



RESEARCH REPORT

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# The Creative Advantage: Central Arts Pathway

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EVALUATION REPORT – YEAR 2

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The Creative Advantage is a city-wide commitment to provide equitable access to arts learning for all Seattle Public School students by 2020. It is a public-private partnership between Seattle Public Schools (SPS), the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS), The Seattle Foundation, and high-leverage community arts organizations, including the Seattle Art Museum, Arts Corps, Arts Impact, and ArtsEd Washington. In 2011, a planning grant from the Wallace Foundation enabled the partnership to conduct a needs assessment around the state of arts education in Seattle Public Schools. This needs assessment found inconsistent access to arts education, especially for students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, students eligible for the transitional bilingual program, and students identifying as Black, Hispanic, or American Indian/Alaska Native. Some of the issues around access to arts education clearly stemmed from a 30-year history of school choice in SPS, which resulted in a district-wide culture of schools competing for enrollment and vast discrepancies in program offerings based on school resources. To address these concerns the Seattle K-12 Arts Plan was created, which lays out specific strategies and benchmarks for all students, K-12, to receive a comprehensive, sequential, and predictable education in the arts.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the progress of The Creative Advantage in the Central Arts Pathway during year 2 of the initiative, as well as to present baseline data for the South-Southwest Arts Pathway during their regional planning year.

### **SPS K-12 Arts Plan Three Broad Implementation Strategies**

Three broad implementation strategies guide the SPS k-12 Arts Plan. They focus on coordinated support efforts from both the District central office and the larger community, as well as the implementation of culturally relevant arts curricula and instruction emphasizing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills within schools.

#### ***District Central Office Strategy***

The first strategy outlined in the SPS K-12 Arts Plan is to “transform the District central office in support of schools and regional K-12 arts learning pathways.” In 2014-15, The Creative Advantage continued to provide support for the vision and action planning at the regional and school levels. SPS is divided into regions. Within those regions are nine K-12 arts learning pathways. Each pathway is defined by the middle and high schools, and elementary schools that feed in into the secondary schools. The Creative Advantage works closely with the leaders in the pathways to develop a comprehensive and sequential learning environment for students as they go from kindergarten to twelfth grade.

The principals in the new South-Southwest Arts Pathway went through regional arts planning, while the Central Arts Pathway principals took on their first year of implementing their school arts plans. Central Arts Pathway schools were in their second year of receiving SPS central funds for increased arts instruction from certified teachers as prioritized by principals in regional planning, informed by data on regional arts access gaps. ARTs provided Central Arts Pathway schools with a first year of funding for arts partnerships in alignment with their school arts plans. As a result of district investments, six Central Arts Pathways schools were able to implement new music programs (3 schools had existing music programs) in grades K-2 in 2013-14, which increased to K-3 in 2014-15. In 2015-2016, all K-5 students will have access to music instruction.

### ***Arts Curricula and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Strategy***

The second strategy outlined by the SPS K-12 Arts Plan targets the implementation of culturally relevant arts curricula, and developing students' 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, as defined by SPS, are skills and learning dispositions critical to success in school, career, and life. These include *Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Cultural Competency, and Perseverance*.

### ***Citywide Support Strategy***

The third strategy outlined by the SPS K-12 Arts Plan is to implement a coordinated city-wide support structure for partnerships, governance, and evaluation. As described in the 2014 report, much of this support structure exists in the form of staff members who lead and implement The Creative Advantage and who bridge the gap between SPS and ARTS. At the city level, ARTS is an equal partner, providing funding, professional development, and outside evaluation. The Seattle Art Museum continues to play a large role in implementing professional development. Additionally, Arts Corps continues to play a role in connecting arts learning and the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and Arts Impact plays a role in arts integration at the elementary level through professional development.

In order to support and steer the vision of The Creative Advantage, program leaders created an advisory group in January of 2015, composed of various stakeholders, including school staff, program leaders, and community members. The advisory group emphasized equity of access to arts in schools, paying specific attention to the benefits of arts education in regards to social, emotional and academic development of students. Additionally, members have identified the role of youth leadership in stewarding the success of Creative Advantage as an emerging component of the advisory group.

### **Contextual Factors**

Interviews with stakeholders revealed a number of contextual factors that influence program implementation, including the lack of equal access to the arts in SPS, a feeling of apathy or disengagement around the arts in school communities, and the lack of understanding and innovation regarding the diversity of arts disciplines available to students. In response to these challenges, results from the Community Partner Survey have already revealed a number of positive factors resulting from The Creative Advantage. Specifically, qualitative and quantitative evidence points towards an increase in access and enthusiasm regarding the arts, innovation in regards to arts integrated curriculum and instructional practice, and improvement in equity for all students in the district. Additionally, to address these contextual factors and improve the delivery of The Creative Advantage, stakeholders have suggested implementing a "point person" to coordinate The Creative Advantage activities and partnerships. To address this need, starting in the 2015-16 school year, each Central Arts Pathway school arts team will have a coordinator position receiving a stipend.

## Evidence of Impact

To assess evidence of initiative impact, researchers analyzed data specific to the arts and data aligned with collective impact goals by comparing school and student outcomes from the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Pathway, and all remaining Seattle Public Schools, when available. Researchers are developing a longitudinal database to measure change overtime.

### *Elementary School Data*

At the elementary level, the total number of minutes of specialist arts instruction per week reported by specialists increased across the entire district from 2012-13 to 2014-15. The data show that the growth was greatest in the Central Arts Pathway (see Figure 1), which increased by approximately 200% since 2013. This increase marks progress towards the primary goals for Creative Advantage Central Arts Pathway and South-Southwest Pathway schools. By supporting art access (specifically music) at the elementary school level, enrollment at the middle school level will be more equitable.

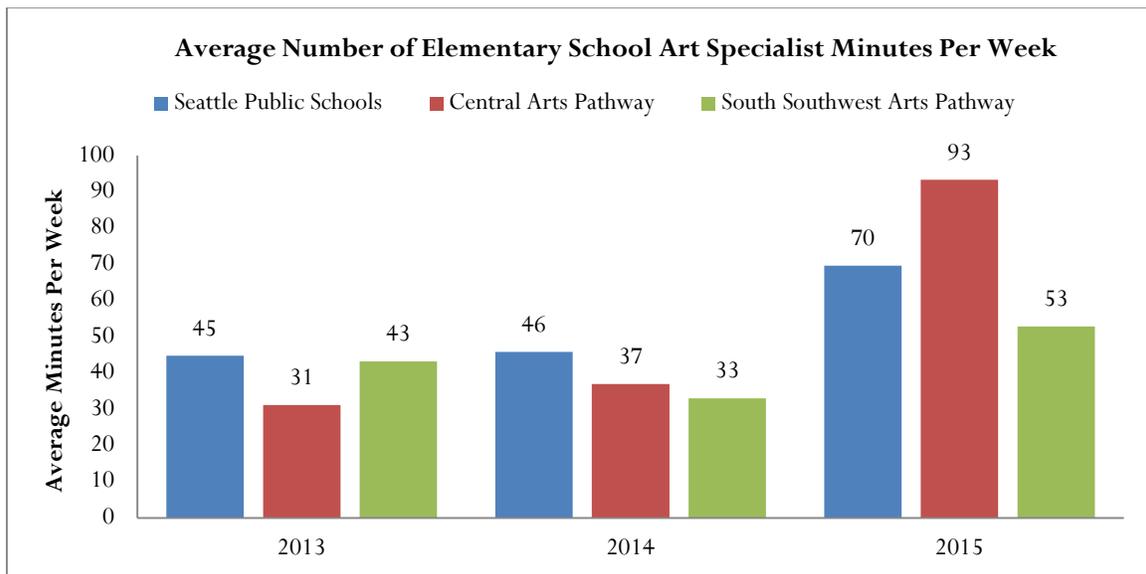


Figure 1. Average weekly elementary school arts specialist minutes, 2013-15

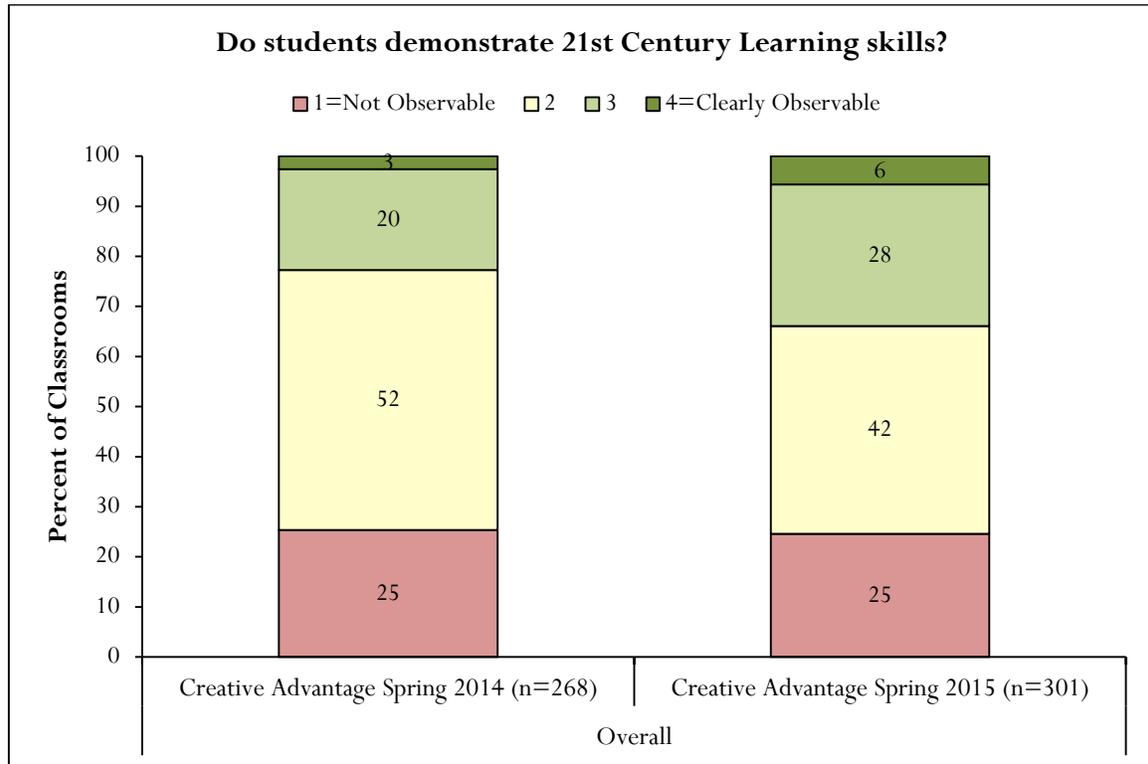
### *Middle and High School Data*

The SPS K-12 Arts Plan identified a goal of students taking two or more credits of arts throughout middle school and two or more credits of arts throughout high school. To date, no significant progress has been made towards these goals, as the focus continues to be at the elementary level during the initial stages of The Creative Advantage. Project leaders anticipate a greater focus on middle and high school outcomes as cohort 1 advances grade levels.

### *Emerging Promising Practices*

During focus groups and interviews, stakeholders identified three emerging promising practices: robust partnerships, support structures for regional planning, and a shared vision of the arts as a core subject. These findings are consistent in both Year One and Year Two of implementation. Stakeholders continued to identify the robust partnership between SPS, ARTS, and community arts

organizations as key to the initial successes of The Creative Advantage. The facilitated regional planning helps to create buy-in within schools and regions, while the funding for community partnerships continues to strengthen ties on a local level. Finally, developing a shared commitment to the arts, both for their own sake and as a vehicle for other learning and community engagement continues to emerge as a promising practice.



*Figure 2. Classroom observation data – overall 21st Century Skills*

Additionally, researchers found clear evidence of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in 34% (classrooms scoring a 3 or 4) of the Central Arts Pathway classrooms they visited in 2015, which is an 11 percentage point increase from 2014 (see Figure 2 above). Researchers observed an increase in all 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills compared to the 2014 Central Arts Pathway classroom observations.

### ***Recommendations***

Stakeholders continue to suggest sustainability is feasible with secure funding and gaining increased awareness and support from the Seattle community as a whole. Recommendations focused on securing sustainable funding, improving communication and collaboration, strengthening the program’s capacity to withstand staffing changes, and streamlining systems and procedures.

# The Creative Advantage: Central Arts Pathway

## A RESEARCH REVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

In 2008, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) partnered with the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS) and the Seattle Arts Commission with the goal of building “sustained capacity to make quality arts education accessible to every student, especially in less affluent communities and communities of color,” as stated on The Creative Advantage website (The Creative Advantage, n.d.). A planning grant from the Wallace Foundation in the summer of 2011 enabled the partnership to conduct a needs assessment around the state of arts education in SPS.

The needs assessment revealed inconsistent access to arts education for students throughout the district. At the elementary level, many students received limited access to arts education from certificated arts instructors. For instance, the majority (78%) of elementary schools throughout the district reported they had less than one full-time equivalent (FTE) certified arts teacher in the building. Over 40% of schools reported their K-3 students received no instruction from a certified arts teacher. When averaged over the school year, 73% of K-5 students received 30 minutes per week or less of music instruction, and over 6,000 students received none at all. Similarly, 71% of K-5 students received 30 minutes or less per week of visual arts instruction, and over 9,000 students received none at all (de Soto, 2012). The study found strong correlations between ethnicity and music offerings at the elementary level. This study also found that race/ethnicity was strongly correlated and predictive of arts access. At the elementary level, Black, Hispanic, and Asian students were overrepresented in schools with no music instruction (De Soto, 2012). Similarly, the study found an inverse relationship between music offerings and discipline rates, with schools offering the highest levels of music instruction reporting the lowest discipline rates, and vice versa (de Soto, 2012). The study also monitored course-taking patterns of secondary students over a six-year period from 2006-12, and found that students eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL), students with high discipline counts, students qualifying for the transitional bilingual program, and students identifying as Black, Hispanic, or American Indian/Alaska Native were overrepresented in below-average enrollment in arts courses (de Soto, 2012).

Some of the issues around arts education access clearly stemmed from a 30-year history of school choice in SPS. Until the implementation of SPS’s School Assignment Plan in 2010, Seattle families could choose which schools in the district their children would attend. This, in turn, resulted in a district-wide climate of school competition, with schools able to draw on funding from parent-teacher organizations and booster clubs creating special programs in the arts, while schools without those resources often chose not to prioritize the arts in their staffing decisions. At the same time, the elimination of the SPS District Office for Arts Education in 2000, resulted in little centralized district awareness or oversight around arts education (ARTS & SPS, 2013). With the return to a neighborhood school system in 2010, the district recognized the importance of “the need for equity in arts programming (p. 8).”



Focus groups conducted with parents, students, and community members in the spring of 2012 revealed a pervasive desire for more consistent arts access throughout the district. Students spoke of wanting an early and broad arts education program guided by professional instructors. As part of this program, students wanted exposure to a greater variety of arts disciplines, including music, dance, theater, and visual arts. Students also wanted increased opportunities to learn about arts careers and to showcase and share their learning. Parents and community stakeholders shared the belief that arts learning builds innovation and collaboration, and that arts education should be multicultural, relevant to students, broad in scope, and integrated with other content areas (Baker, Gratama, & Toledo, 2012).

In 2013, the partnership was renamed The Creative Advantage (The Creative Advantage, 2013). In addition to the district and ARTS, the partnership includes several key community agencies, including Arts Corps, ArtsEd Washington, Arts Impact, and the Seattle Art Museum. This partnership developed a Seattle K-12 arts plan focused on increasing access to arts education for all Seattle students. The plan set a goal of creating equity in arts access throughout the district by the year 2020, and lays out specific benchmarks for the number of hours each grade band of students will receive in certificated arts instruction per week. The plan also emphasizes the importance of 21st Century Skills, including creative and critical thinking, collaboration, communication, perseverance, and growth mindset. As the SPS K-12 Arts Plan states, “SPS needs to be preparing its students to graduate with the skills needed to thrive in Seattle’s strong creative economy as well as the many innovation driven companies of the region, such as Boeing, Microsoft, and Amazon.com (pg. 16).” Finally, the plan focuses on coordinating school-community arts partnerships to help them more effectively meet school and district goals.

A key component of The Creative Advantage is the creation of regional arts plans. Seattle Public Schools is comprised of regions and each region contains one or two K-12 arts learning pathways. Of the nine total pathways, the Central Arts Pathway was chosen to pilot the process, which began in the spring of 2013. In 2014-15, the South-Southwest Arts Pathway entered its regional planning phase. The remaining seven pathways will begin planning on a staggered basis between 2016 and 2020 (ARTS and SPS, 2013). The purpose of this report is to present evaluation findings for The Creative Advantage in the Central Arts Pathway in Year 2. In addition, some baseline data are presented for the South-Southwest Arts Pathway in the baseline year.

## RESEARCH AROUND ART IN SCHOOLS

Numerous studies have linked student participation in the arts to higher academic achievement. A research overview from the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) revealed a connection between arts participation and overall academic participation at the elementary level, while studies conducted at the secondary level indicated students engaged in the arts performed better on standardized achievement tests, earned higher grades, and were less likely to drop-out than their peers (AEP, n.d.). A 2012 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) report, “The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies,” by Catterall, Dumais, and Hampden-Thompson found that “Teenagers and young adults of low socioeconomic status (SES) who have a history of in-depth arts involvement show better academic outcomes than do low-SES youth who have less arts involvement. They earn better grades and demonstrate higher rates of college enrollment and attainment (p. 12).”

Studies have also indicated a correlation between the study of the arts and achievement in core subjects, with participation in theater leading to increased and refined oral language skills and story understanding at the elementary level and increased use of complex language and expressive ability at the secondary level. (AEP, n.d.). Similarly, studies found correlations between the study of arts (especially music and dance) and mathematical achievement (AEP, n.d.). A longitudinal study indicated students from low socio-economic backgrounds, English language learners, and students with disabilities who participated in the arts showed the greatest relative improvement, and that English language learners from arts-rich high schools were more likely to pursue college degrees than their peers (Catterall, et al, 2012). As for cognitive outcomes, studies indicated that arts education led to improvements in creative and critical thinking skills, as well as in problem-solving and reasoning skills (AEP, n.d.). The NEA report found higher rates of competitive college enrollment, and four-year college enrollment in general, in arts-engaged high school students (Catterall, et al.). The report stated, “Even among high-SES individuals, college rates were higher if students had engaged in arts-rich experiences in high school (p. 15).”

In addition to increasing student academic achievement, arts education has been linked to positive personal and social/civil outcomes for students. Studies have indicated correlations between arts education and student engagement and persistence, with research findings suggesting that elementary and middle school students who generally did not participate in class were more likely to participate in arts classes and arts-integrated learning (AEP, n.d.). Similarly, at the secondary level, arts education led to increased perseverance and motivation. Studies have also indicated a relationship between participation in music, drama, and visual arts and a positive change in student behavior (AEP, n.d.). Connections between arts learning and students’ self-awareness, self-concept, and self-expression, as well as in self-efficacy and self-confidence were identified, and longitudinal studies indicated students who participated in arts education were more likely to engage with arts as consumers, performers, or creators as adults (AEP, n.d.). Arts education was also linked to increased collaboration and communication including improved team work skills, improved understanding of cultural differences, and better understanding of other points of view (AEP, n.d.). Similarly, studies have indicated that arts education can create safe spaces or working environments that support arts learning and provide conditions for students to develop group connections. In addition, research shows ties between arts education and community civic engagement, with studies showing connections between arts learning as students and subsequent community involvement and volunteering as adults (AEP, n.d.)

A 2013, the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) released an Interim Progress Report evaluating Turnaround Art Schools, a subset of the School Improvement Grant (SIG) cohort (Stoelinga, et al, 2013). According to this report:

The premise of Turnaround Arts is that arts education offerings provide school leadership with particularly powerful levers in the area of improving school climate and culture as well as increasing student and parent engagement, which can ultimately contribute to improved academic achievement and successful reform efforts. ( p. 2)

The Interim Report found arts integration strategies in non-arts classrooms; excitement around professional development, arts specialists, and teaching artists; and enhanced physical spaces aimed



at promoting positive school climates. However, the report also noticed a few areas for growth, including the need for additional professional development in integrating arts strategies, limited time to plan or teach in-depth arts activities, and competing priorities (p. IV). To a large extent, this echoes the experiences of the Central Arts Pathway schools.

## METHODOLOGY

This evaluation utilized a multiple measures, mixed methodology approach. The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data adds scope and breadth to the study, in addition to providing the ability to triangulate findings (Creswell, 1994). Descriptions of the evaluation questions and data sources are provided below.

### Evaluation 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?
  - 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills instruction change over time?
6. To what extent does student achievement change over time?
  - a. Percentage 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?

### Participants

Program leaders identified the Central District – Washington Middle School Service Area as the pilot area for The Creative Advantage initiative. Table 1 includes the 13 schools in the Central District, identified as the Central Arts Pathway that began the plan in the 2013-14 school year. Table 2 includes the ten schools in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway, which began planning in 2014-15.

**Table 1.**  
*Central Arts Pathway Schools*

School Level	School
Elementary Schools	Bailey Gatzert Elementary School
	Leschi Elementary School
	Lowell Elementary School
	John Muir Elementary School
	Thurgood Marshall Elementary School
	McGilvra Elementary School
	Montlake Elementary School
	Stevens Elementary School
K – 8 School	Madrona K – 8 School
Middle School	Washington Middle School
High Schools	Garfield High School
	NOVA High School (Option)
	Seattle World School (Service)

**Table 2.**  
*South-Southwest Pathway Schools*

School Level	School
Elementary Schools	Arbor Heights Elementary
	Concord International Elementary
	Highland Park Elementary
	K-5 STEM at Boren (option)
	Roxhill Elementary
	Sanislo Elementary
	West Seattle Elementary
Middle School	Denny International Middle School
High Schools	Chief Seattle International High School
	Interagency at Youngtown

## Data Sources

### *Focus Groups and Interviews*

Focus groups and interviews were conducted in the spring of the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years with key stakeholders, including program leaders and staff at the district, city, and community arts organizations. Additionally, evaluators completed site visits to the Central Arts Pathway schools to conduct focus groups and interviews with teachers and administrators. The use of structured focus group/interview protocols provided a qualitative perspective and the ability to triangulate findings from other quantitative measures.

### *STAR Classroom Observations<sup>®</sup>*

In addition to focus groups and interviews during our site visitations, we conducted observations in Central Arts Pathway classrooms. The STAR Classroom Observation Protocol<sup>®1</sup> is designed as a

<sup>1</sup> Researchers completed a validation study on the STAR Protocol in 2010. Report findings established content, concurrent, and construct validity. Good inter-rater reliability was also found using the Kappa reliability coefficient (.90) in addition to internal consistency (.92) using Cronbach’s Alpha for the Indicators taken together. Furthermore,



research instrument to measure the degree to which Powerful Teaching & Learning™ (cognitive, research-based instruction) is being employed and/or are present during any given period of observation in a classroom. Through 12 Indicators, the STAR Protocol® efficiently assesses student learning in the areas of *Skills, Thinking, Application, and Relationships*. In addition, we modified the existing protocol to include 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: *Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, and Persistence*. Finally, we also aggregated four indicators on the protocol to develop a *Culturally Responsive Component*.

### ***Student Data***

The BEREC Group worked with SPS to obtain and analyze student level data, including achievement results, course taking patterns, absences, and disciplinary events. This information is updated annually to provide a longitudinal perspective on the initiative.

### ***Document Collection and Analysis***

Evaluators collected and analyzed various documents related to the initiative, including the Seattle K-12 arts plan, previous research reports, and The Creative Advantage and partner websites.

## **EVIDENCE OF IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Evaluation Question #1: What is the vision of The Creative Advantage initiative?**

In 2014-15, program leaders continued to describe a broad vision for The Creative Advantage that emphasized the importance of arts education for students and schools, and also for Seattle as a whole. “The big picture is to change district and city systems to ensure that all students at all schools have access to learning through the arts to be successful through school career and life,” one program leader summarized. Other leaders from the district, city, and community arts organizations echoed this “big picture.” As one representative from the city shared, “[The Creative Advantage] is about making certain every student in SPS has the skills to be creative and successful in life.” A representative from a community arts partner explained, “I feel like a parallel vision is to raise the awareness of the importance of arts education in Seattle.”

In addition, program leaders continued emphasizing the goal “to provide equitable access to arts learning, and to provide cultural awareness that fosters 21st Century skills development.” As one representative from the district explained, “. . . race and family income is a predictor of access to the arts, and we want to eliminate that barrier.” An elementary school principal shared:

. . . There’s a strong music tradition here [in the Central Arts Pathway], but also there are kids who might not be exposed. We have an African-American parent group that meets throughout the Central and South East regions. One parent said, “These other kids ours are competing with go to art, drama, and music lessons on the weekends. We need to think about that. Why am I the only black dad bringing his daughter to music?”

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the STAR Protocol’s single construct, Powerful Teaching and Learning™ (PTL), was found to show a positive contribution to student achievement beyond the effects of low income. Most notably, a unique contribution was found for PTL in predicting math achievement. About 7% of the variance in math achievement was explained by PTL (Baker, Gratama, Petersen, & Thompson, 2010).

Stakeholders at all levels continued to connect equity of access to arts learning with other benefits for children, both in and out of school, and for the city of Seattle as a whole. One program leader described the need to move beyond the “education system built on the industrial revolution,” saying, “Now we have to create education for the current world, for entrepreneurship, creativity, and leadership. Arts education isn’t all, but it is critical component.” Another shared, “It helps the arts community in Seattle that already exists. I, as a teacher, need the arts community to create this legacy and broaden the arts.” Stakeholders also described the socio-emotional benefits of creative thinking in the classroom.

[The benefit] is that our kids feel that they matter and their identities matter. You can learn creatively, and they learn the creative process. It isn’t always about performance. I think it is just the practice of being creative and building the value at the school . . . When the adults in your life at your school value that, the child will feel more value. The arts are a tool for learning.

In order to support and steer the vision of The Creative Advantage, program leaders created an advisory group in January of 2015, composed of teachers, administrators and teaching artists. As one member said, the advisory group has “a lot of different lenses, perspectives, and experiences on the table.” Another member shared:

I think the advisory group is a key element, though it is a new element. Since this [The Creative Advantage] is based on a partnership, you need all the different perspectives going in on the decision making process. It helps with equity, and makes a more well-rounded perspective. There are too many different groups that are involved, and to just have a couple people making the decisions, it just doesn’t make sense. You need more voices.

“The role of the committee is to really help develop and frame and strategically plan for the sustainability and the efficacy of that work,” a member explained. Since its inception, the Advisory Board has met “every couple months.” As one member described:

Basically we learn about all the current updates of what’s happening with Creative Advantage, both on the private level and the public level, and also on the arts and culture side and the SPS side. Through these updates, we’re able to connect with different facets of the infrastructure. Some are educators, administrators, public sector, private sector, and I guess we’re trying to find the right combination to meet everyone’s interest. How can the program be better?

The advisory group is also considering how The Creative Advantage can better include and serve the students of SPS. A board member described meeting with youth to hear their opinions on the arts and arts learning:

We were specifically charged with going to two different youth groups and talking to the youth about their access to the arts. How did they feel about the arts? How did they feel about art in school? What did art mean to them?”



Multiple board members viewed their new role as a way to help advocate for the students. As one explained, “It puts me at a position where I have influence over people in leadership roles who can influence what kids experience. I feel like the membrane between Creative Advantage decisions and the youth.”

## **Evaluation Question #2: What strategies and activities support the implementation of that vision?**

### *District level*

One of the three broad strategies outlined in the SPS K-12 Arts Plan is to “transform the District central office in support of schools and regional K-12 arts learning pathways.” In 2014-15, The Creative Advantage continued to provide facilitated support for vision and action planning at the regional and school levels. In addition, regional principals receive professional development around quality arts programs. As described more fully in the Year 2 report, trained facilitators guided participants through the planning process using the Principal Arts Leadership (PALs) program, developed by ArtsEd Washington. One program leader explained the benefits of the regional planning process as “an investment in principal and school leadership.” At these sessions, principals receive data around student performance and arts access disaggregated by race and socioeconomic status. As a program leader explained, “[Principals] are empowered to understand what is happening in individual schools and the K–12 continuum. That is a powerful starting place to convene the principals that don’t often collaborate as partners.” One principal at the secondary level shared:

We saw our students of color weren’t getting any art exposure at all. At first, people were really upset just hearing that. I started digging at the pathway. [In] the pathway, kids are taking courses at the middle school, and it prepares them [for the high school arts program], they’re a year or two ahead. They have more time for electives. But the current kids coming in have to double up on math and language arts, so we’re taking [elective] time away.

In addition to facilitation, the schools in the pathway receive seed funds from SPS for staffing and resources. According to one program leader, during the first year of implementation, the pathway schools receive “\$200,000 and for South-Southwest, that is 2.1 FTE.” Another program leader explained how principals decide to use these funds during regional planning:

At the regional planning level, when the principals meet, they create a regional arts vision. They are aware they have a set amount of funding for arts staffing and materials to fill regional arts gap, and they decide what to prioritize. The funding won’t fill every arts gap. As a group, those principals decide which schools and which programs receive funding.

Program leaders emphasized the collaborative nature of the process, which focused on the needs of the Pathway as a whole. “In both groups, they are starting with the youngest and building foundational arts skills with the understanding that they will leave elementary school with the foundational skills and will move up to secondary school with the arts,” a program leader explained. As another program leader said, “We have [secondary] schools with phenomenal music

programs, but you can't take advantage of it if you don't have music in elementary school." However, one secondary principal offered a more prosaic viewpoint, saying, "I just thought, 'Don't give me money, it's going to disappear.' You increase somebody's FTE for a year, but it's not sustainable." Instead of hiring another arts specialist, that principal focused on building the capacity of the school's existing teachers to infuse art into other disciplines. He explained, "It's not the ideal way because you don't have that expert, but any exposure is a good thing. Bare bones. Water your plants – it doesn't take an expert."

In addition to facilitated planning support and seed funding, "the district also receives extensive PD for arts specialists as they revamp and create cornerstone assessments," according to program leaders. One of the community partner organizations, ArtsCorps, works with the Visual and Performing Arts Manager to provide this training. "This goes beyond how do we assess skill development, but how do we understand how students develop the skills and arts specialist teach in ways to foster the skills," a program leader explained. The Creative Advantage offers other professional development opportunities as well. During an all-day Arts Institute, teaching artists and teachers receive training from fellow teachers and teaching artists "on partnerships, how to embed 21st century skills into practice, and how to embed that into teaching and learning." Program leaders explained this Arts Institute was originally planned only for teaching artists, but they have since expanded it to include arts teachers to promote collaboration on best practices in working with SPS students.

### *School Level*

In addition to regional planning, The Creative Advantage provides facilitated planning for each school in the pathways to create an arts plan that meets its individual needs. As one educator described:

We got a lot of support in forming our vision. Each region has a principal with training to guide schools in developing their vision for how they see the arts in their school and to tailor the vision to schools' existing vision, and the context of the school. We had two three-hour meetings to develop our vision, make an implementation timeline, and last night we had a meeting to look at funding.

Stakeholders at the school level continued to speak highly about the facilitated planning meetings. "I went into it apprehensive, but it was such lovely brainstorming, creative flow," one principal shared. Another explained, "What I love about our arts plan is that it's in line with the goals we have for our school. We're about bringing bridges, keeping it real." Stakeholders at another school described how the planning process is helping to rebuild an arts team that had suffered from teacher turnover:

In the arts team, we went to training with Creative Advantage. We are trying to get back on the same page. The work we had done with them three years ago, we only have one staff member left [from that team]. We laid out our arts plan for the next year, what we want to accomplish each quarter, communication, and engagement with families. The training piece for specialists and teachers - how do we incorporate those things?



Teachers and administrators also spoke with excitement about their vision moving forward. For example, one administrator shared:

One of the ways we want to expand the vision is to find what our kids are involved in and what they are participating in and capitalize on that, use it as a way to expose other kids to opportunities throughout the community and engage parents and family.

The South-Southwest Arts Pathway schools created their regional arts plans in spring of 2014-15, while the Central Arts Pathway schools completed their first year of school arts plan implementation. During Year Two, facilitators from The Creative Advantage met with the school's arts teams to revisit their plans and further refine them moving forward. As one teacher explained, "Our school put together a year-long plan for Creative Advantage. First we made a more complicated plan, then wriggled it down to something doable [the] first year."

Because the arts team at each school created a unique plan, implementation activities differed throughout the Central Arts Pathway. Arts teams at Garfield High School and Washington Middle School emphasized arts integration training for classroom teachers." For example, the Experience Music Project (EMP) trained Garfield teachers around integrating the arts in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) classrooms, while actors from Seattle Repertory Theatre trained Washington teachers in improvisation techniques they could use in their classrooms. "The teachers felt they walked away with actual strategies," one administrator said. However, at Nova High School, where teachers have already received training around implementing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in the classroom, the arts team instead expanded the school's arts offerings by creating a jewelry program in collaboration with an artist from Pratt Fine Arts Center. A Nova student shared, "I think it's inspiring for students to see [working artists] come in. A lot of times, you can't make it in the arts. But seeing a real person doing it is inspiring."

At the elementary level, six schools (Bailey-Gatzert Elementary School, Montlake Elementary School, John Muir Elementary School, Stevens Elementary School, Leschi Elementary School, and McGilvra Elementary School) were able to implement new music programs in 2013-14 due to increased funding for arts specialists. While the overall number of students taking music at those schools decreased slightly this year (1,627 students in 2014-15, compared to 1,659 students in 2013-14) a district representative explained the decline was due to enrollment fluctuations at schools and changes to grade-level offerings. Some schools had previously offered K-5 music programs, but switched to K-3 to focus support. A district representative explained that the new music programs meant that all K-3 students in the Central Arts Pathway had exposure to music in 2014-15, and all K-5 students will have exposure to music in 2015-16.

In addition to increased music offerings, elementary teachers in the Central Arts Pathway also described professional development around arts integration, field trips, assemblies, and partnerships with community arts organizations.

Teachers and administrators in Central Arts Pathway schools tended to speak positively about the support they had received from The Creative Advantage during the first year of implementation. While some expressed frustration around the logistics of utilizing funding, completing paperwork,

and contacting pre-vetted teaching artists, they also indicated program leadership was supportive. “There is ongoing contact,” one principal shared. “When I expressed my frustration this weekend about the artists not getting back to me, Audrey [Querns, SPS Creative Advantage Project Manager] was right on it.”

Reflecting on implementation, a teacher at one Central Arts Pathway school shared, “The biggest difference in the last two years is intentionality. We’re thinking about it [art], doing it, we’ve co-taught classes. It’s moved into other parts of the school. It’s always been there to some extent, but it’s grown in ways that have given it a kick start.”

### ***Partnerships***

The third broad strategy outlined by the K-12 arts plan is to implement a coordinated citywide support structure for partnerships, governance, and evaluation. As described in last year’s report, much of this support structure exists in the form of staff members who lead and implement The Creative Advantage and who bridge the gap between SPS and ARTS. When describing the structure of program leadership in 2013-14, one stakeholder described Carri Campbell, the Director of School and Community Partnerships at SPS, and Randy Engstrom, the Director of Seattle Arts and Culture at ARTS, as the leadership of The Creative Advantage. Audrey Querns, the implementation Project Manager at SPS, and Lara Davis, the Arts Education Manager at ARTS, carry out much of the implementation. The Creative Advantage leadership has remained stable in 2014-15, with the addition of Gail Sehlhorst as Visual and Performing Arts Program Manager at SPS, a position previously occupied by Campbell.

At the city level, ARTS continues to be an equal partner. As Engstrom explained:

We want to align the work of our partner organizations to meet the needs of the district and to enhance the district because of the specialization our partners bring. How can a series of community partnerships create a comprehensive series of experiences? We provide funding and professional development to train them on evaluation, classroom management, collaboration, and professional development. We also provide evaluation to assess the work.

As described last year, the Seattle Art Museum also continues to play a large role in professional development.

One of The Creative Advantage’s undertakings was to prepare a pre-vetted list of teaching artists, who received \$7,500 of seed funding from the city, to help support these partnerships in each school. In 2014-15, this led to increased partnerships with community arts organizations throughout the Central Pathway. While some concerns and frustrations emerged from this process, several stakeholders spoke positively about these partnerships. One arts specialist who collaborated with “an awesome visiting artist” explained the appeal of having working artists visit the classroom, saying, “I think it’s good for students to see . . . people who are in the field, maybe not doing it full time, but who make a living from it, who have a passion for it.” A representative from one community arts organization described the experience of providing residencies to one school:



We are examining what it really means to offer those residencies in addition to our partner school relationships. It's really pushed our capacity, but it has also made it possible for [the schools] to become a better partner in funding some of those residencies that we funded for the last three years almost entirely. They are on a steeper learning curve with responsibility internally, really identifying the leadership and taking leadership roles, finding out what their leadership really is . . . That's exciting to think Creative Advantage could help support that and maybe release some of our resources to work in other areas of SPS.

The Creative Advantage leadership established an advisory group in January, following a recommendation outlined in the 2013-14 evaluation to strengthen the program's resilience to possible staffing changes in the future. Querns and Davis co-manage the advisory group. As Querns described:

The role of the advisory group expands the thinking of Creative Advantage now that we are two years into the work. We felt it was important to have new ideas and perspectives. They act as advocates, and they get specific tasks to recruit different cohorts of stakeholders to let them know, get feedback, and to inform the direction [of The Creative Advantage].

### **Evaluation Question #3: What contextual factors influence program implementation?**

Contextual factors influencing The Creative Advantage initiative include the lack of equal access to the arts in SPS, a feeling of apathy or disengagement around the arts in school communities, and the lack of understanding and innovation regarding the diversity of arts disciplines available to students. Interviews with stakeholders and results from the Community Partner Survey revealed a number of positive factors resulting from this initiative.

#### **Access and Enthusiasm**

As one shared, "being able to say every student in the Central District has access to arts education for the first time in 30 years," is a positive factor in itself. Other stakeholders described the initiative's success in building enthusiasm in teachers and broadening the scope of art in the schools. One administrator explained:

I think it made art a priority. The folks who participated in art and elected themselves to be part of the arts team last year, they saw an opportunity to invigorate [the school] through the arts. The Creative Advantage project has helped bring it to the forefront and given us a platform to utilize our skill sets and ideas.

#### **Innovation**

Another program leader explained that Seattle is helping to shape a national conversation around arts education:

This is part of the cohort – Cities for Creative Future – that includes Dallas and Chicago, and we talk with LA who is doing similar work. National funders are looking at and funding the work. We have large-scale arts partners who have funding to continue to reach young people through integration. We have national funders helping the conversation of collective impact. Seattle is increasingly being seen as a leader of this work and is sharing thoughts around this model.

## **Equity**

Leaders also described The Creative Advantage within the context of a larger push towards equity in the district. A program leader explained that SPS's strategic five-year plan "calls for equity in elevating arts as basic education. That helps to create some foundation for what we do." Another leader shared, "The act of embedding arts learning and the partnership model in the strategic plan lets Clover Codd [Executive Director of SPS Strategic and Planning Partnerships] know to hire Certified Arts teachers. You have to embed this throughout the bureaucracy."

While The Creative Advantage has focused on expanding arts learning opportunities within the school day, program leaders spoke of looking for opportunities to expand this work:

Creative youth development is recognizing that arts programs and other out of school time programs, engage creativity to connect with young people and support healthy development. That is a network that is looking at a continuum of learning from the school day to out of school time. While Creative Advantage is about the school day, we are thinking about the connections to stay engaged after school, and to have opportunities that might foster creative development. That is hot and now. The Office of Arts and Culture is connected, and that helps to drive the work on the local level.

## **Hindrances to Implementation**

In terms of hindrances to the Creative Advantage's work, a common barrier that emerged from Year Two focus groups was the amount of extra work that implementation required from arts team members and specialists. As one principal described:

This work would not be possible without having a strong internal arts team. [The school] is fortunate to have an extremely dedicated and talented visual arts teacher who has taken the lead on this initiative. In addition we have several staff members who have been supporting this work on our internal Creative Advantage arts team. They have put in countless hours of thoughtful planning to launch this effort and have developed plans to keep arts integration growing in the [school] community. They have done much of this work on their own time because they believe in it. If there was one thing I would change, it would be to provide more funding towards compensating staff members for the time they've committed to making this great work happen.

Stakeholders at all levels, from teachers to administrators to community arts partners, suggested that each school establish a "point person" to coordinate implementation activities. Furthermore, several community arts partners identified a school representative as the support structure that would be most beneficial to their partnership with CAP schools. They believe this point person would facilitate clear communication and collaboration between schools and community arts partners. Survey results from the Community Arts Partner Survey support this, with only 35.7% of Arts Partners indicating they are Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the logistics of working with Central Arts Pathway schools (e.g. scheduling, contracting). A survey respondent wrote, "Communications and paperwork needs to be focused and streamlined on an ongoing basis. It is hard to work with schools and the responsibility is on schools. They are unsure of procedure and



overwhelmed with other initiatives.” Because of the extra workload such a position would entail, stakeholders also highlighted that it should receive a stipend. A representative from a community arts organization explained how this position would streamline contact with teaching artists, saying, “The point person is key. Emailing groups of 13 people and hoping someone will understand and respond is frustrating. When you know best practices, this is clearly not a best practice.”

The Creative Advantage leadership indicated they had heard this suggestion and were planning to move forward with it:

In the future, we will provide a stipend so each school has an arts lead, who will go to training on programming arts partnerships, [learn] how you spear it out, and make certain you align it with your school instructional goals. We will also have the arts lead learn the implementation protocol for school based planning.

During focus groups, teachers and administrators also expressed frustration around some of the logistics of working with the pre-vetted list of teaching artists. For example, teachers at one school were disappointed to learn that an organization they had previously collaborated with was not on the list:

The list is a detriment to our school. The people we want are not on the list and can’t get on the list, and even if they can go to the trainings aren’t aware of deadlines. There is no process they can go through to be added. I would be happy if [The Creative Advantage] said there is a month-long streamlined process. If they said, “You want someone in December? Start in October and you can get that approved.”

A community arts partner explained it took “a lot of effort to get onto the roster.” She added, “I’m not sure people feel like the effort was worth it. It feels a little confusing how schools are giving out their money and partnering, and I think that needs to be a little more transparent.”

A representative from another community arts organization explained that schools also need guidance to know which artists and organizations will be a good fit:

Recommendations for artists and directions for a school can be key. If it is matching personalities and matching goals, rather than leaving the schools to their frustration, trying to figure out who would be the best match. I think they’re figuring this out.

At another school, a principal described contracting with the artists in residence as “a bit of a pain.” Program leaders at The Creative Advantage acknowledged that the paperwork involved in sorting out contracts could be overwhelming:

With each year of implementation . . . we have rolled out new processes, and the big one was funding community partnerships at the school level. There was a huge learning curve on Creative Advantage and on the school side to understand the type of partnerships and the contracts. I know they were frustrating for the schools, and it made more work for me chasing down contracts.

An advisory group member agreed, saying, “It’s one thing to say, ‘I’m going to partner with ArtsCorps,’ but a lot of principals don’t have experience with drafting personal services contracts. . . . How do we communicate this information in the best way possible?”

Interviews with stakeholders also revealed communication about program goals and activities continued to be an issue in Year Two. When asked to describe barriers to success, one principal shared, “Communication between the district and school. Being clear on what we can and can’t do with money, forms, all of that. If there’s an expectation for a timeline, we need to know about it ahead of time.” An administrator at another school recommended The Creative Advantage focus on better communication, saying, “We’re all in the dark. We know about it, but we don’t. Just more up-front communication as a good advertisement, and so that more teachers know besides the few who are passionate about it.” Community arts partners also described wanting increased communication about other aspects of the program and more frequent check-ins with program leaders.

In addition to confusion about program logistics, interviews with stakeholders continued to reveal limited knowledge of The Creative Advantage among classroom teachers and the Seattle community as a whole. While teachers in the Central Arts Pathway could typically describe arts activities they had participated in due to funding from The Creative Advantage, most teachers outside the arts teams continued to show limited, if any, knowledge of the partnership’s vision and activities. “Some teachers don’t know about it still,” one teaching artist said, adding, “I’ve been to an arts class where a Creative Advantage flyer was displayed as though it were an ad. I went to talk to the teacher, and she didn’t know about it.” Another community partner shared:

The speed with which [The Creative Advantage] was implemented did not allow for the quality of communication that I think the organizers had hoped for. There still are many people within the school who go, “What’s Creative Advantage? I don’t get it. I’ve heard there’s some kind of funding . . .” But they don’t get the bigger picture, which is not surprising with the other initiatives going on.

Yet another community partner shared a similar perspective:

. . . The general public in Seattle, including teachers, doesn’t really understand what The Creative Advantage is. We did these trainings this spring and even people who are in the trainings didn’t even know what Creative Advantage is. If they don’t, someone in the school will have no idea what it is. There needs to be more community outreach and buy-in.

A program leader shared a similar viewpoint, saying, “I want there to be public accountability with the community buying in. We have to show why this is viable and important that isn’t just related to the public sector.”

Another program leader acknowledged that, “it can be hard to track the moving parts. I believe telling the right story to the right audience is a challenge, and everyone wants to hear a different



message – community partners, parents, district, and governance.” One member of the advisory group described communication as a major challenge facing The Creative Advantage:

I think the communication is going to be one of the biggest barriers . . . What even are the options for schools? It’s complex. Individual artists, PTOs, all of these groups that are talented and eager and have capacity to support schools and provide art enrichment for kids. But that’s challenging in terms of how to get that information properly communicated to the schools in a way that’s easily implemented.

Time for implementation activities amidst competing initiatives also continued to be a barrier in Year Two. A program leader explained, “Last year, the math adoption was something that took up time, but this year it is the new SBAC (Smarter Balanced) testing.” A principal described the challenge of changing teacher’s mindsets around arts integration:

Overwhelmingly, teachers would say it [art] increases learning in the classroom and gives kids a creative way to educate themselves and students. It’s huge. Everybody agrees with it. The number one question is how do we have time to do it?

. . . [Implementation is] one big piece, but you’re conflicting that with the rollout of Common Core. Most people look at art and say, “My job doesn’t depend on that. I get evaluated because I don’t have academic growth.” But what people [need to] see is that art and the Common Core can work together . . . It can’t just be me as principal saying it, the district has to be prefacing these learning opportunities for students and teachers, but right now it’s just a drive-by.

District officials also explained how issues of time overlapped with issues of funding:

The biggest barrier is that the district over the years has taken on a number of initiatives for which it doesn’t have sustainable funding. There are a number of important and basic services for which Creative Advantage is, for lack of a better word, in competition with resources with school programs, lunch, recess, and other things that in other districts might be taken care of already.

In 2014-15 stakeholders continued to describe The Creative Advantage’s lack of stable funding as one of the largest barriers to sustainability. Program leaders referenced the possibility of increased funding from the legislature as a result of the *McCleary v. State of Washington* case, where the state Supreme Court determined the state was not meeting its Constitutional obligation to fully fund public education. As one program leader explained, “The assumption that there will be more funding from the state because of the *McCleary* case, and the referendum to class sizes . . . while we aren’t counting on increased funding, that helps our ability to expand.”

However, program leaders explained their long-term goal is to secure levy funding. While they are “making progress” on that front, in the meantime, they are “still applying for grants for short-term funding.” A representative from the city described the “need to educate the [levy funding] team about the role of arts. It isn’t about hand painting and making hand turkeys. It is about demonstrating creativity as a career skill. That is a message we need to grapple with.”

In addition, program leaders described the challenge of working with the district’s funding cycle:

When Creative Advantage takes root, it is a commitment of at least three to four years to invest and jump start and get the work off the ground with the arts plans and figuring out the challenges. The district is on an annual funding cycle and that creates challenges of needing the commitment, but not having the assurance of dollars because it is on an annual basis.

Another leader also mentioned SPS’s budgeting process as a concern:

‘Tis the season, and I have put in my request for the staffing and resources. I made our request. Now, we have schools in Central and in South-Southwest that are poised to hire teachers and build some teachers’ FTE to meet their vision. They are on hold until the budget gets approved. We have communicated our “asks” and we aren’t guaranteed. Some asks are time sensitive, and our hope is this time sensitive ask will be prioritized. This complicates things in the district. We are asking for 3.1 FTE across both pathways, and that is a barrier. The Creative Advantage is successful in backwards planning, but to do this incrementally because of the budget timeline is a challenge.”

