord Intl Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
West Seattle Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Roxhill Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Genessee Hill Elementary	Jack straw Cultural Center
John Muir Elementary	Jeffie Lou Thornton
Pathfinder K-8	Jennifer Anne Haynes
Lawton Elementary	Kathya Alexander
Chief Sealth High School	KUOW RadioActive
Hawthorn Elementary	Macha Monkey Productions
Coe Elementary	Massive Monkeys - Extraordinary Futures
Interagency	Michael Benjamin Grant

Rising Star Elementary	MoPOP
Martin Luther King Jr. Elem	MTI / STG - Disney in Schools
Southwest @ Roxhill	Music Equipment
TOPS K-8	Ocheami
Boren K-8 STEM	Ocheami
Roxhill Elementary	Ocheami
Beacon Hill Elementary	Ocheami
Maple Elementary	Olisa Johnson
District Partnerships	Praxis Essentials - Olisa Enrico
District Partnerships	Rachel Atkins
John Muir Elementary	Randy Ford
Catharine Blaine K-8	Seattle Art Museum
Alki Elementary	Seattle Art Museum
Dearborn Park Elementary	Seattle Arts & Lectures - WITS
Franklin HS	Seattle Arts & Lectures - WITS
Fairmount Park Elementary	Seattle Children's Theatre
District Partnerships	SIFF Film Center
Rising Star Elementary	Sondra Simone Segundo
Montlake Elementary	STYLE
Leschi Elementary	STYLE
Bailey Gatzert Elementary	STYLE
Magnolia Elementary	STYLE
Orca K-8	STYLE
Decatur Elementary	STYLE
Franklin HS	TeenTix
Wing Luke Elementary	Thinking about a mosaic tile project with families for new bldg
West Seattle High School	Urban Artworks
Center High School	Vera Project
West Seattle Elementary	We.APP
District Partnerships	We.APP
Dunlap Elementary	Whistle Stop Dance
Denny Middle School	Youth In Focus

2020-21

School Site	Partner
Meany Middle	Amina Quraishi
Olympic View Elementary	Anna Marie Caldwell
Boren K-8 STEM	Art Maranth - Amaranta
Rising Star Elementary	Art Maranth - Amaranta

John Rogers Elementary	Art With Heart
Interagency	Arts Corps
Martin Luther King Jr. Elem	Arts Corps
Cascadia Elementary	Bayfest
Chief Sealth High School	Bayfest
Boren K-8 STEM	Bayfest
Bailey Gatzert Elementary	Big World Breaks
Leschi Elementary	Big World Breaks
Meany Middle	Big World Breaks
Seattle World School	Big World Breaks
South Shore K-8	Big World Breaks
Washington Middle	Big World Breaks
Queen Anne Elementary	Book It Reperatory Theatre
Wing Luke Elementary	Bureau of Fearless Ideas
Middle College at Northgate	Carina del Rosario
Greenwood Elementary	Chris Daigre
John Rogers Elementary	Chris Daigre
John Muir Elementary	Eduardo Mendonca
TOPS K-8	Eva Abram
Kimball Elementary	Extraordinary Futures
Alki Elementary	Fern Naomi Renville
Madison Middle School	Gage Academy
Cedar Park Elementary	Greg Thornton
John Rogers Elementary	Greg Thornton
Concord Intl Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Denny Middle School	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Genessee Hill Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Lowell Elementary	Jack Straw Cultural Center
Mercer Intl Middle	Jack Straw Cultural Center
John Muir Elementary	Jeffie Lou Thornton
Maple Elementary	Kathya Alexander
Chief Sealth High School	KUOW RadioActive
Graham Hill Elementary	Meredith Arena
Graham Hill Elementary	Nakema Jones
Beacon Hill Elementary	Ocheami
Alki Elementary	Olisa Johnson
John Rogers Elementary	Olisa Johnson
Graham Hill Elementary	PacificNorthwest Ballet
Center High School	Pottery Northwest
Dearborn Park Elementary	Seattle Arts & Lectures - WITS
Catharine Blaine K-8	Seattle Arts & Lectures - WITS

Franklin HS	Seattle Arts & Lectures - WITS
Orca K-8	Seattle Opera
Alki Elementary	Show Brazil
Magnolia Elementary	STYLE
Dearborn Park Elementary	STYLE
Leschi Elementary	STYLE
Lawton Elementary	STYLE
Alki Elementary	Sumayya E. Diop
McClure Middle School	Sumayya E. Diop
Franklin HS	TeenTix
Garfield High School	Totem Star
Middle College at Northgate	Totem Star
Graham Hill Elementary	Urban Artworks
Center High School	Vera Project
John Muir Elementary	We.APP
Olympic View Elementary	We.APP
Denny Middle School	Youth In Focus

