

**Interchange Program Evaluation:
Initial Report**

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Interchange Program Evaluation Initial Report

INTRODUCTION

During the 2008-09 school year we began a multi-year evaluation of the Interchange arts partnership program. The principal objectives of the evaluation are to investigate: (1) the program's impact on students' development of arts and academic skills; (2) the program's impact on other areas of student development in cognitive, social and personal domains; (3) the program's impact on teachers' professional development and classroom instruction; (4) the program's impact on school climate and culture, and (5) overall program implementation and patterns of participation, in order to provide formative evaluation data to improve program performance.

We investigated these objectives through three partnership lenses: conditions, process and outcomes.

Conditions include areas that are beyond the control or influence of Interchange, but provide an overall context for the partnership. These areas include school district/state budgets and mandates, classroom teacher experience and turnover, and demographic changes within SLPS.

Process variables include areas of implementation, partnership and context that are within the potential influence of Interchange. These areas include collaboration with schools and collaboration between artists and teachers; teacher professional development, buy-in and classroom implementation; school leadership and school climate; and community support and advocacy.

Outcome variables include areas of student and teacher engagement, learning and development. These areas potentially include students' thinking skills, social development, personal dispositions and self-perceptions, learning in the arts and other academic areas, and school engagement. Potential outcomes for teachers include increased engagement and support for arts integrated approaches to instruction, increased capacity for teaching through the arts, and professional renewal and retention.

Our over-arching goal was to develop a valid and credible model for how Interchange can improve student performance, support student development and develop teachers' capacity for high quality arts-integrated instruction. Our first-year data collection was focused on investigating the perceptions of teachers and artists about program implementation and outcome variables, in order to develop a reasonable causal model for continued study. Our subsequent research will seek to measure the most salient variables,

and determine statistical and qualitative relationships between the process of partnership implementation and student/teacher outcomes.

Principal methods of data collection in 2008-09 included: (a) site visits to participating schools (elementary, middle and high school); (b) interviews with participating teachers, artists and principals (n = 51); (c) teacher surveys (n = 30) and artist surveys (n = 33). Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis with qualitative analysis software, which helped us identify themes in program implementation and outcomes. The qualitative analysis also guided the development of teacher surveys. The surveys included rating scales and open-ended questions.

LEARNING IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS

Personal Expression through the Arts

Interchange residencies supported students’ ability to express themselves through the arts. In the best teacher/artist collaborations, younger students developed an understanding of content area through arts experiences that was reflected in their work. Older students worked at articulating more complex ideas and values, such as through writing or video.

Teachers rated students’ personal expression through participation in Interchange. Results were very positive, indicating that teachers found the program to be effective in developing expressive abilities.

Personal Expression – Teacher Perceptions

PERSONAL EXPRESSION	SA	A	N	D	SD
Through the Interchange residency, students expressed themselves creatively and independently.	51.7%	41.4%	6.9%	0%	0%
Through Interchange, students developed and expressed ideas that were important to them.	41.4%	41.4%	6.9%	10.3%	0%
Because of the Interchange residency my students are more expressive.	20.8%	51.7%	24.1%	3.4%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 93% of teachers reported that students expressed themselves creatively and independently.
- 83% of teachers reported that students developed and expressed ideas that were important to them.
- 73% of teachers reported that their students were more expressive.

Interchange artists gave higher ratings to students' personal expression than the school teachers.

Personal Expression – Artist Perceptions

EXPRESSION	SA	A	N	D	SD
Through the Interchange residency, students expressed themselves creatively and independently.	63.6%	33.4%	3%	0%	0%
Through Interchange, students developed and expressed ideas that were important to them.	54.5%	30.3%	12.2%	3.0%	0%
Because of the Interchange residency students were more expressive.	62.5%	21.9%	15.6%	0%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 97% of artists reported that students expressed themselves creatively and independently.
- 85% of artists reported that students developed and expressed ideas that were important to them.
- 84% of artists reported that their students were more expressive.

Teachers and artists, however, had similar perceptions of students' development in the arts.

Understanding in the Arts – Teacher Perceptions

UNDERSTANDING IN THE ARTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
My students gained a greater understanding of the arts from the residency.	41.4%	44.8%	6.9%	6.9%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 86% of teachers reported that their students gained a greater understanding of the arts through the residencies.

Understanding in the Arts – Artist Perceptions

UNDERSTANDING IN THE ARTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
My students gained a greater understanding of the arts from the residency.	45.5%	45.5%	6.1%	2.9%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 91% of artists reported that their students gained a greater understanding of the arts through the residencies.

Residencies addressed different arts disciplines with varied connections to other academic subjects.

We’re writing poetry in response to art, and then also creating art in response to poetry. Each student creates a collection of their own poetry and artwork, and has it in a form that is useful for them and that they can be proud of. – *Teacher*

Through video production, older students gained a deeper understanding of media literacy.

That was interesting to them. The idea that you can manipulate things not only to make it look better, but to really give more information. It’s an obvious thing, but until you do it, you don’t totally understand it...The goal is always to teach media literacy through production, so they can better understand how media literacy works – the ways in which people manipulate [images and information], both good and bad. – *Artist*

I think they now will be a more critical viewer of any type of media, but more so advertising, [and] things of that nature. I think they began to see the tricks of the trade. – *Teacher*

Social and Personal Development

Teachers and artists reported that Interchange helped students develop confidence through participation in the artist residencies. According to most teachers, the students learned to work collaboratively and improved their behavior and peer relations.