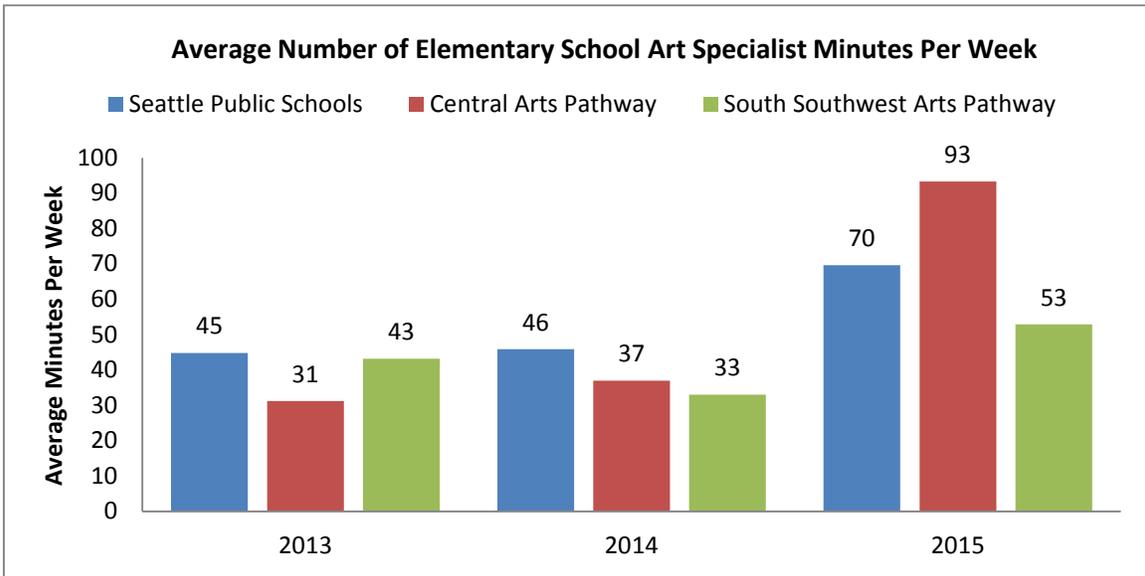
Finally, some stakeholders also identified finding qualified staff as a barrier. When asked about program barriers, a teacher at another school explained that arts specialists needed additional training to succeed in the Central Pathway. At that school, for two years in a row, music teachers left mid-year due to “partly not [being] prepared for being able to work in this setting.” That teacher explained specialists in the building often needed additional support in classroom management and making connections for the students. In addition, a district representative explained how “our displacement process that works on seniority” means that new hires “are the first ones released based on enrollment.” She added, “I think we need to make some adjustments to make certain we have a quality program, and the school can hire the best [staff].”

## EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

**Evaluation Question #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)**

*Do elementary students receive more minutes of arts instruction each week?*

Figure 1 shows the change in the total number of minutes of arts instruction at Seattle Public Schools for elementary school students from the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. We estimated the number of minutes of instruction received per week by summing the total number of minutes reported by specialists for each student throughout the school year and dividing the total number of minutes by 36 (the number of weeks in the school year). Figure 1 shows the total number of minutes of specialist arts instruction per week reported by specialists in the Central Arts Pathway, the South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and in the other SPS schools in 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15. The number of minutes reported rose across the three-year period. The data show that the growth was greatest in the Central Arts Pathway.



**Figure 1. Average number of elementary school arts specialist minutes per week, 2013-2015**

A linear mixed model (see Table 3) showed that the increase in specialist minutes was statistically significant for all schools in SPS ( $\pi_{30} = 13.57 (.10)$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The rate of increase was higher in the Central Arts Pathway ( $\pi_{31} = 14.05 (.26)$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than in the other schools in SPS. Finally, although the number of minutes increased in the South-Southwest region, the rate of the increase at these schools was slower than the SPS average ( $\pi_{32} = -10.17 (.33)$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, this was the baseline year in that region, and schools had not implemented focused strategies to increase the minutes in the arts.

**Table 3.**

**Fixed Effects for Linear Mixed Model for Total Arts Specialist Minutes per Week**

Variable	B	SE	df	t	Pr(>  t )
(Intercept), $\pi_{00}$	34.14	3.15	66	10.83	<.001
Central Arts Pathway, $\pi_{10}$	-9.80	8.27	66	-1.19	0.24
South-Southwest Arts Pathway, $\pi_{20}$	2.34	9.23	66	0.25	0.80
Linear, $\pi_{30}$	13.57	0.10	78310	138.22	<.001
Linear X Central, $\pi_{31}$	14.05	0.26	78310	54.28	<.001
Linear X South-Southwest, $\pi_{32}$	-10.17	0.33	78310	-30.74	<.001

**Do middle and high school students take more arts courses?**

Figure 2 shows the percentage of students taking an arts course in middle school during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. A similar percentage of students in the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway Students, and the remaining SPS schools took an arts course. Middle

school students in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway took Visual Arts at a higher rate compared to students in the Central Arts Pathway and the other SPS schools (see Figure 3). In contrast, middle school students in the Central Arts Pathway took music at higher rates compared to the South-Southwest Pathway and other SPS students (see Figure 4).

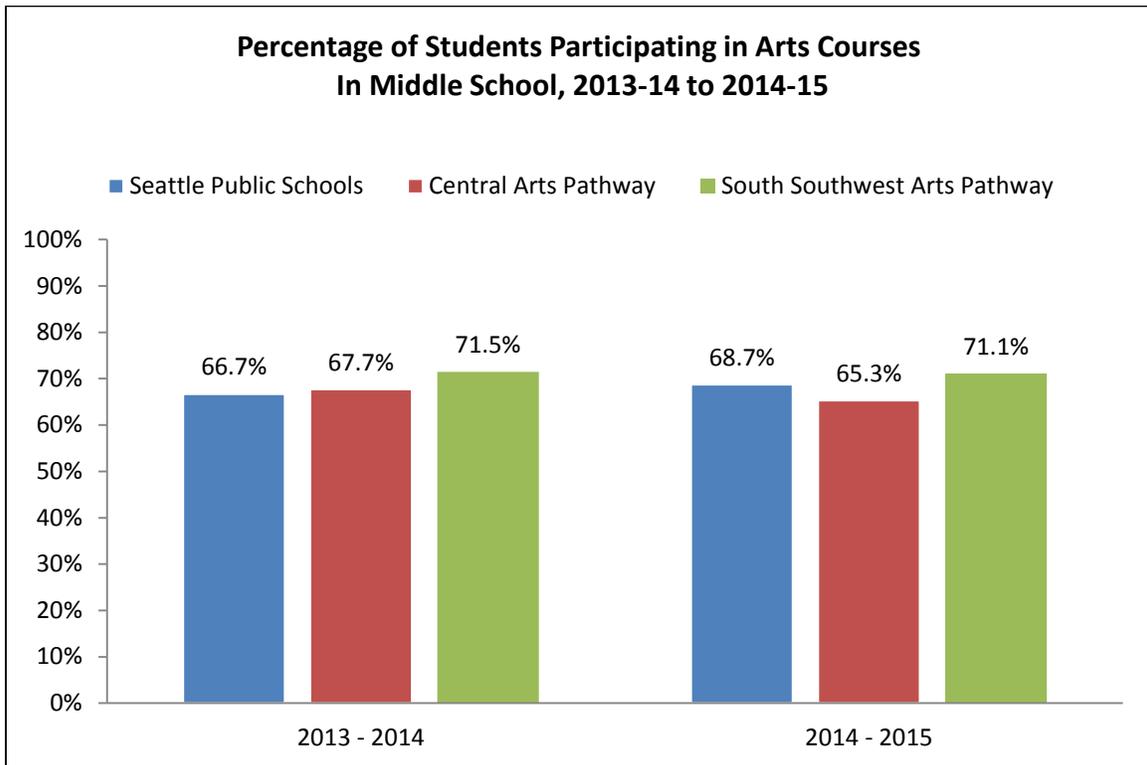


Figure 2. Percentage of students participating in arts courses in middle school, 2014 to 2015

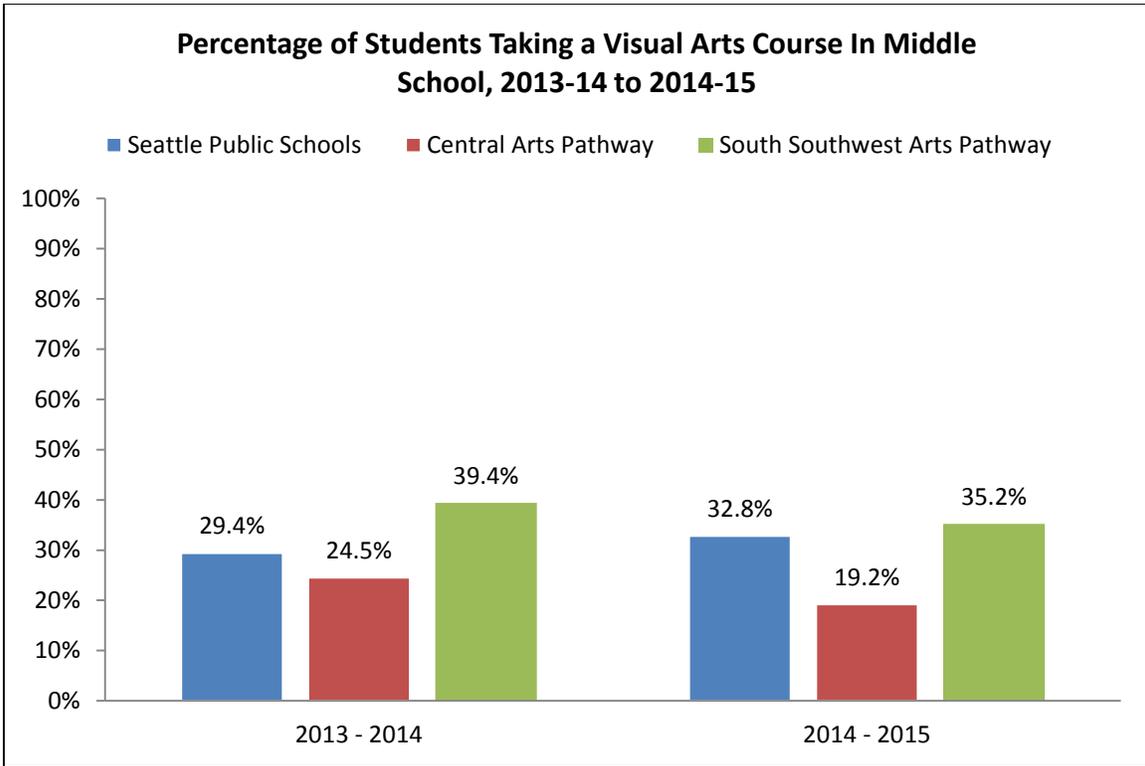


Figure 3. Percentage of students taking a visual arts course in middle school, 2013-14 to 2014-15

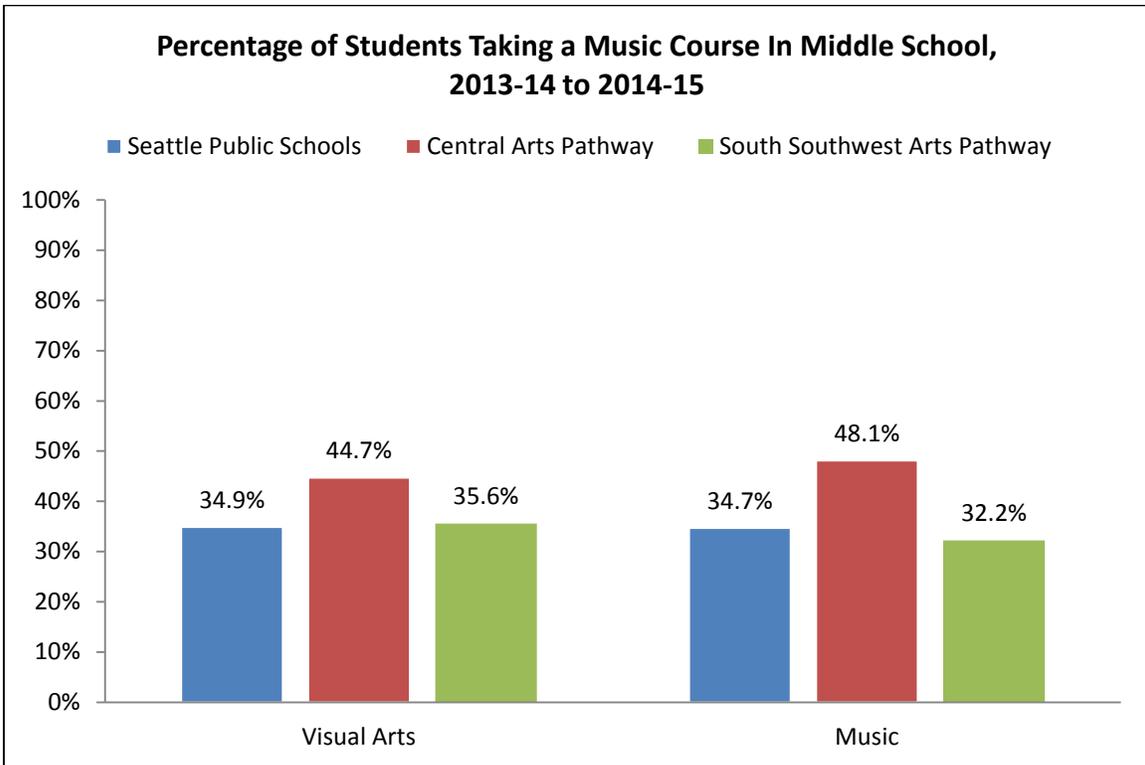


Figure 4. Percentage of students taking a music course in middle school, 2013-14 to 2014-15

Disaggregated results by race/ethnicity and special programs for middle school students show an interesting pattern. Across all groups, more White students and gifted students enrolled in art classes in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years compared to other groups. Furthermore, Black students and fewer students enrolled in the English Language Learner (ELL) or Special Education programs enrolled in an art class (see Table 4). Female students enroll in the arts at higher rates compared to male students.

Across all groups, gifted students tend to enroll in visual arts courses less often than music (see Table 4). There is more variation within the Central Arts Pathway, with students who are White, two or more races, or Asian enrolling in visual arts less often, and ELL students enrolling in Visual Arts at a greater rate. There is less variation within the South-Southwest Pathway.

In music, nearly every group within the Central Arts Pathway enrolled in music at higher rates compared to the South-Southwest Arts Pathway and other schools within SPS. However, the variation between groups is quite large. For example, in 2014-15, 74% of White and 74% of gifted middle school students, respectively, enroll in music. In contrast, only 27% of Black students, 9% of ELL students, and 21% of Special Education students enroll in music (see Table 4). While a similar pattern occurs across the South-Southwest Pathway and other SPS schools, the differences are not as pronounced.

**Table 4.**  
**Students Taking Arts in Middle School, 2013-14 and 2014-15**

Group	Pathway	Year	Discipline		
			Total Arts	Visual Arts	Music
Asian/Pacific Islander	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	64.3%	29.9%	35.1%
		2014-2015	61.9%	33.1%	31.9%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	65.4%	22.4%	41.9%
		2014-2015	60.7%	24.5%	41.9%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	74.6%	41.2%	39.5%
		2014-2015	81.3%	47.9%	45.6%
Black	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	52.0%	29.0%	19.0%
		2014-2015	53.0%	35.1%	17.8%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	53.7%	31.4%	22.2%
		2014-2015	49.0%	20.0%	26.5%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	67.0%	40.1%	27.5%
		2014-2015	50.6%	47.9%	26.1%
Hispanic	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	60.6%	29.3%	29.1%
		2014-2015	61.9%	35.4%	23.8%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	61.1%	35.8%	37.5%
		2014-2015	43.1%	20.2%	39.4%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	62.9%	31.8%	30.0%
		2014-2015	51.1%	27.0%	20.4%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	53.7%	34.7%	16.8%
		2014-2015	64.4%	40.0%	22.2%
	Central Arts	2013-2014	53.4%	28.6%	50.0%

	Pathway	2014-2015	61.5%	23.1%	46.2%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	50.0%	25.0%	25.5%
		2014-2015	60.0%	30.0%	20.0%
White	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	74.2%	29.2%	41.7%
		2014-2015	76.5%	31.0%	43.2%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	84.3%	16.2%	71.6%
		2014-2015	85.2%	12.3%	74.6%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	82.4%	46.6%	43.5%
		2014-2015	79.1%	36.1%	42.6%
Two or More Races	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	69.6%	29.2%	38.8%
		2014-2015	74.9%	34.6%	37.6%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	69.9%	18.9%	50.0%
		2014-2015	70.6%	21.6%	51.0%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	72.9%	37.5%	43.8%
		2014-2015	71.4%	28.6%	30.6%
ELL	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	46.3%	29.6%	14.1%
		2014-2015	49.6%	33.1%	14.5%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	61.7%	48.1%	18.0%
		2014-2015	41.5%	33.9%	9.3%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	59.5%	33.3%	26.1%
		2014-2015	60.7%	32.9%	22.1%
Gifted	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	82.8%	17.4%	63.6%
		2014-2015	81.4%	20.6%	59.0%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	83.5%	12.3%	73.9%
		2014-2015	82.8%	9.9%	73.9%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	85.5%	32.9%	63.2%
		2014-2015	86.8%	25.0%	51.4%
Special Education	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	54.7%	31.2%	21.1%
		2014-2015	55.8%	33.6%	18.6%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	43.6%	29.5%	16.1%
		2014-2015	48.6%	29.7%	20.9%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	58.4%	40.5%	20.8%
		2014-2015	57.0%	31.4%	16.3%
Male	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	63.4%	29.0%	31.7%
		2014-2015	66.1%	33.4%	29.7%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	61.7%	23.1%	40.2%
		2014-2015	61.3%	20.1%	42.3%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	66.0%	39.1%	28.3%
		2014-2015	64.9%	36.8%	27.0%
Female	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	70.1%	29.9%	38.5%
		2014-2015	71.4%	32.3%	77.2%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	72.1%	26.0%	49.5%
		2014-2015	69.5%	18.2%	31.4%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	77.0%	39.6%	42.7%
		2014-2015	77.2%	54.1%	37.2%

Figure 5 shows the percentage of students taking an arts course in high school during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. Overall, a greater percentage of students in the Central Arts Pathway enroll in arts courses compared to the South-Southwest Arts Pathway and the remaining SPS schools. Generally, a similar proportion of students enroll in visual arts, while there is more fluctuation in music (see Figures 6 and 7).

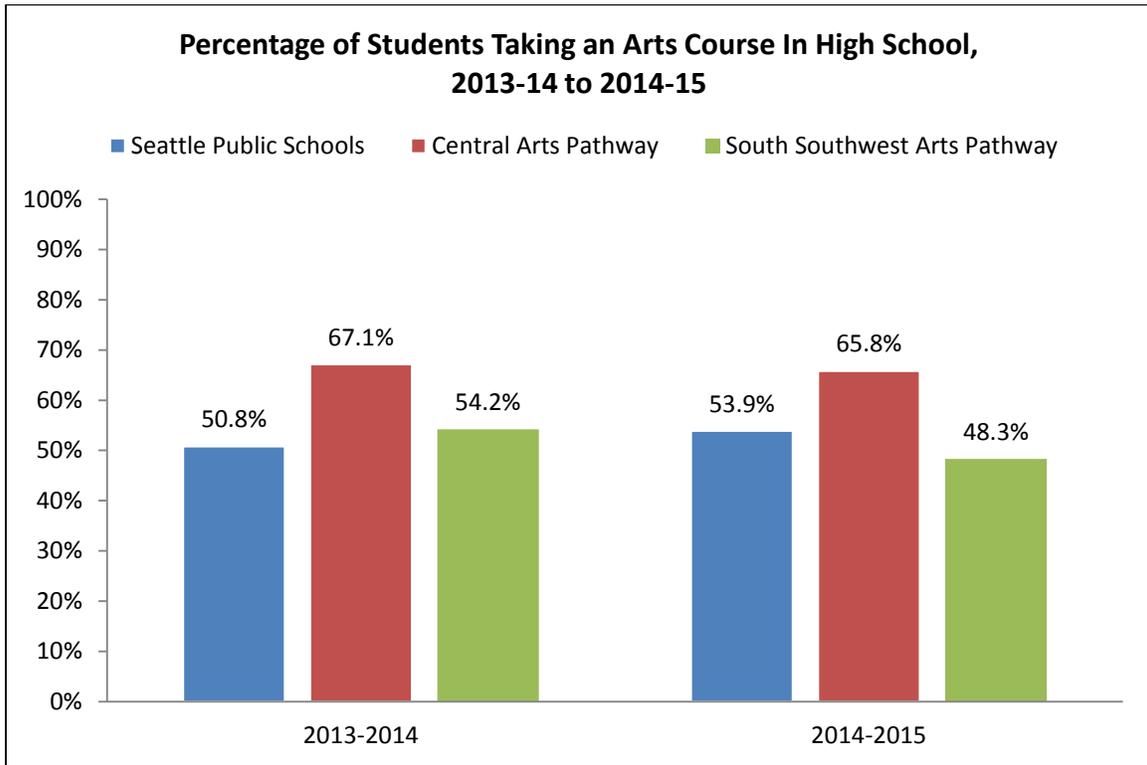


Figure 5. Percentage of students taking an arts course in high school, 2013-14 to 2014 - 15

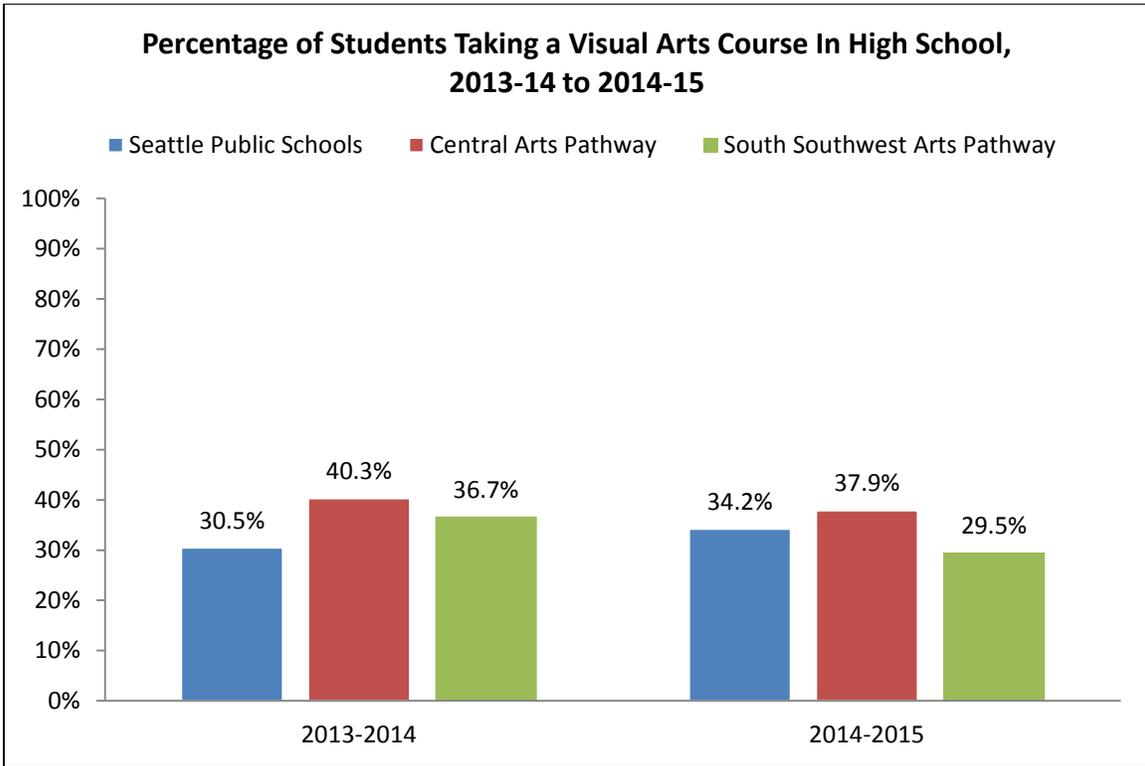


Figure 6. Percentage of students taking a visual arts course in high school, 2013-14 to 2014-15

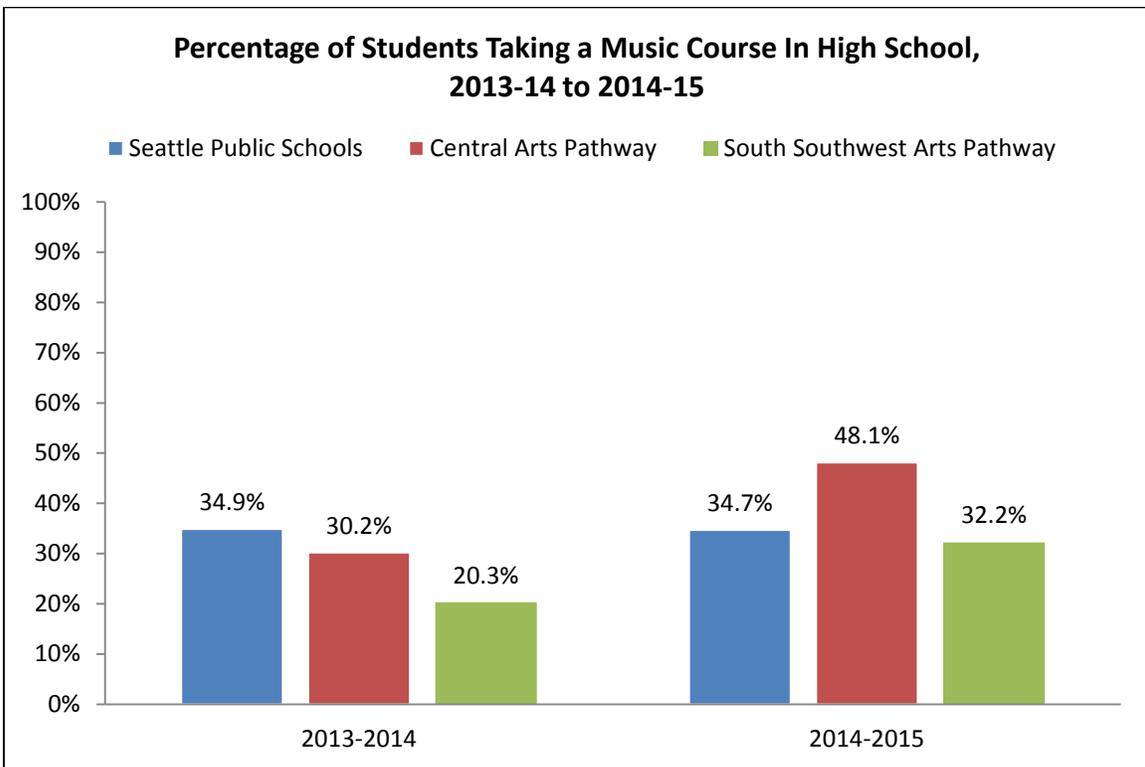


Figure 7. Percentage of students taking a music course in high school, 2013-14 to 2014 - 15

Disaggregated results by race/ethnicity and special programs for high school students show that all groups took at arts course in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years at greater rates in the Central Arts Pathway compared to the South-Southwest Arts Pathway and remaining SPS schools (see Table 5). There tends to be less fluctuation among groups.

A similar pattern emerged in visual arts, with more high school students enrolling in visual arts courses during the 2013-2014 and 2014 – 2015 school years from the Central Arts Pathway compared to the other groups (see Table 5). In addition, there is less fluctuation among the groups with one exception. Gifted students, across the groups, tend to enroll in visual arts less often. Please note, no gifted students were identified in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway.

In music, all groups within the Central Arts Pathway enroll in music at higher rates compared to the other groups. However, the variation between groups is quite large. Far more gifted high school students enroll in music and fewer students enrolled in the ELL program and enrolled in special education take music (see Table 6). The differences are much smaller in the remaining groups.

**Table 5.**  
*Students Taking Arts in High School, 2013-14 and 2014-15*

Group	Pathway	Year	Discipline		
			Total Arts	Visual Arts	Music
Asian/Pacific Islander	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	47.7%	28.3%	20.4%
		2014-2015	52.3%	33.5%	15.2%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	66.1%	33.7%	32.2%
		2014-2015	65.4%	37.1%	31.2%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	54.0%	34.5%	23.0%
		2014-2015	53.7%	31.4%	17.7%
Black	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	44.3%	31.8%	10.9%
		2014-2015	46.5%	33.4%	6.9%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	63.0%	43.0%	23.3%
		2014-2015	63.1%	39.6%	24.0%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	50.2%	34.8%	23.0%
		2014-2015	45.0%	31.6%	10.0%
Hispanic	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	42.9%	28.0%	11.9%
		2014-2015	47.4%	33.1%	12.0%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	70.0%	45.9%	29.2%
		2014-2015	64.3%	41.8%	26.1%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	49.6%	37.0%	16.1%
		2014-2015	50.3%	30.1%	22.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	46.5%	27.7%	17.0%
		2014-2015	38.0%	23.0%	10.0%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	84.6%	53.8%	46.2%
		2014-2015	50.0%	21.4%	21.4%
	South-Southwest	2013-2014	56.5%	43.5%	17.4%

	Arts Pathway	2014-2015	40.0%	15.0%	20.0%
White	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	57.8%	31.8%	19.4%
		2014-2015	60.2%	35.3%	18.1%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	69.3%	40.2%	33.4%
		2014-2015	68.0%	36.6%	30.0%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	60.9%	40.2%	23.5%
		2014-2015	47.3%	27.1%	18.9%
Two or More Races	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	52.8%	32.2%	17.2%
		2014-2015	57.5%	35.3%	18.3%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	67.4%	38.9%	34.7%
		2014-2015	69.8%	35.7%	42.6%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	56.1%	31.8%	27.3%
		2014-2015	54.2%	27.8%	23.6%
ELL	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	45.0%	31.7%	14.2%
		2014-2015	50.4%	37.9%	7.9%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	60.3%	40.5%	16.7%
		2014-2015	64.6%	44.8%	26.0%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	48.1%	36.7%	18.4%
		2014-2015	47.8%	34.4%	15.0%
Gifted	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	43.6%	17.4%	22.1%
		2014-2015	52.6%	20.1%	27.7%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	79.1%	32.2%	56.3%
		2014-2015	82.1%	27.6%	55.9%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014			
		2014-2015			
Special Education	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	45.0%	29.8%	12.1%
		2014-2015	40.5%	26.8%	8.0%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	57.5%	37.7%	29.1%
		2014-2015	54.8%	37.1%	14.2%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	55.6%	39.4%	20.1%
		2014-2015	43.1%	26.3%	13.4%
Male	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	46.9%	28.1%	15.7%
		2014-2015	62.9%	31.5%	13.5%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	62.1%	35.5%	29.1%
		2014-2015	51.2%	34.2%	29.7%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	54.3%	35.5%	20.1%
		2014-2015	64.9%	27.7%	19.2%
Female	Seattle Public Schools	2013-2014	55.3%	33.2%	18.2%
		2014-2015	68.5%	37.0%	15.4%
	Central Arts Pathway	2013-2014	71.9%	45.0%	31.3%
		2014-2015	56.8%	41.1%	28.2%
	South-Southwest Arts Pathway	2013-2014	55.2%	38.1%	20.5%
		2014-2015	48.6%	31.4%	16.5%

*Do students follow the recommended sequence of arts?*

Figures 8 through 10 show the number of arts credits the class of 2018 and 2019 took through their middle school years. Approximately two-thirds of students from the classes of 2018 and 2019 took at least one credit of art in middle school in the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and the remaining Seattle Public Schools. For the class of 2019, only 49% of students in the Central Arts Pathway, 34% of Students from the South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and 46% of students in the remaining Seattle Public Schools took two or more credits of arts throughout middle school, which is a goal of The Creative Advantage. Black and Hispanic students were least likely to take an arts course compared to other groups. However, across all groups, more Black students in the class of 2019 took at least one credit of art compared to the class of 2018. Overall, very few students take two or more visual arts credits, and there are very few differences by race/ethnicity (see Figures 11 through 13). For music, in the class of 2019, approximately 46% of Central Arts Pathway students, 31% of South-Southwest Arts Pathway Students, and 28% of other SPS schools take two or more credits. Fewer Black students across all groups take two or more credits of music (see Figures 14 through 16).

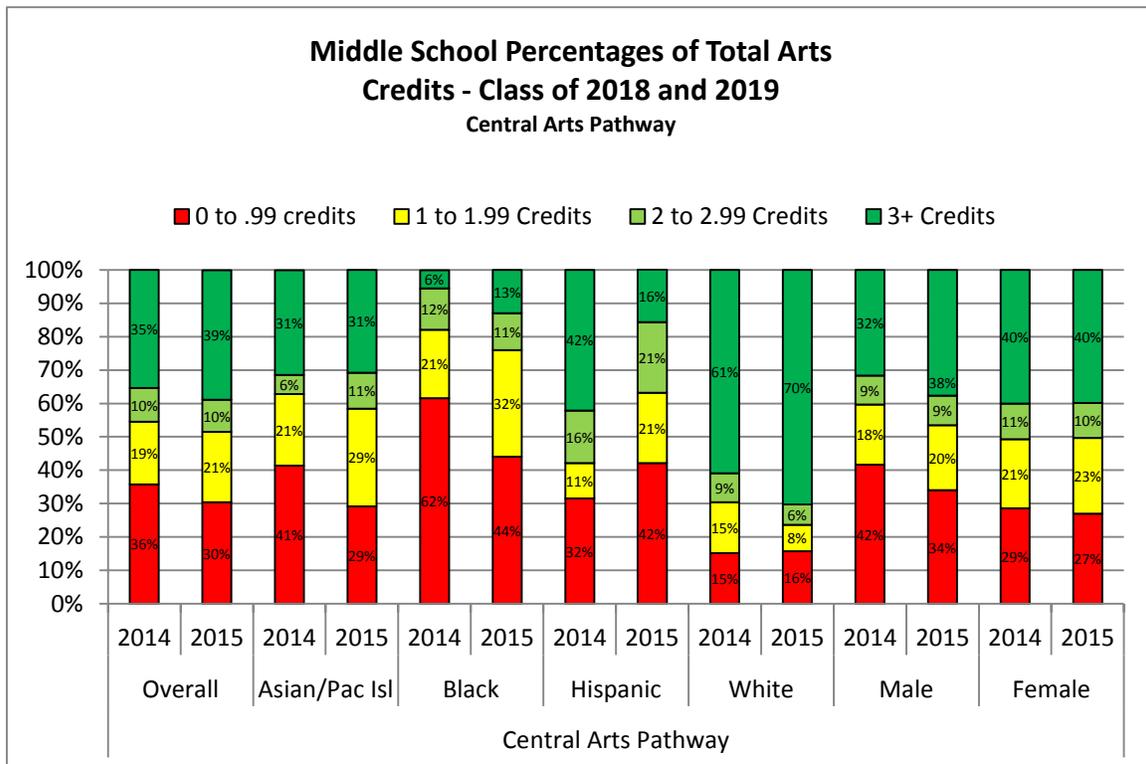


Figure 8. Number of total credits of arts taken, Central Arts Pathway, class of 2018 and 2019

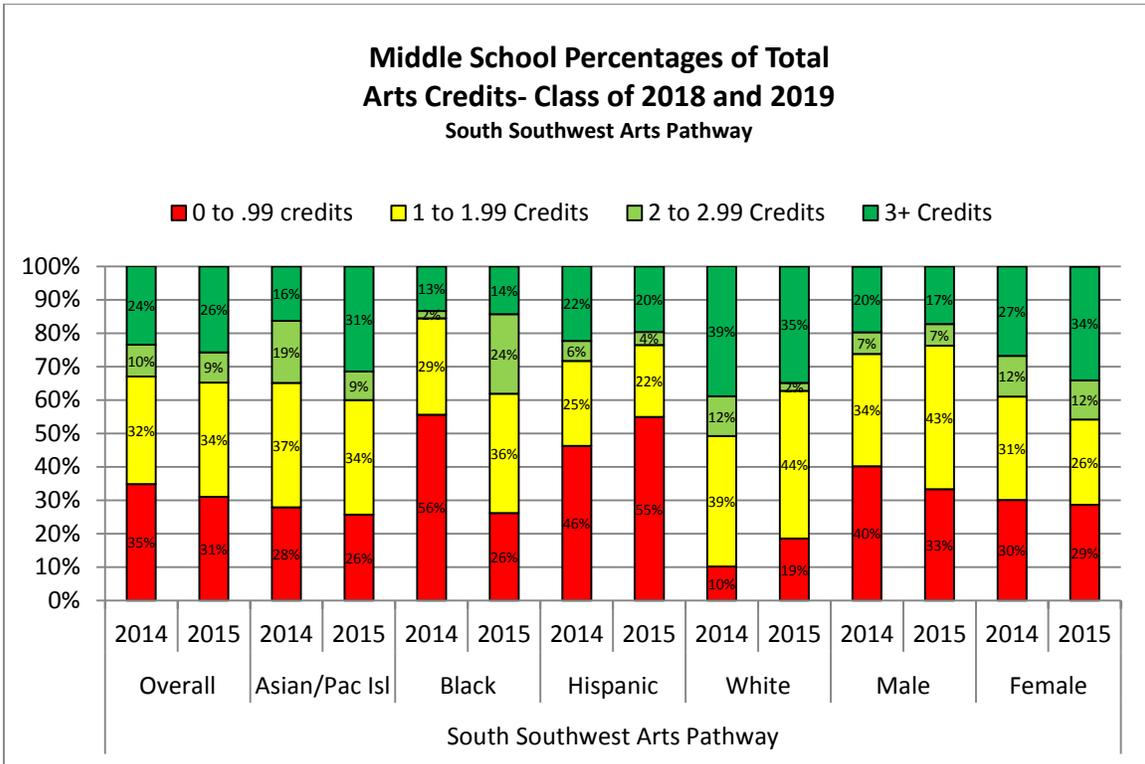


Figure 9. Number of total credits of arts taken, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, class of 2018 and 2019

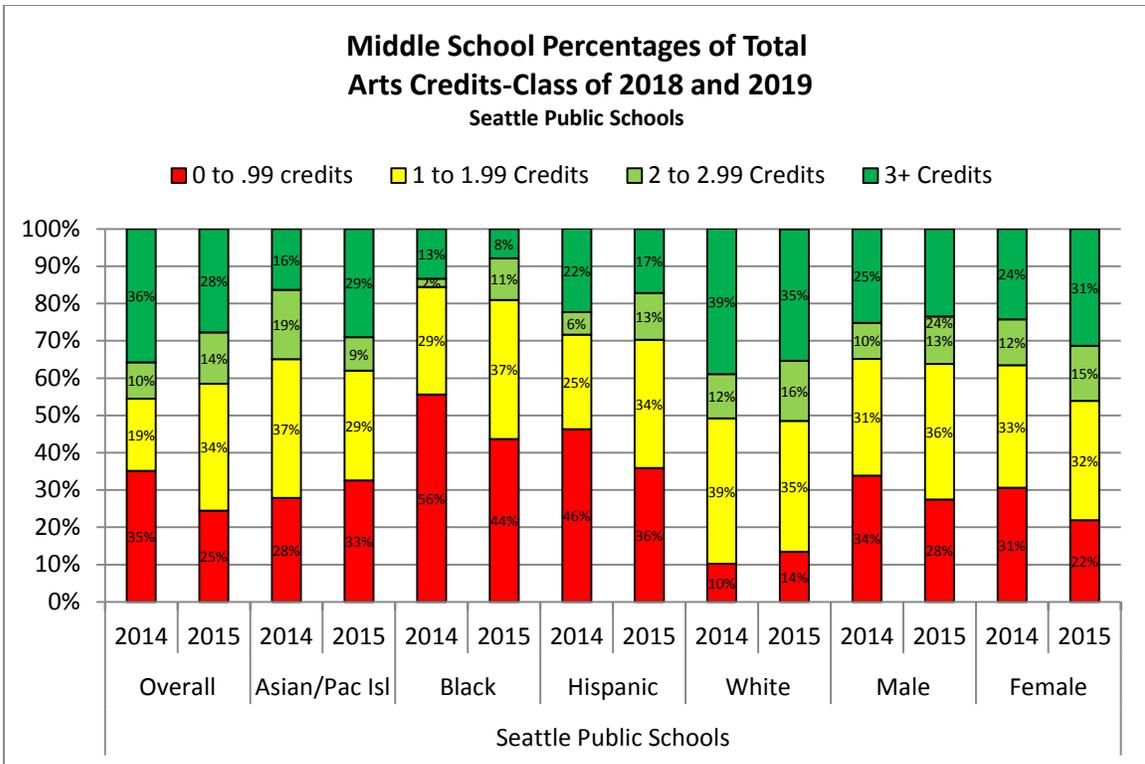


Figure 10. Number of total credits of arts taken, remaining Seattle Public Schools, class of 2018 and 2019

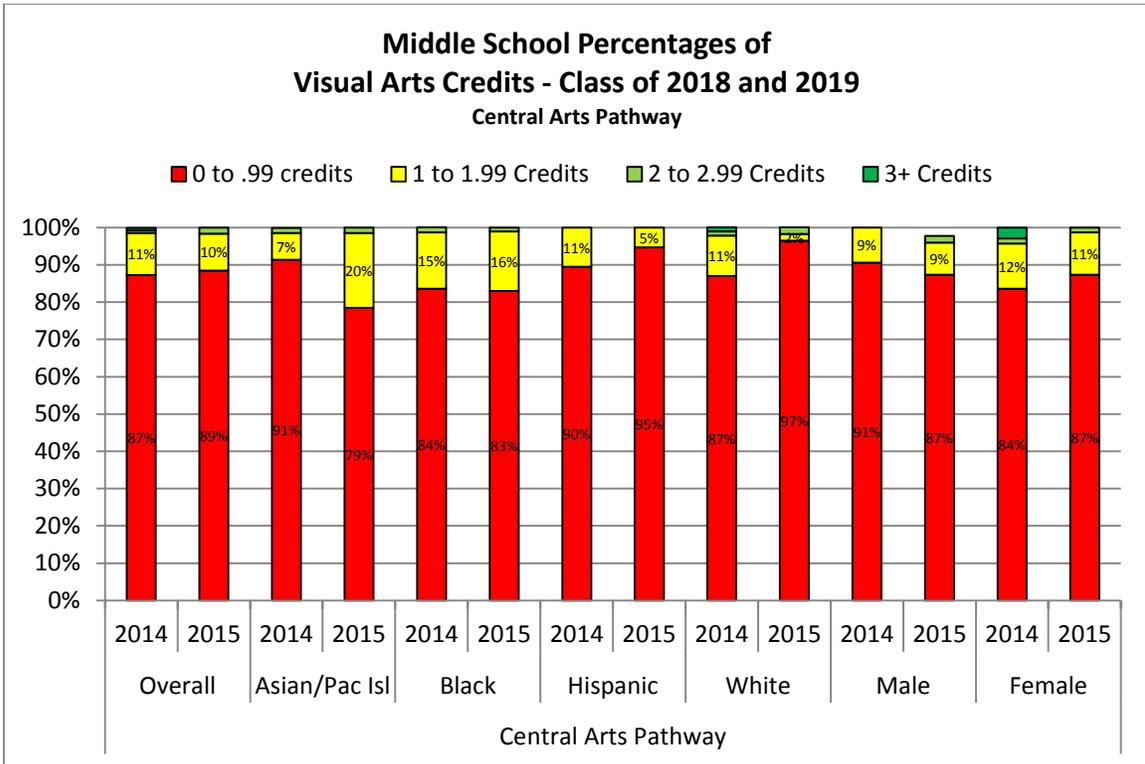


Figure 11. Number of total credits of visual arts taken, Central Arts Pathway Area, class of 2018 and 2019

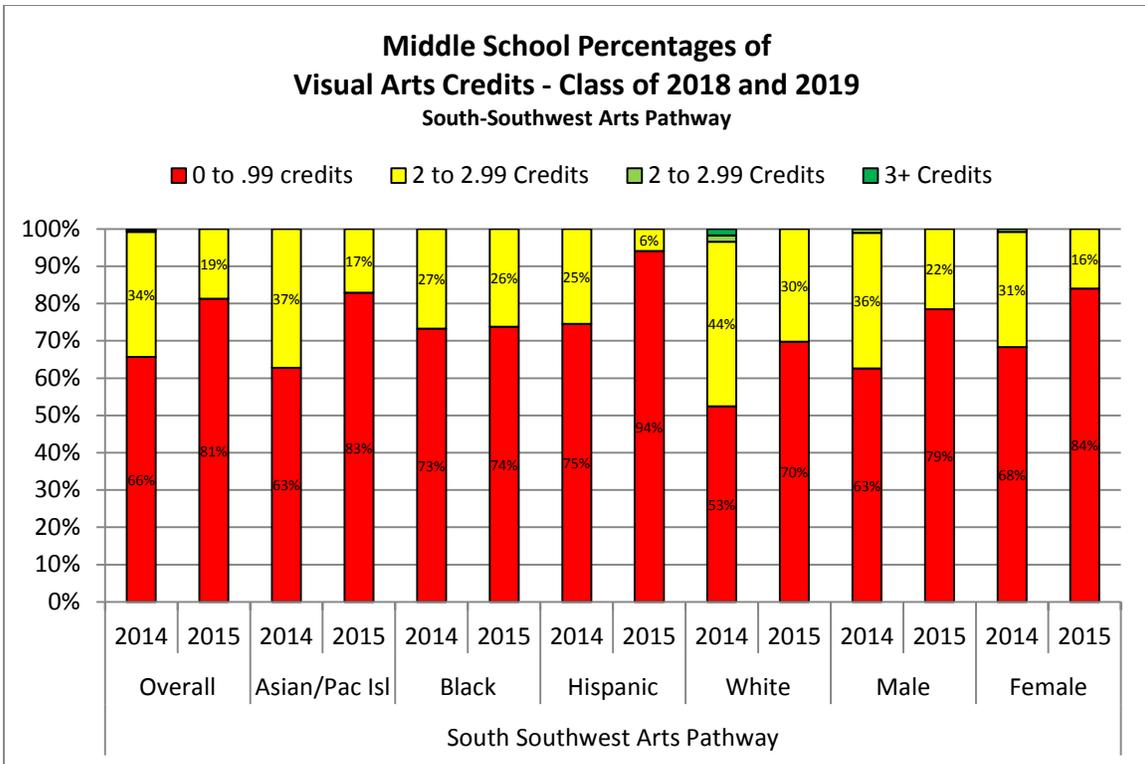


Figure 12. Number of total credits of visual arts taken, South-Southwest Arts Pathway Area, class of 2018 and 2019

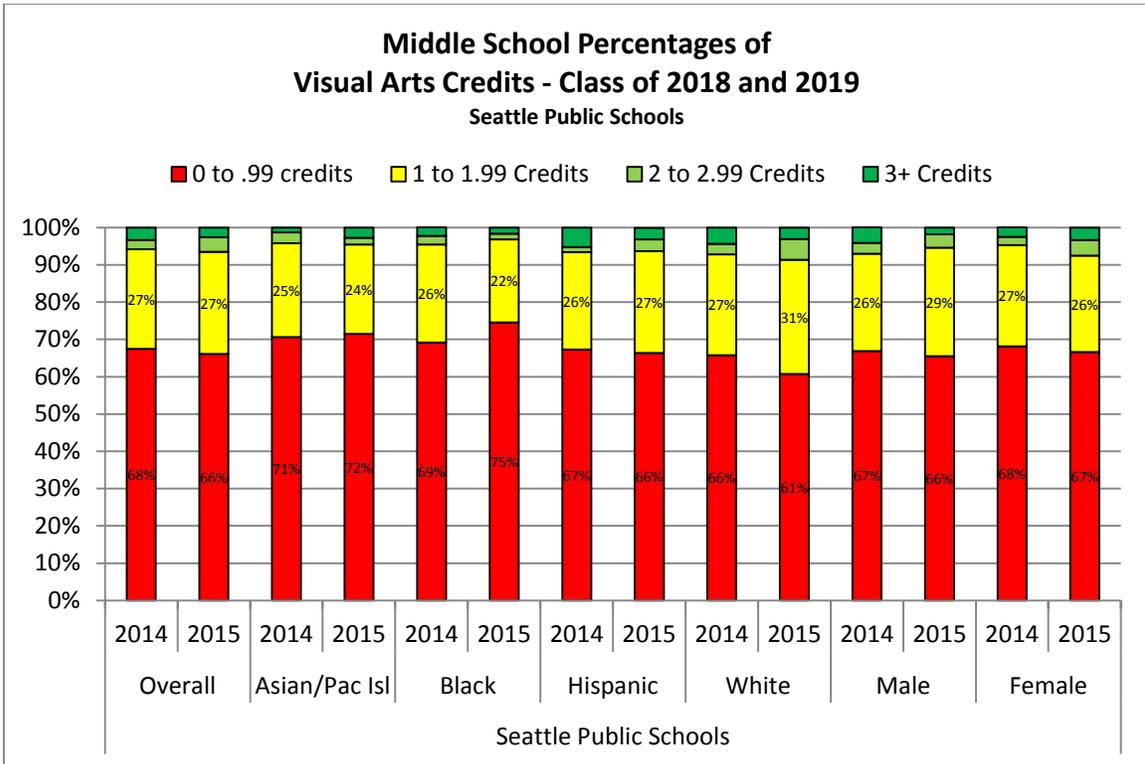


Figure 13. Number of total credits of visual arts taken, remaining Seattle Public Schools, class of 2018 and 2019