Appendix C –Creative Advantage Evaluation Research Questions

Evaluation efforts focused on evidence of implementation, evidence of impact, contextual factors, and sustainability, using the following guiding questions:

1. What is the vision of the Creative Advantage initiative?
2. What strategies and activities support the implementation of that vision?
3. What contextual factors influence program implementation?
4. To what extent does student participation in the arts change over time? (Number of Minutes ES, Courses at HS Level, Continuum of Courses, Course Catalogs)
 - a. Do elementary students receive more minutes of arts instruction each week?
 - b. Do middle and high school students take more arts courses?
 - c. Do students follow the recommended sequence of arts?
 - d. Do Central District Schools offer more arts Courses?
 - e. Does arts integration change over time?
5. To what extent does the use of 21st Century Skills instruction change over time? (Students and Teachers)
6. To what extent does student achievement change over time?
 - a. % Meeting Arts Standards at ES
 - b. Passing Arts Classes at MS and HS
 - c. MSP/EOC
 - d. Absenteeism
 - e. Suspension Rates
 - f. Graduation
7. To what extent are students prepared for, attending, and persisting in college?
8. To what extent does parent and student satisfaction with SPS education change overtime?
9. To what extent did the Creative Advantage Initiative contribute to changes in student outcomes?
10. What are the emerging promising practices?
11. To what extent is the program sustainable?

Appendix D – General Successes

Examples of implementation and impact during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years include:

- Elementary music programs have grown from 24 to 56 (77% of schools) and visual arts has grown from 24 to 62 (84% of schools)
- Visual and performing arts teachers have grown from 190 in 2014-2015 to 268 in 2020-2021
- 81 schools have arts vision and action plans
- The CA Arts Partner Roster has 145 teaching artists and arts organizations
- *The 21st Century Arts Common Assessments* are implemented annually district-wide
- *The Roots: A Culturally Responsive & Antiracist Arts Framework* has been piloted with teachers and teaching artists
- The Media Arts Skills Center was created and serves students district-wide with multiple media arts summer courses are offered every year
- The SPS Ethnic Studies Program with Visual & Performing Arts Program and CA teaching artists integrate Theatre of the Oppressed into Ethnic Studies Units
- Annual arts integration professional development is offered with local arts partners
- City-wide Regional Arts Festivals highlight the visual and performing arts learning in specific pathways
- Arts Sustainability Funds are available for schools to continue arts partnerships after their original funding have been used
- The CA Online Arts series and All Access Online classes launched and continue in response to COVID-19 and virtual learning

Additionally, the number of visual or performing arts teachers increased from the 2018-19 (260 VPA teachers) school year to the 2019-20 (267 VPA teachers) and 2020-21 (268 VPA teachers) school years, and the percentage of elementary and K-8 schools with *both* music and visual arts classes increased from 59% during the 2018-19 school year to 62% during 2019-20 and 66% during the 2020-21 school year.