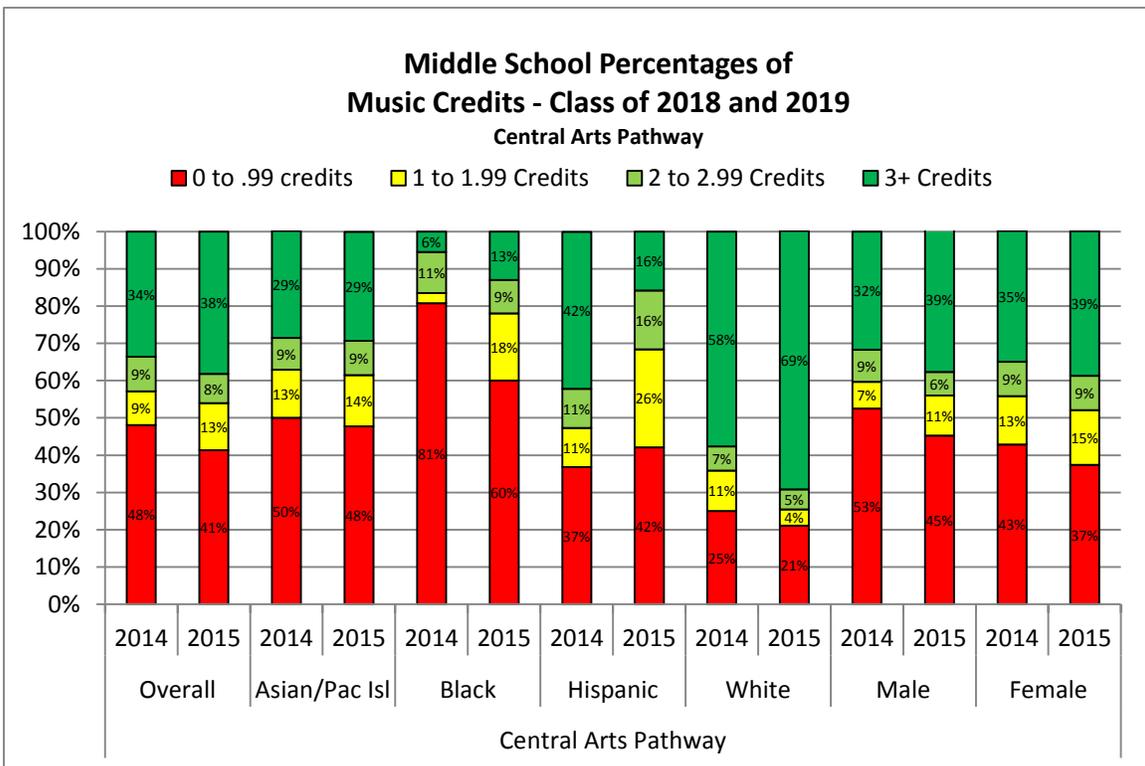


Figure 14. Number of total credits music taken, Central Arts Pathway, class of 2018 and 2019

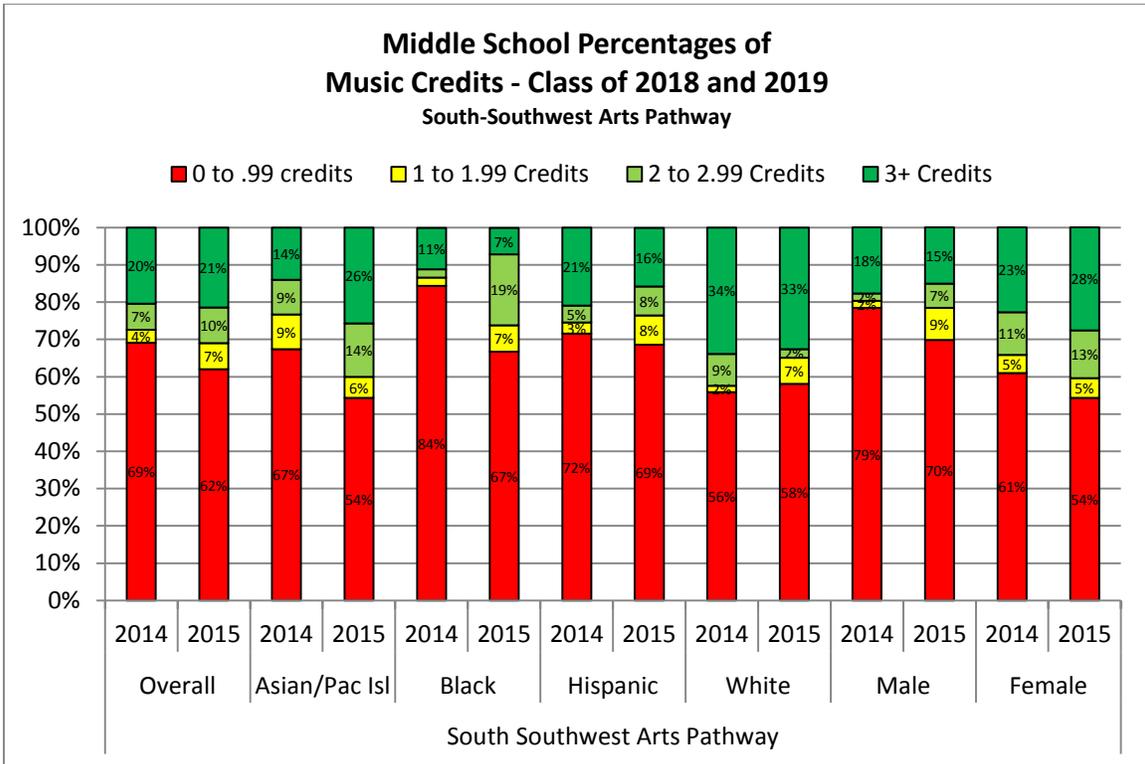


Figure 15. Number of total credits music taken, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, class of 2018 and 2019

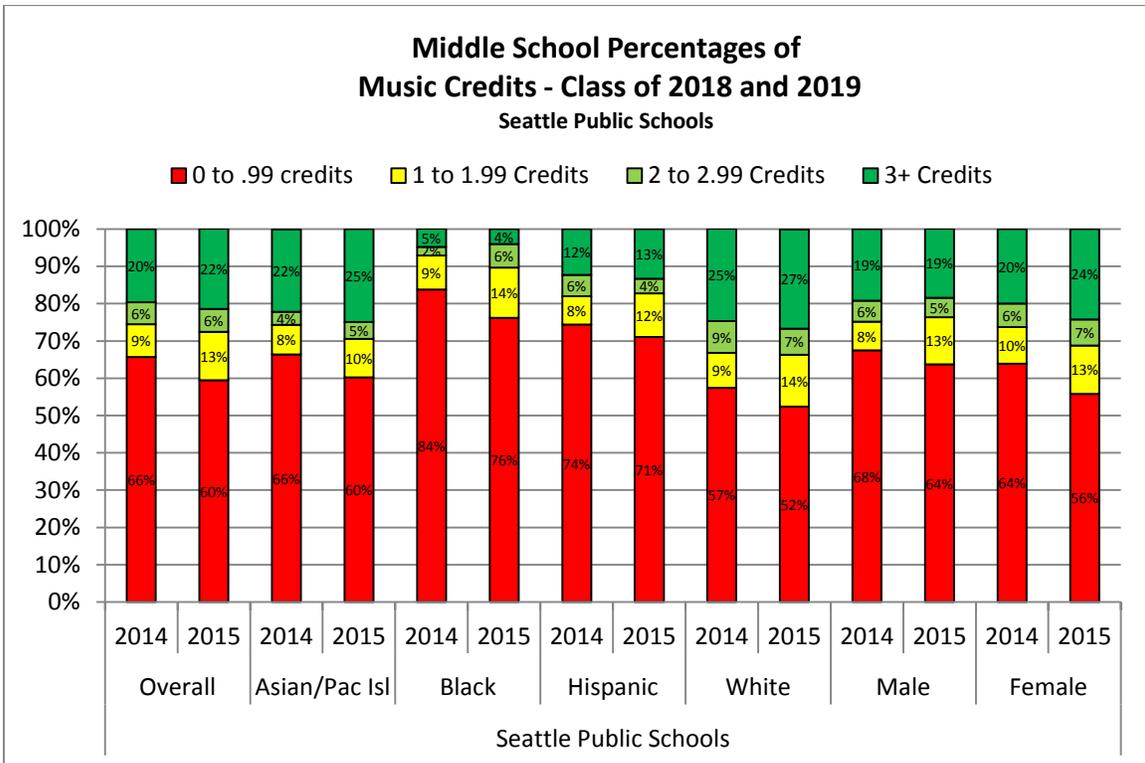


Figure 16. Number of total credits music taken, remaining Seattle Public Schools, class of 2018 and 2019



Figures 17 through 19 show the number of arts credits the 2014 and 2015 graduates took through their high school career, for total arts, visual arts, and performing arts, within the Central Arts Pathway, the South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and the remaining SPS high schools, respectively. While nearly all students within the district took at least one credit of art, 62% of students in the Central Arts Pathway, 31% in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and 46% of students in the remaining SPS high schools took two or more credits of Arts, which is a goal for the initiative. The Central Arts Pathway increased by 2 percentage points from 2014 to 2015, and the remaining SPS schools increased by 8 percentage points, while the South-Southwest Pathway demonstrated a decrease in the percentage of students taking two or more credits.

Overall, very few students take two or more visual arts credits, and there are very few differences by race/ethnicity and by gender (see Figure 20 through 22). While fewer students take music courses, more students take two or more credits in music compared to visual arts. There is also greater fluctuation in music, with more students in the Central Arts Pathway taking two or more credits compared to the South-Southwest Pathway and the other schools. For music, approximately 21% of Central Arts Pathway students, 11% of South-Southwest Pathway students, and 13% of other SPS students take two or more credits of music. Fewer Black students take music across all groups (see Figures 23 through 25).

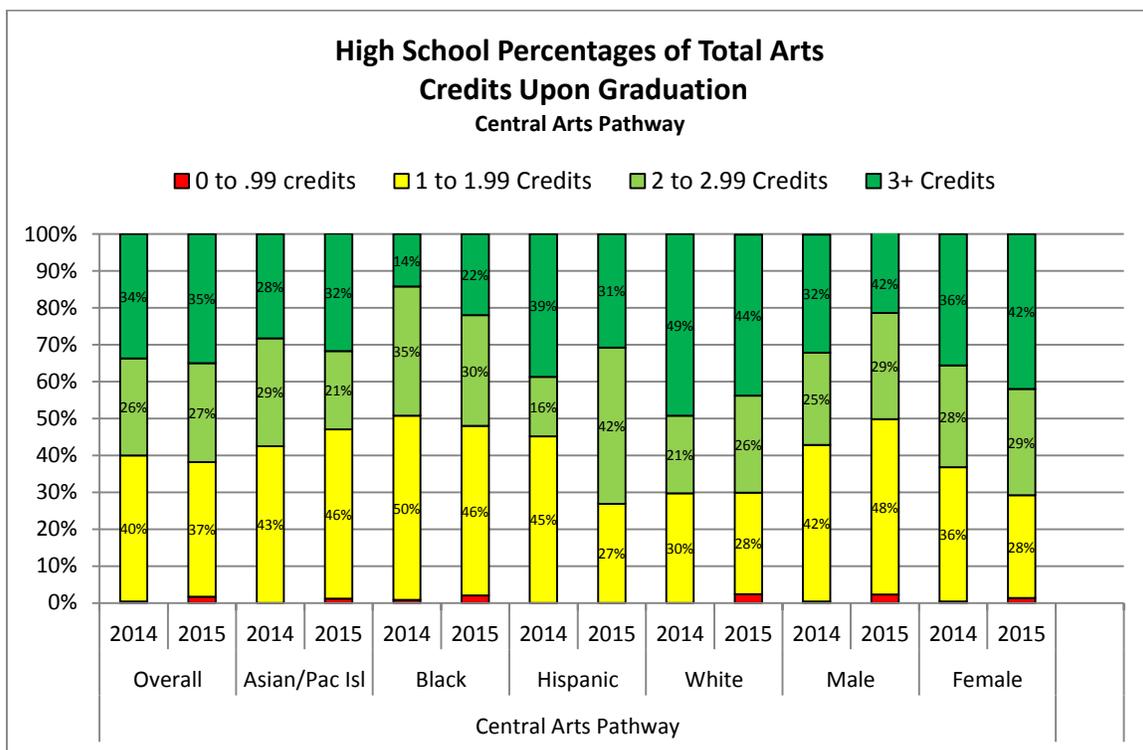


Figure 17. Number of total credits of arts taken, Central Arts Pathway graduating classes of 2014 and 2015

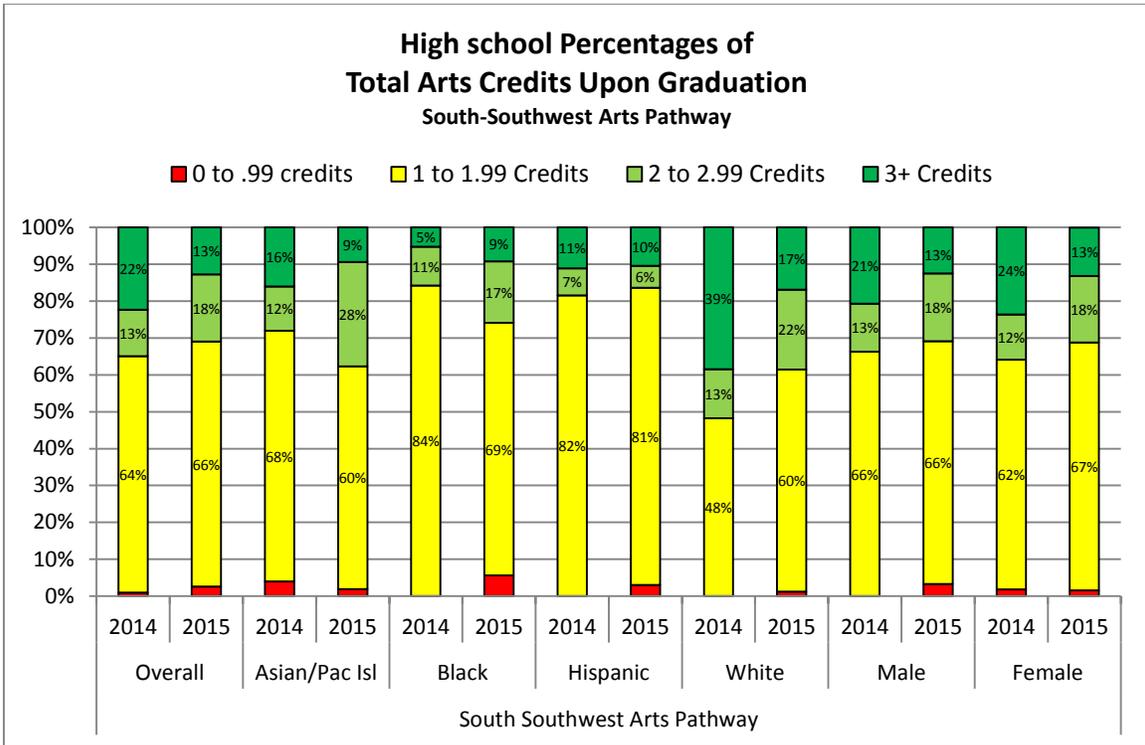


Figure 18. Number of total credits of arts taken, South-Southwest Arts Pathway graduating classes of 2014 and 2015

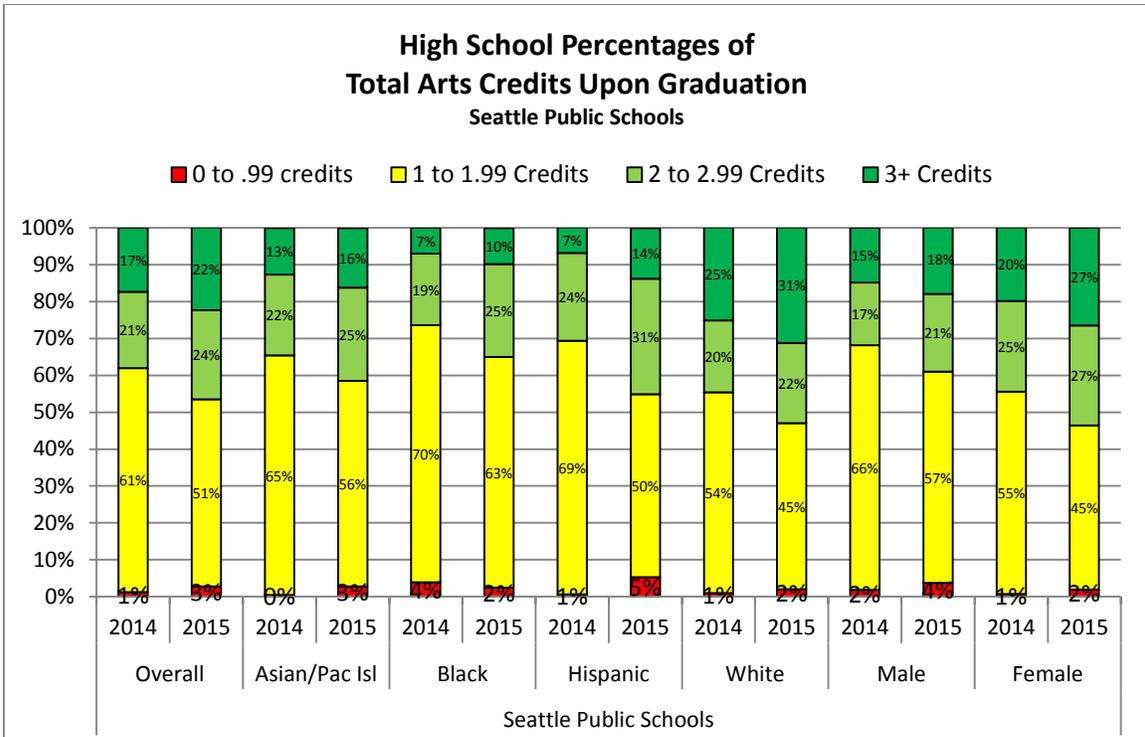


Figure 19. Number of total credits of arts taken, remaining Seattle Public Schools graduating classes of 2014 and 2015

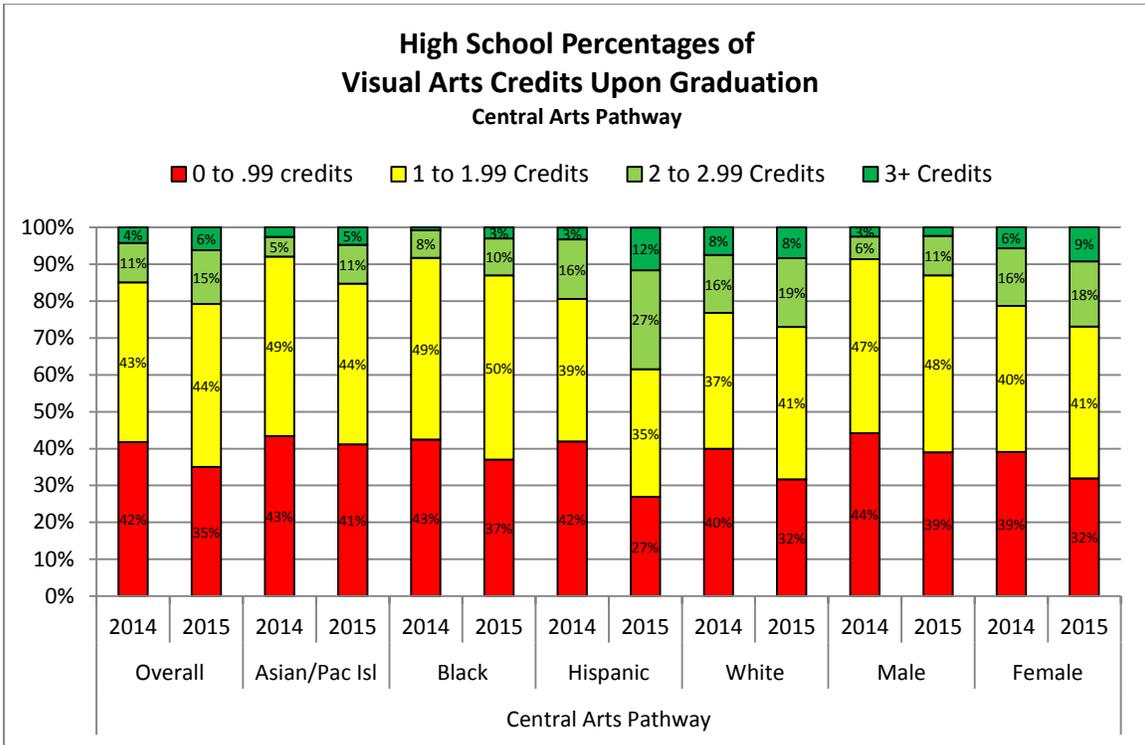


Figure 20. Number of total credits of visual arts taken, Central Arts Pathway graduating class of 2014 and 2015

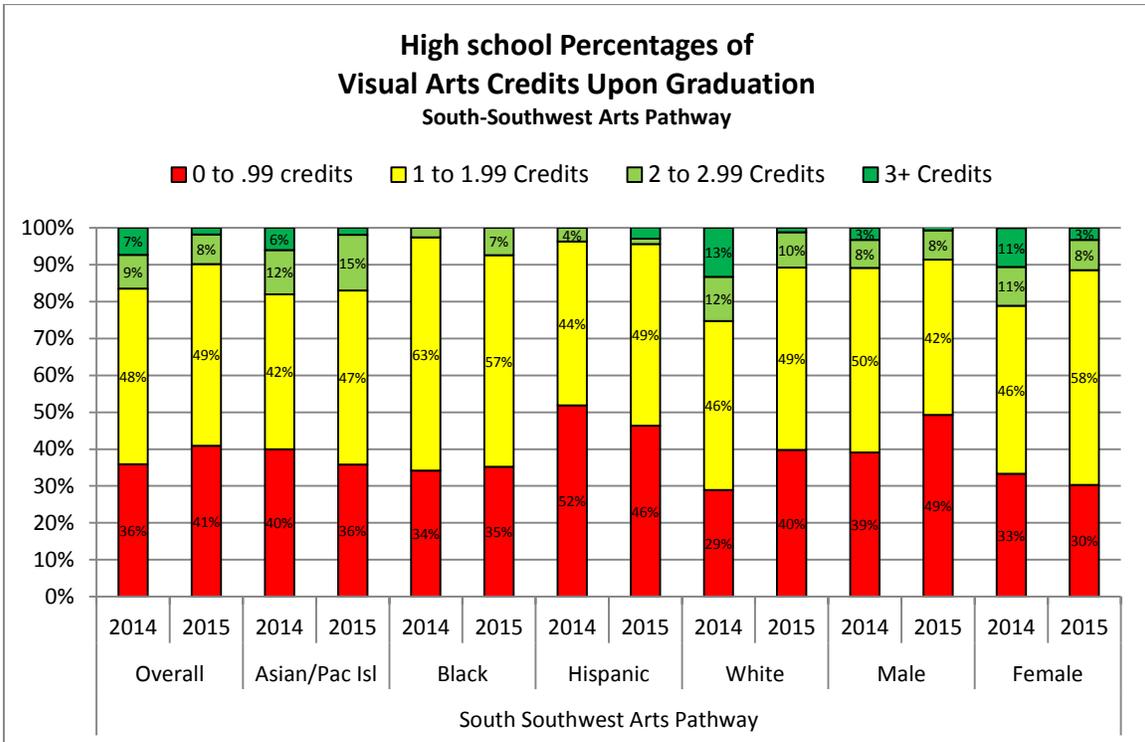


Figure 21. Number of total credits of visual arts taken, South-Southwest Arts Pathway graduating class of 2014 and 2015

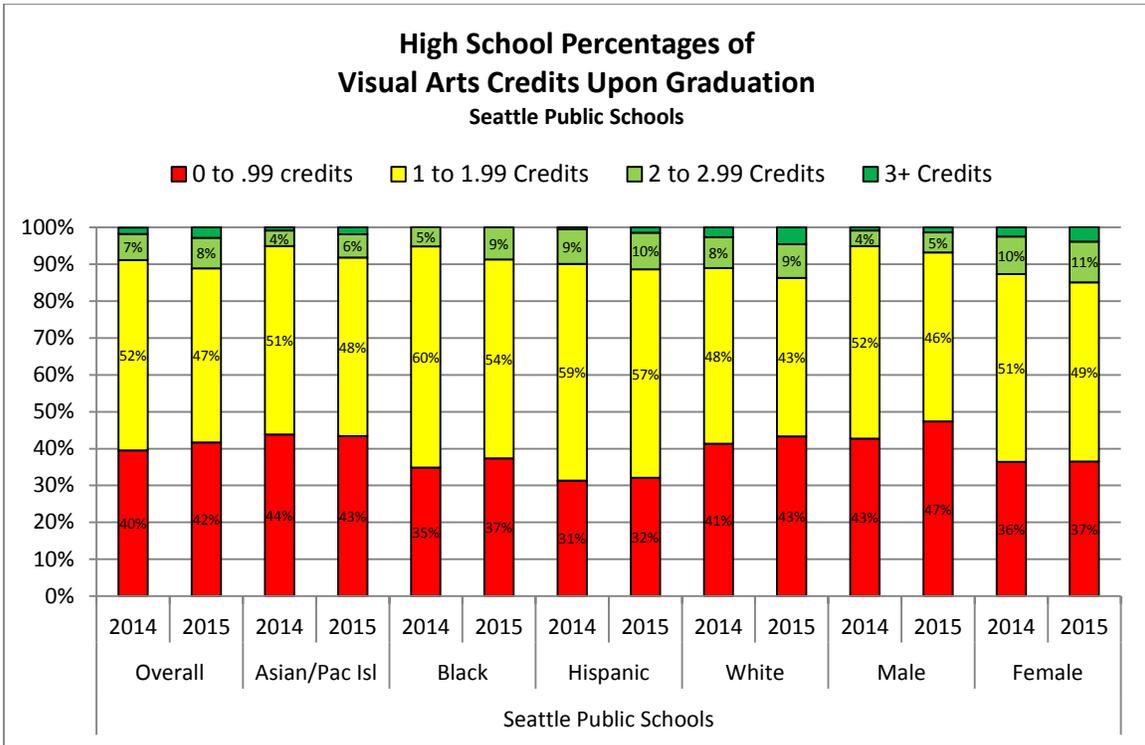


Figure 22. Number of total credits of visual arts taken, remaining Seattle Public Schools graduating class of 2014 and 2015

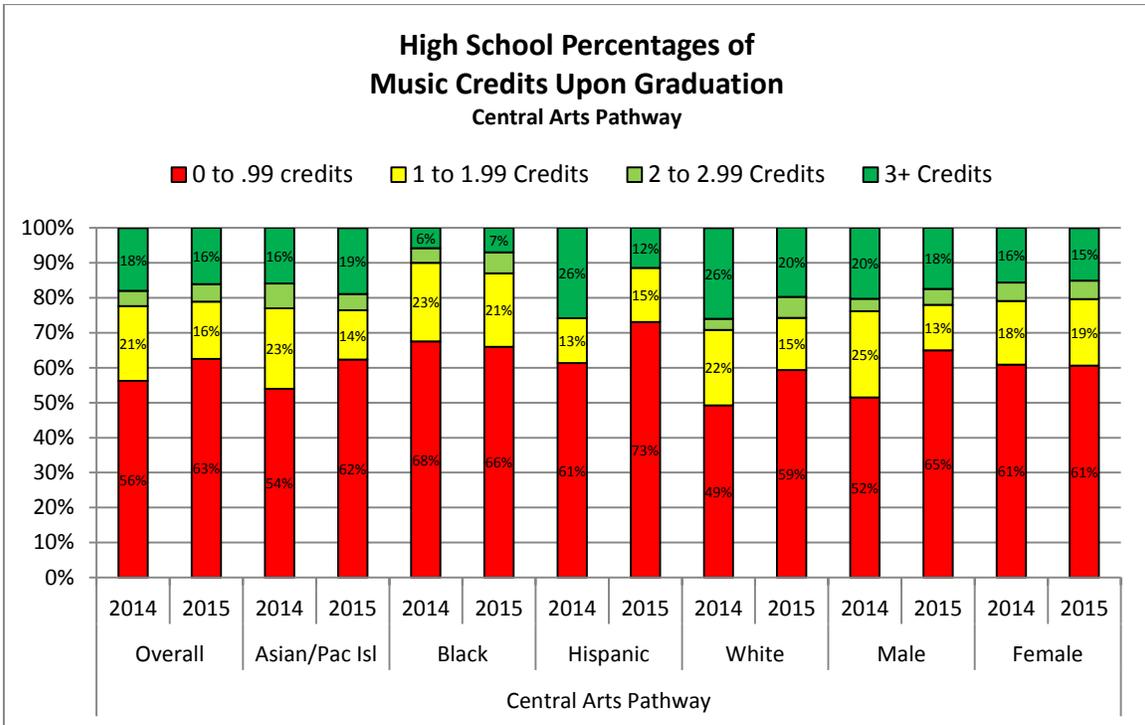


Figure 23. Number of total credits of music taken, Central Arts Pathway graduating class of 2014 and 2015

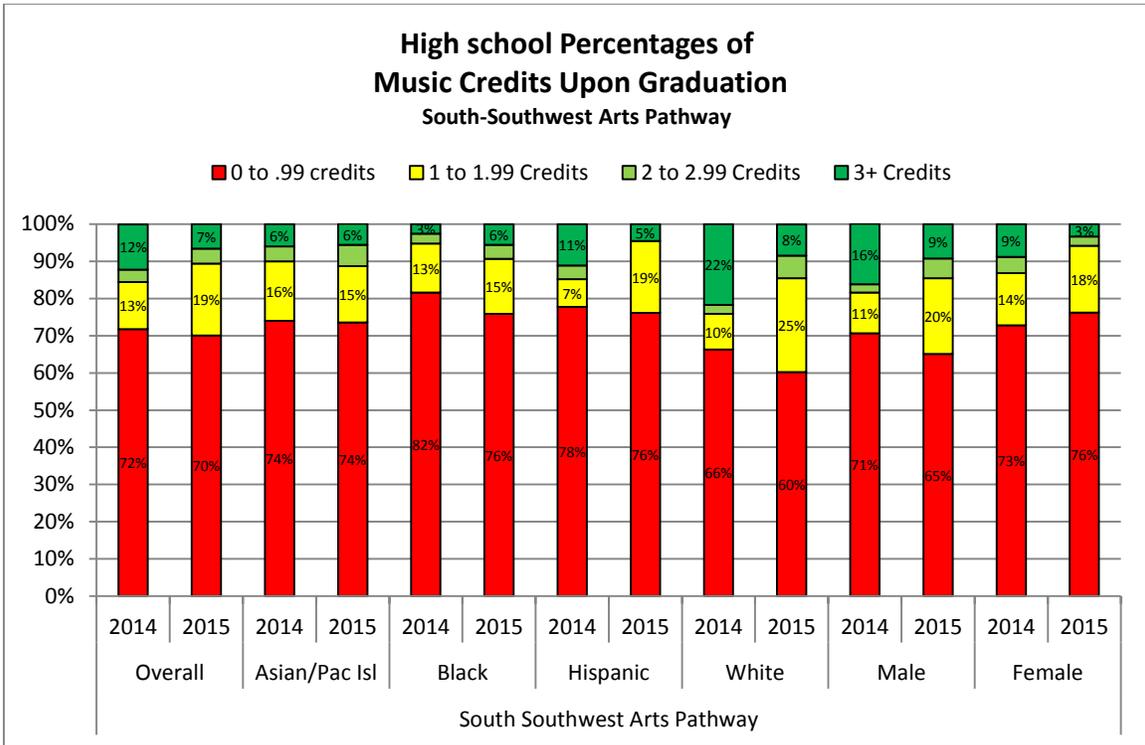


Figure 24. Number of total credits of music taken, South-Southwest Arts Pathway graduating class of 2014 and 2015

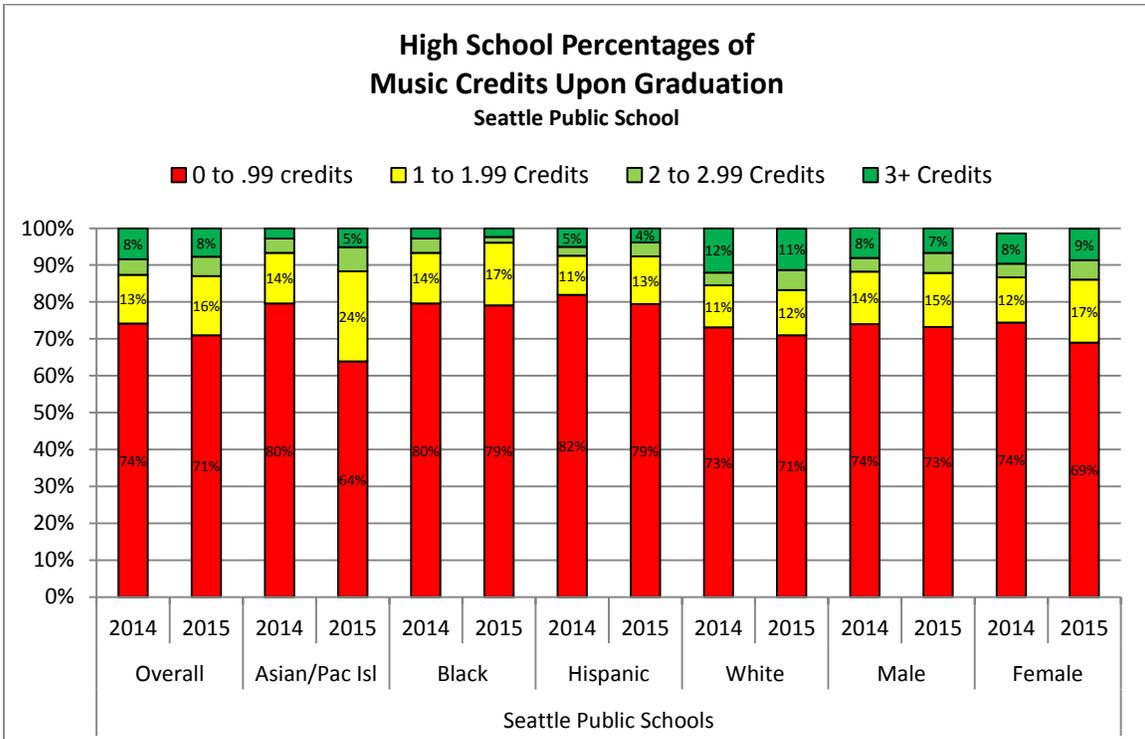


Figure 25. Number of total credits of music taken, remaining Seattle Public Schools graduating class of 2014 and 2015

### ***Does arts integration change over time***

Data on arts integration were collected through the School Arts Inventory. The data are difficult to interpret because the number of participants taking the School Arts Inventory has decreased overtime. Within the Central Arts Pathway 13 schools completed baseline survey data, 10 schools completed Year 1 data, and nine schools completed Year 2 data. The South-Southwest Pathway had a lower response of six out of nine schools completing some portion of the Year 1 survey data. However, only three survey respondents within the South-Southwest Pathway completed at least half of the survey, which makes many of the survey items unreportable. Please see the appendix for results of all comparison School Arts Inventory questions including: Baseline, Year 1, Year 2 Central Arts Pathway, and Year 1 Cohort 2 South-Southwest Pathway. Cohort 2 Year 1 survey question results with less than three respondents are not provided.

Overall, 86% of Central Arts Pathway school respondents reported an increase in the quantity and in the quality of arts integration instruction within their schools compared to 40% reporting an increase in the quantity of arts instruction and 20% reporting an increase in the quality of arts instruction in Year 1. During Year 2, Central Arts Pathways schools continue to use a variety of methods to teach arts integration with “using art to enhance other subjects” as most prominent across all years. All school respondents within the Central Arts Pathway indicated they are doing arts integration in Year 2.

### **Evaluation Question #5: To what extent does the use of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills instruction change over time?**

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*, and *Perseverance Skills*. An additional 21st Century Skill used by SPS, *Growth Mindset*, is not included in the Protocol due to the difficulty inherent in measuring it through classroom observations, instead of surveys or other means. *Creative Thinking* is manifested as the teacher provides students an opportunity to generate and develop novel ideas and solutions, and to make their own choices about how to approach learning tasks, instead of using scripted lessons and assignments. *Critical Thinking* is manifested as the teacher provides opportunities for students to elaborate, refine, analyze, and/or evaluate ideas, instead of just recalling information. *Communication Skills* are manifested as teachers provide students the opportunity to articulate their thoughts and emotions effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal skills, instead of just stating correct or incorrect answers. *Collaboration Skills* are manifested when teachers provide students with opportunities to work effectively and respectfully in diverse teams, instead of simply completing assignments individually. *Perseverance Skills* are manifested when teachers support students to persist in completing tasks and goals in the face of obstacles, instead of allowing them to give up.

### ***How are the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills measured?***

The 21st Century Skills section of the Protocol includes relevant strategies from the STAR Protocol as well as additional strategies developed through research into 21st Century Skills. One half of the Indicators (n=“5”) are designed to measure the extent to which the teacher initiates effective opportunities for students to demonstrate the 21st Century Skills. The other half of the Indicators (n=“5”) are designed to measure the extent to which students are effectively engaged in using these



skills. The 21st Century Skills section of the Protocol is scored on all 10 Indicators, all five 21st Century Skills Components, and Overall. The scores from the original STAR Protocol are not included in scoring; however, because several observables exist in both the STAR Protocol and the 21st Century Skills section. The 4-point scoring scale represents the extent to which 21st Century Skills are evident during an observation period. The Indicator and Component scales range from 1- Not Observable to 4-Clearly Observable. The Overall score represents the extent to which the overall teaching and learning practices observed were aligned with Powerful Teaching and Learning. The 4-point scale ranges from 1-Not at All, 2-Very Little, 3-Somewhat, and 4-Very.

Overall, researchers found clear evidence of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in 34% of the classrooms they visited in 2015, compared to 23% in 2014(see Figure 26). All of the skills scored in the low or moderate ranges. Communication was the highest-scoring skills, with 46% of classrooms scoring a 3 or 4, an increase of 10 percentage points from 2014 (See Figure 29). An analysis of individual indicators (see Table 8) revealed that researchers observed 48% of teachers providing opportunities for students to engage with dialogue, debate, or written/oral assignments. Perseverance was the lowest-scoring skill, with 21% of classrooms scoring a 3 or 4 in 2015; however, this is a 6 percentage point improvement from 2014 (see Figure 31). An analysis of the individual indicators reveals that researchers observed students reflecting on growth, connecting learning tasks to long-term goals, and/or practicing strategies for taking responsibility and dealing with challenges in only 12% of the classrooms (see Table 8).

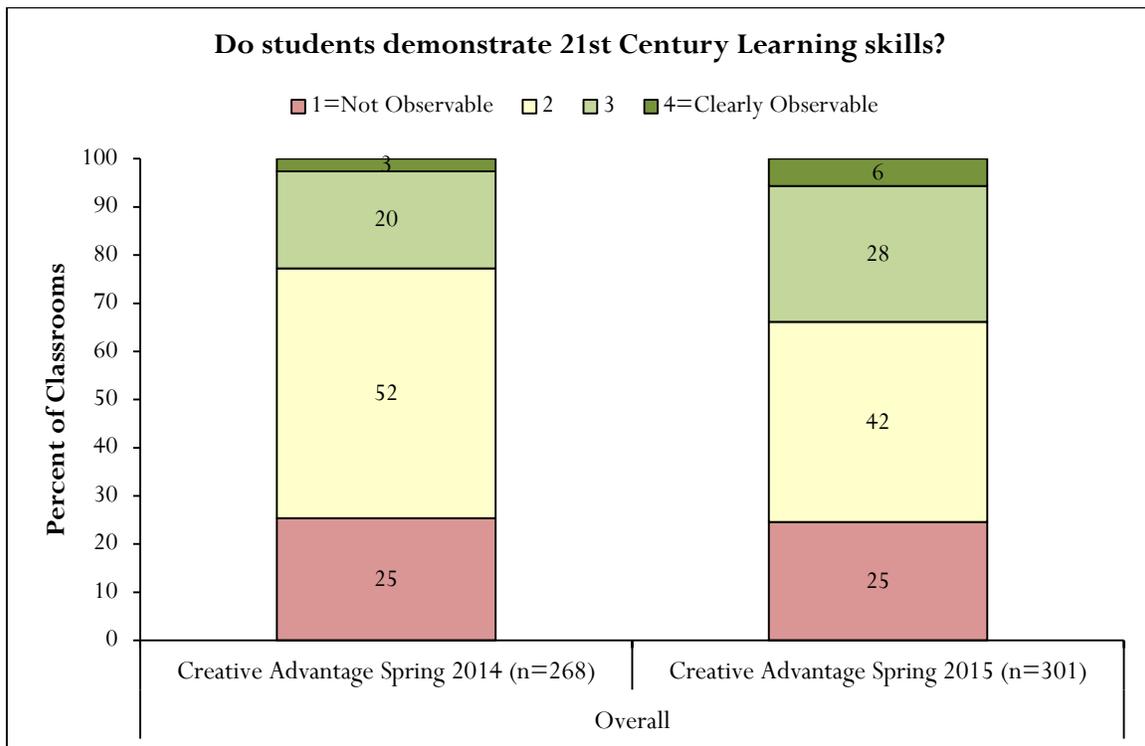


Figure 26. Classroom observation data – overall 21st Century Skills

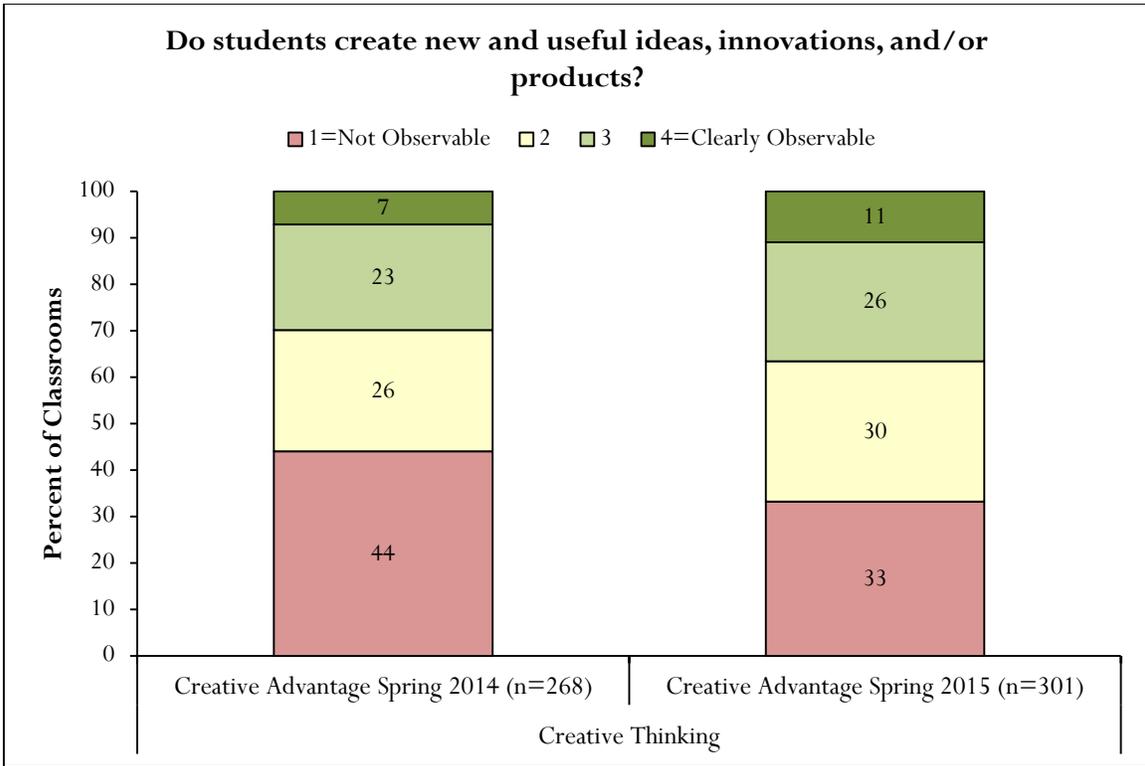


Figure 127 Classroom observation data - Creative Thinking

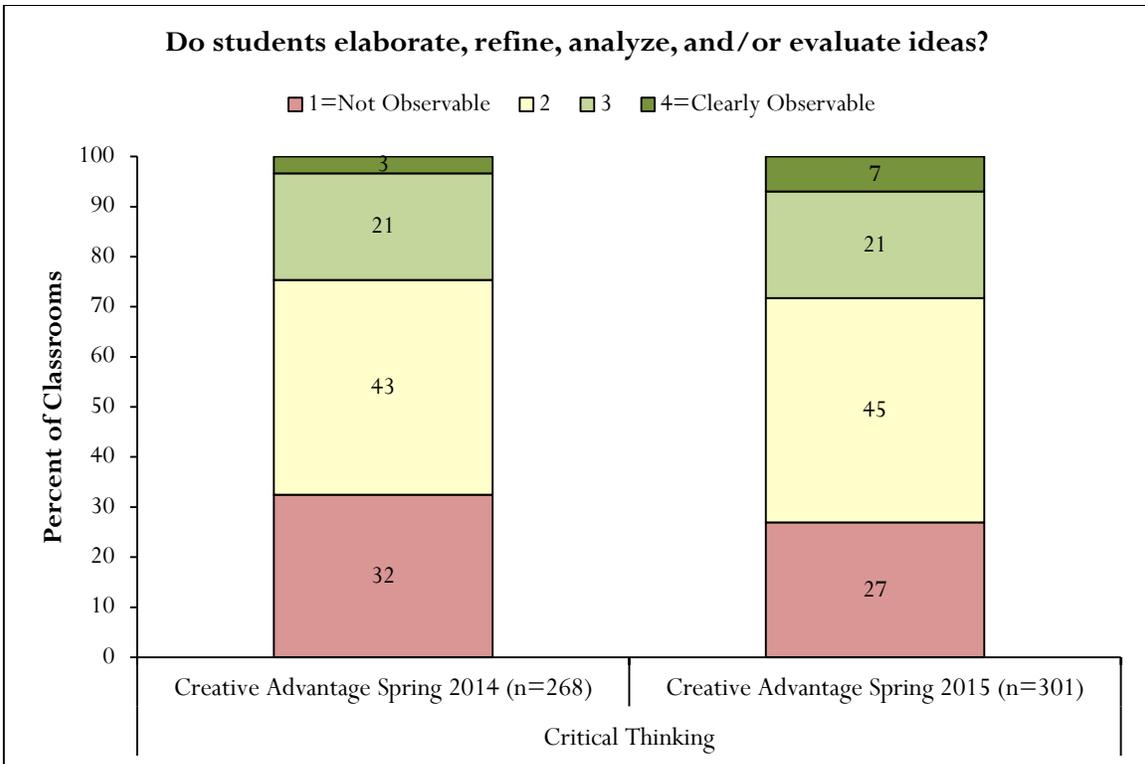


Figure 28. Classroom observation data - Critical Thinking

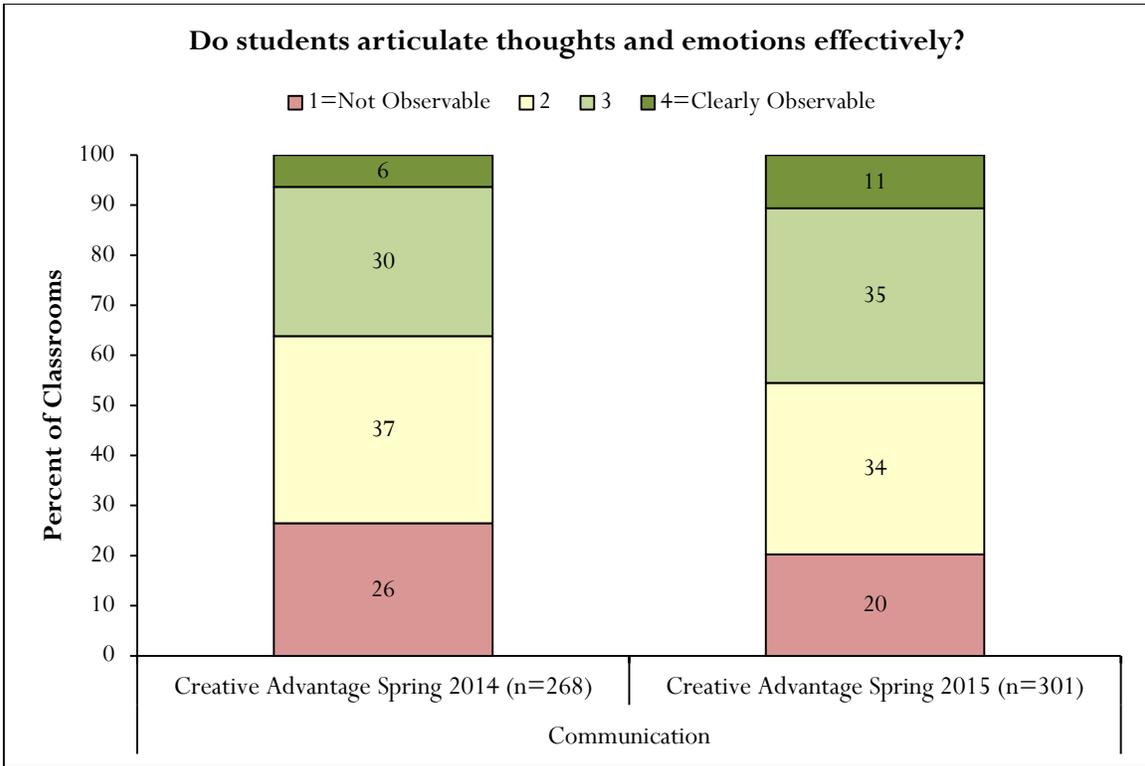


Figure 29. Classroom observation data - Communication

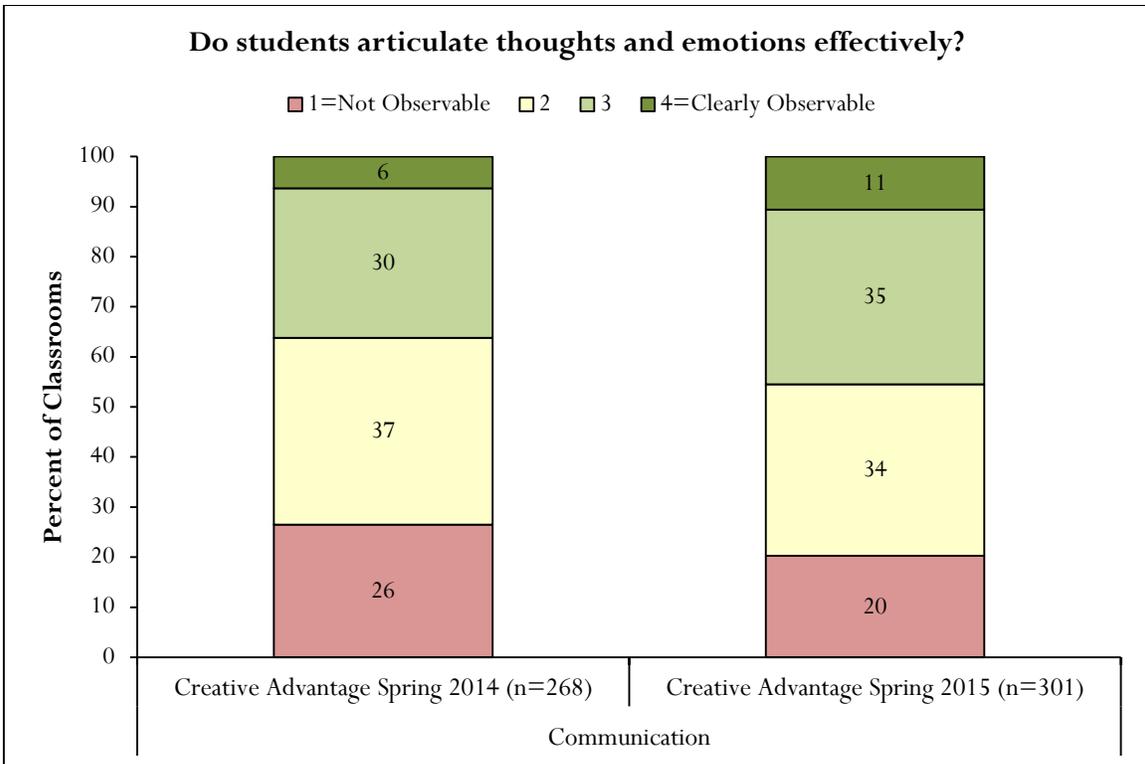


Figure 30 Classroom observation data - Collaboration

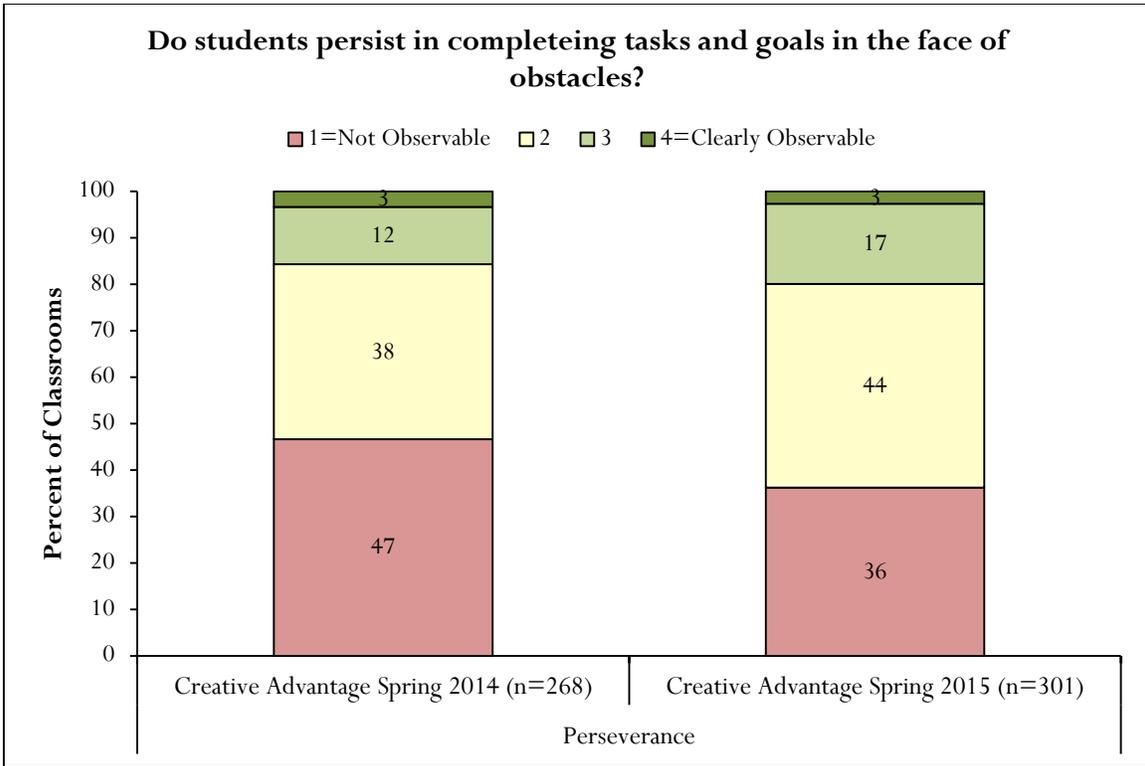


Figure 31. Classroom observation data – Perseverance



**Table 8.**  
*21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Indicators*

<i>Creative Thinking</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
13. <b>Teacher</b> provides students an opportunity to generate and develop novel ideas/solutions and make their own choices about how to approach learning tasks.	32%	31%	26%	12%
			37%	
14. <b>Students</b> create new and useful ideas, innovations, and/or products.	35%	30%	24%	11%
			35%	
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
15. <b>Teacher</b> provides opportunities for students to engage with skills/concepts in multiple ways.	32%	42%	20%	7%
			27%	
16. <b>Students</b> elaborate, refine, analyze, and/or evaluate ideas.	30%	44%	20%	6%
			27%	
<i>Communication</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
17. <b>Teacher</b> provides students an opportunity to engage in dialogue, debate, and written/oral assignments.	17%	35%	36%	12%
			48%	
18. <b>Students</b> articulate thoughts and emotions.	22%	34%	34%	10%
			45%	
<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
19. <b>Teacher</b> provides opportunities for student collaboration.	41%	25%	19%	15%
			34%	
20. <b>Students</b> work effectively and respectfully in teams.	45%	21%	21%	13%
			34%	
<i>Perseverance</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
21. <b>Teacher</b> provides encouragement and problem-solving strategies.	28%	42%	24%	6%
			30%	
22. <b>Students</b> reflect on growth, connect learning tasks to long-term goals, and/or practice strategies for taking responsibility and dealing with challenges.	57%	31%	10%	2%
			12%	

Researchers disaggregated the results to look specifically at Art classrooms (see Figures 32 through 37). The results of observations conducted in the Arts classrooms show evidence of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills at a similar rate as the other classrooms. In 2015, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills were evidence in 38% of Arts Classrooms compared to 34% of the other classrooms (see Figure 32). Most the Skills scored in the low to moderate range, and were similar to the Arts classrooms and non-Arts classrooms, with one exception. Creative Thinking was evident in Arts classrooms at a moderately high range (69% in 2015), while Creative Thinking was evident in non-Arts classrooms at a moderately low range (37% in 2015) (see Figure 33).

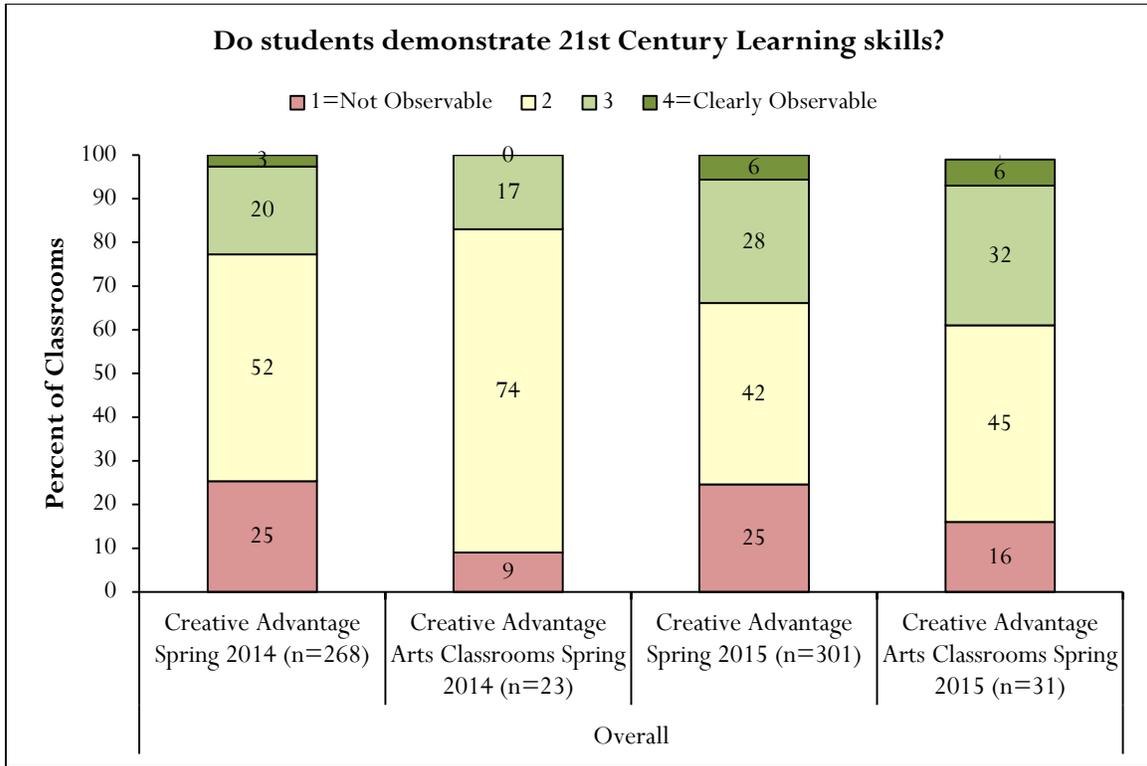


Figure 32. Classroom observation data – overall 21st Century Skills, Arts Classrooms Compared to other Classrooms

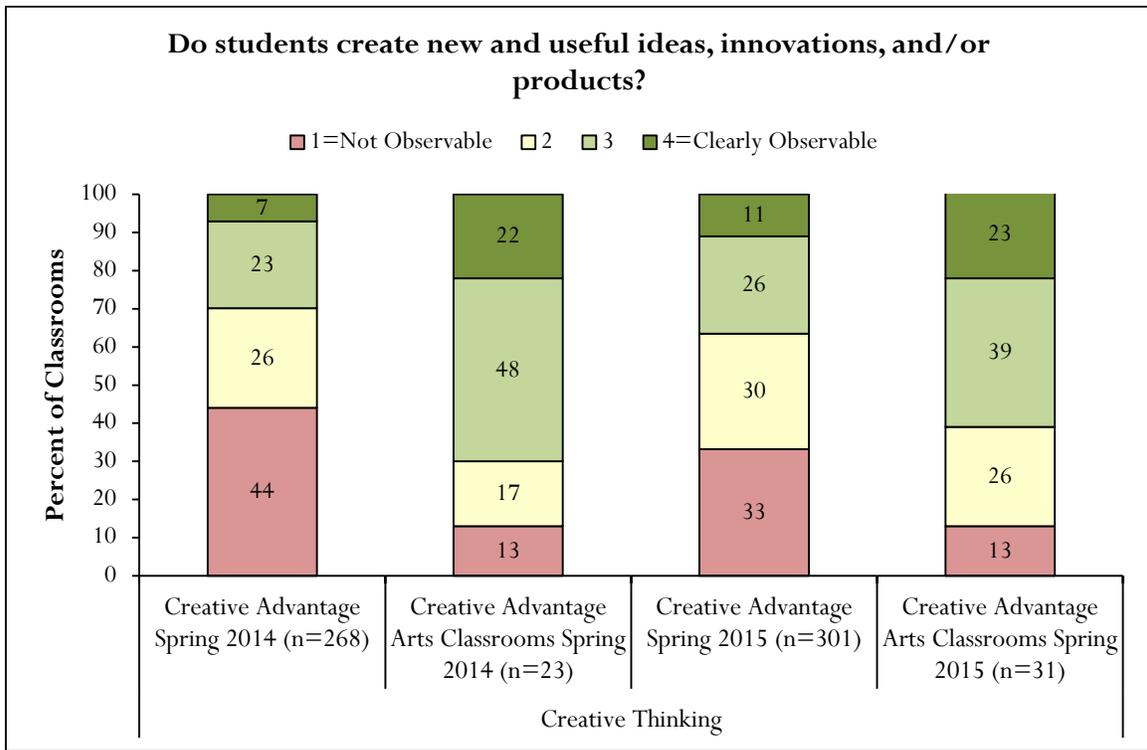


Figure 33. Classroom observation data - Creative Thinking, Arts Classrooms Compared to other Classrooms

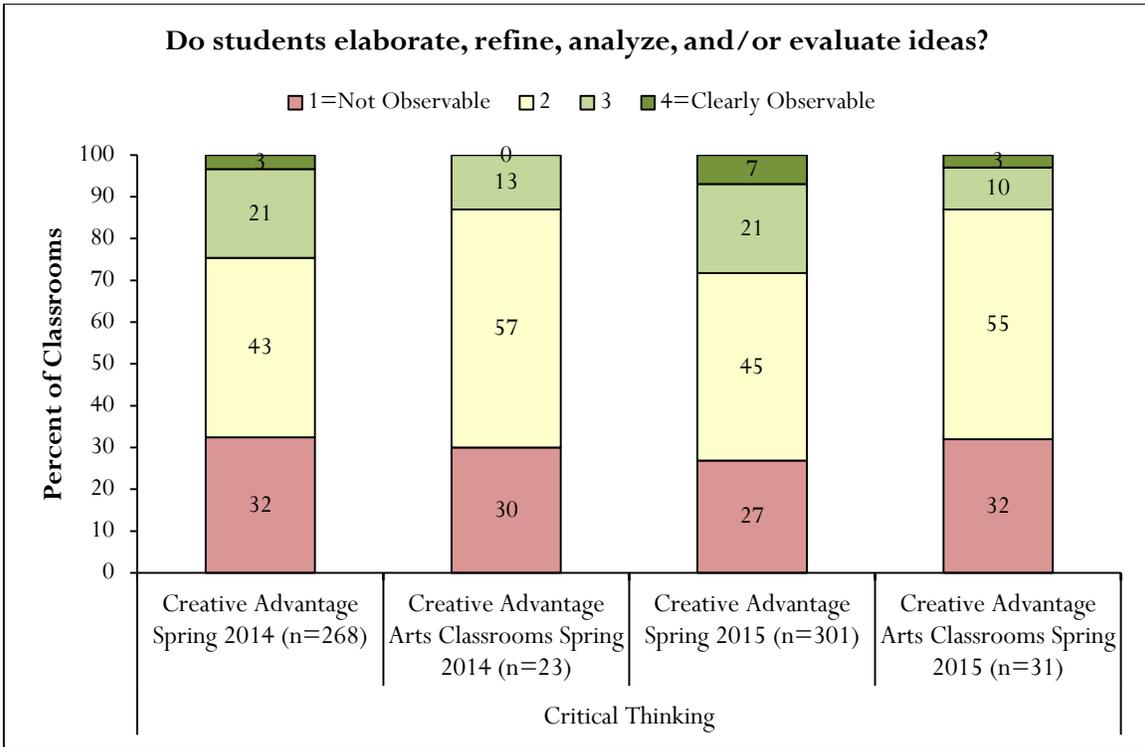


Figure 34. Classroom observation data - Critical Thinking, Arts Classrooms Compared to other Classrooms

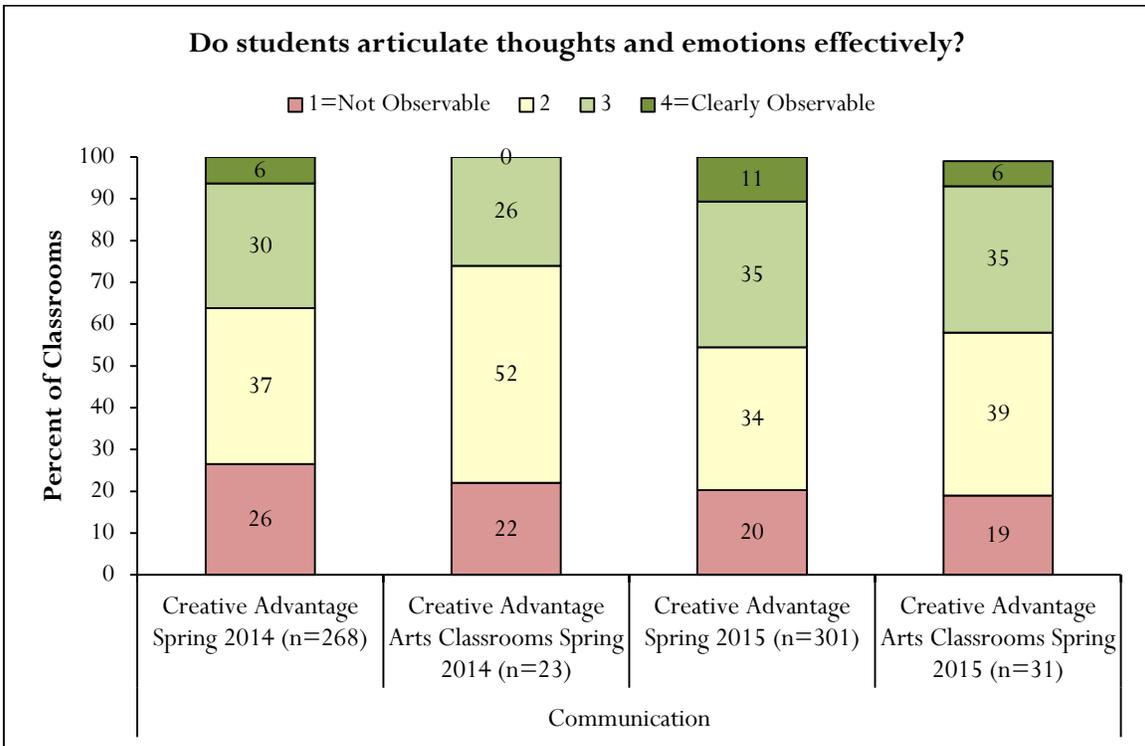


Figure 35 Classroom observation data - Communication, Arts Classrooms Compared to other Classrooms

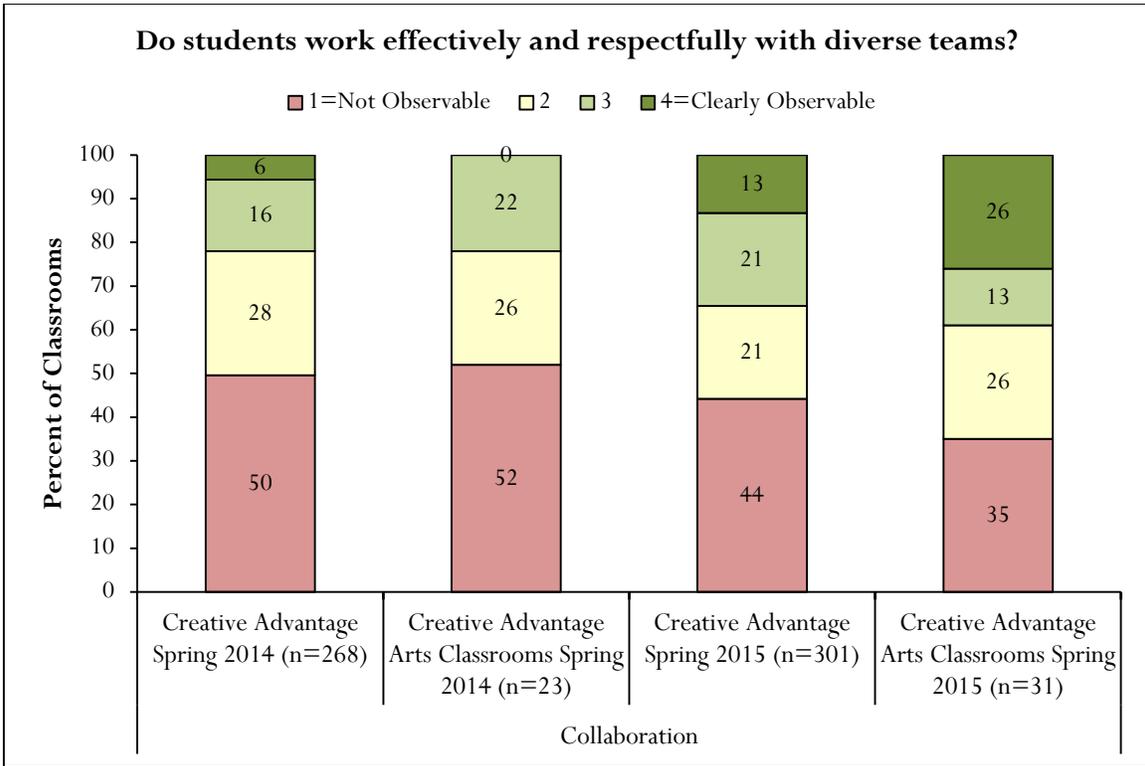


Figure 36. Classroom observation data - Collaboration, Arts Classrooms Compared to other Classrooms

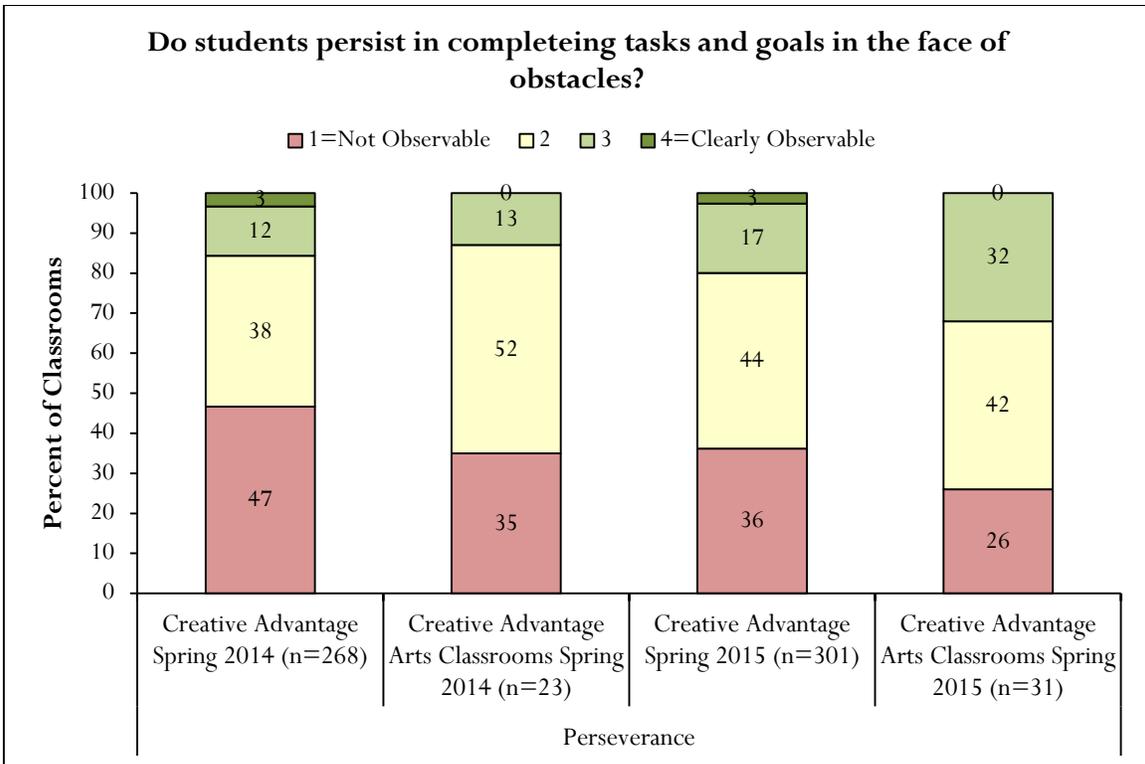


Figure 37. Classroom observation data – Perseverance, Arts Classrooms Compared to other Classrooms



**Cultural Competency.** In conjunction with personnel from SPS, researchers at The BERC Group identified four Indicators from the STAR Protocol to measure the extent to which the classrooms observed exhibited *Culturally Responsive* teaching and learning. Half of the Indicators ( $n=2$ ) focused on teachers assuring the purpose of the lesson was clear and relevant to all students and assuring the classroom was a positive and challenging environment. The other half ( $n=2$ ) focused on students demonstrating a meaningful personal connection to the lesson and experiencing learning activities that were adapted to meet the needs of diverse learners. The 4-point scoring scale represents the extent to which *Culturally Responsive* teaching and learning is evident during an observation period. The Indicator and Component scales range from 1-Not Observable to 4-Clearly Observable. The Overall score represents the extent to which the overall teaching and learning practices observed were aligned with cultural competency. The 4-point scale ranges from 1-Not at All, 2-Very Little, 3-Somewhat, and 4-Very

Researchers observed evidence of *Culturally Responsive* in 55% of the classrooms they visited in 2015 compared to 53% in 2014 (see Figure 38). This is 27 percentage-points higher than the STAR average. An analysis of the individual Indicators (see Table 9) showed that the vast majority (88%) of teachers who were observed assured the classroom was a positive academic environment. The other Indicators scored in the low and moderate ranges. The lowest of these was Indicator 8: researchers observed students demonstrating a meaningful personal connection to the lesson in only 30% of the classrooms.

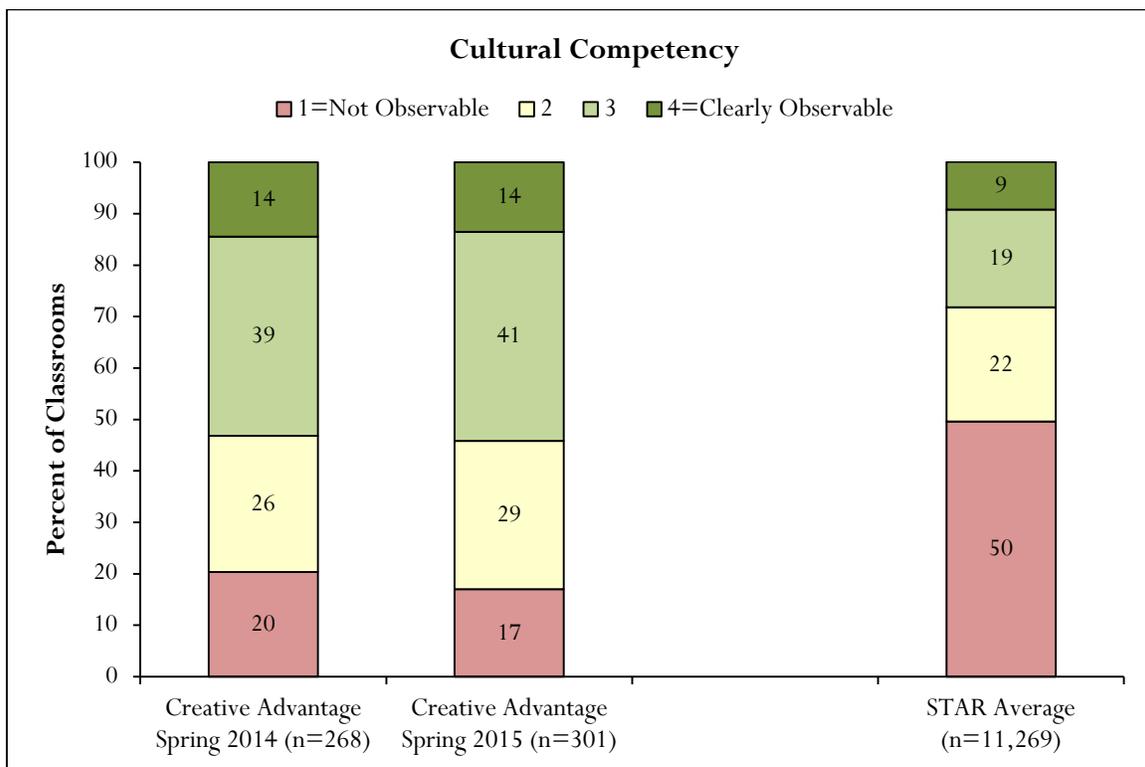


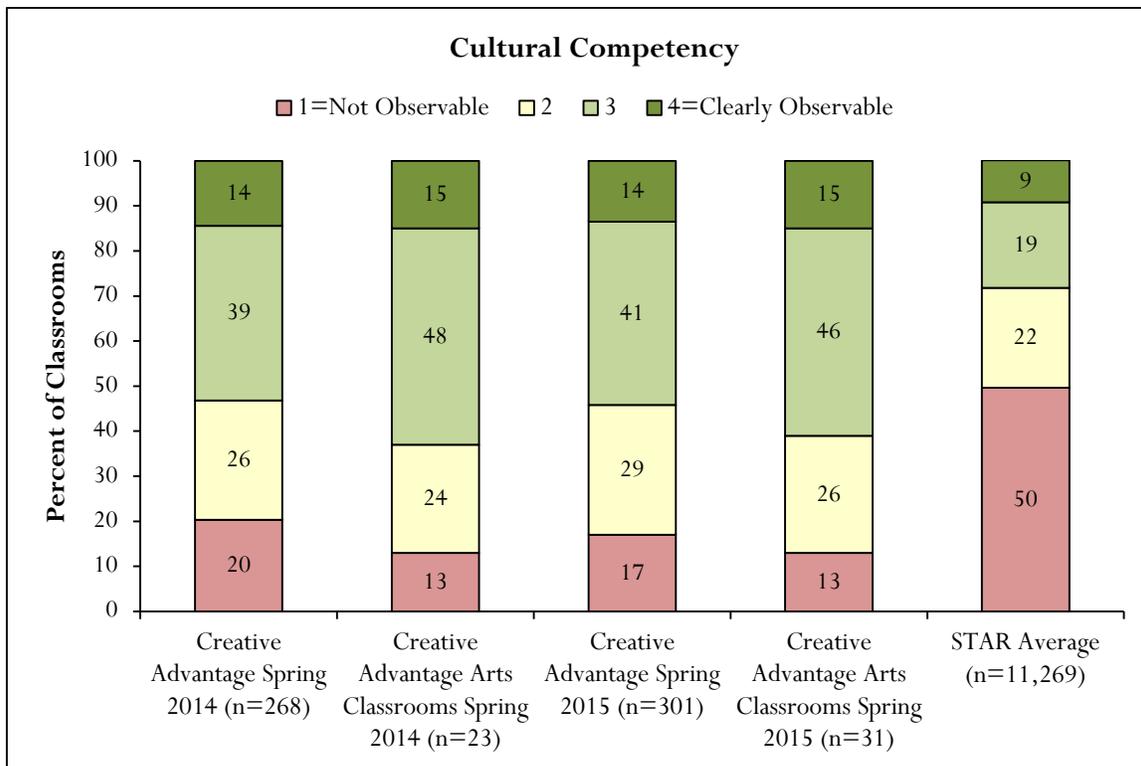
Figure 38. Classroom Observation Data – Culturally Responsive

**Table 9.**

***Culturally Responsive Indicators***

<b>CULTURAL COMPETENCY</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
7. Teacher assures that the purpose of the lesson is clear and relevant to all students.	17%	43%	32%	9%
			41%	
8. Students demonstrate a meaningful personal connection to the lesson.	41%	29%	24%	6%
			30%	
10. Teacher assures the classroom is a positive and challenging academic environment.	1%	11%	64%	24%
			88%	
12. Students experiencing learning activities that are adapted to meet needs of diverse learners.	10%	33%	43%	15%
			57%	

Researchers also disaggregated the results to look specifically at Art classrooms compared to non-Arts classrooms (see Figure 39). The results show very little differences between the groups. Both groups demonstrate evidence of Cultural Competence in the classroom at a moderately high range. The difference in n-sizes between the groups should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results, as larger fluctuations are expected with small sample sizes.



**Figure 39. Classroom Observation Data – Culturally Responsive, Arts Classrooms Compared to Other Classrooms**

## Evaluation Question #6: To what extent does student achievement change over time?

### *Percent of Students Meeting Arts Standards at Elementary School*

To assess changes in the percent of students meeting arts standards in elementary schools, we examined three school years of data from SPS (see Figure 40). For students enrolled in the Central Arts Pathway, the percentage rose from 78% in 2012-13 to 88% in 2014-15. For students enrolled in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway, the percentage fell from 83% in 2012-13 to 72% in 2014-15. For students enrolled in the other SPS service areas, the percentage rose from 87% in 2012-13 to 91% in 2014-15. We used a generalized mixed model to analyze the change in the percent of students meeting arts standards in SPS. The model showed that the rate of increase over the three-year period was slightly lower for students in the Central Arts Pathway than for students in other service areas within SPS,  $\pi_{21} = -0.26 (0.04)$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Table 2). The model also showed slower rates of increase for students enrolled in the South-Southwest Arts district SPS,  $\pi_{21} = -1.27 (0.28)$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Table 10).

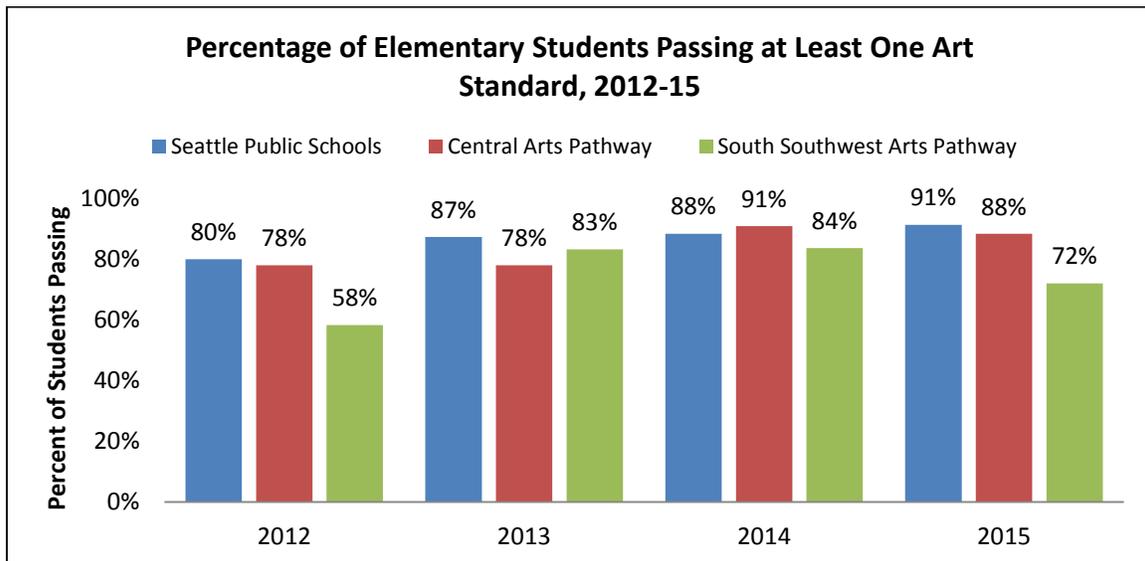


Figure 40. Percentage of elementary students passing at least one art standard, 2012-15

Table 10.

### *Fixed Effects for Generalized Linear Model for Percent of Students Passing Arts Standard*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>exp(B)</i>	<i>1/exp(B)</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>Pr(&gt;  z )</i>
(Intercept), $\pi_{00}$	0.51	1.67	0.60	0.26	1.97	0.05
Central Arts Pathway, $\pi_{10}$	-0.34	0.71	1.41	0.68	-0.50	0.62
South-Southwest Arts Pathway, $\pi_{20}$	-0.23	0.79	1.26	0.76	-0.30	0.76
Linear, $\pi_{30}$	2.37	10.70	0.09	0.02	130.29	<.001
Linear X Central, $\pi_{31}$	-0.26	0.77	1.30	0.04	-6.23	<.001
Linear X South-Southwest, $\pi_{32}$	-1.27	0.28	3.54	0.03	-37.63	<.001

### *Passing Arts Classes at MS and HS*

We examined middle and high school students' course-taking data to assess the percentage of arts courses in which students received at least a C- or a passing grade. The data showed that the percentage of students who reached this benchmark was similar in all three groups of schools (see Figure 41).

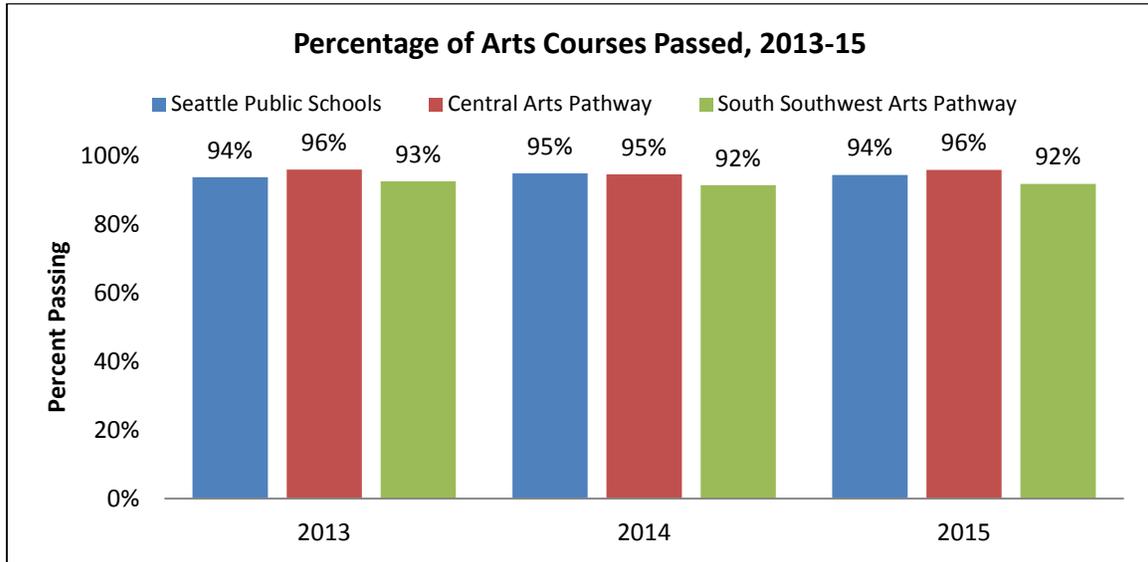


Figure 41. Percentage of arts courses passed, 2013-2015

### *Assessment Results*

To examine the relationship between program activities and academic achievement, we analyzed results from the Smarter Balanced assessments in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Since the assessment changed, we did not present previous results and will use this data as our baseline. Figure 42 shows the percentage of students in Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and other SPS. The figure shows that the Central and South-Southwest Pathways had lower English and math scores during the first year of the Smarter Balanced test. Table 11 shows the generalized linear mixed model for English. This analysis indicated that the Central Pathway's English scores were significantly lower than SPS' scores. Although the South-Southwest Arts Pathway's scores were also lower than the SPS average, the analysis indicated that the difference was not statistically significant. Similarly, the analysis for mathematics showed that both the Central and South-Southwest Pathways had significantly lower passing rates than the SPS average (see Table 12). It is important to note that many students boycotted the standardized tests this year. The results should be interpreted with caution.

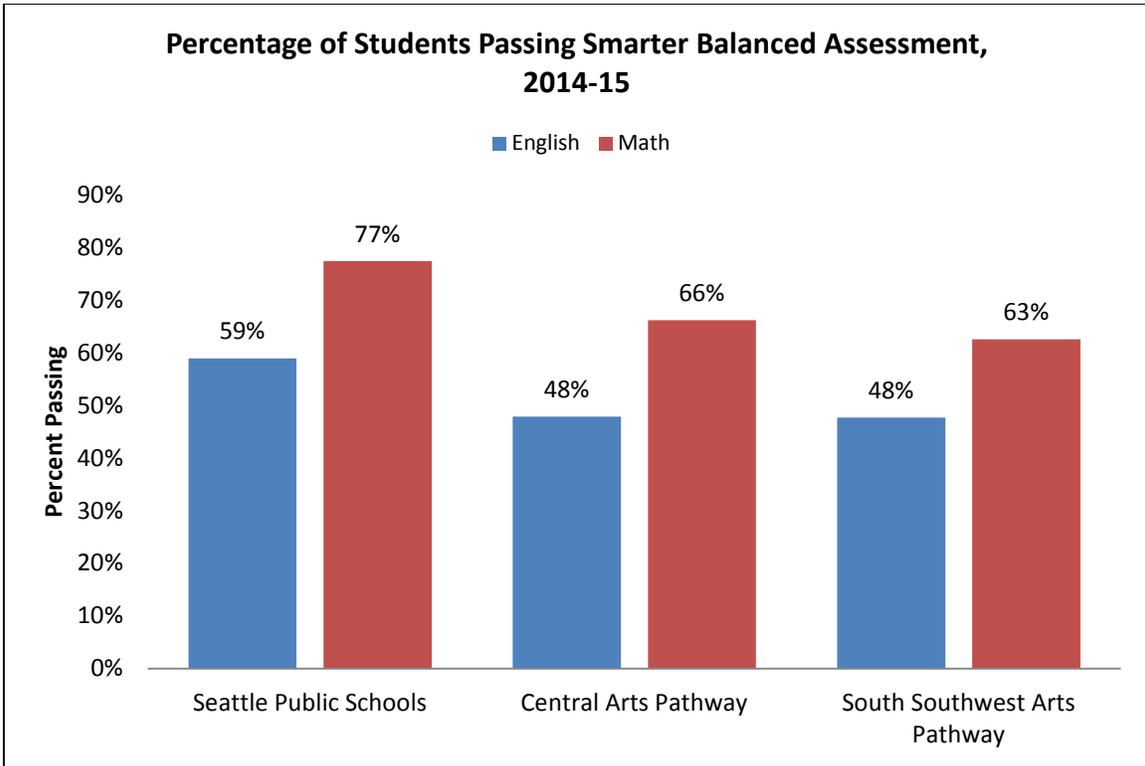


Figure 42. Percentage of students passing English and Math Smarter Balanced Assessments, 2014-15

**Table 11.**

*Fixed Effects for Generalized Linear Model for Percent of Students Passing Smarter Balanced English Language Arts Assessment*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>exp(B)</i>	<i>1/exp(B)</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>Pr(&gt;  z )</i>
(Intercept), $\pi_{00}$	0.35	1.42	0.71	0.12	2.90	0.00
Central District, $\pi_{10}$	-0.79	0.45	2.21	0.32	-2.50	0.01
South-Southwest District, $\pi_{20}$	-0.58	0.56	1.78	0.37	-1.57	0.12

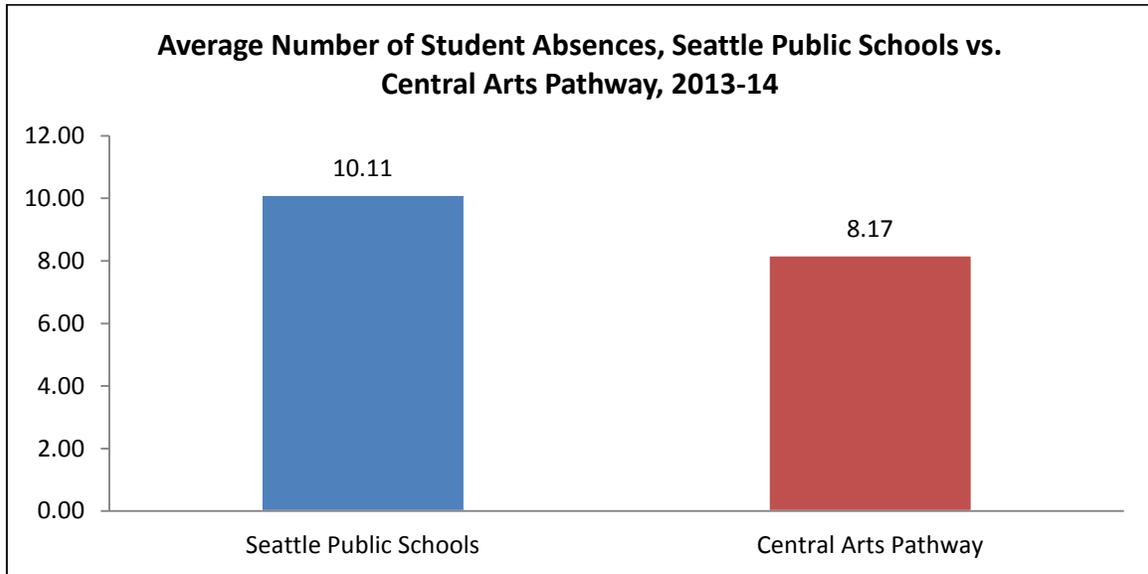
**Table 12.**

*Fixed Effects for Generalized Linear Model for Percent of Students Passing Smarter Balanced Math Assessment*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>exp(B)</i>	<i>1/exp(B)</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>Pr(&gt;  z )</i>
(Intercept), $\pi_{00}$	1.10	2.99	0.33	0.11	10.21	$p < .001$
Central District, $\pi_{10}$	-0.69	0.50	2.00	0.28	-2.45	0.01
South-Southwest District, $\pi_{20}$	-0.80	0.45	2.24	0.33	-2.45	0.01

### ***Absenteeism***

We also examined the number of absences at SPS schools for the 2013-14 school year. Our analysis showed that students enrolled at Central Arts Pathway schools had fewer absences, on average, than their counterparts in the rest of SPS. Figure 35 shows the average number of absences in SPS and the Central Arts Pathway. These results were not analyzed in the 2014-15 school year because of problems with the dataset. If we receive a new dataset, we will update this section of the report.