Appendix E – Supplemental Figures

Partnership Dollars Spent vs. FRL Percentage
2019-20

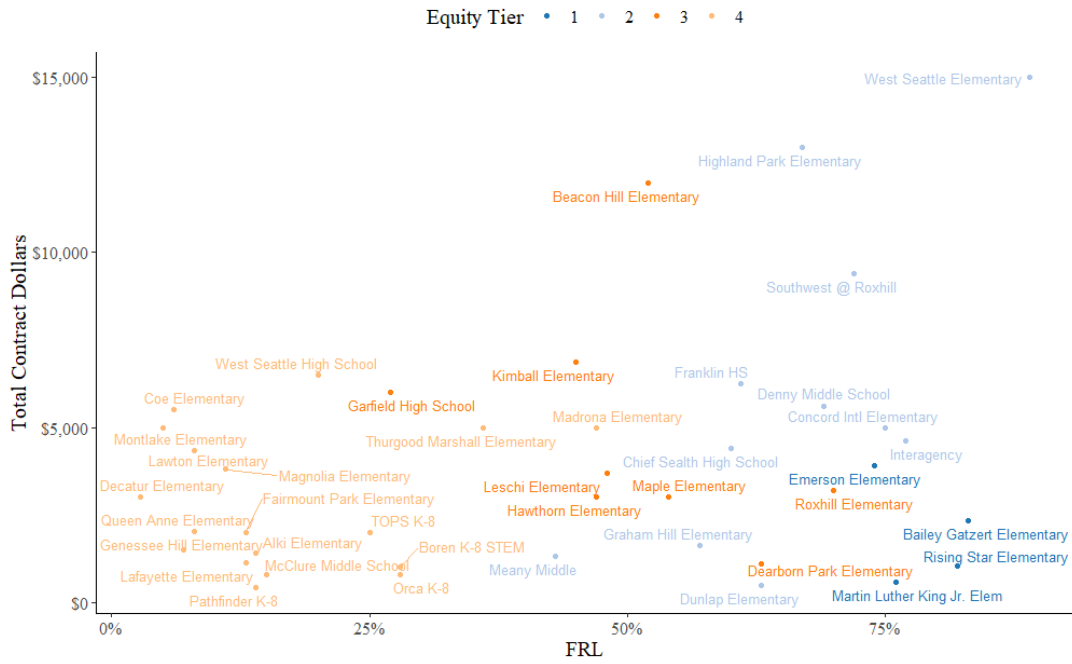


Figure 11

Partnership Dollars Spent vs. FRL Percentage
2020-21

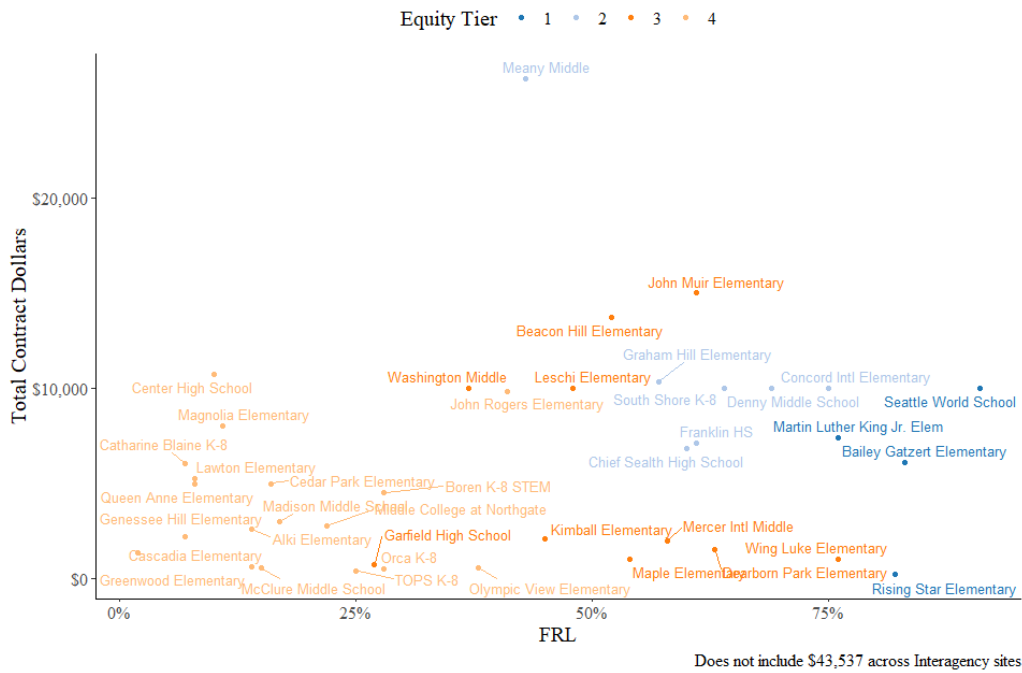


Figure 12

Partnership Dollars Spent vs. SOCFFEJ Percentage
2019-20

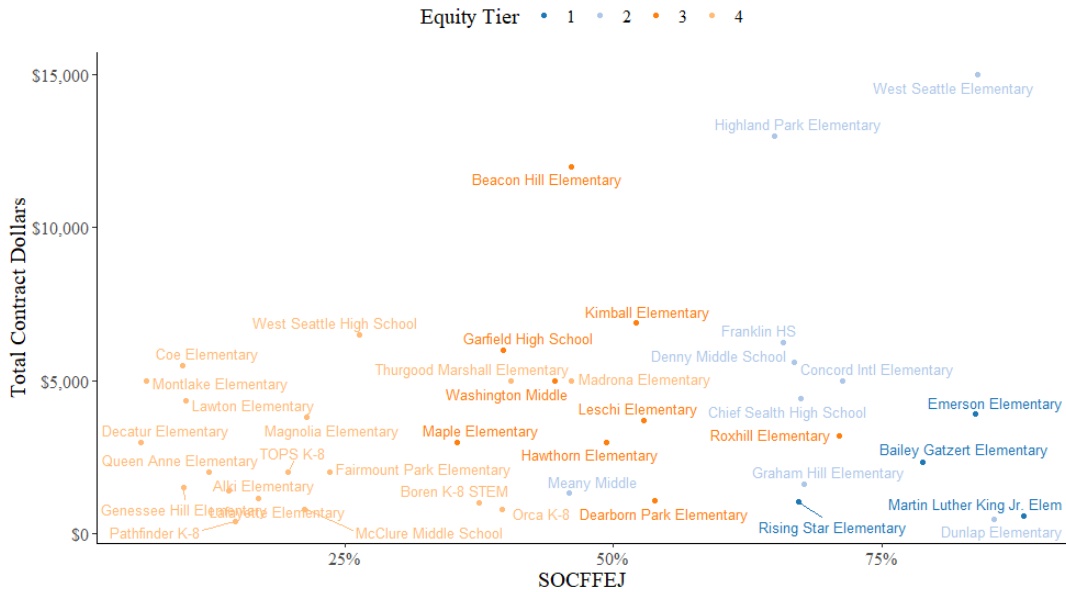
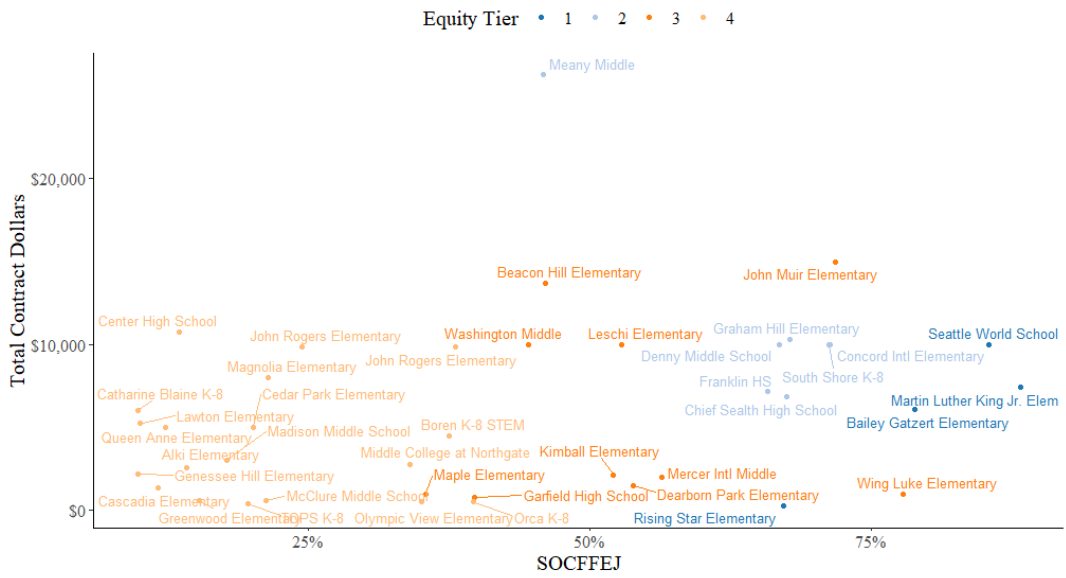


Figure 13

Partnership Dollars Spent vs. SOCFFEJ Percentage
2020-21



Does not include \$43,537 across Interagency sites

Figure 14

Researchers performed correlation analyses on the 2019-20 and 2020-21 contract amounts and FRL percentages of the school (Figure 11 & **Error! Reference source not found.**). During the 2019-20 school year, the contract amount used was positively correlated with the free or reduced price lunch percentage ($r(39) = .356, p = .02$). There was also a positive correlation between contract dollars used and free or reduced price percentage, ($r(37) = .372, p = .02$) during the

2020-2021 school year. This suggests that schools with a higher free or reduced-price lunch percentage were accessing CA partnership funds at a slightly higher rate than schools with lower free or reduced-price lunch rates.

Researchers also performed correlation analyses on the 2019-20 and 2020-21 contract dollars spent and percentage of *Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice* (SOCFFEJ) in each school (Figure 13 & Figure 14). There was no statistically significant relationship between SOCFFEJ and the contract dollars spent by school in either year.