**Figure 43. Average number of student absences, Seattle Public Schools vs. Central Arts Pathway, 2013-14**

### ***Suspension Rates***

We also examined SPS discipline files from the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. The files included information on a variety of discipline incidents, including office referrals, school-based actions, emergency exclusions, expulsions from school and the district, and suspensions (in-house, short-term, and long-term). The present analysis includes students that received expulsions and suspensions. More specifically, we counted the number of students who received these consequences. We divided the number of expelled and suspended students by the total number of students enrolled at a particular school to calculate the percentage of the total student population suspended or expelled. Figure 36 shows the percentage expelled or suspended in the Central Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and SPS. The percentage of students receiving these disciplinary consequences increased from the 2012-13 to the 2013-14 school year in the Central Arts Pathway, but decreased to the previous level during the last school year. The Southwest Pathway had a slightly higher number of disciplined students than the Central Pathway during 2015.

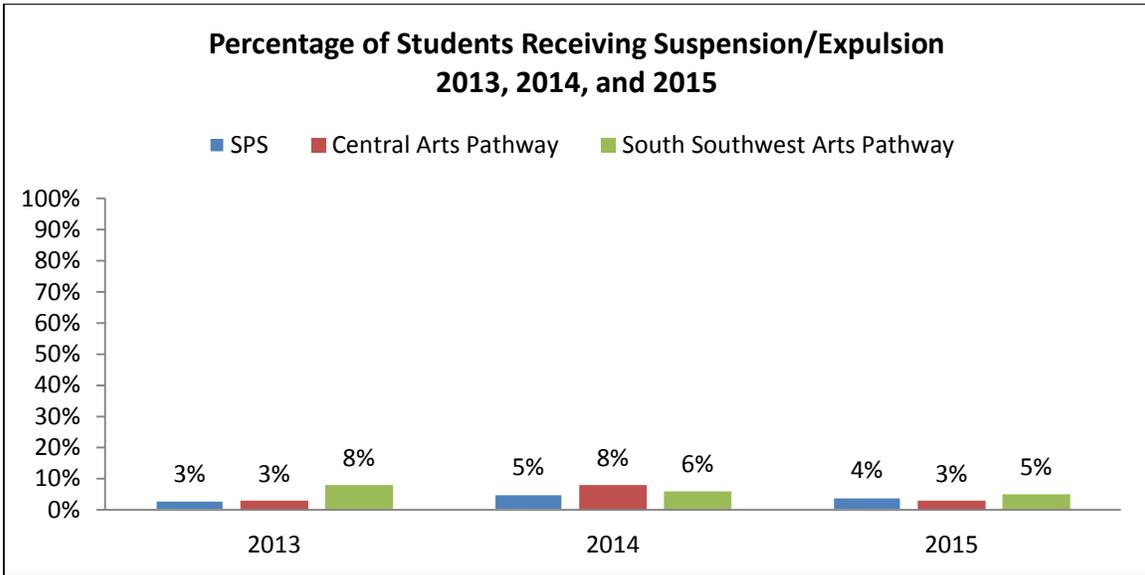


Figure 44. Percentage of students receiving suspension/expulsion -2013 - 2015

#### ***Graduation Rates***

Figure 45 shows the adjusted 5-year graduation rates for Seattle Public Schools. The graduation rate for Central Arts Pathway high schools remained at 85% across all three years. The graduation rate in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway rose from a low of 80% in 2013 and 2014 to a high of 86% in 2015. The rate at the other schools in SPS stayed between 76% and 77%. Chi square tests indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups.

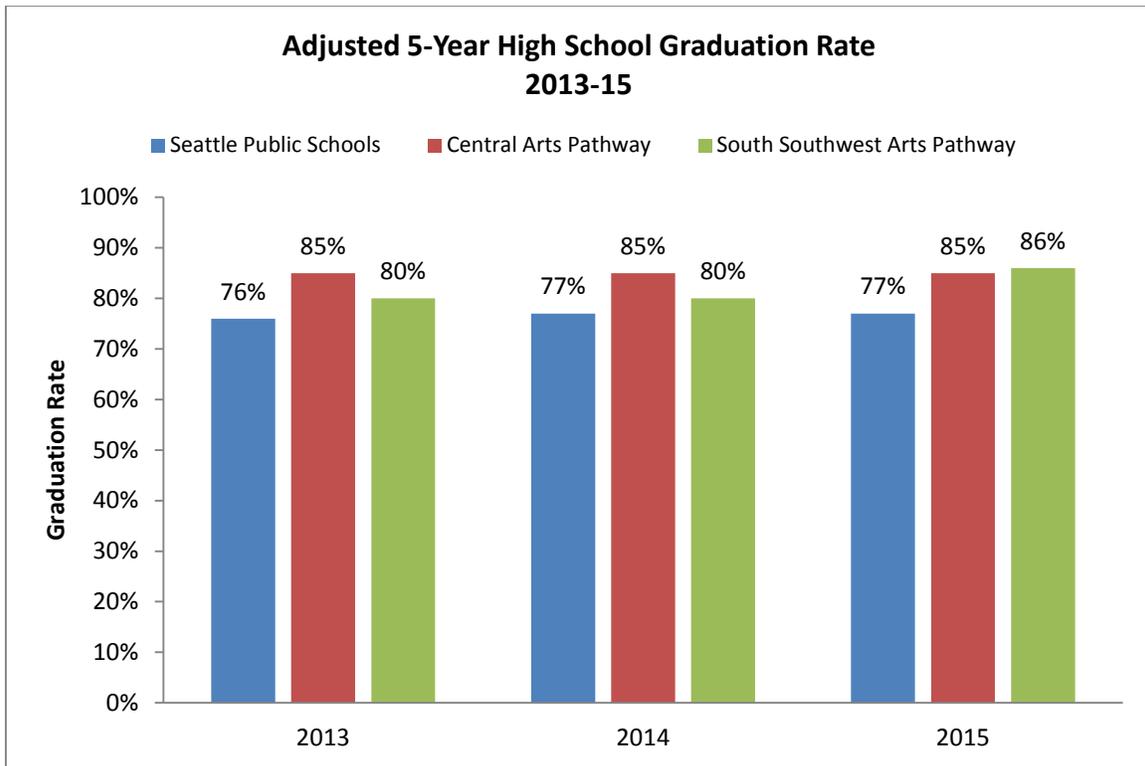


Figure 45. Adjusted 5-Year high school graduation rate- 2013-15

**Evaluation Question #7: To what extent are students prepared for, attending, and persisting in college?**

*College ready transcripts*

To assess the extent to which students are prepared for college, researchers collected transcripts for all graduating students from the class of 2014 and 2015. Researchers analyzed the transcripts to determine if the courses taken met the College Admission Distribution Requirements (CADRs) as defined by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). The requirements include:

- 4 years of English, which must include three years of literature
- 3 years of mathematics, which must include an introduction to trigonometry
- 3 years of social studies
- 2 years of science, which must include two years of laboratory science, one of which must be algebra based (Biology, Chemistry, or Physics).
- 2 years of the same foreign language
- 1 year of fine arts

Of the 2015 high school graduates in the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway and across the remaining SPS schools, 62.0%, 52.2%, and 62.7% of the graduates, respectively, took the requisite courses for admission to a Washington four-year college (see Figure 46). These percentages are slightly below 2014 rates, and this is a particular drop for the South-Southwest



Pathway. This shows that a many students graduating from these schools cannot be admitted to college because of course deficiencies.

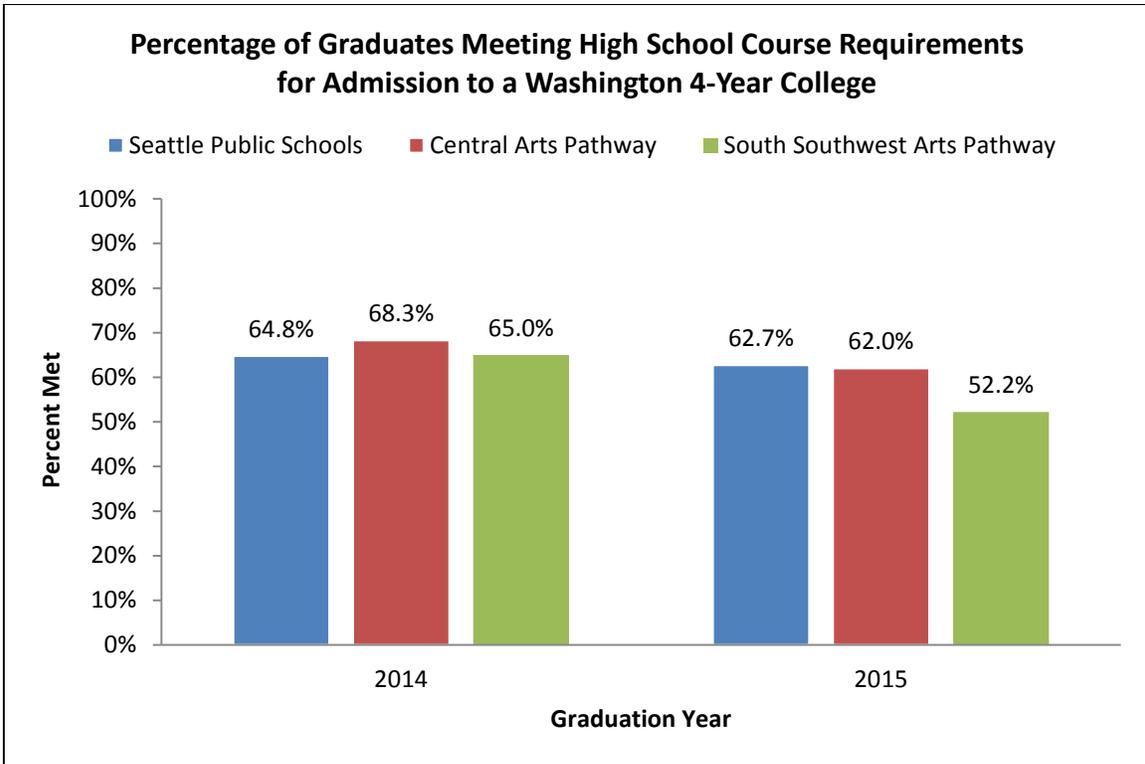


Figure 46. Percentage of 2014 and 2015 graduates meeting high school course requirements for admissions to a Washington four-year college

These data show similar patterns when disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender across all groups. Generally, Asian and White students typically met college eligibility requirements at a greater rate than Black and Hispanic students (see Figures 47 through 49). By region, there was a general decrease across all ethnic/racial groups, with the South-Southwest Arts Pathway demonstrating the largest decrease.

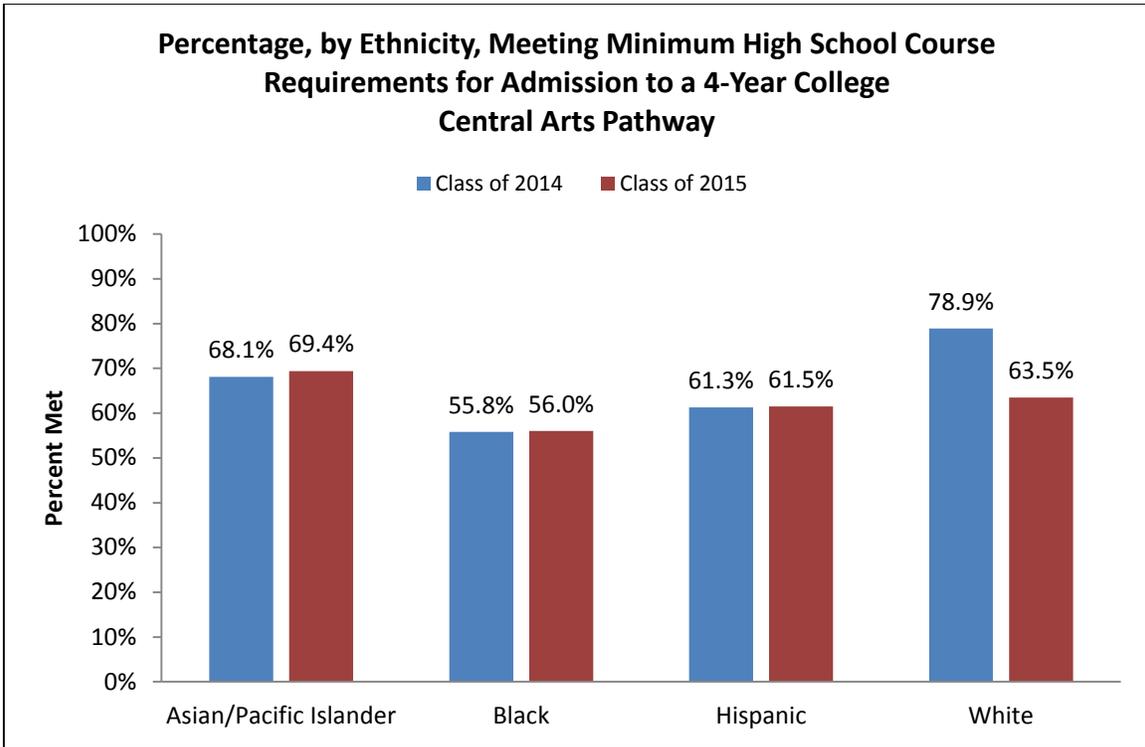


Figure 47. Percentage of students meeting four-year college course requirements by ethnicity, Central Arts Pathway

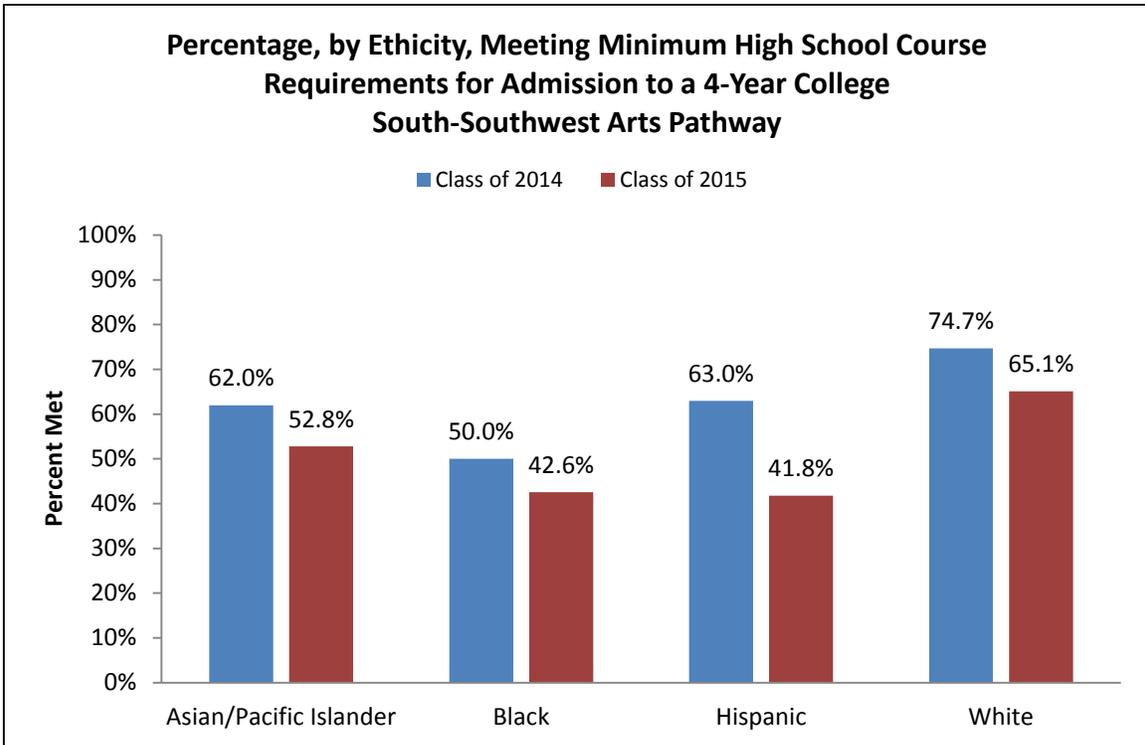
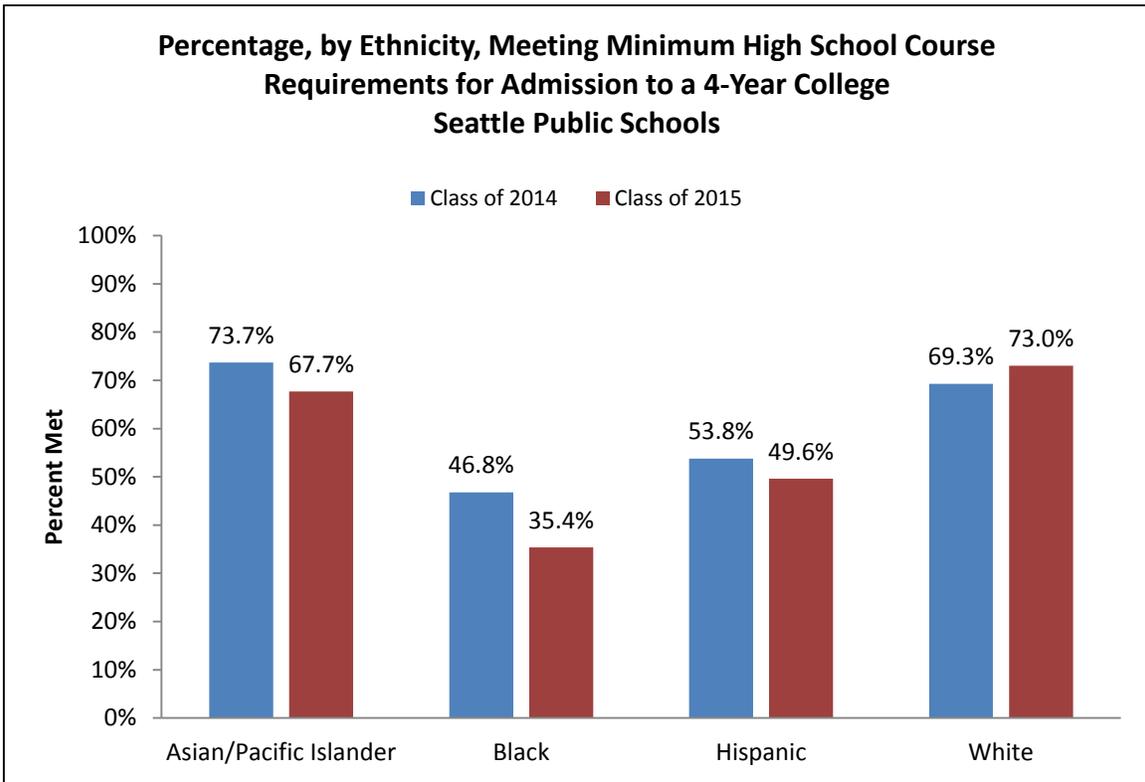


Figure 48. Percentage of students meeting four-year college course requirements by ethnicity, South-Southwest Arts Pathway



*Figure 49. Percentage of students meeting four-year college course requirements by ethnicity, Seattle Public Schools*

Overall, female students complete the minimum college entrance requirements at higher rates than males, with one exception. In 2014, in the Central Arts Pathway, males and females completed these requirements at similar rates (see Figures 50 through 52).

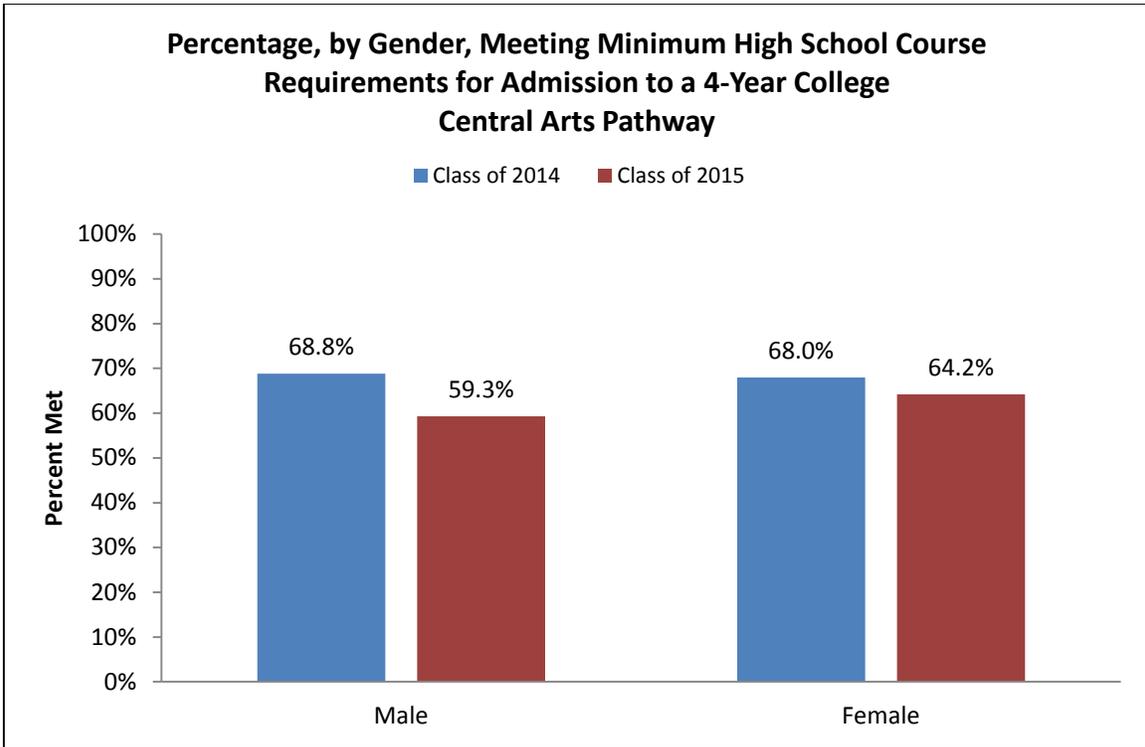


Figure 50. Percentage of students meeting four-year college course requirements by gender, Central Arts Pathway

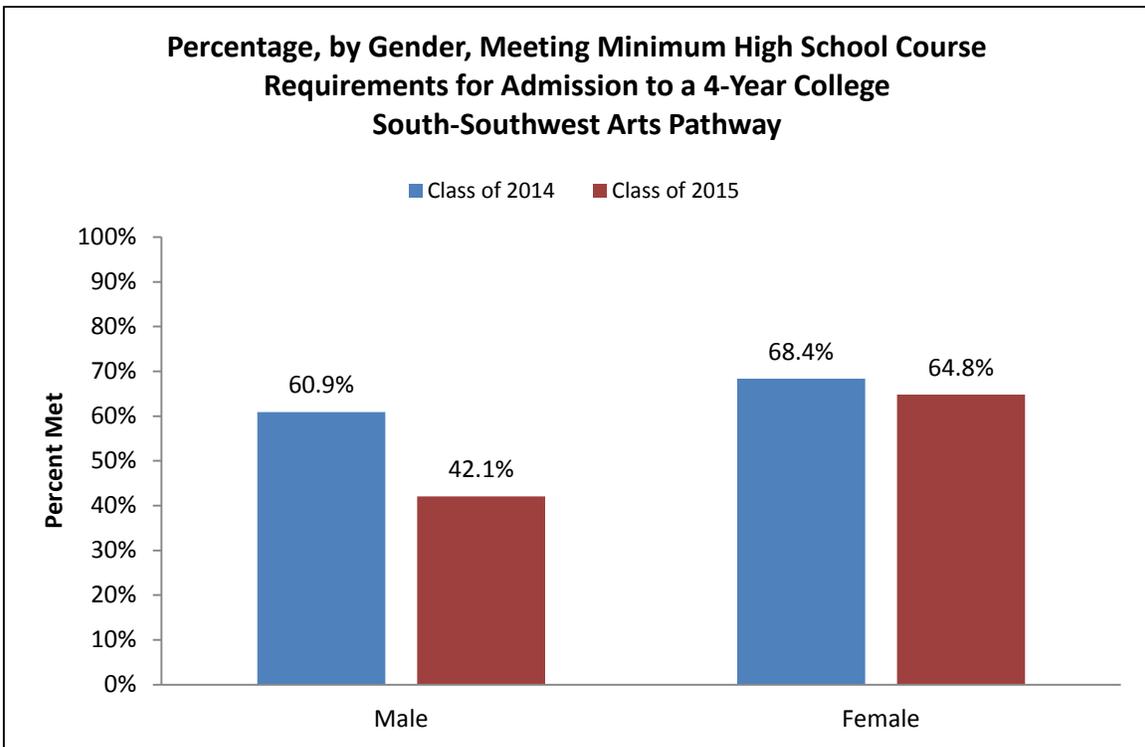
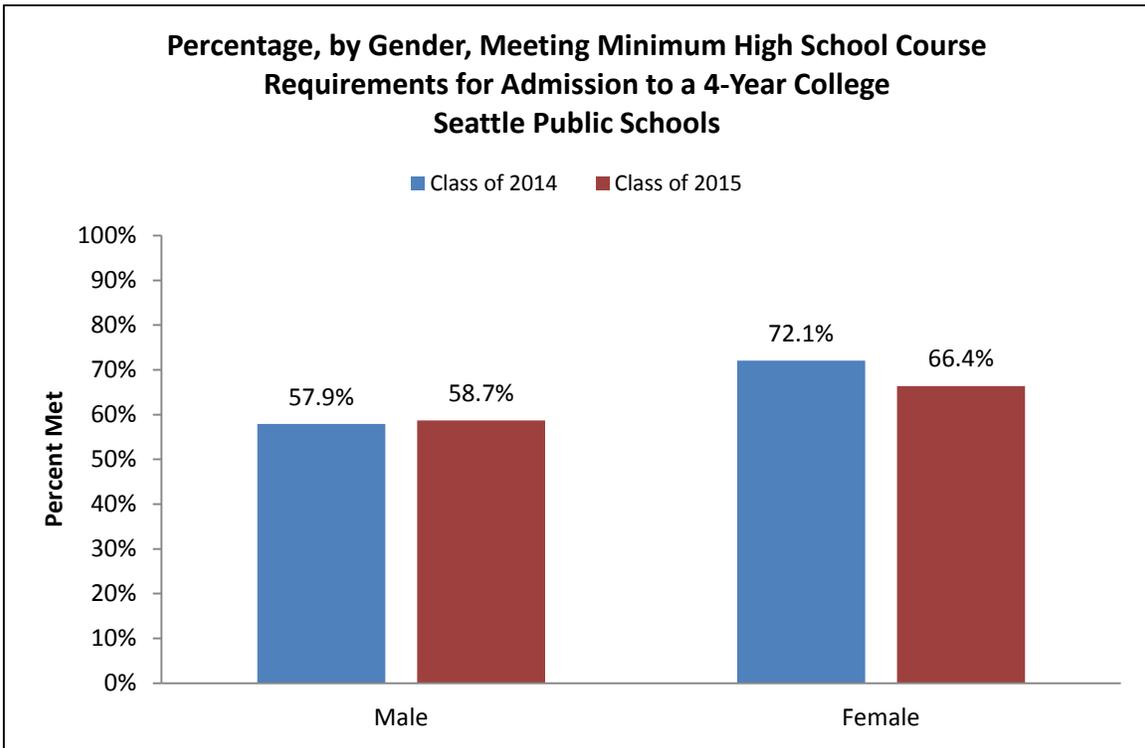


Figure 51. Percentage of students meeting four-year college course requirements by gender, South-Southwest Arts Pathway



**Figure 52. Percentage of students meeting four-year college course requirements by gender, Seattle Public Schools**

The data also show that students who failed to meet college admission requirements were most likely to lack the English and/or foreign language requisites (see Figures 53 through 55). An analysis of graduation requirements show that students are required to take only three credits of English and no credits in foreign language. This pattern is consistent within the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and other SPS schools. The result shows that the graduation requirements at these schools, while meeting the state’s minimum requirements for a high school diploma, are not aligned with colleges’ admission expectations.

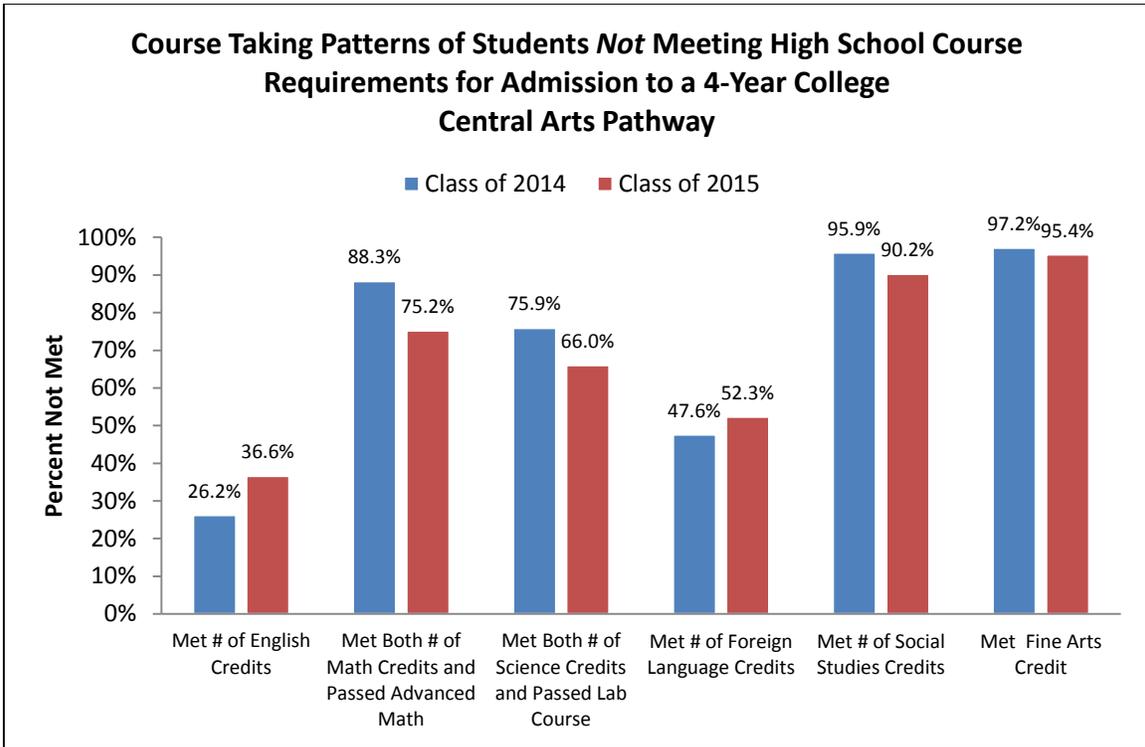


Figure 53. Course taking patterns of students NOT meeting four-year college eligibility requirements, Central Arts Pathway

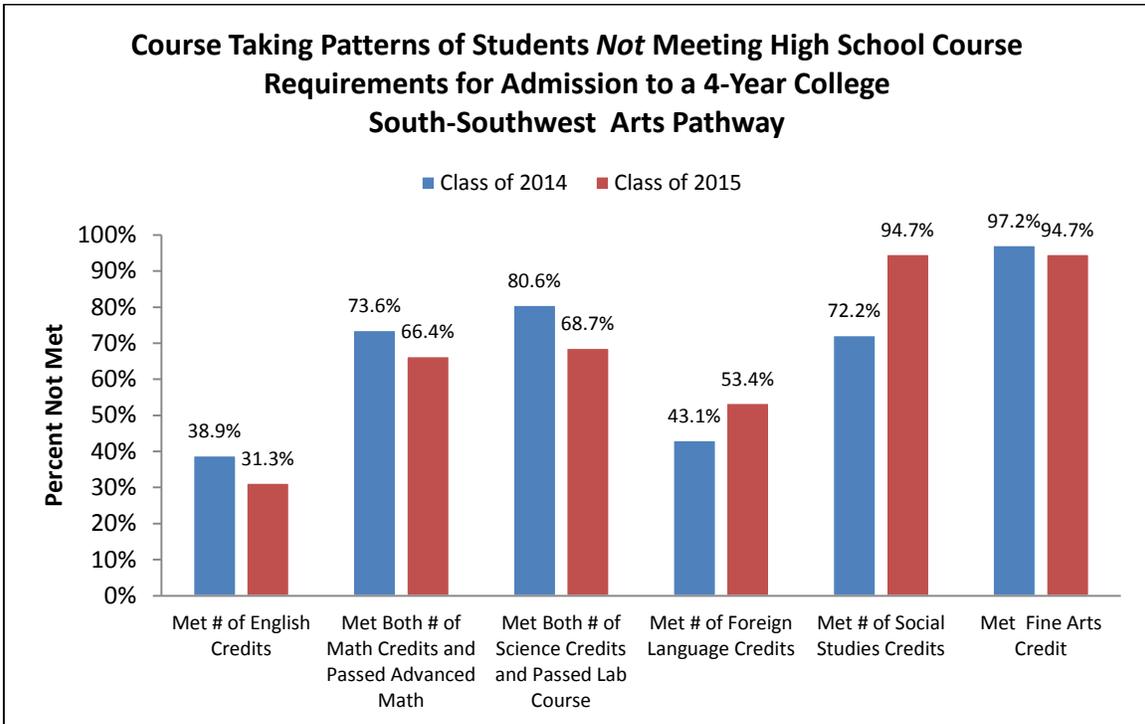
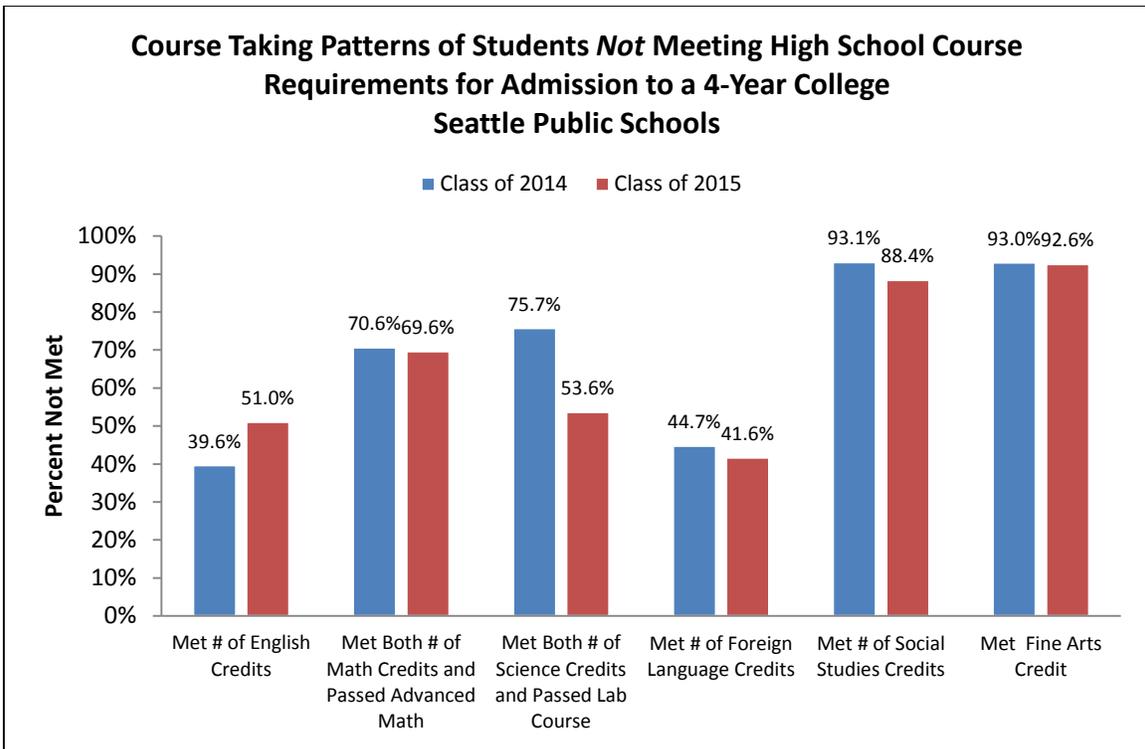


Figure 54. Course taking patterns of students NOT meeting four-year college eligibility requirements, South-Southwest Arts Pathway



**Figure 55. Course taking patterns of students NOT meeting four-year college eligibility requirements, Seattle Public Schools**

***College Attendance, Persistence, and Graduation Rates***

The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was established in 1993 by colleges and universities to serve as a national repository for comprehensive enrollment, degree, and certificate records. Since its beginnings, it has grown to contain more than 65 million student records from over 3,300 colleges and universities in the United States. As of 2012, these institutions enrolled approximately 96% of all students in public and private U.S. higher education institutions.

To assess college attendance, persistence, and graduation rates, researchers obtained college enrollment and persistence data from the National Student Clearinghouse for students attending Seattle Public Schools. Researchers collected information for the graduating classes of 2010 through 2014. These classes graduated prior to The Creative Advantage initiative, and these data serve as baseline prior to the initiative. Researchers submitted lists of the names, birth dates, and year of graduation, among other data, to NSC to be matched with the college reported enrollments. We then compiled and analyzed these yearly enrollment records to determine college enrollment persistence and college graduation rates.

“College direct” students are defined as high school graduates who attended college any time in the academic year immediately following their high school graduation. The college direct rates for the high school graduates from the Central Arts Pathway schools and SPS for 2010 through 2014 graduates are presented in Figure 56. The percentage of college direct students in the Central Arts Pathway schools decreased from 2010 to 2014, while the South-Southwest Arts Pathway schools demonstrated an improvement.

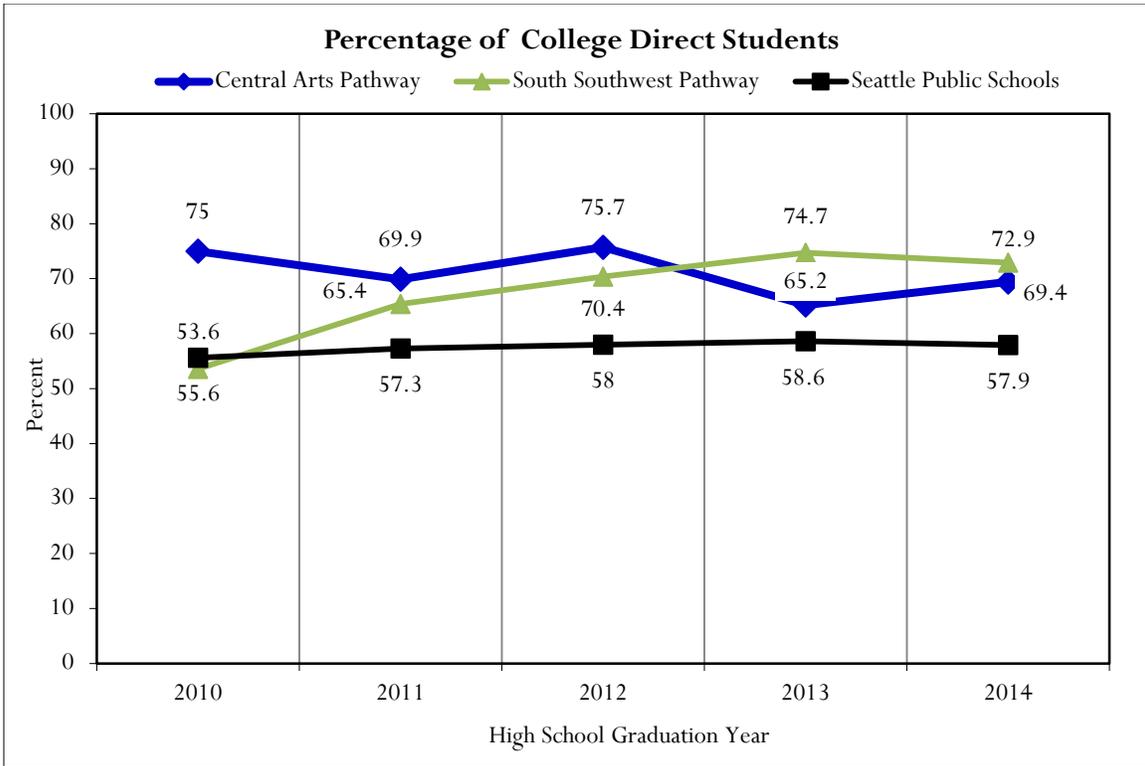


Figure 56. Percentage of “college direct” students – 2010-13

The 2010 through 2014 college direct rates disaggregated by ethnicity for Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and SPS schools are presented in Figures 57 through 59, respectively. There is variation across the groups, but generally, Hispanic students attend college at lower rates compared to other ethnic/racial groups in the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and SPS.

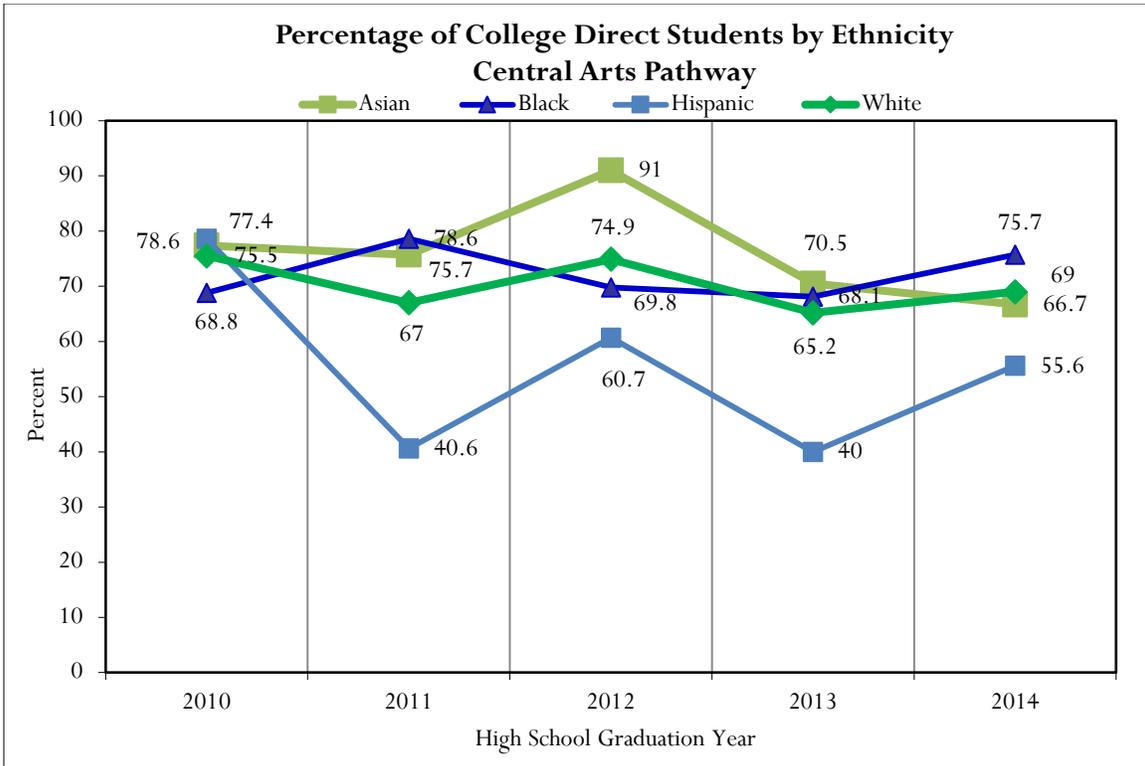


Figure 57. Percentage of “college direct” students by ethnicity – 2010-14, Central Arts Pathway

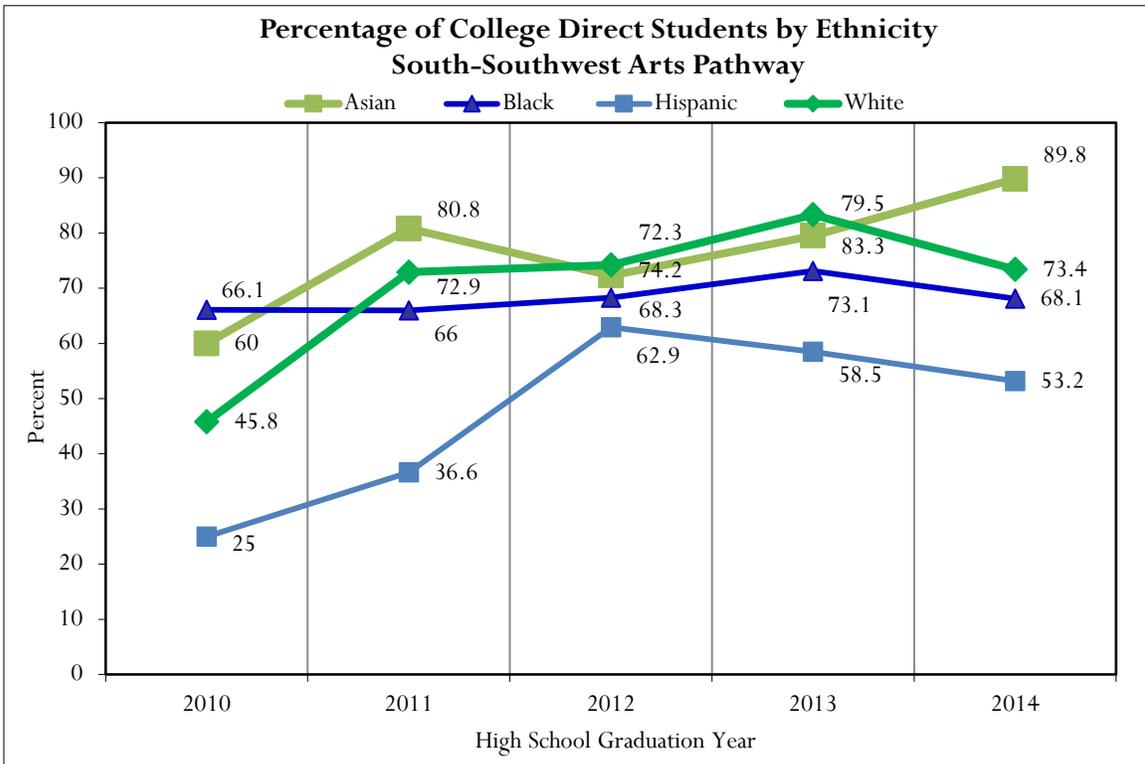
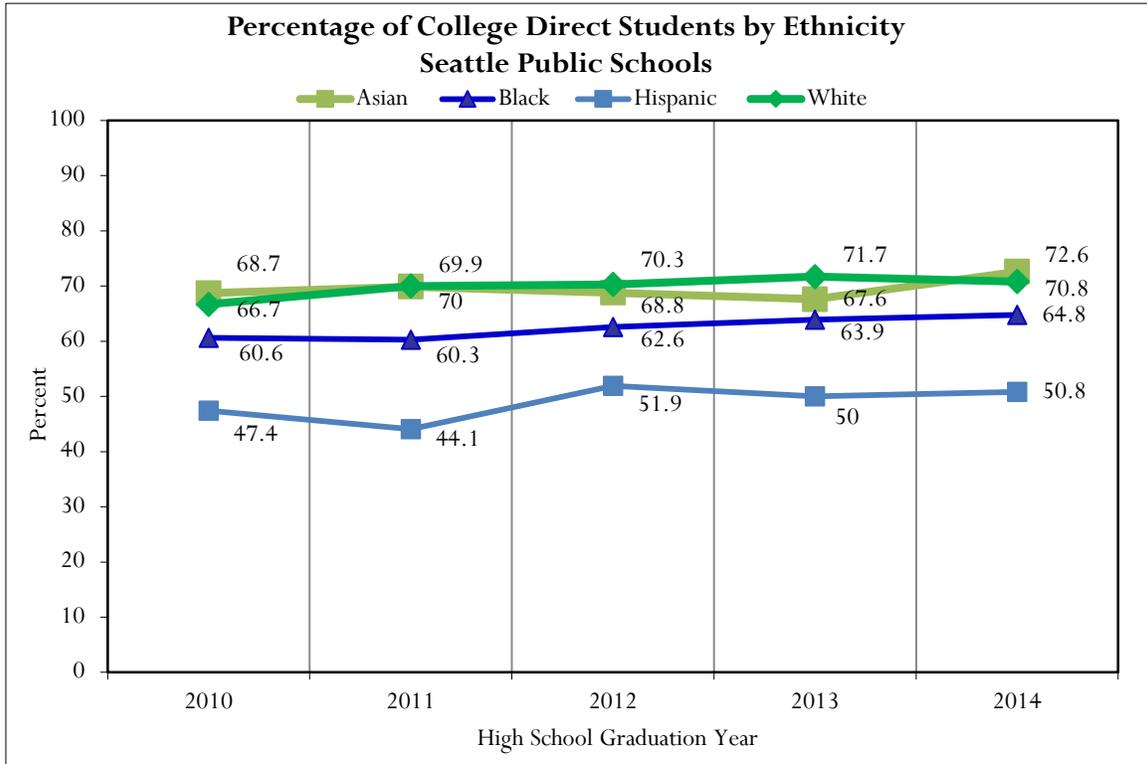


Figure 58. Percentage of “college direct” students by ethnicity – 2010-14, South-Southwest Arts Pathway



**Figure 59. Percentage of “college direct” students by ethnicity – 2010-14, Seattle Public Schools**

The 2010 through 2014 college direct rates disaggregated by gender for Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and SPS schools are presented in Figures 60 through 62, respectively. With a few exceptions, generally, female students attend college at higher rates compared to male students in the Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and SPS.

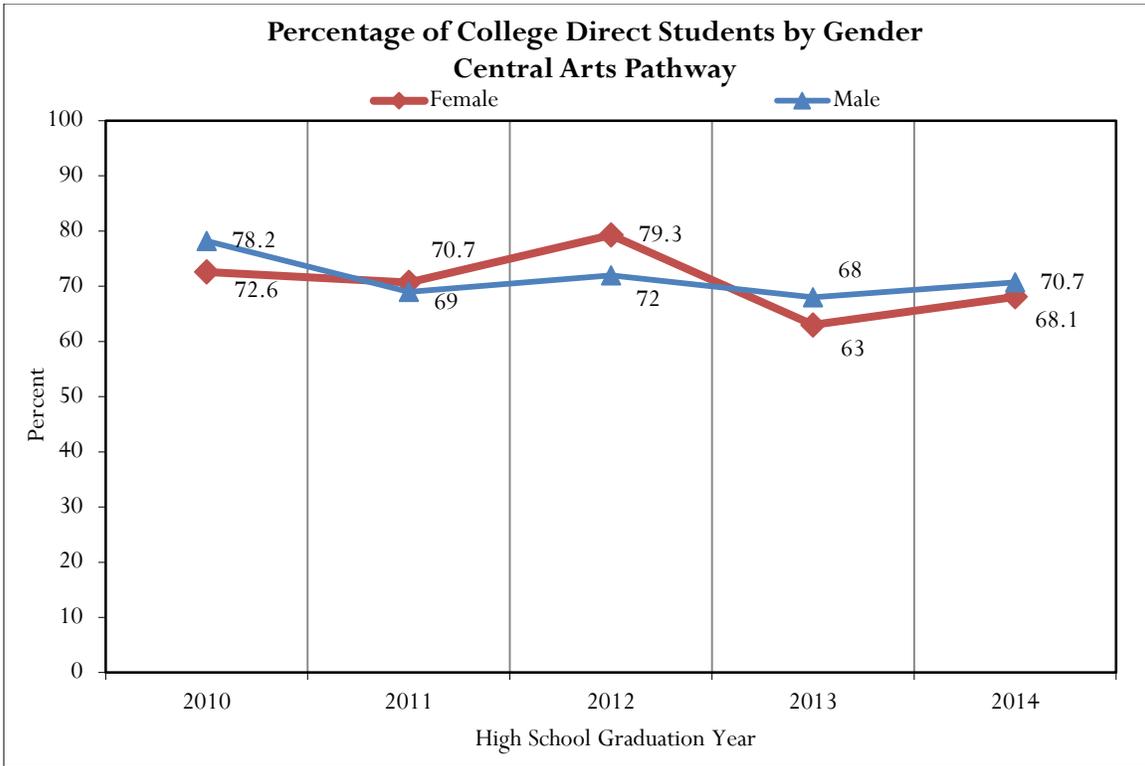


Figure 60. Percentage “college direct” students by gender – 2010-14, Central Arts Pathway

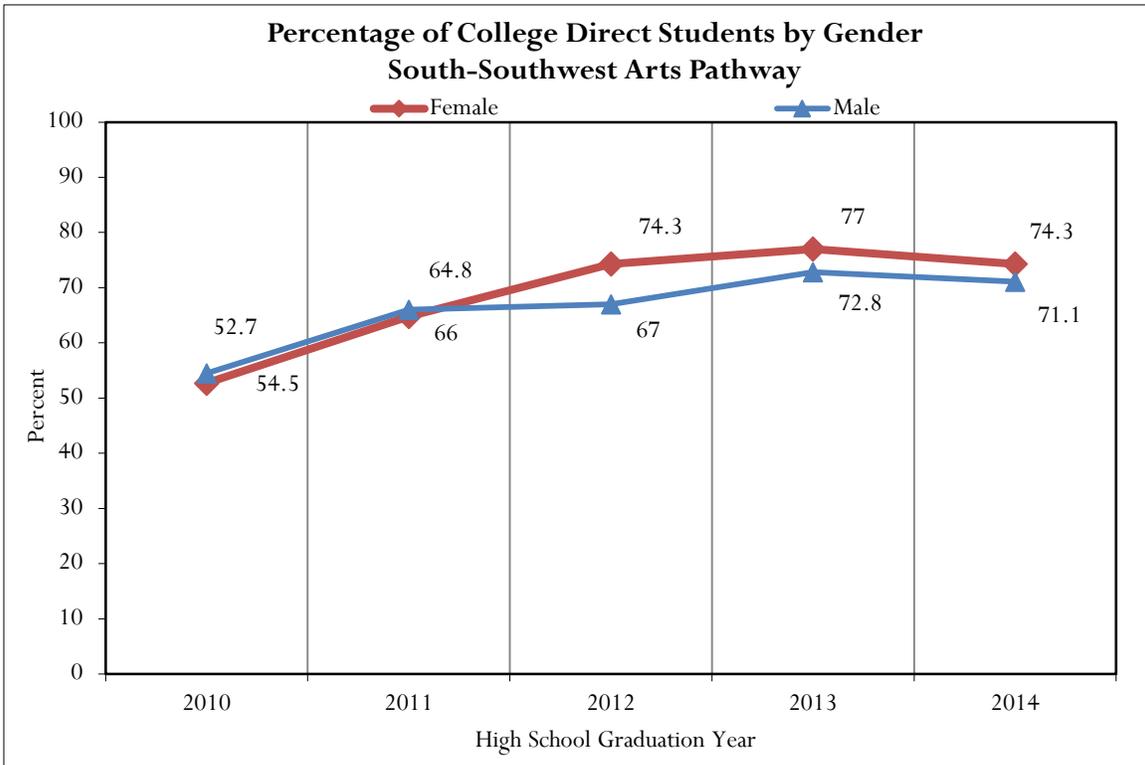


Figure 61. Percentage of “college direct” students by gender – 2010-14, South-Southwest Arts Pathway

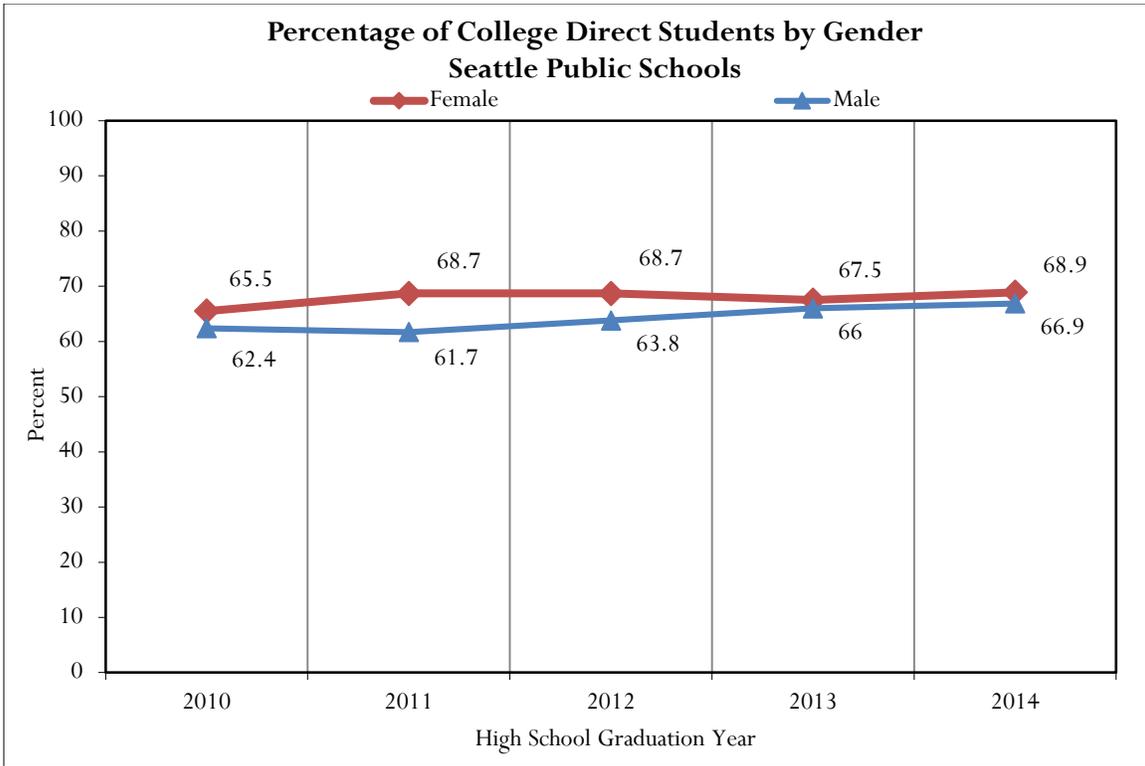


Figure 62. Percentage of “college direct” students by gender – 2010-14, Seattle Public Schools

Figures 63 and 64 show the percentages of graduates attending two- and four-year colleges the first year after graduating high school.<sup>2</sup> These data indicate more students attend four-year colleges compared to two-year colleges across both the Central Arts Pathway and SPS. In contrast, more students attend two-year colleges compared to four-year colleges in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway.

<sup>2</sup> The percentages may total more than 100% due to dual enrollments of some students.

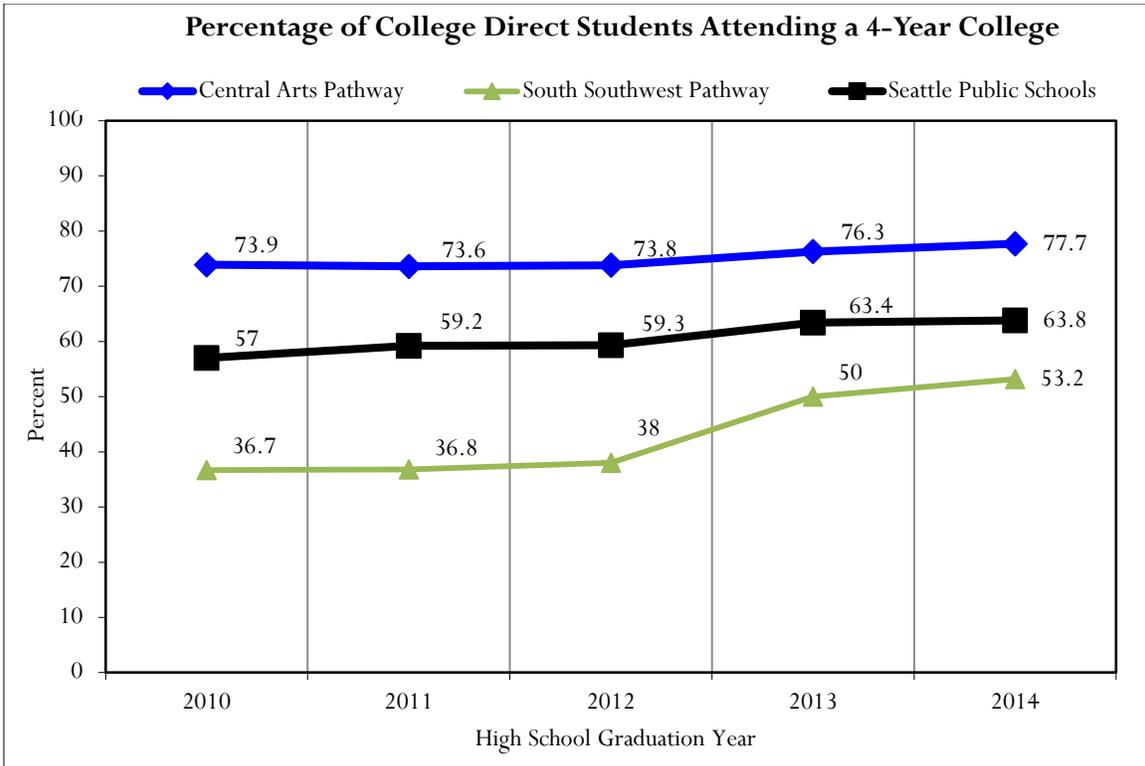


Figure 63. Percentage of “college direct” students attending four-year colleges after graduating high school – 2010-14

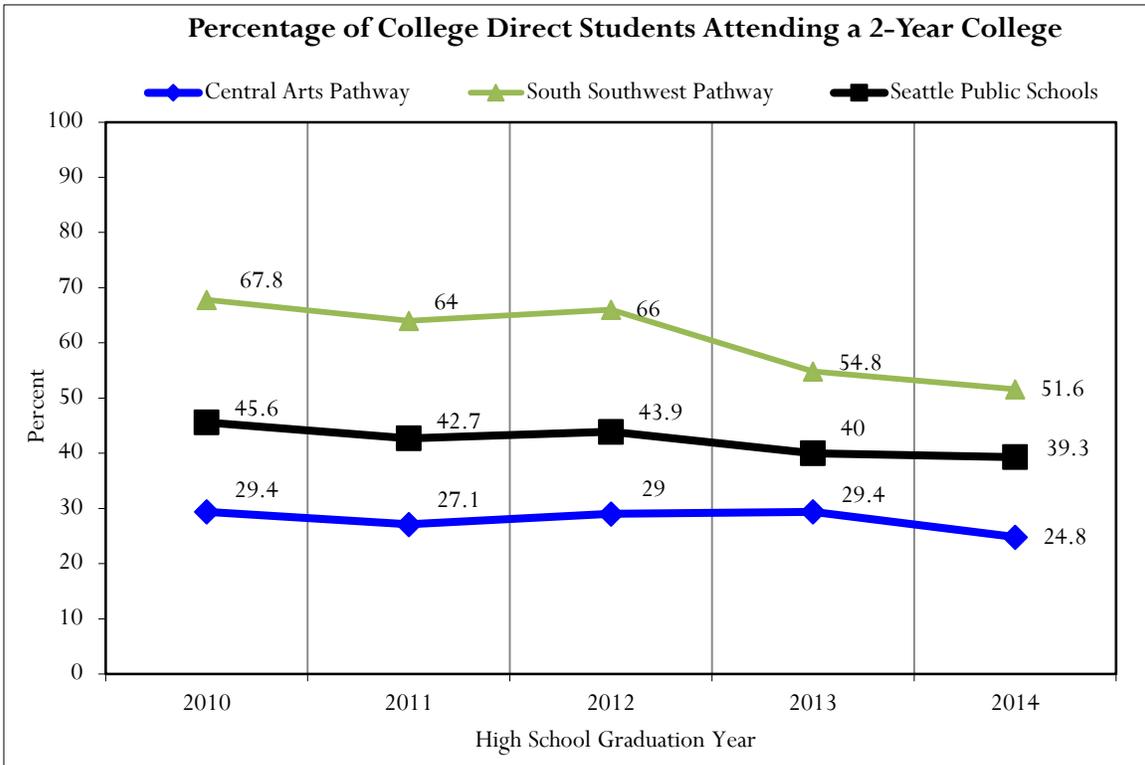
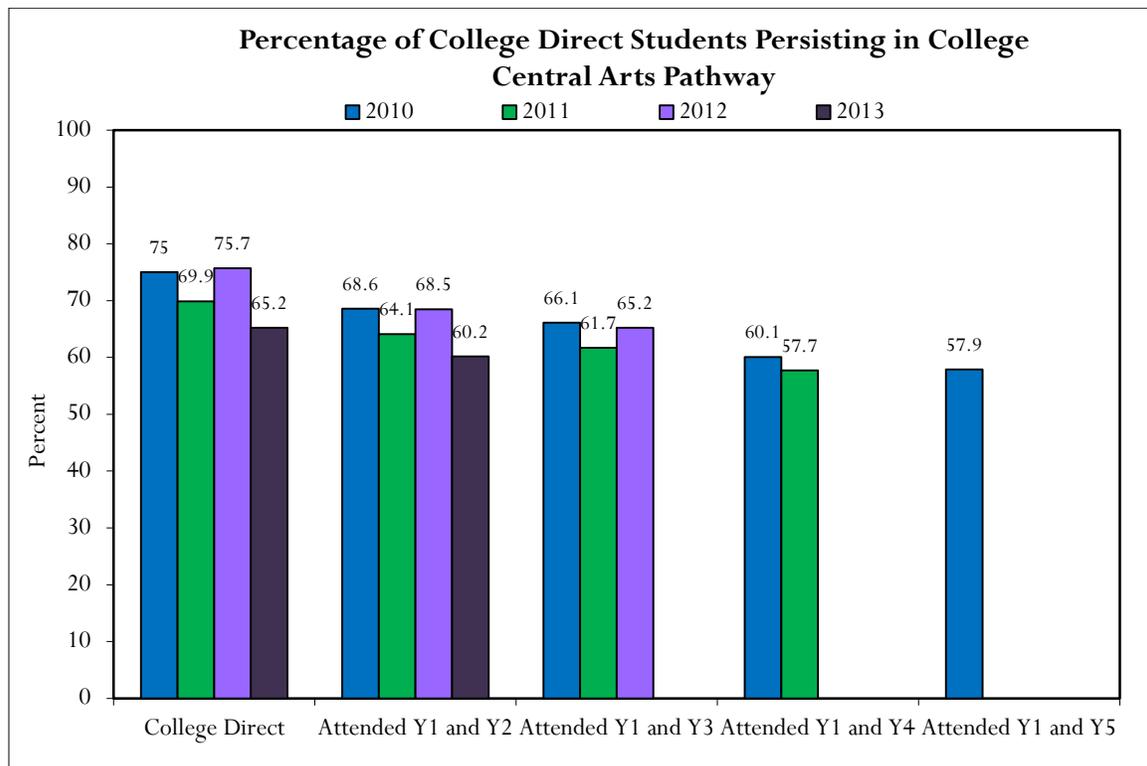


Figure 64. Percentage of “college direct” students attending two-year colleges after graduating high school – 2010-14

The college persistence rates of college direct students from Central Arts Pathway, South-Southwest Arts Pathway, and SPS are presented in Figures 65 and 67, respectively. We defined “persisting in college” for college direct students as being enrolled anytime in a given year following high school graduation or having received a four-year college degree. Figure 46 illustrates the percent of 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 high school graduates that were college direct and persisting into a second, third, fourth, and fifth year of college.<sup>3</sup> For example, for 2010 high school graduates, approximately 75% were enrolled in college during the 2010-2011 academic year, the first year after graduation. In the second year after graduation, approximately 70% of the high school graduates were still enrolled in college. In the fifth year after graduation, about 58% of the high school graduates had attended college the first year after graduating high school and were still enrolled in college or had received their degree. Generally, persistence rates were much higher for Central Arts Pathway and SPS. Fewer students persist from the first to the second year in the South-Southwest Arts Pathway.



**Figure 65. Percentage of “college direct” students persisting in college, Central Arts Pathway**

Note. “College direct”=% of students enrolled first year after graduating high school.

“Attended Y1 and Y2”=% of students attending college first year and have graduated from a four-year college or are still attending college second year after graduating high school.

<sup>3</sup> Our definition of “persistence” also includes students who had graduated from a four-year college.

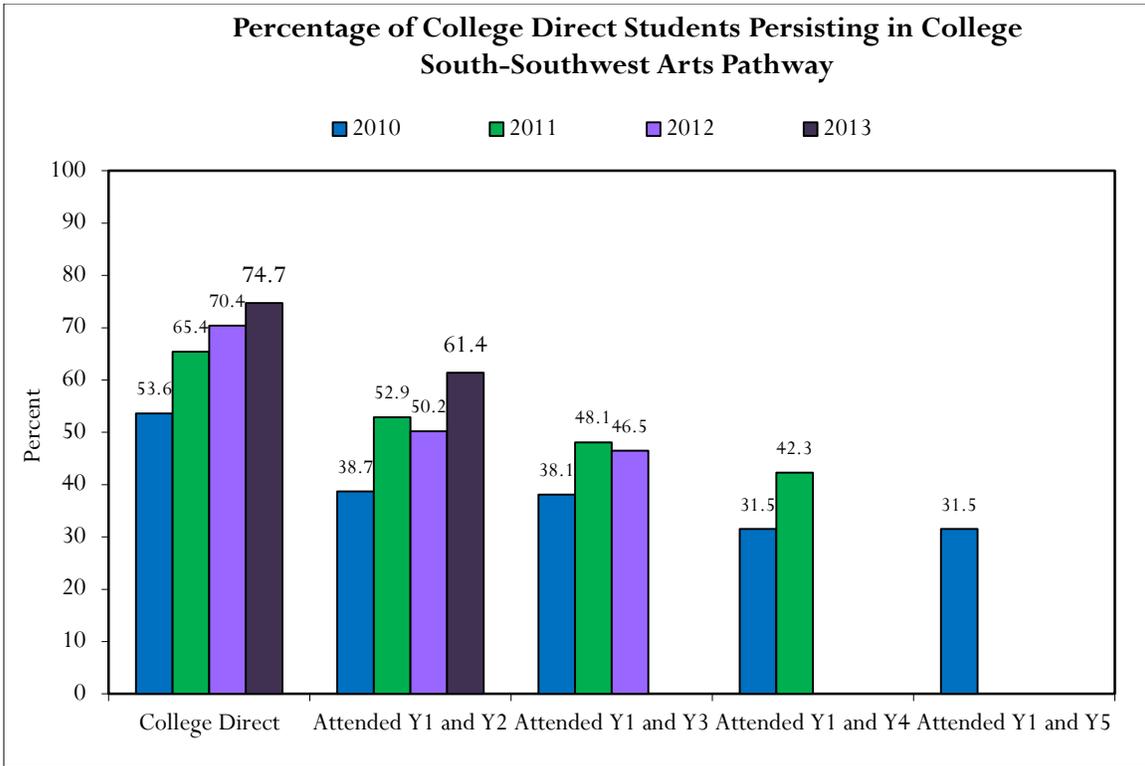


Figure 66. Percentage of “college direct” students persisting in college, South-Southwest Arts Pathway

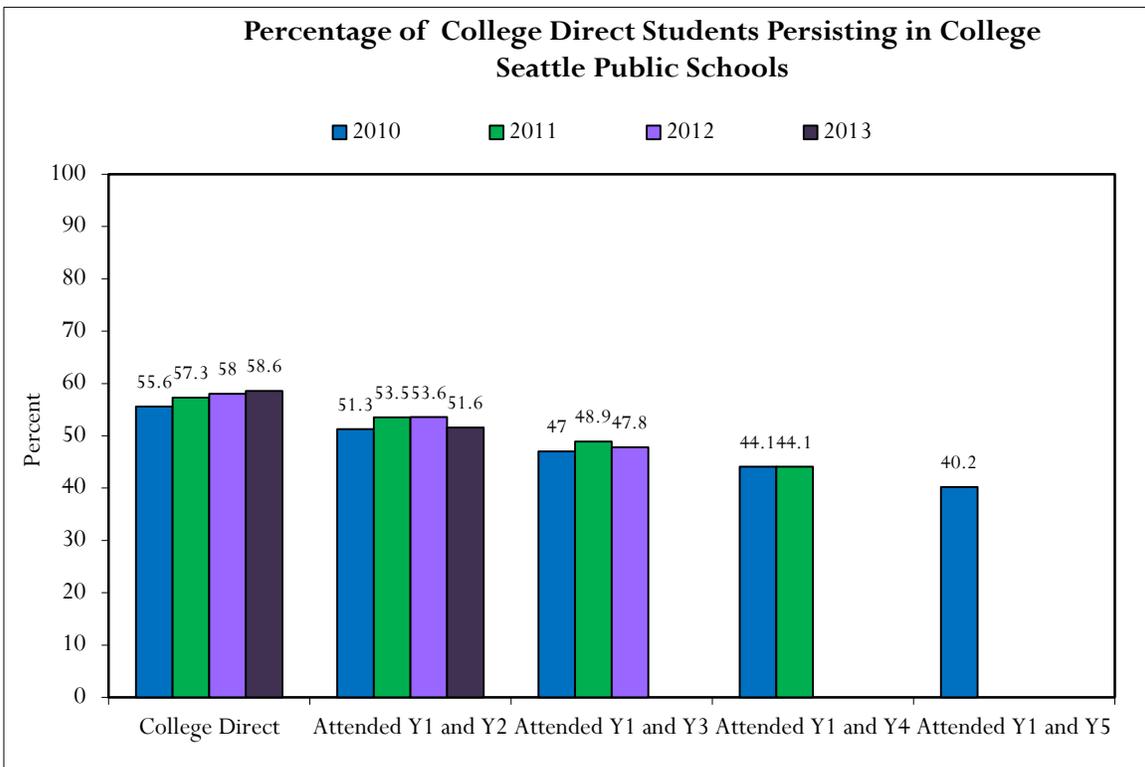


Figure 67. Percentage of “college direct” students persisting in college, SPS

The percentage of students attending college any time after graduating from high school is depicted in Figure 68. For example, within the 2010 graduating class from Central Arts Pathway, approximately 85% attended college sometime after graduating from high school. This is a ten percentage-point increase from the college direct rates shown in Figure 56.

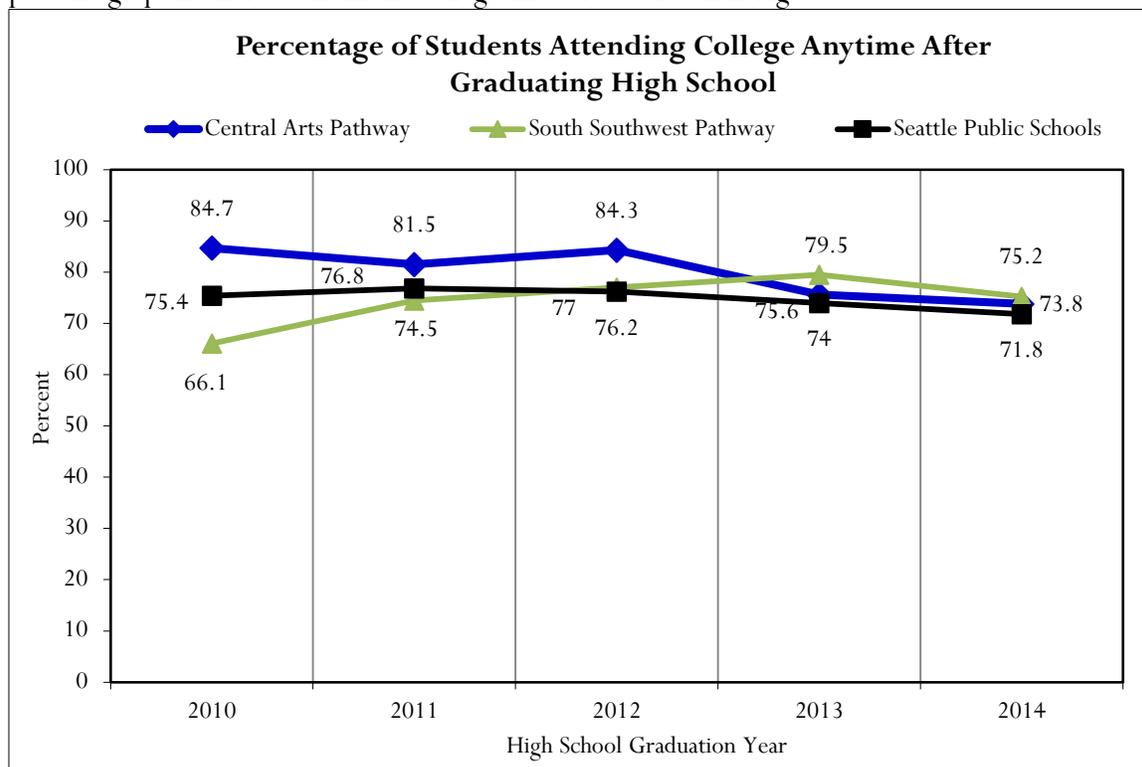


Figure 68. Percentage of students who attend college any time after graduating from high school

Table 13 shows the two- and four-year college graduation rates. This details the percent of students from the class of 2010 and 2011 who received a college degree.

Table 13.

*Percent of Students Receiving and Two or Four-Year Degree*

Graduating Class	Percent Receiving a Two-Year Degree	Percent Receiving a Four-Year Degree
2010 – Central Arts Pathway	5.7%	40.6%
2010 – South-Southwest Arts Pathway	10.1%	14.3%
2010 – SPS	8.1%	26.3%
2011 – Central Arts Pathway	5.6%	30.7%
2011 – South-Southwest Arts Pathway	14.9%	12.5%
2011 – SPS	7.5%	20.6%



### **Evaluation Question #8: To what extent does parent and student satisfaction with SPS education change overtime?**

#### *Surveys*

Survey data were not available at the time of the report. These data are not reported because the most recently available survey data are from the 2013-2014 school year. In addition, because surveys changed from the previous year, it makes comparisons difficult. We will include survey data when the 2014-2015 survey results become available.

### **Evaluation Question #9: To what extent did The Creative Advantage initiative contribute to changes in student outcomes?**

Because The Creative Advantage is in the early stages of implementation, this evaluation question cannot be answered Year 2. Evaluators will continue to develop a longitudinal database to answer this question in future reports.

### **Evaluation Question #10: What are the emerging promising practices?**

During focus group interviews in 2013-14, stakeholders identified three emerging promising practices: robust partnerships, support structures for regional planning, and a shared vision of the arts as a core subject. Stakeholders continued to mention these three practices in Year Two. It is too early in the initiative to determine if these are promising practice, but these practices initially appear strong.

#### ***Robust Partnerships***

Stakeholders continued to identify the robust partnership between SPS, ARTS, and community arts organizations as key to the initial successes of The Creative Advantage. “I think the partnership between the city and the artist with the school district is a huge advantage. I think when you try to do this without the partnership it wouldn’t work,” one leader commented. Another shared:

The collective impact model designed with SPS, the city, and the Seattle Foundation anchors the work. . . . We are sharing resources, sharing leadership, and have shared responsibility to meet the promises. That is the advantage of the model. We have the cultural organizations that we are partnering to create the ecosystem that is landing in the classroom.

Another program leader shared a similar perspective:

I think the coordinated effort shows that this isn’t just the school district, and this isn’t just the city trying to usurp and take over, and it isn’t just community partners trying to scramble to close the gaps. We are making a commitment to make them accountable and a commitment to young people to have access [to arts learning].

One leader also mentioned the advisory group as an emerging promising practice, sharing, “We are at an early stage with the advisory group, but I think having that group and a place where

community members can shape the work is important.” While it is still too early to gauge the effectiveness of an advisory group that was only convened in January, initial feedback does sound promising.

In addition, a program leader spoke of the importance of building partnerships within the national community:

Lara [Davis] being part of the Cities for Creative Network, getting the NEA grant is an endorsement. Lara’s role has been critical and spending one day a week at the district and becoming the leadership of Creative Youth Development has been critical. I’m a good advocate but not a content expert. I couldn’t do that.”

### ***Supported Regional Planning***

As described in last year’s report, The Creative Advantage’s focus on supported regional planning recognizes that individual schools exist as part of a larger, nested system. As described in Evaluation Question #3, The Creative Advantage itself is situated within a larger regional and national push for arts education. The facilitated regional planning helps to create buy-in within schools and regions, while the funding for community partnerships continues to strengthen ties on a local level. At one school, the principal shared, “You can actually see the crossover between the school arts and the improvement plan. Not everything because it’s an arts focus, not academic, but there’s carry over in terms of PD, values, structure, arts infusion, and commitment.” A program leader explained how the regional planning approach is helping to build connections between arts teachers and generalists:

There are relationship building and knowledge building between arts teachers and generalist and teachers of other disciplines. I think this is an intangible outcome. Often you have the arts teacher and the other teachers. Because of the team making decisions, it is raising the understanding and awareness of the relevance of the arts and provides a space for the teachers to collaborate.

The Creative Advantage builds on these developing connections and provides support for schools to continue bridging the gaps between art and other disciplines. In addition, a principal described how a shared focus on the arts helped the population of one diverse school find common ground:

The most outstanding benefit for me and my community right now is that it’s given us something to come around together in a very diverse community. Through the arts, we celebrate our cultures. It brings out the best of our different cultures and has created an opportunity for community building. That was an unanticipated pay-off.

One leader posited this support and sense of connection is one reason The Creative Advantage has continued to thrive, despite changes to district and city leadership:

I have been pretty impressed with seeing the school satisfaction survey. Based on the data I have looked at, the schools feel that there is value in the investment, and it improves the ways school sites work with the district. I believe they feel that they are supported and



connected to the work. My perception is that the perception is that we are moving in the same direction, and people understand where they can plug in. This has the support of the third mayor and tenth superintendent. The work has persisted and [is] surviving.

### ***Shared Vision for Arts as a Core Subject***

In 2013-14, stakeholders described the third emerging promising practice as a shared commitment to the arts, both for their own sake and as a vehicle for other learning and community engagement. This theme continued into Year Two. During interviews, educators and program leaders emphasized the importance of arts learning in education and the need for equity of access. “Why are arts only for a certain population?” one principal asked. “Our kids deserve that, too.”

Several stakeholders spoke of the powerful role professional development can play in creating a shared vision amongst the staff. For example, one program leader identified “having all-staff professional development related to the arts,” as a promising practice. “A number of schools did it at the beginning of the year, and this had been a great building exercise, and it is energizing for teachers.” Another program leader explained, “Teachers are taking [the training], and they want to find ways to integrate and infuse arts into LA and science. That is exciting.”

Another leader described professional development for teaching artists as a promising practice, explaining, “With the PD, convening teaching artists so they see others as allies, they can explore and expand the way they work with one another.” A representative from a community arts partner also emphasized the importance of training for teaching artists, and the role they can play with proper support:

I think we need to get the teaching artists in the school aware of the challenges, the logistics, things like standards, so they are prepared to do their best work. I see our work as key in that. And I see teaching artists having the ability to push like teachers can’t, pushing against some of the confines of public education.

Another leader shared:

. . . the benefit is that we are saying and have clear actions moving forward to have arts education as a central and realized core part of education. We are taking action to make certain this is happening. We are looking for where the access is the least, and we are making certain we are starting with the students who need it more and growing this in a way that is just. The elevation and prominence of arts education as a catalyst for change is incredible. We can’t do this alone. It takes a village, and we have to be better partners with community and parents. We need them to form the steps along the way.

### **Evaluation Question #11: To what extent is the program sustainable?**

The majority of stakeholders indicated The Creative Advantage could be sustainable with solid funding and increased support from the larger Seattle community. When asked about the sustainability of the program, one community arts partner replied, “I believe from the expertise, the willingness, and the shared goals of many organizations in the community, it could be

sustainable from that standpoint. But unfortunately, we also need personnel and funding.” Stakeholders at many levels echoed this sentiment. One program leader emphasized that sustainability would depend upon maintaining a quality experience:

I think that it is sustainable, but the key is the quality of the program and the benefit for students. A strong program will push the need at the building level to find funding to continue an arts program. I think it is sustainable, but dependent upon the experience. Thus, I think staffing is a critical piece. We need to be focused and deliberate on hiring. We need to have a quality program.

Program leaders shared they were aiming to secure levy funds. As one explained:

I think it is feasible to meet the modest needs to resource community partnerships, which is about \$10,000/school. That is a couple million a year, and for a levy with \$235,000,000 that is reasonable. We have shown good outcomes about closing the access gap and partner satisfaction. We need to show that we have good outcomes to get the levy. We need to be intentional about having skills centers or tech centers in Seattle so we can get the industry involved. If they can get the training they need for the employees locally. I think skills centers is a discreet investment, and they would pay for that to train up a potential work source.

A district representative shared that, as it is currently structured, The Creative Advantage is “not financially” sustainable:

We have an Excel spreadsheet, and each year, we have more pathways, and the dollars associated with it . . . With South-Southwest, I’m making an ask of \$200,000, and if I get that, my baseline budget goes up \$200,000. Each year the Visual and Performing Arts budget is going for the baseline dollars. Next year, I will start with that as my baseline, and I get another \$200,000. This ensures that, at minimum, the schools that we have promised can continue the work. But if I don’t get the additional ask, the work will pause or the schools will need to find a way to sustain it. In the staircase model, when you think of the schools in the district, it isn’t sustainable.”

Another district representative explained that sustainability depended on funding.

There are so many competing needs for limited resources. And you know our schools are not fully funded anyway, but that makes it tricky . . . It’s hard for people to understand on the outside, but it’s like, “Do we pay the light bill or do we buy food?” Those are the choices we’re faced with.

Not only does the partnership need increased funds as it scales throughout the district, but it also needs funds to maintain the program staff to continue that work. Stakeholders explained that central program staff members have been funded through a grant from The Wallace Foundation, but that expired June 30. As one leader said, “. . . we need to find a sustainable way to ensure we have the management staff to move the work forward.”



As described earlier in the report, program leaders are exploring using a levy to fund The Creative Advantage in the long-term, but the partnership is primarily funded by grants. In addition to funding, several stakeholders emphasized the importance of gaining increased awareness and support from the Seattle community as a whole. A representative from a community arts organization explained:

[The Creative Advantage] is still a little precarious because it doesn't have enough widespread buy-in. If Randy [Engstrom] and Carri [Campbell] disappeared, I don't think we could keep moving this forward. It's not about getting the mayor and superintendent on board, they will both change. It's about getting a wider response.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2014-15, schools in the Central Arts Pathway began implementing the vision and action plans they developed during facilitated planning sessions the previous year. At the same time, the South-Southwest Arts Pathway entered its regional planning year. Teachers and administrators in the Central Arts Pathway generally spoke positively about their experiences during Year Two. While site-based planning meant that each school worked towards its own vision and action plan, commonalities in the first year of implementation included professional development around arts integration strategies and increased partnerships with community organizations. In addition, district leaders indicated that all K-3 students within the Central Arts Pathway received music instruction from a certificated instructor in 2014-15, and that all K-5 students in the pathway would receive music instruction next year.

An advisory group comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders convened in January of 2015. This group has been charged with guiding The Creative Advantage program leaders in decision-making and exploring how to increase the voice of students in the planning process.

Focus groups and interviews with stakeholders revealed contextual factors affecting the program. Stakeholders spoke of congruence between The Creative Advantage and other movements happening in the district and at the national level. However, as in 2014-15, stakeholders continued to identify communication as a barrier. In addition, stakeholders expressed frustration with the pre-vetted list of teaching artists and the difficulty in contracting with community partners. While the majority of stakeholders indicated The Creative Advantage could be sustainable, they also cautioned that sustainability and scalability depended on secure funding, appropriate staffing levels, and buy-in from the greater community of Seattle.

The initiative continues to be distinguished by three emerging promising practices: robust partnerships, support structures for regional planning, and a shared vision of the arts as a core subject. As described last year, the collaboration between the district, the city, and the community arts partners allows all of the stakeholders to coordinate their efforts around arts learning. This same spirit of collaboration has influenced the regional planning, which has potential to continue shifting the district away from the culture of competition between schools. Perhaps most importantly, program leaders demonstrate a shared commitment to providing equity of arts access and improving the quality of arts education for Seattle students.

In order to build upon these strengths, we suggest The Creative Advantage Initiative consider the following recommendations:

### ***Continue to Explore Sources of Sustainable Funding***

Interviews with stakeholders revealed the lack of funding is the largest barrier to sustainability. Program leaders should continue their efforts to secure long-term funding through a levy or other means. In the short term, they should continue seeking appropriate grant funding that can maintain program staffing levels necessary to move their work forward. Opportunities for Creative Advantage stakeholders to become involved in the process of searching and applying for funding for



the arts might also be useful. Professional development opportunities focused on writing grants for arts education could engage stakeholders and create a strong culture of investment and ownership in the initiative.

#### ***Prioritize Clear Communication***

While program and district leaders spoke knowledgeably about The Creative Advantage’s vision and activities, stakeholders at the school and community level spoke of uncertainty around program logistics and deadlines. At the same time, interviews and focus groups indicated teachers who are not involved with the program – as well as the general population of Seattle – still lack basic awareness about The Creative Advantage. In future planning, program leaders should continue to prioritize clear communication to all stakeholders, including developing opportunities to engage families and community members.

#### ***Collaborate with School Advisors***

The SPS K-12 Arts Plan identified a goal of students taking two or more credits of arts throughout middle school and two or more credits of arts throughout high school. Data indicates approximately half of Central Arts Pathway middle school students and about three-fifths of Central Arts Pathway high school students take two or more credits of art. Program leaders should collaborate with school advisors to identify strategies for increasing student enrollment in arts courses. If school advisors are knowledgeable and engaged with the Creative Advantage Initiative they can be an advocate to students during their course planning sessions.

#### ***Focus on Creating Program Structures that are Resilient to Changes in Leadership***

The advisory group convened in January of 2015 and should continue to counsel program leaders. In addition, program leaders should continue to focus on raising a broad base of support from the general public and school staff by focusing on communication strategies that explain the program’s vision. Supporting momentum around individual school communities may be one way to increase success, as is engaging Seattle’s vibrant technology industry. Additionally, individual schools might also benefit from a structured method of recording processes and procedures specific to their unique population. For example, a Creative Advantage rubric or form that individual school planning teams can electronically maintain, adding notes, contacts, and anecdotal information that might benefit the next group of Creative Advantage advocates following a staff transition, could provide support and encourage a continuous flow of information throughout the school and community. Schools might also benefit from opportunities for trainings throughout the school year, in an attempt to reach staff and administration joining their school community after the start of the academic year.

#### ***Provide a platform for resource and information sharing among Creative Advantage teachers***

We recommend increasing support for teachers through an online platform. While teachers generally agree arts integration is important, many are not confident in their arts knowledge, have access to integrated curriculum materials, or time to develop arts integrated lessons. Teachers expressed appreciation over time spent collaborating and learning with other teachers in the district, but these collaboration opportunities are limited. Creating an online platform for Creative Advantage teachers to easily share their art integration strategies, relevant grade level lesson plans,

troubleshooting efforts, and school progress would add an additional layer of support to the Creative Advantage work.

***Streamline Systems and Processes***

Whenever feasible, program leaders should make efforts to streamline systems and processes to make them more user-friendly. Program leaders have already indicated plans to select a “point person” on each school’s arts team to facilitate communication and coordinate program activities. In addition, program leaders should explore ways to streamline the process through which teaching artists are added to the pre-vetted list, as conversations with teachers and community partners indicated the current process is burdensome and dependent upon prior knowledge of processes and deadlines. Furthermore, program leaders should provide a summary of the community partner’s program to allow school personnel to fully understand the scope of services. Finally, program leaders should also provide training or support to building administrators around intricacies of contracting community partners.



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## APPENDIX: SCHOOL ARTS INVENTORY

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## TEACHING STAFF

**Teachers at our school, in general, see the arts as a key element of our school's culture and environment.**

■ Strongly agree   
 ■ Somewhat agree   
 ■ Somewhat disagree   
 ■ Strongly disagree



**Teachers at our school believe that the arts are a valuable tool in achieving successful school learning for all students.**

■ Strongly agree   
 ■ Somewhat agree   
 ■ Somewhat disagree   
 ■ Strongly disagree



**A wide range of teachers in our school are involved in developing and planning ways to incorporate the arts into the classroom.**

Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Stongly disagree



**Teachers at our school feel they are building their skills to teach arts skills and concepts.**

Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Stongly disagree



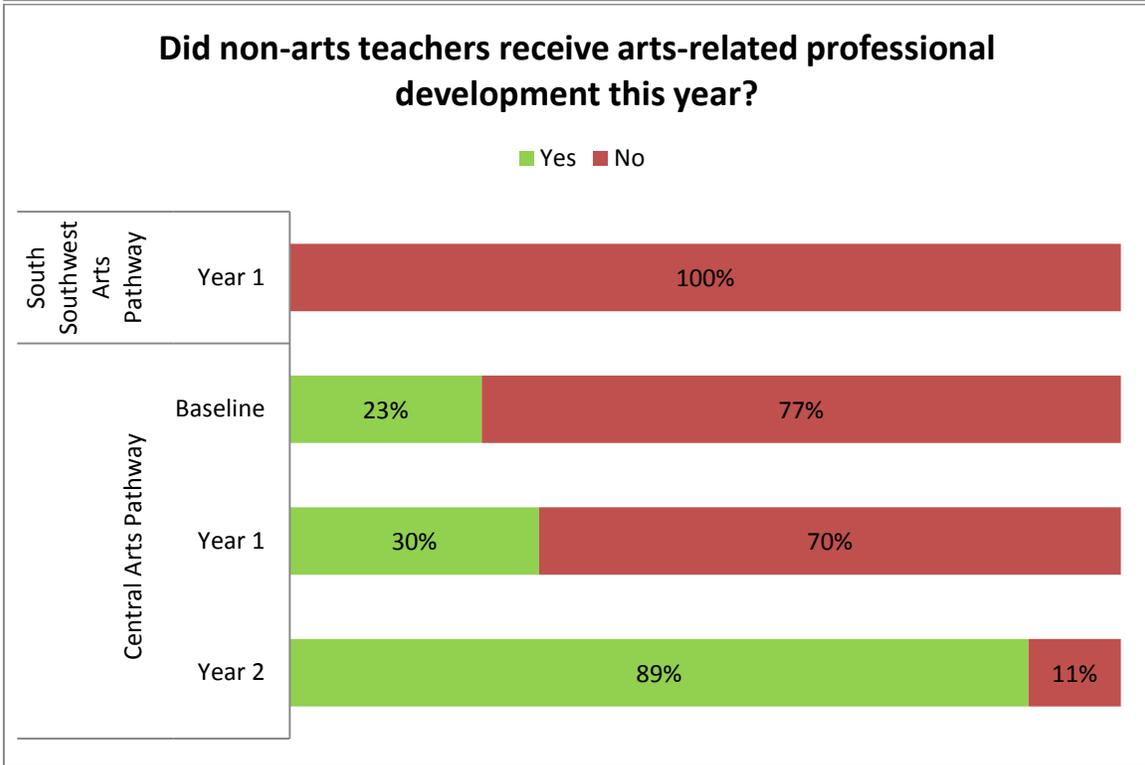
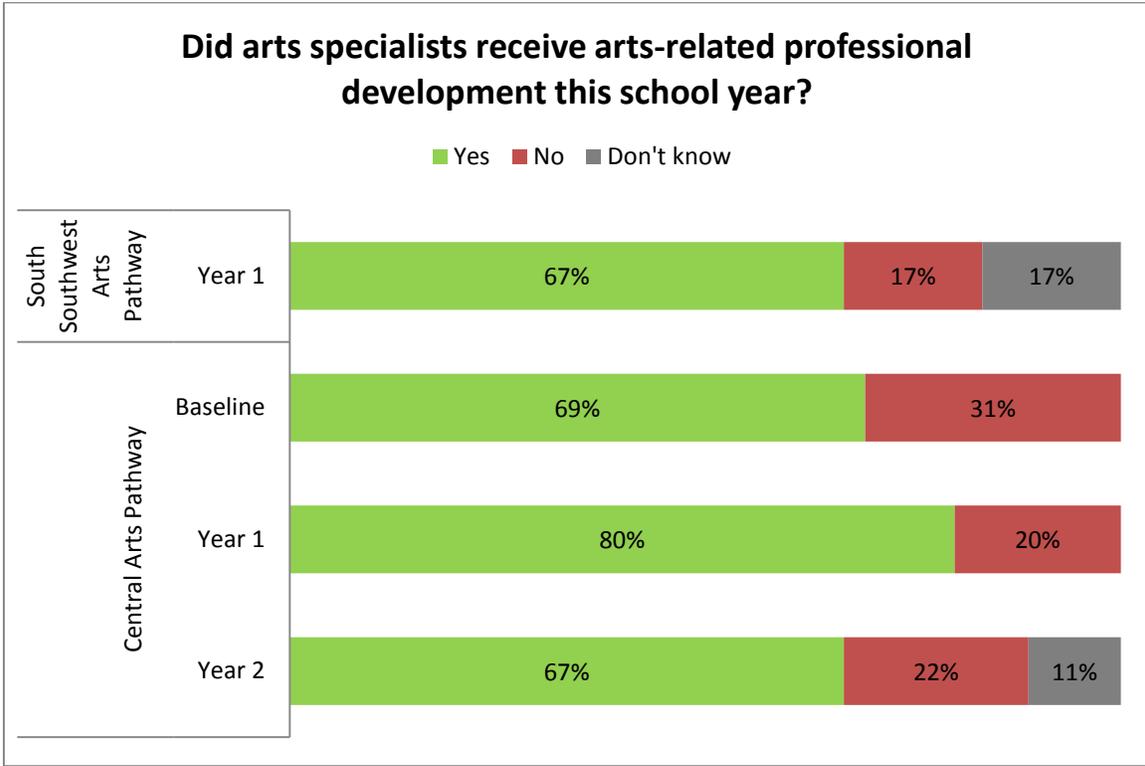


### Non-arts teachers at our school feel they are building their skills to use arts integration in their content area.

Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree



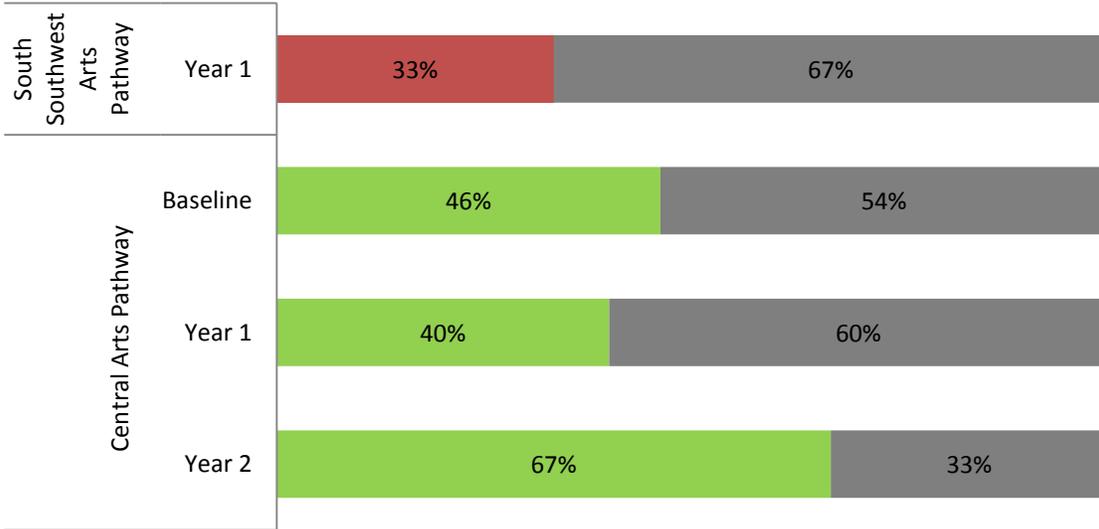
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT





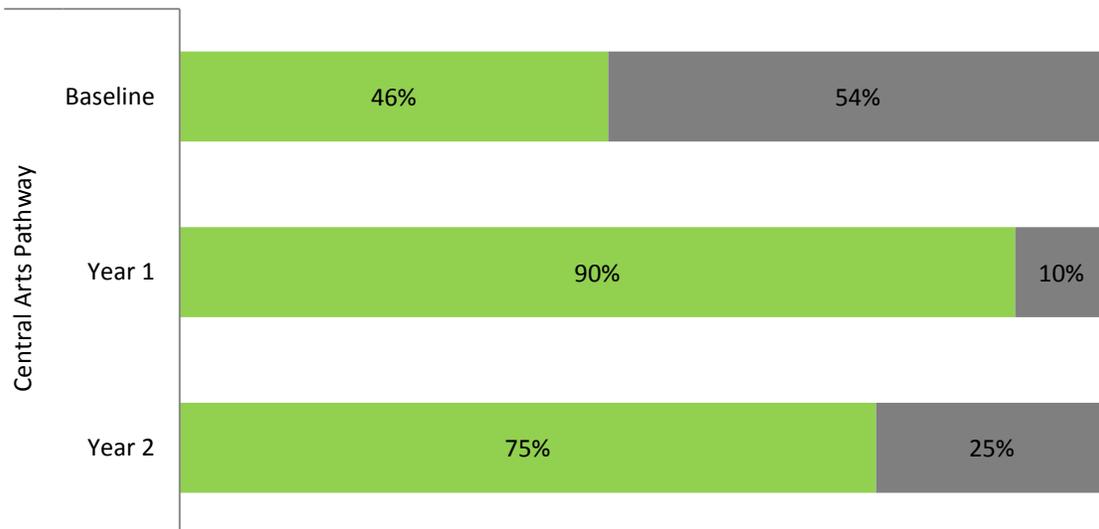
### This past year, the pool of teachers at our school with training in the arts:

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



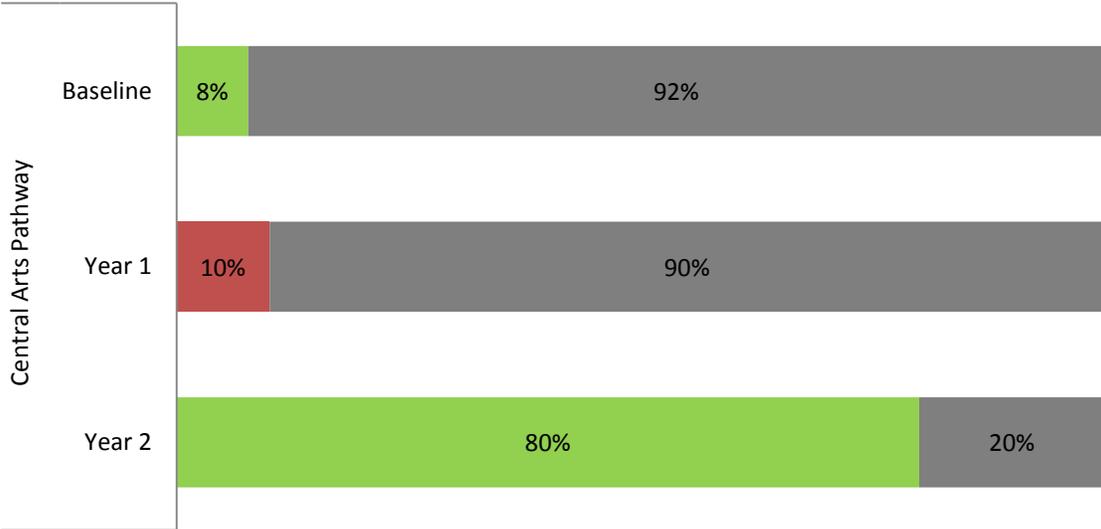
### Quantity of Instructional Time for all teachers in arts during school day: All Arts Combined

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



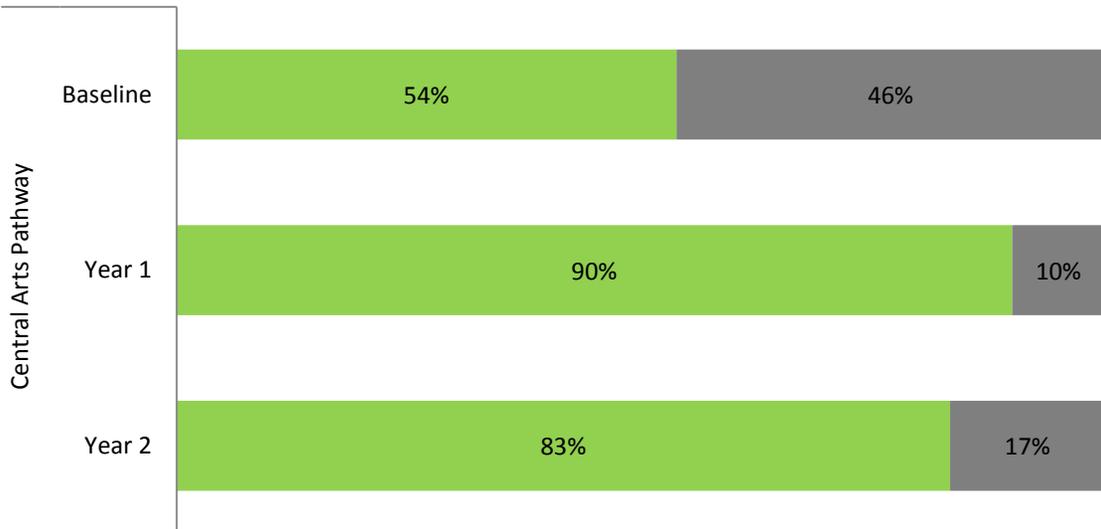
### Quantity of Instructional Time for all teachers in arts during school day: Dance

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



### Quantity of Instructional Time for all teachers in arts during school day: Music

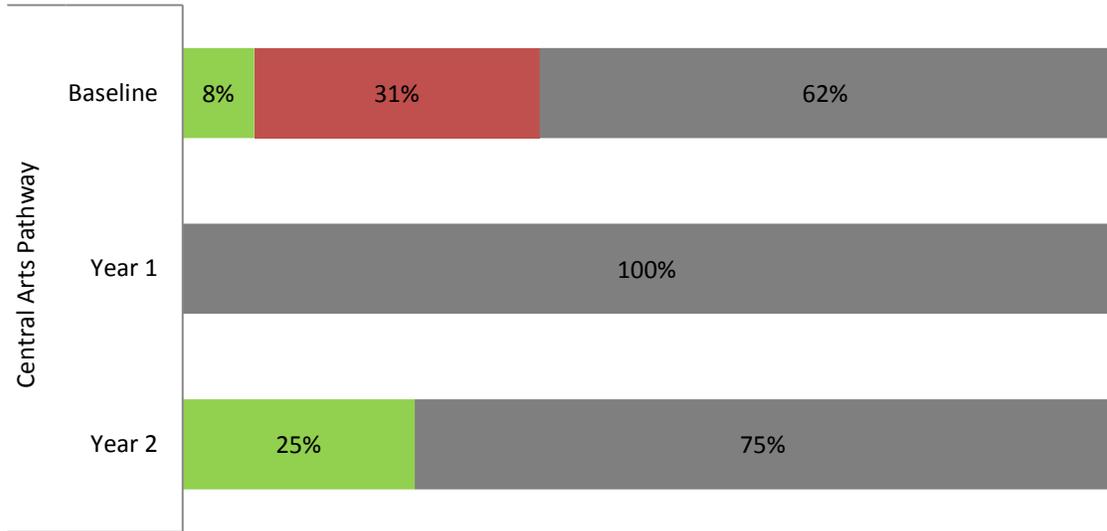
■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same





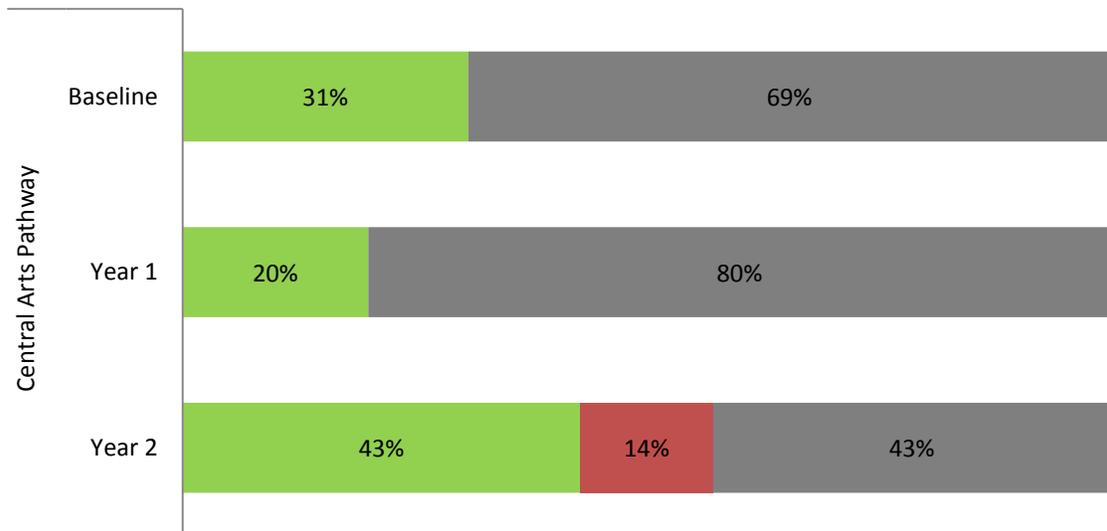
### Quantity of Instructional Time for all teachers in arts during school day: Theater

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



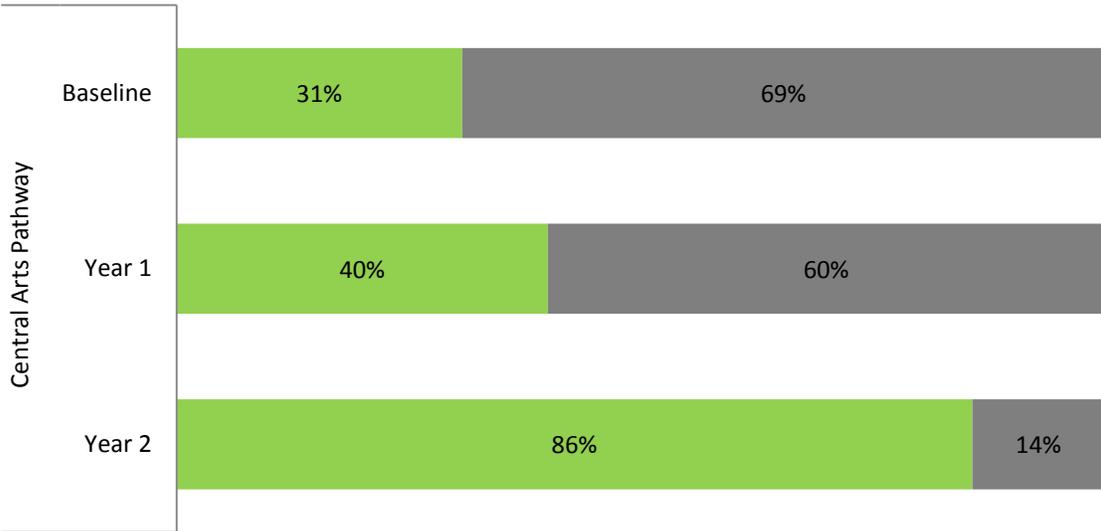
### Quantity of Instructional Time for all teachers in arts during school day: Visual Arts

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



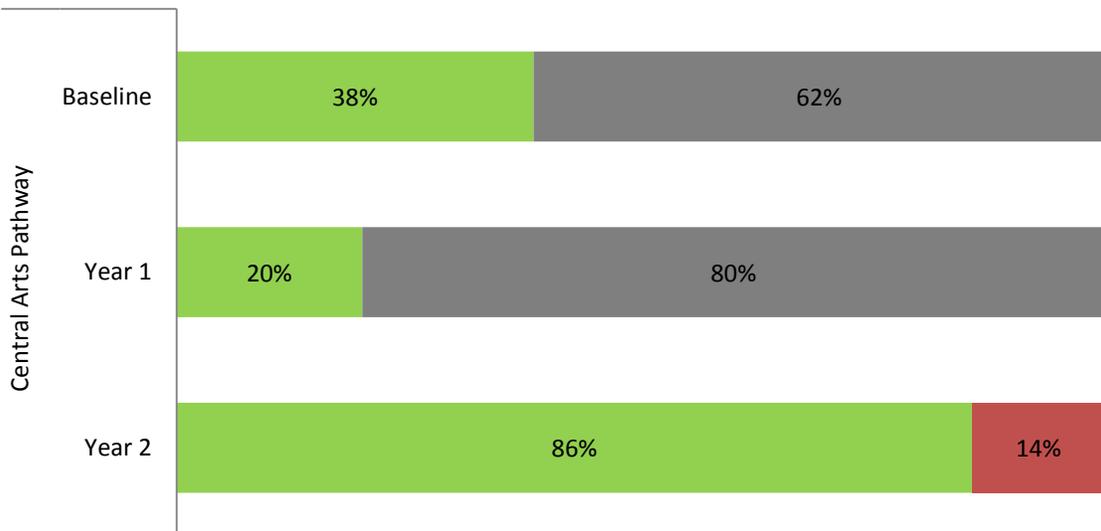
### How would you describe the quantity of arts integration instruction at your school this year?

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



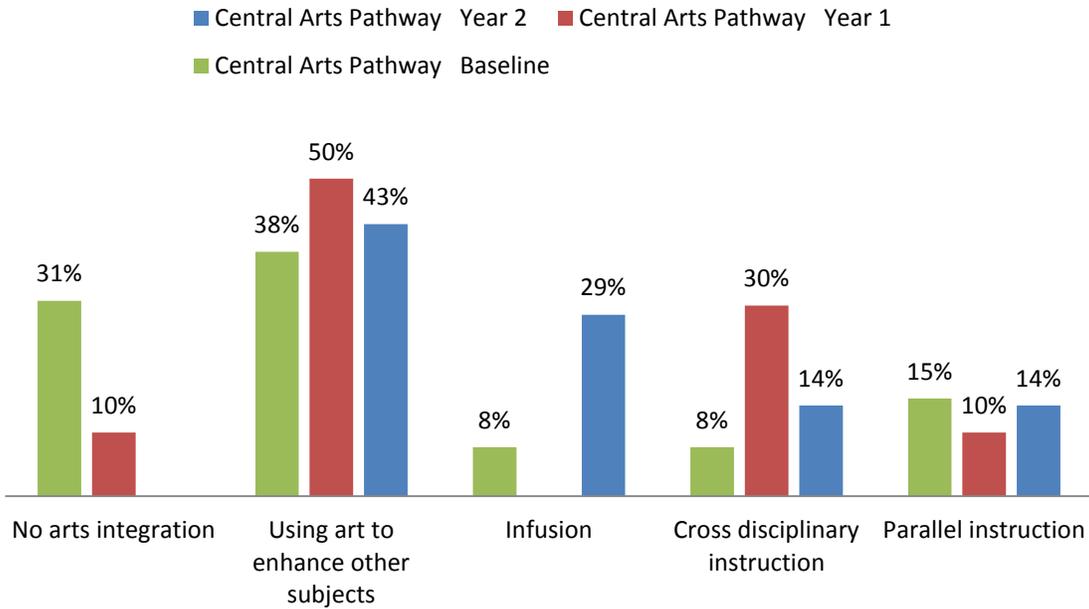
### How would you describe the quality of arts integration instruction at your school this year?

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same

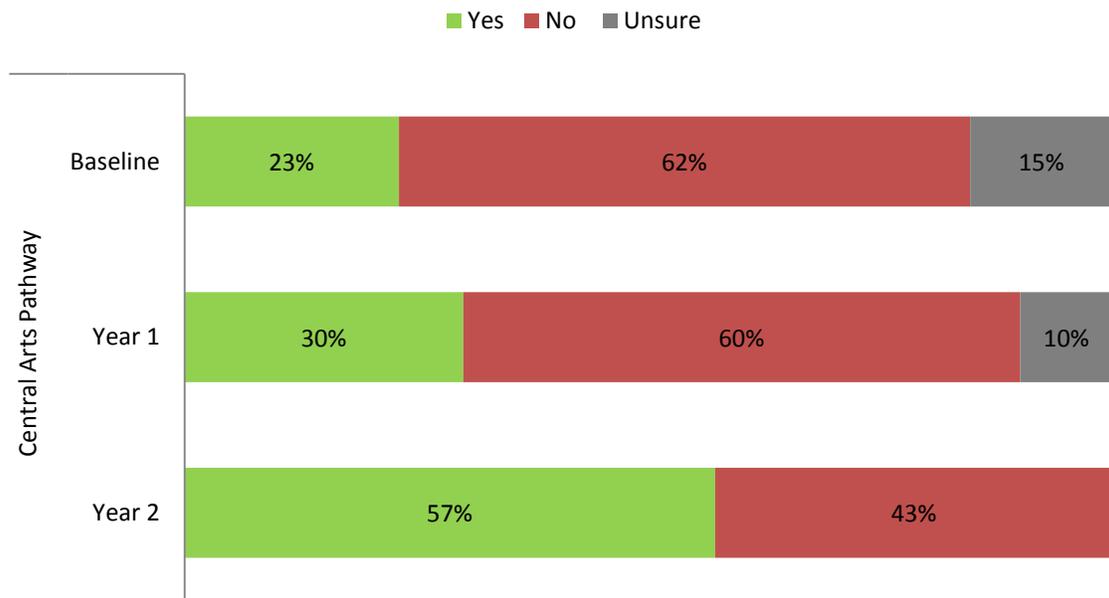




**The majority of teachers at our school use the following method for teaching arts integration:**

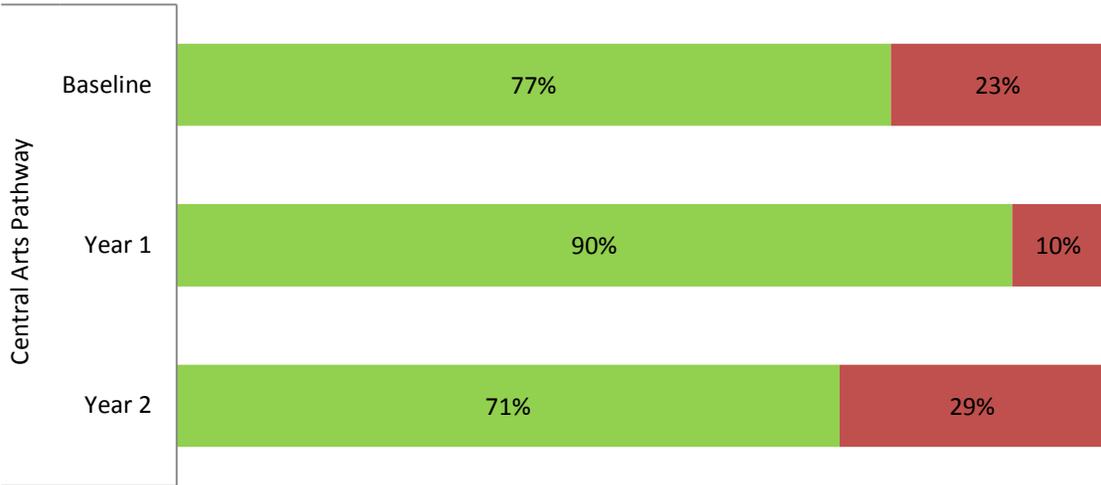


**Has the principal and/or Arts Team set arts integration goals for your school?**



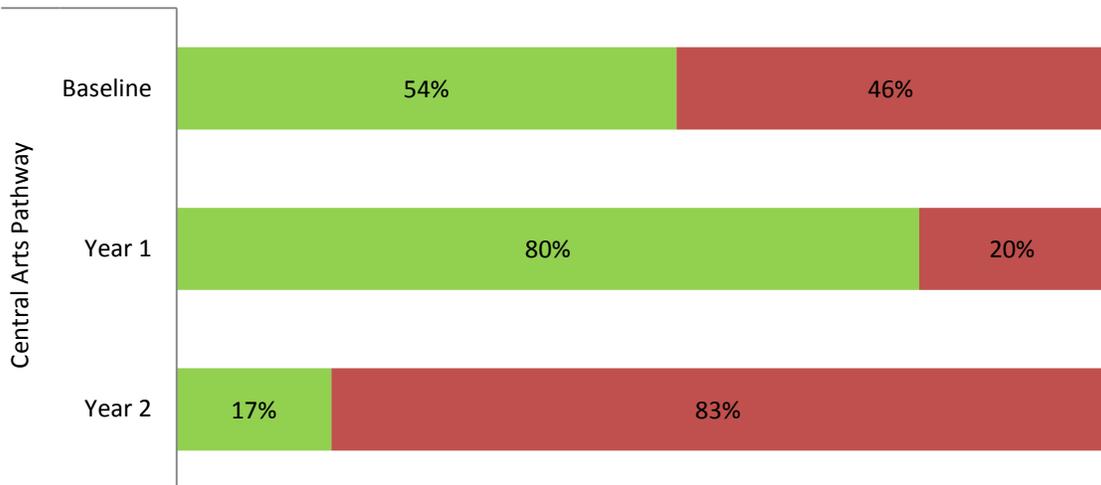
**Has the principal offered teachers flexibility in their teaching requirements to allow them to increase arts instruction?**

■ Yes ■ No



**Has the principal made adjustments to the school schedule, allowing for more subject specific arts instruction?**

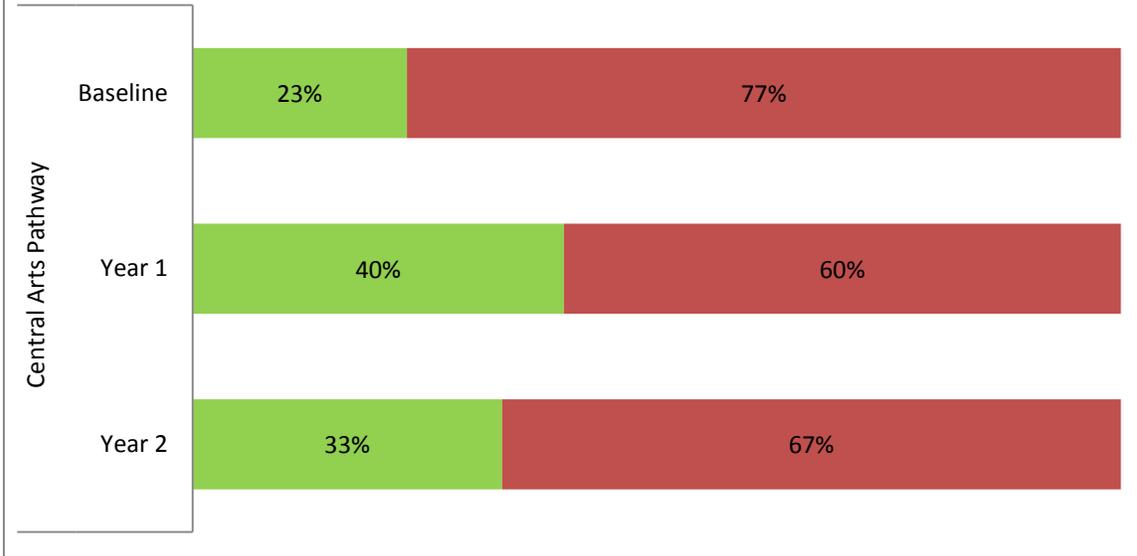
■ Yes ■ No





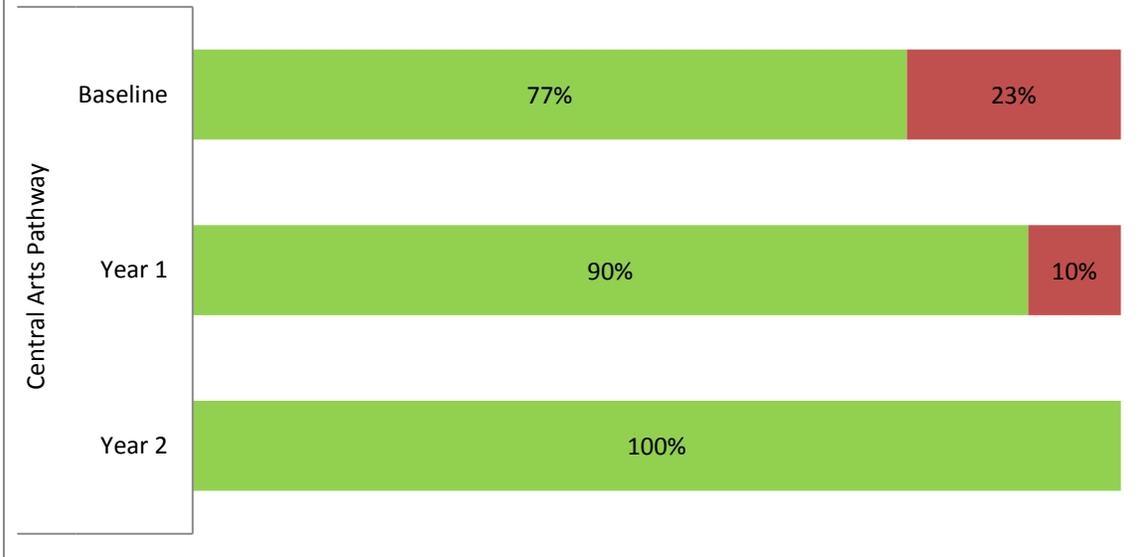
### Do non-arts teachers and arts specialists have collaborative planning time?

■ Yes ■ No



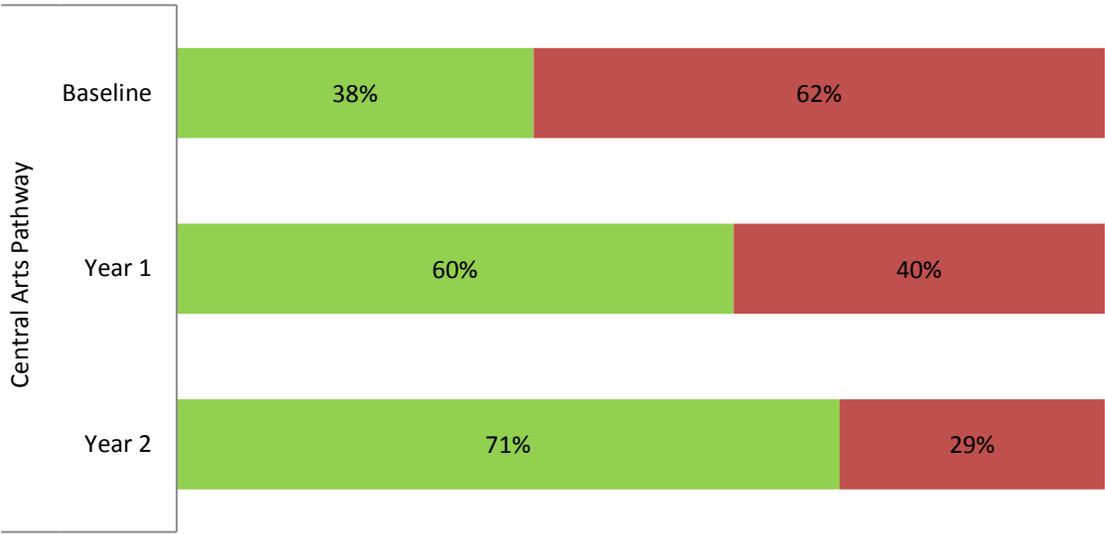
### Do you offer sequential arts learning opportunities for students?

■ Yes ■ No



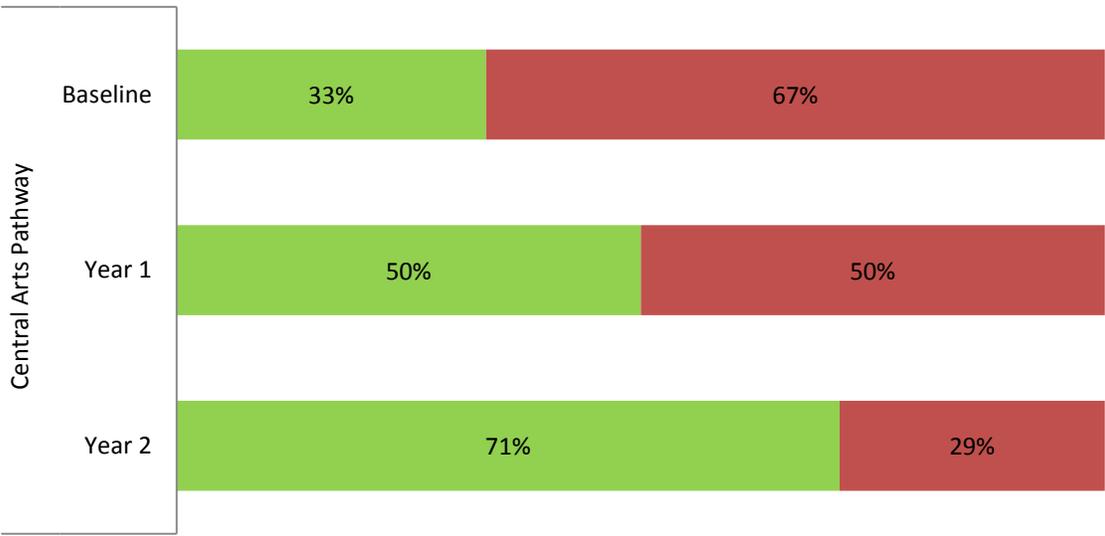
### Did your school use assessments to measure student arts learning this year?

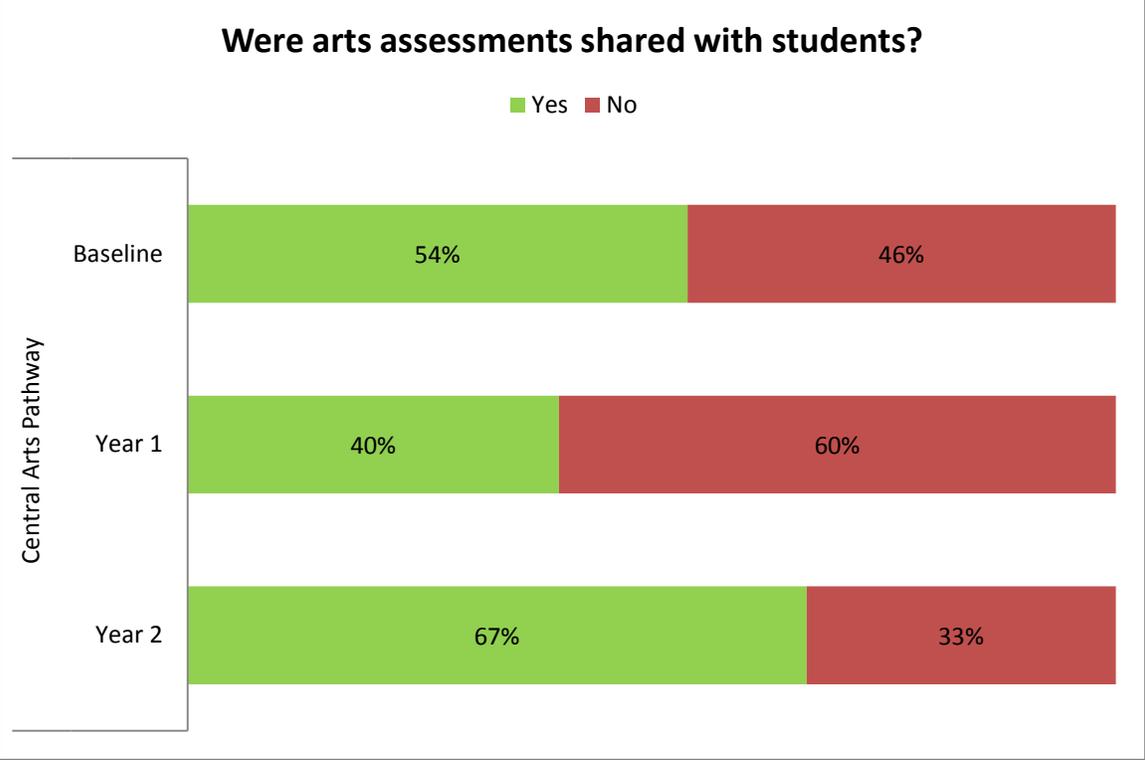
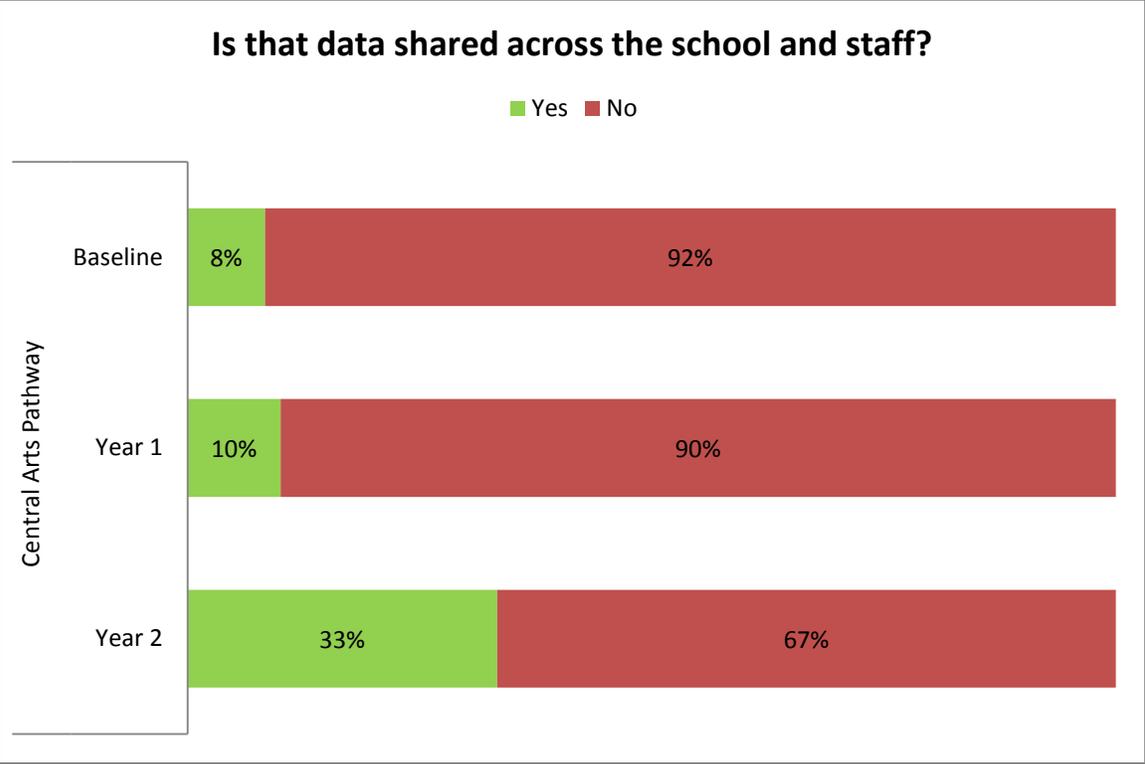
■ Yes ■ No



### Does your school use student data from arts assessments to adjust instructional practices?

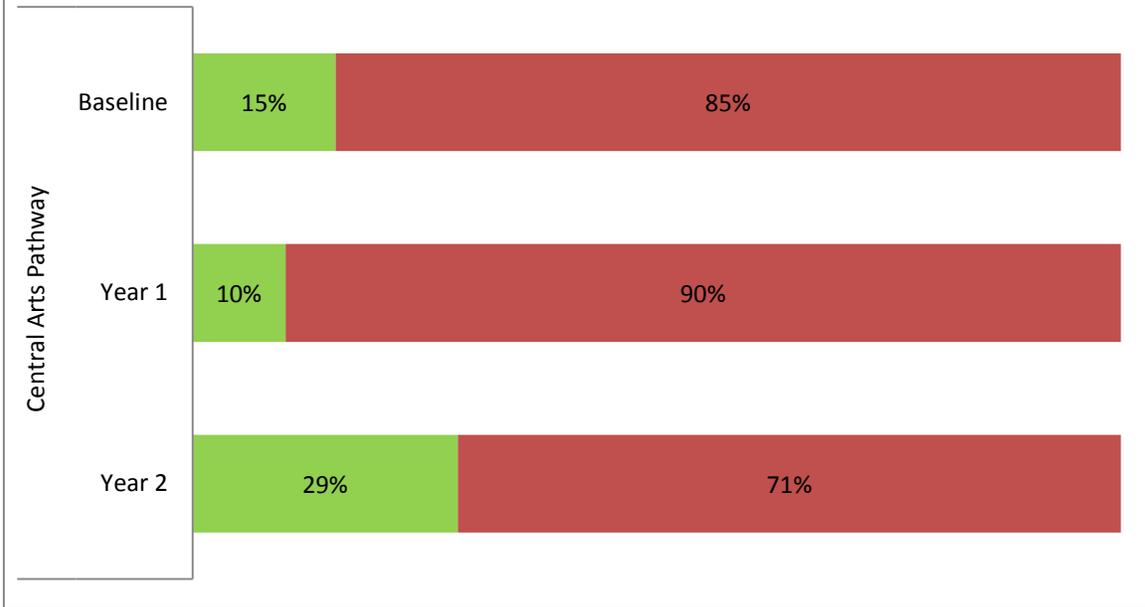
■ Yes ■ No





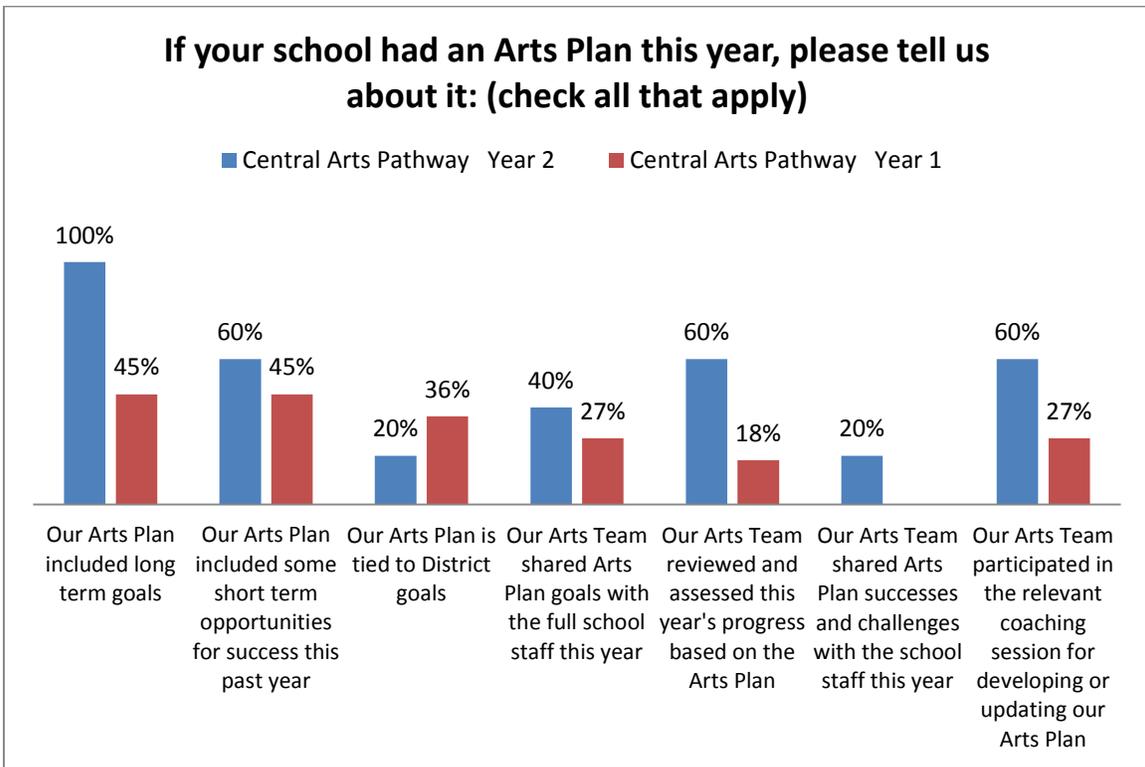
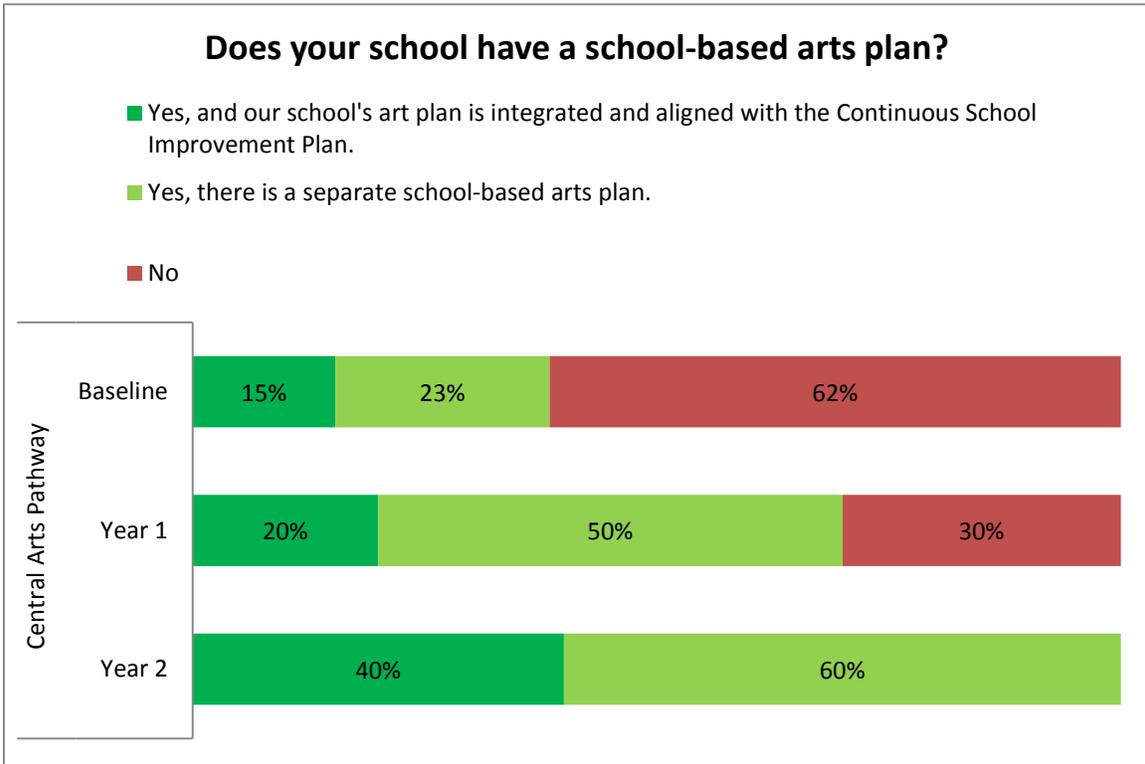
### Were arts assessments shared with parents/guardians?

■ Yes ■ No



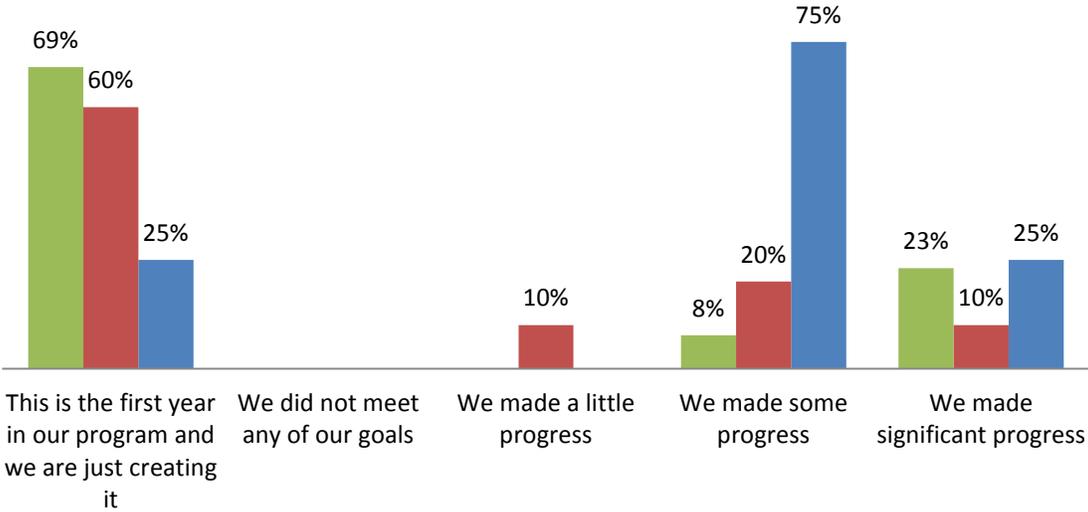


**PLANNING**



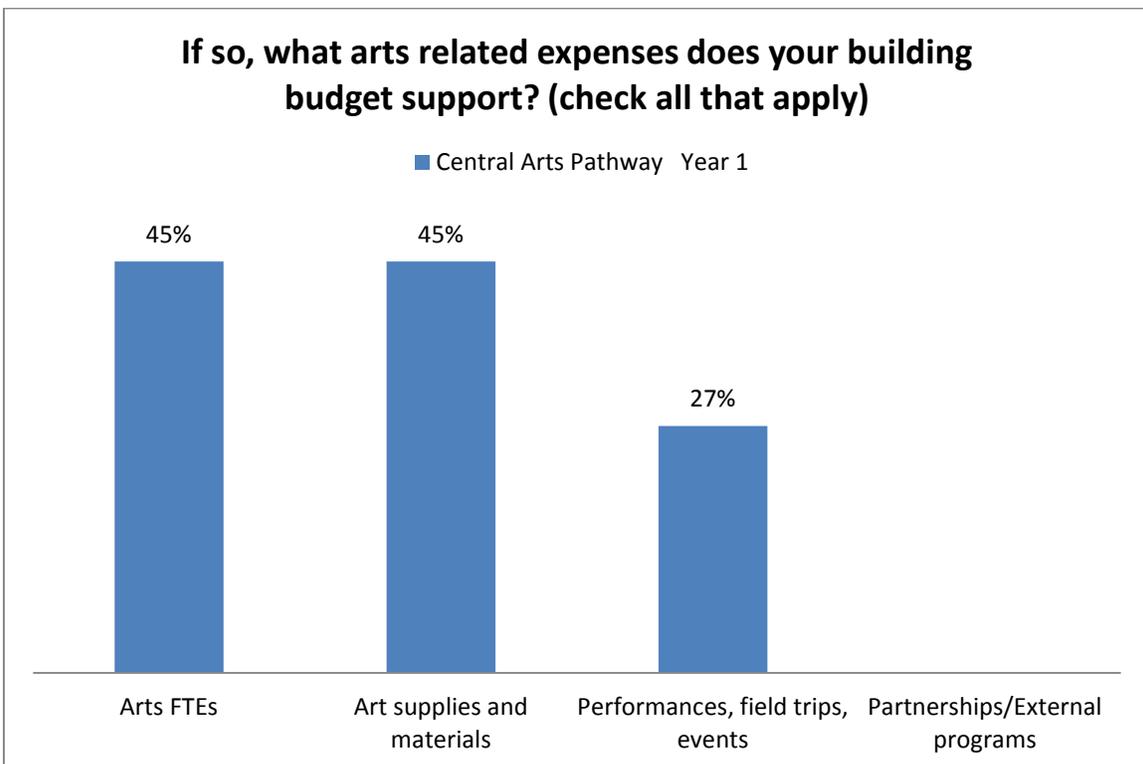
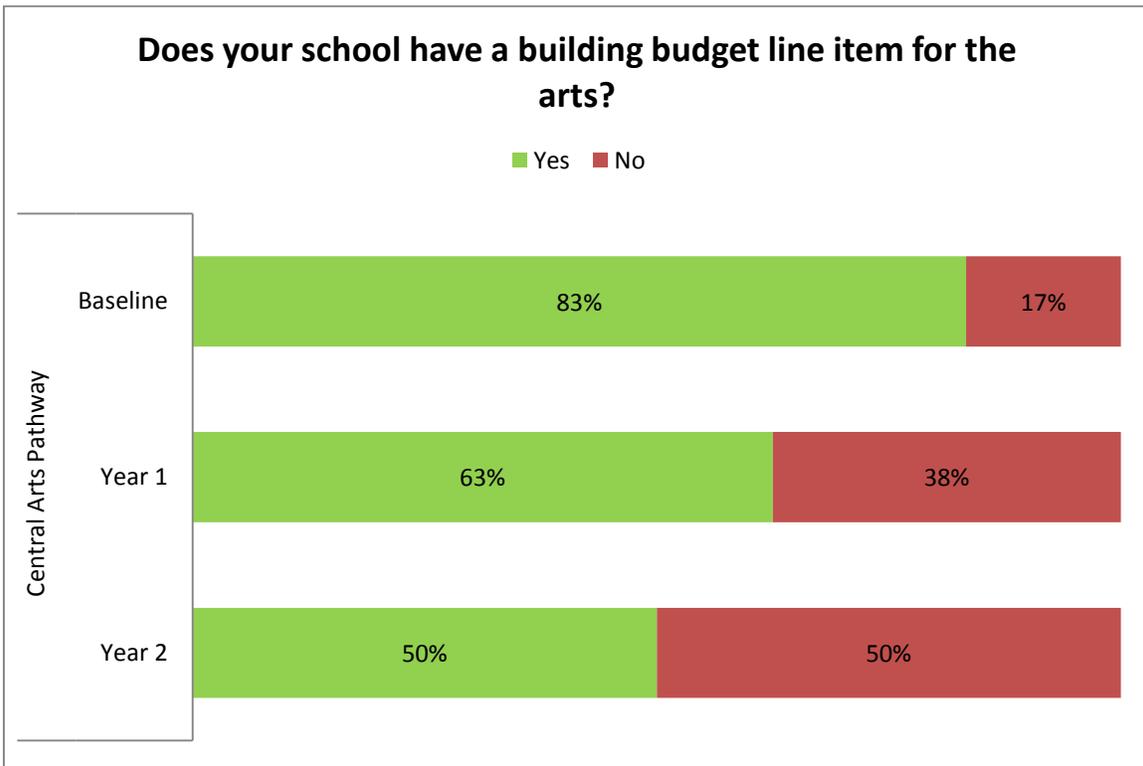
**Please describe your progress toward meeting your Arts Plan's goals this year.**

■ Central Arts Pathway Year 2   
 ■ Central Arts Pathway Year 1  
■ Central Arts Pathway Baseline



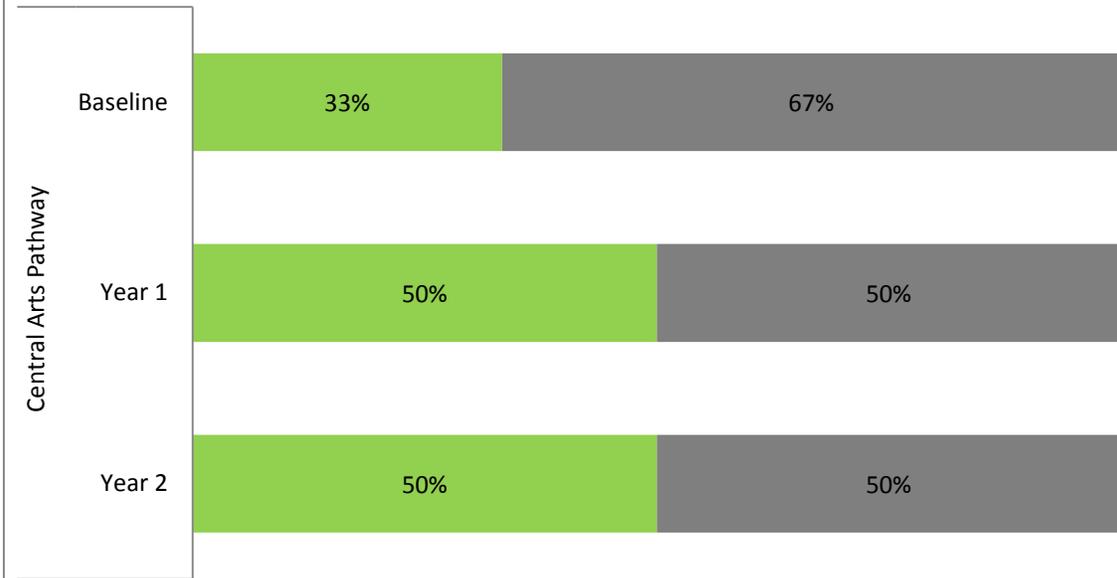


## FUNDING



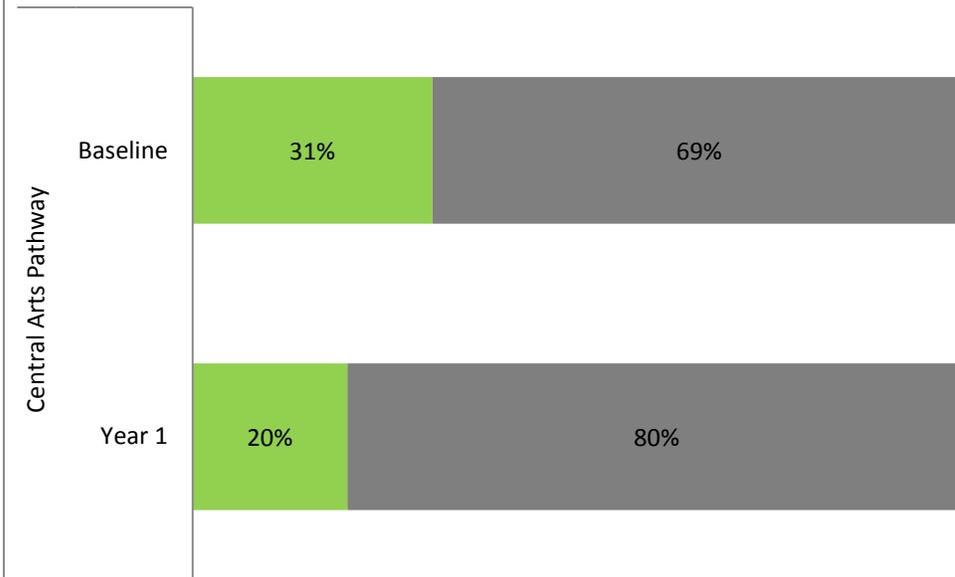
### This year, support for the arts in our building budget:

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



### This year, our school's budget for arts supplies:

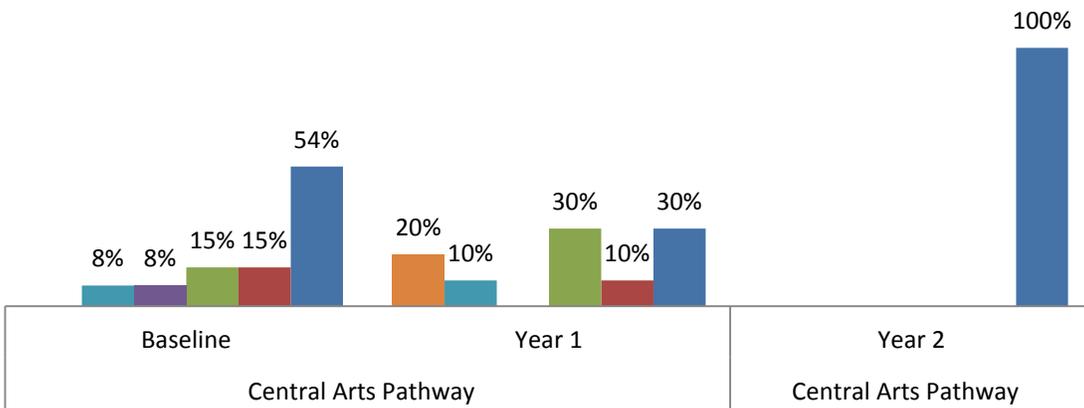
■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same





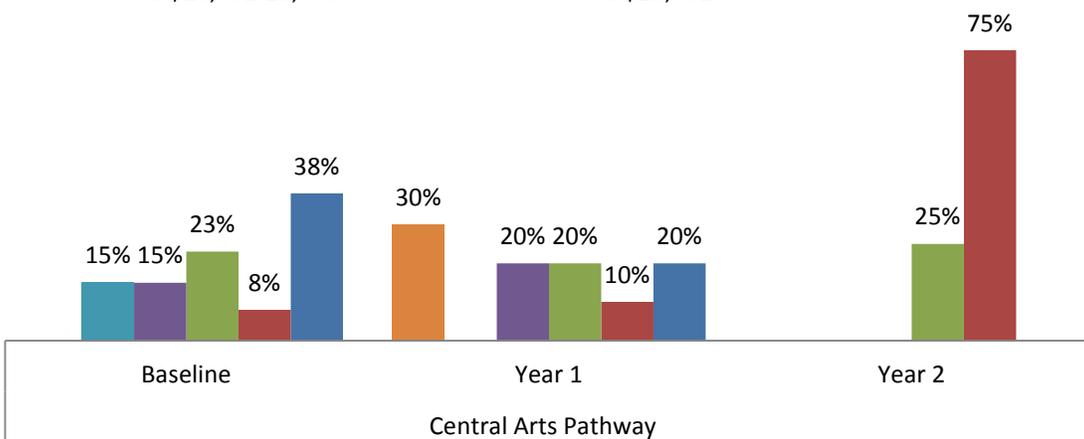
**Aside from Creative Advantage funds, did your school receive any grants or awards to support the arts this year?**

- No grant support for the arts
- \$1,000 or less
- \$1,000-5,000
- \$5,001-10,000
- \$10,001-25,000
- \$25,001+

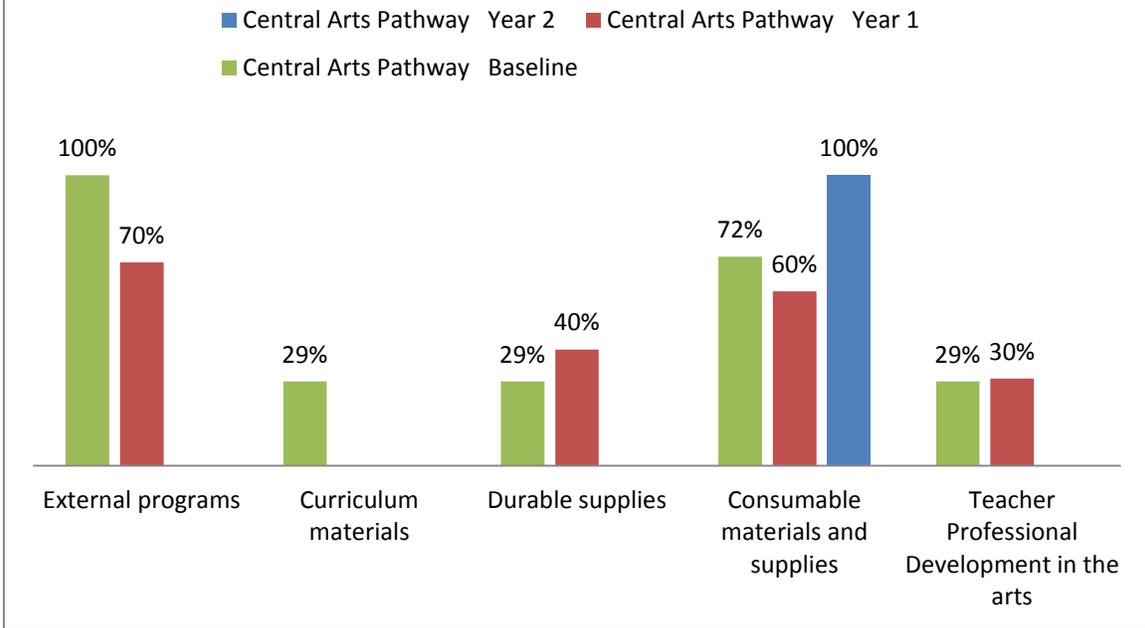


**Did your school receive funds from a school-related organization (e.g. PTSA, booster club) to support the arts this year?**

- We did not receive any funds
- \$1,000 or less
- \$1,000-5,000
- \$5,001-10,000
- \$10,001-25,000
- \$25,001+

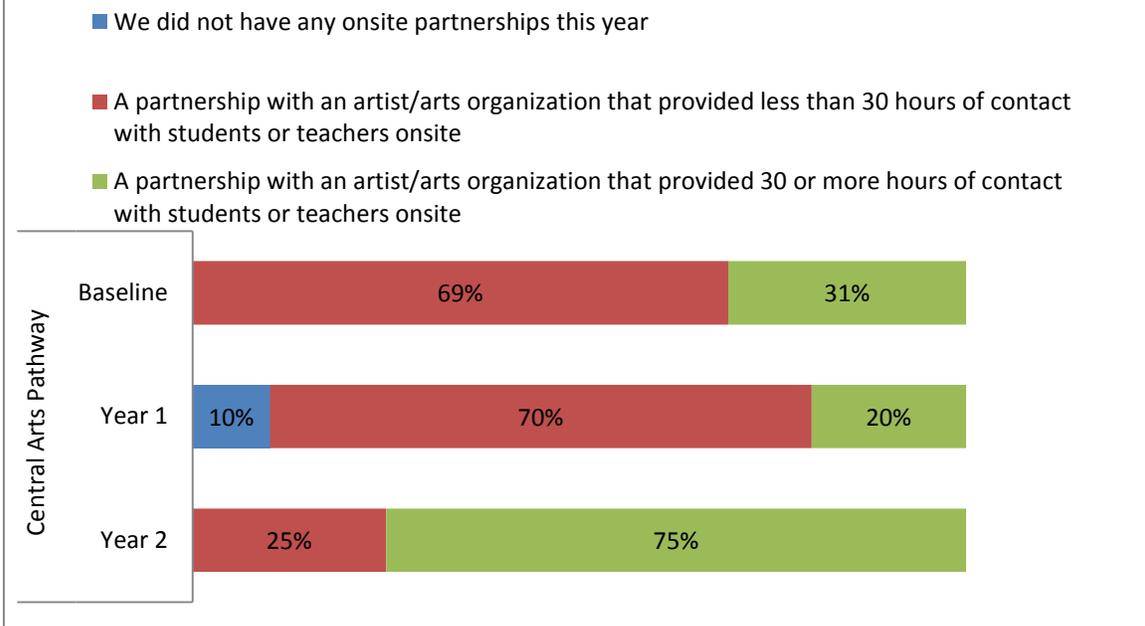


### If you received grants, awards, or other funds, how were they used?



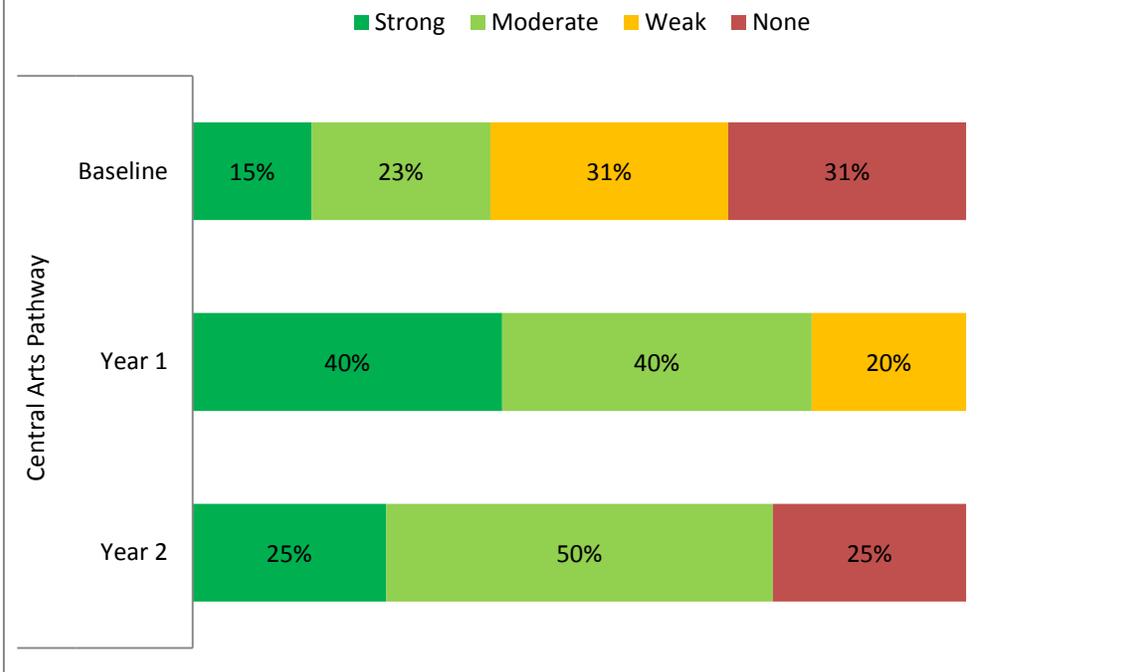
### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#### Did you have any of the following partner or artist relationships during the past school year?





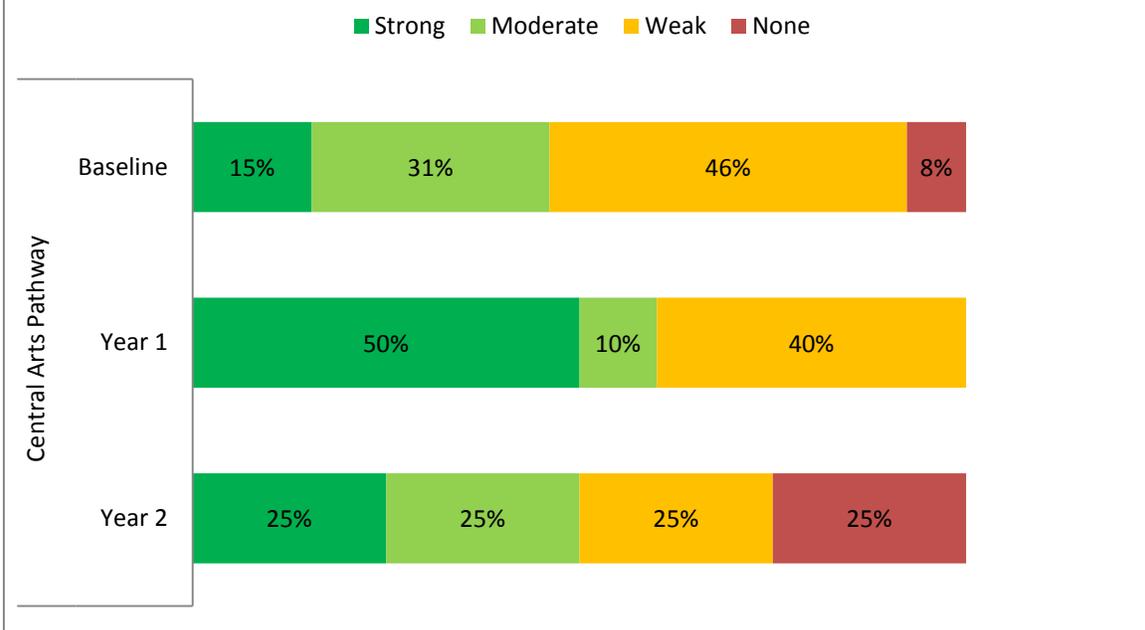
### Family members assist with classroom arts activities.



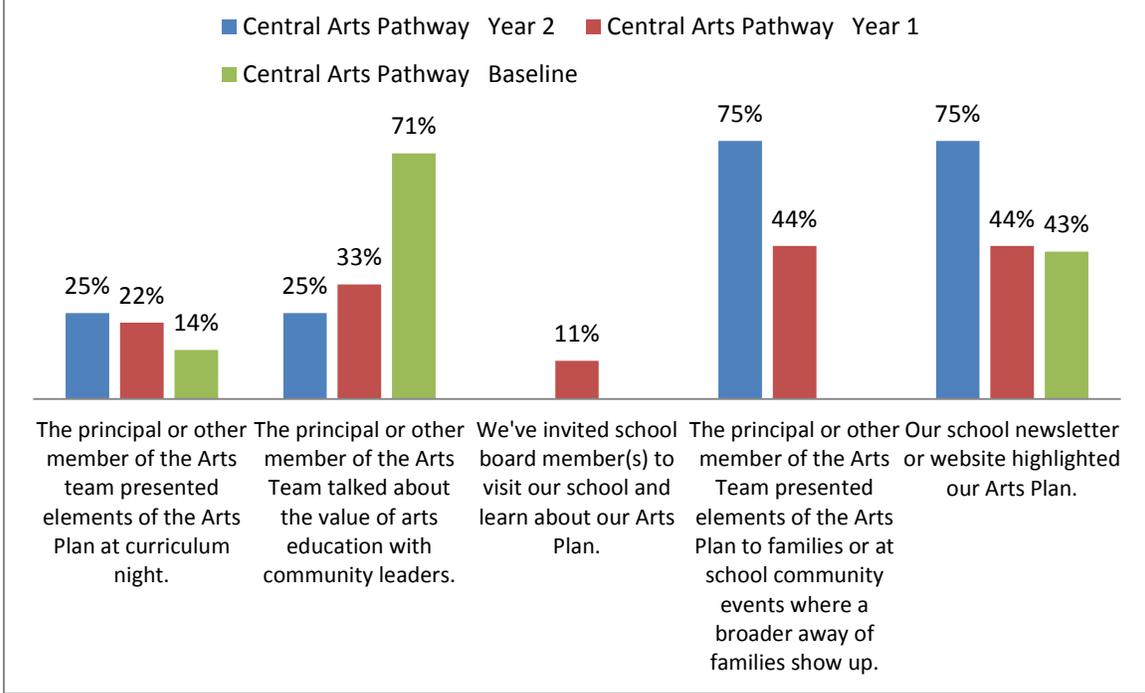
### Family members assist with fundraising efforts to raise funds for the arts.



### Family members share their opinions regarding their children's arts education.



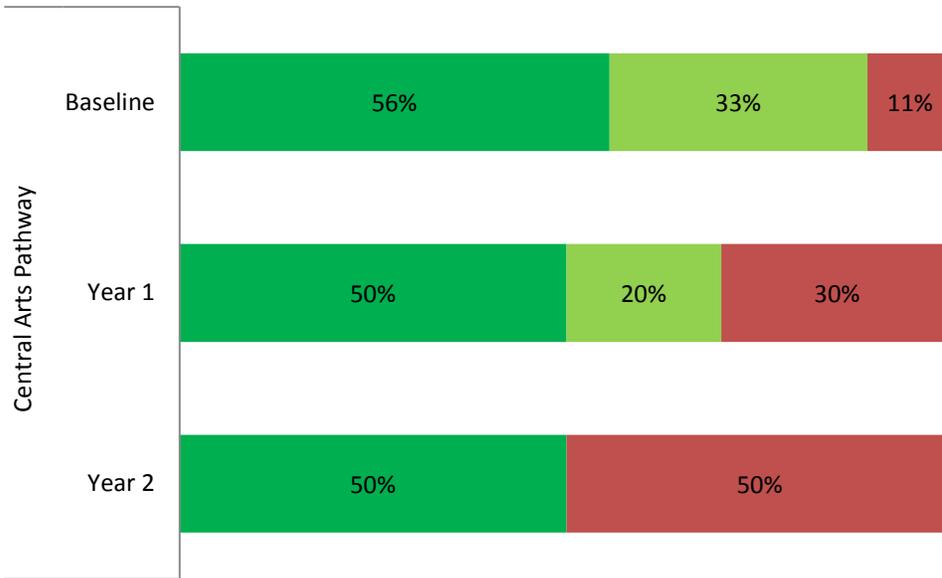
### Please let us know how your school advocated for arts education this year: (check all that apply)





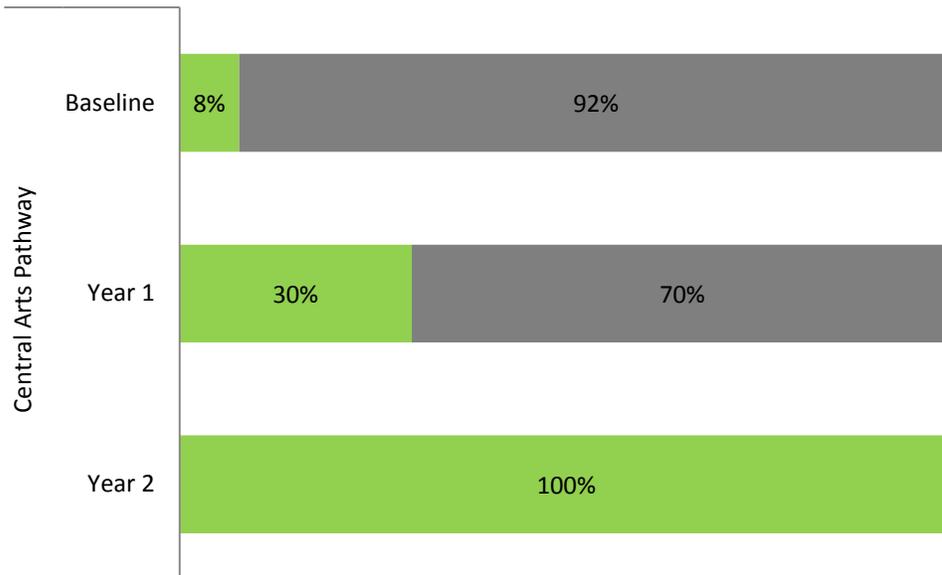
### The arts are a key recruitment aspect of our school.

■ Yes, for recruiting students and families ■ Yes, for recruiting new teachers and staff ■ No



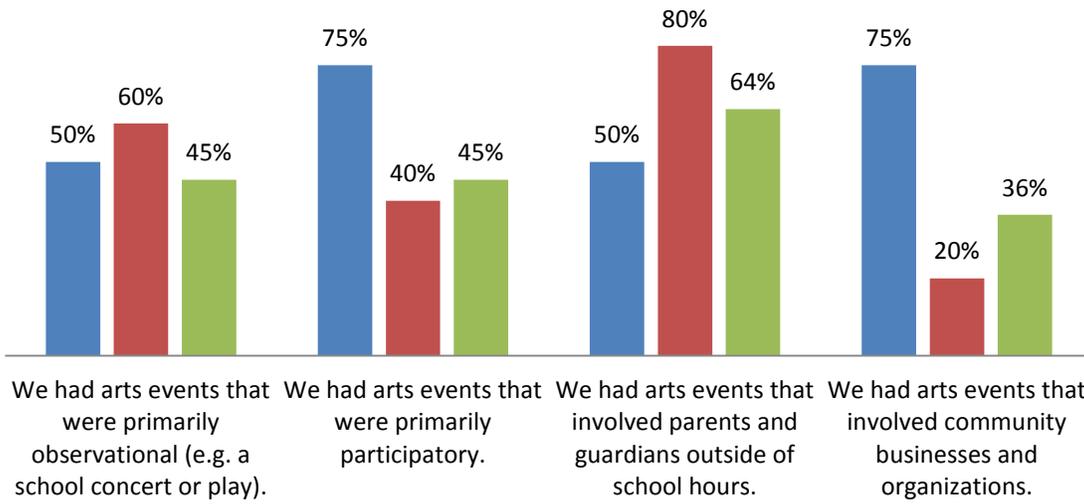
### The number of arts events at our school this year:

■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same



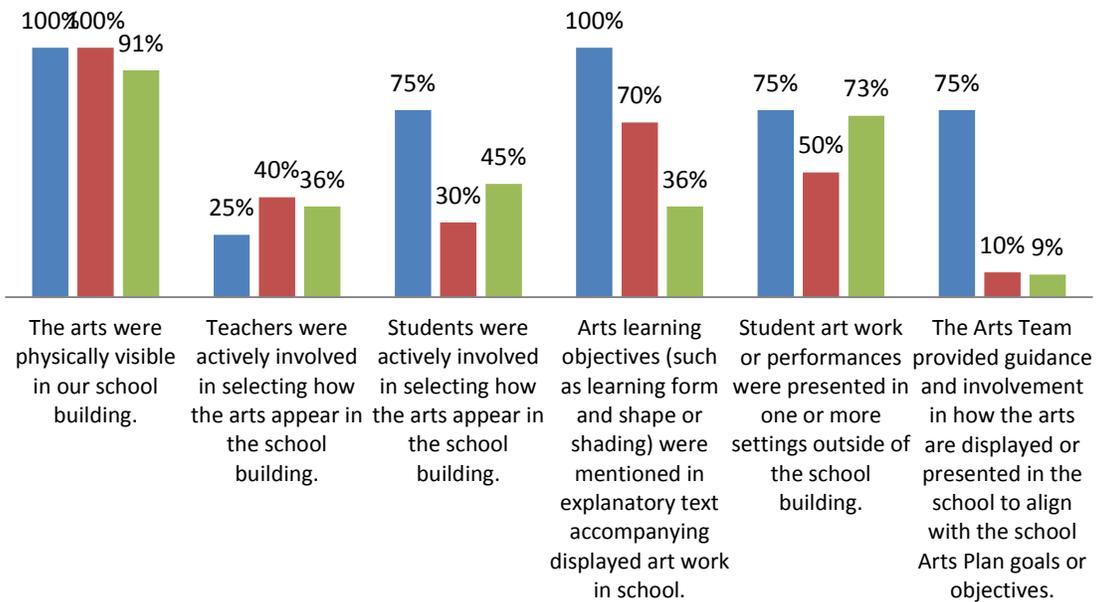
**Please tell us about any arts events at your school this past year: (check all that apply)**

■ Central Arts Pathway Year 2   
 ■ Central Arts Pathway Year 1  
■ Central Arts Pathway Baseline



**Please indicate which of the following apply to the arts in your school this past year: (check all that apply)**

■ Central Arts Pathway Year 2   
 ■ Central Arts Pathway Year 1  
■ Central Arts Pathway Baseline





## IMPACTS

**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Had an impact on the overall school culture?**

■ Significant positive change   ■ Some positive change   ■ No change  
■ Some negative change   ■ Significant negative change



**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Had an impact on the overall level of academic learning?**

■ Significant positive change   ■ Some positive change   ■ No change  
■ Some negative change   ■ Significant negative change



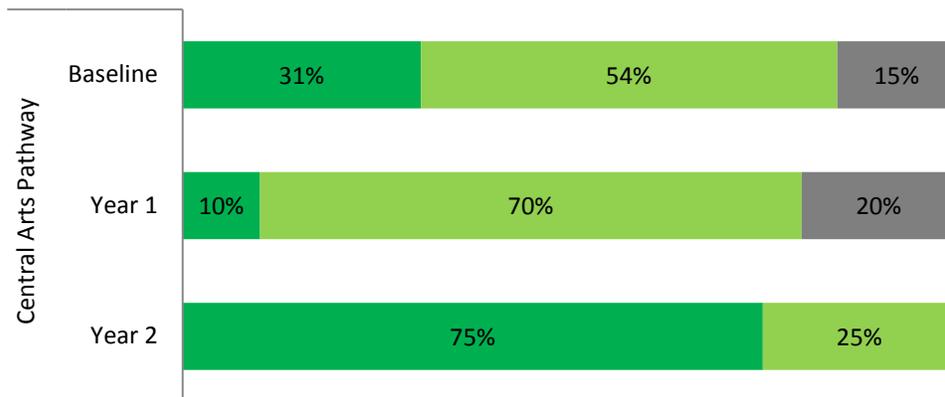
**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Increased your ability to engage and serve students who struggle academically?**

■ Significant positive change  
 ■ Some positive change  
 ■ No change  
■ Some negative change  
 ■ Significant negative change



**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Increased your ability to engage and serve students who struggle behaviorally?**

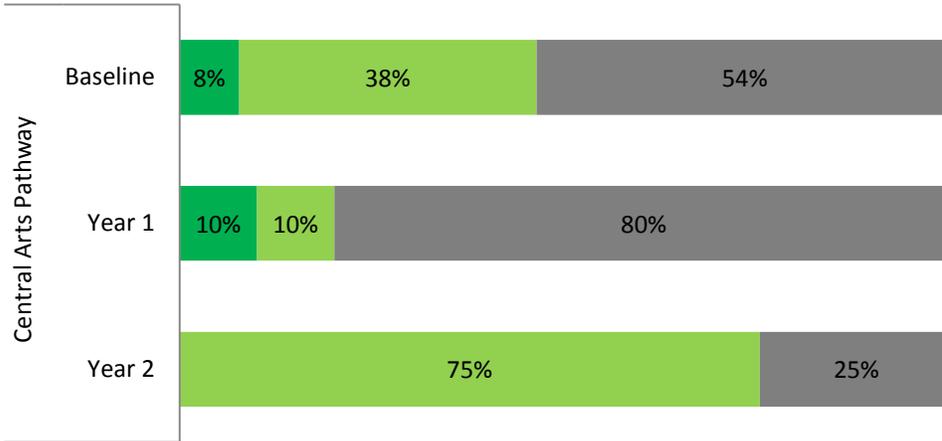
■ Significant positive change  
 ■ Some positive change  
 ■ No change  
■ Some negative change  
 ■ Significant negative change





**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Had an impact on our disciplinary referrals?**

- Significant positive change
- Some positive change
- No change
- Some negative change
- Significant negative change



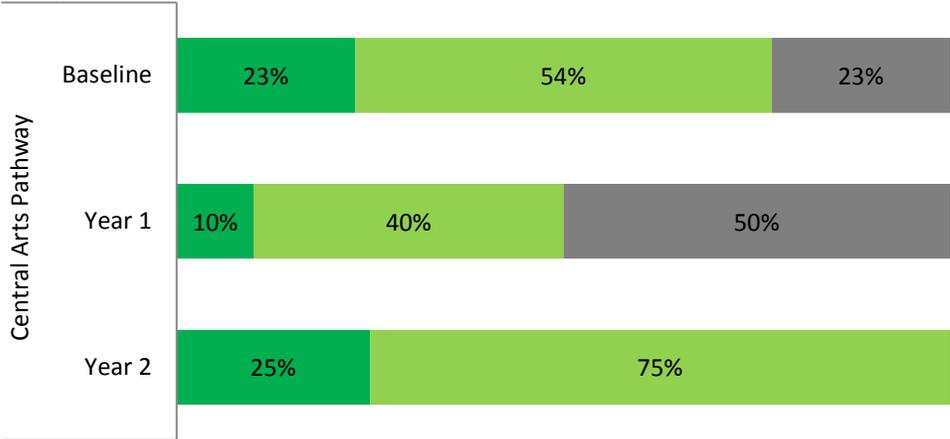
**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Had an impact on parent or community engagement, involvement or support to the school?**

- Significant positive change
- Some positive change
- No change
- Some negative change
- Significant negative change



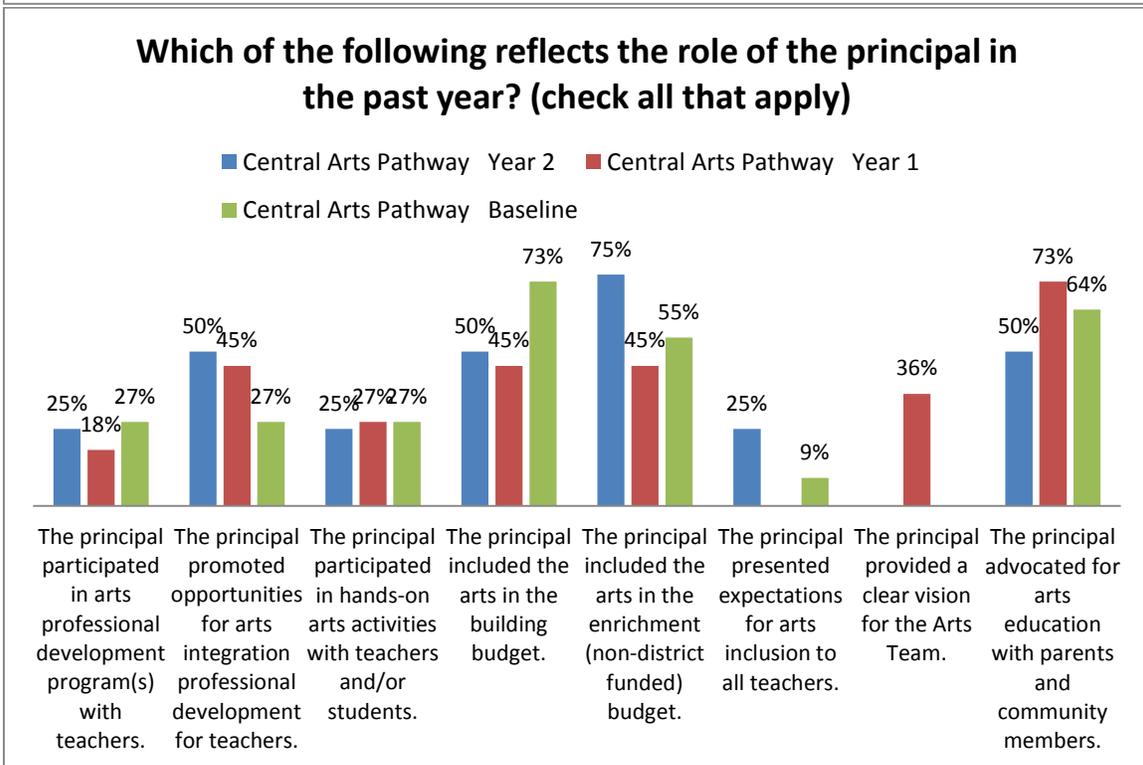
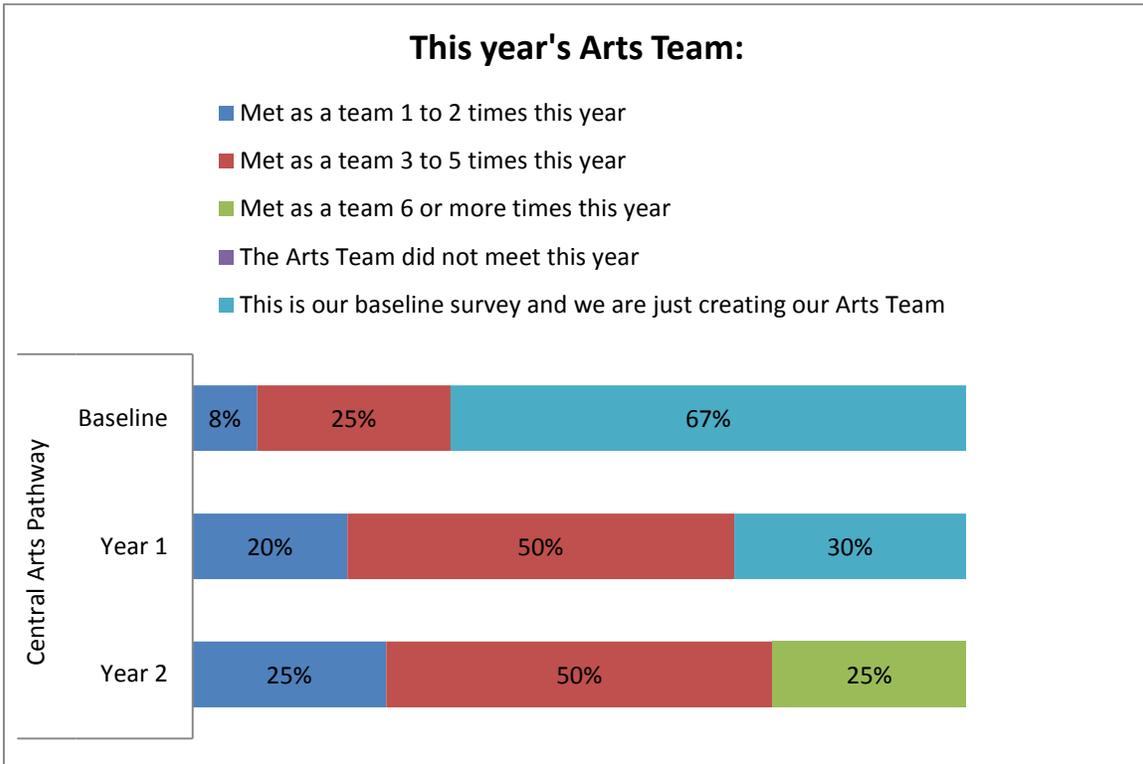
**Please tell us your opinion about any impact increasing the arts at your school has had on the following: Had an impact on teacher engagement and commitment?**

- Significant positive change
- Some positive change
- No change
- Some negative change
- Significant negative change





## LEADERSHIP



**If your Arts Team was active this year, how much impact did it have in the following areas: Motivating parent involvement in the arts.**

■ Significant impact ■ Some impact ■ Little impact ■ No impact



**If your Arts Team was active this year, how much impact did it have in the following areas: Developing community partnerships in the arts.**

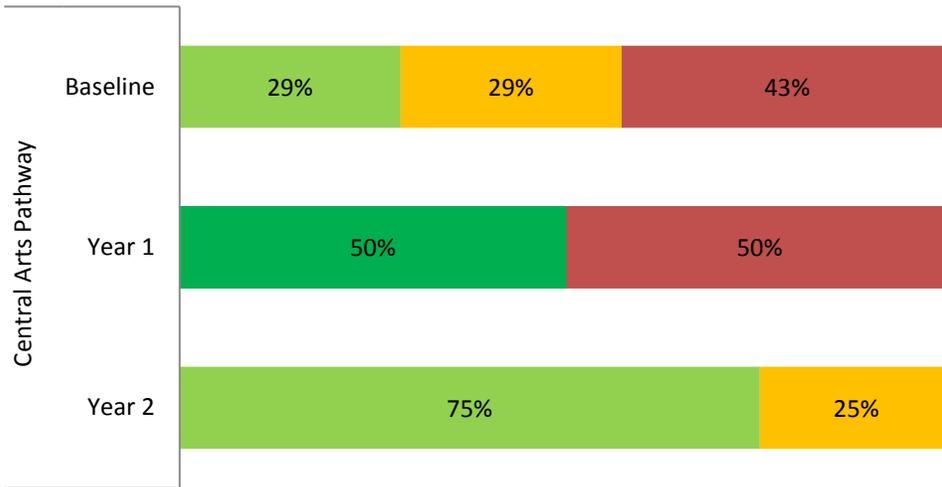
■ Significant impact ■ Some impact ■ Little impact ■ No impact





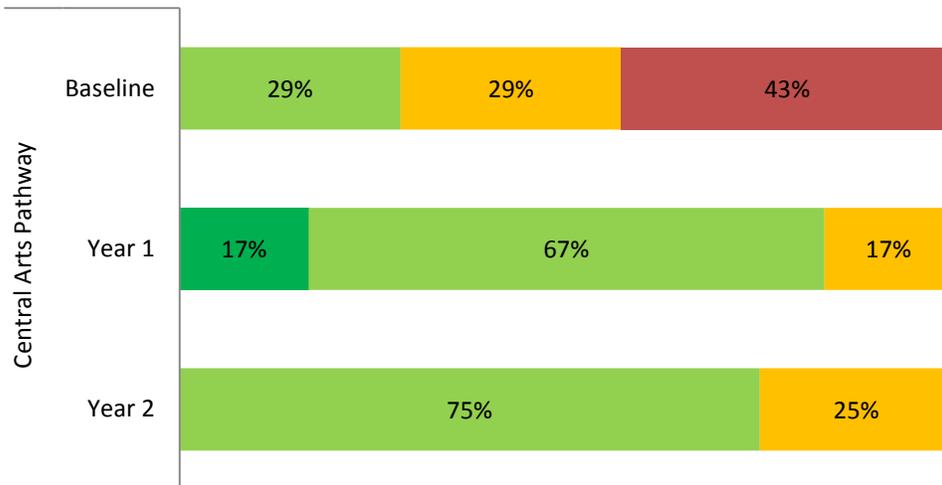
**If your Arts Team was active this year, how much impact did it have in the following areas: Providing opportunities for arts related professional development for all teachers.**

■ Significant impact ■ Some impact ■ Little impact ■ No impact



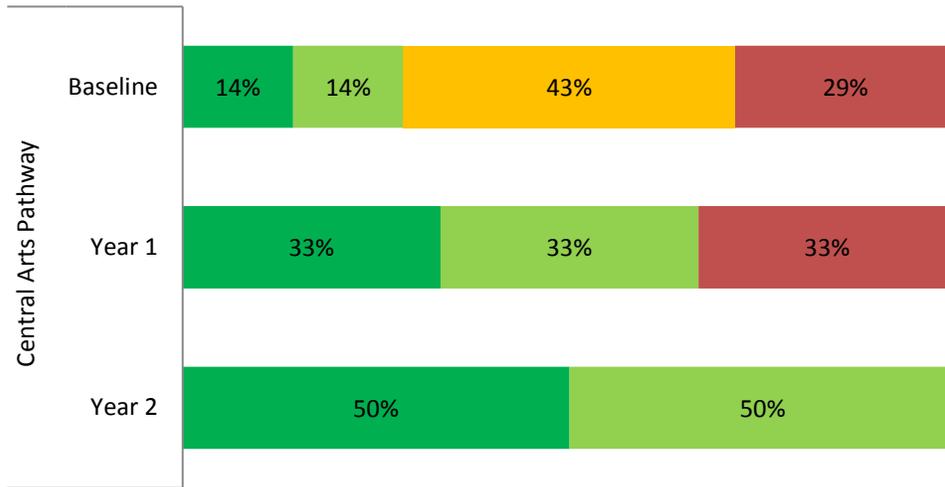
**If your Arts Team was active this year, how much impact did it have in the following areas: Engaging the majority of your school's teachers with the arts.**

■ Significant impact ■ Some impact ■ Little impact ■ No impact



**If your Arts Team was active this year, how much impact did it have in the following areas: Increasing the school's reputation in the arts.**

■ Significant impact ■ Some impact ■ Little impact ■ No impact



**Have you suggested to other teachers or principals that they consider involvement in some kind of arts training or learning?**

■ Yes ■ No





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