Social and Personal Development – Teacher Perceptions

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
My students were more engaged and motivated to learn because of our participation with Interchange.	35.7%	46.4%	17.9%	0%	0%
The Interchange residency helped my students gain self-confidence.	44.8%	44.8%	10.4%	0%	0%
The Interchange program helped my students work cooperatively.	41.4%	27.6%	20.7%	10.3%	0%
Students’ peer relations and behavior improved because of the Interchange residency.	13.8%	41.4%	31%	13.8%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 82% of teachers reported that students were more engaged and motivated to learn because of their participation with Interchange.
- 90% of teachers reported that their students gained self-confidence through Interchange.
- 70% of teachers reported that Interchange helped students work cooperatively.
- 55% of teachers reported that students’ peer relations and behavior improved because of Interchange

Social and Personal Development – Artist Perceptions

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
Students were engaged and motivated by the residency.	60.7%	33.3%	3.0%	3.0%	0%
The Interchange residency helped students gain self-confidence.	57.6%	30.3%	12.1%	0%	0%
The Interchange program helped students work cooperatively.	48.5%	39.4%	12.1%	0%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 94% of artists reported that students were more engaged and motivated because of Interchange.
- 88% of artists reported that their students gained self-confidence through Interchange.
- 88% of teachers reported that Interchange helped students work cooperatively.

Authentic arts experiences provided unique opportunities for self-expression. Teachers often spoke of students gaining confidence in their ability to express themselves to their peers and teachers, through written, oral or artistic work.

Students’ self-confidence was dramatically improved! Students often have difficulty speaking in front of an audience. Not only did their public speaking skills improve, but their confidence in their writing skills also improved.

–*Teacher*

They gained confidence in writing, expressing themselves, taking risks and presenting in front of their peers. –*Teacher*

An elementary school teacher told us how arts approaches gave a context for students to seek help with their writing.

It makes [struggling students] more comfortable with their inabilities, and they’re not so afraid to open up and ask for help. – *Teacher*

Struggling students gained confidence in their ability to succeed in classroom activities.

One of my students is dyslexic, but she has an artistic eye that far surpasses everybody else in the room. And when she made her [quilt] square, she just really put a lot of color in it and just made it so unique that it stood out from everybody else's. So that helped with her self-esteem. It helped her learn about herself, feel better about herself. – *Teacher*

Formerly reticent students became more verbal through arts experiences.

Some of my students who were normally very quiet and shy in class became more outspoken. It gave the students the incentive to complete poems so they would have something to share. – *Teacher*

Other students overcame shyness through physical expression.

In certain parts of the dances they would partner up with other kids and it brought them out of that shyness. You'd see them doing the little spins and really starting to come out of their shells. That was really good for the kids. – *Teacher*

[One student] says very little in class. And I try – as you do with all the shy and withdrawn students – to engage him at times, but it's very difficult. And he has in a quiet way been more participatory since the program started. – *Teacher*

Learning to express through the arts helped students deal with personal issues and gain confidence in their ability to succeed at school.

He has a lot of personal stuff that he's dealing with, and through his poetry he has beautifully expressed himself. He's used extended metaphors. I'm staring at one right now, where he considers himself a flower and he goes through this whole thing. He starts off saying at the bottom, "I'm the dirt. People step on me. They spit on me." And then he goes to the grass, "I'm growing, but people are still knocking me down." Then he goes to the stem, and then at the end he says, "I'm a flower," and he takes control of how he feels about himself through poetry. – *Teacher*

I think it's transformed my students in a number of ways. One, they feel successful. Two, they're able to express things that they couldn't or didn't know they were allowed to express before. And then, three, it's invested them in writing and opened another door of a possible avenue in their future. – *Teacher*

Teachers described how students demonstrated a greater awareness of respect, teamwork, and learning with their peers.

Students learned to respect each other a little more. – *Teacher*

They started working together better and understanding that caring and acceptance does not necessarily mean weakness. – *Teacher*

Teachers and artists also observed a stronger sense of classroom community, which enabled students to see each other differently, collaborate better, and cultivate a low-risk learning environment where students felt comfortable sharing and performing for an audience.

They got used to being respectful, listening to each other, sharing their work. – *Teacher*

Some students significantly improved their behavior through participating in the residencies.

K _____ was a student who caused a lot of behavioral problems. It was a struggle, and now she's one of the students who has an A in my class because this helped her focus. She really excelled. – *Teacher*

School Engagement

The program provided the opportunity for students to meet and learn from artists in their own classroom. The artists engaged them in authentic arts experiences, often richly connected to other school subjects. Students were more engaged when they felt that their work reflected their own experiences.

Teachers described how artists engaged students and helped them develop a sense of ownership of the learning process.

Our students learned how to take ownership of their work. This may sound like a little thing, but it brings tears to my eyes to see how the students united together, and took ownership of their own performance and practices. Prior to Interchange, they were negative and blamed teachers for making them work. – *Teacher*

It was their show. And I have never seen that [sense of ownership] before with our kids. Usually...even if they're the best students, they just kind of do the work quietly, but it's still teacher centered. – *Teacher*

Some students became motivated to succeed for the first time.

[A student] who...for the most part, I think could [not] care less but has been coming on time. Another young lady, she's almost to a passing grade now, and she was in a pretty deep hole. Interchange has motivated her. I'm seeing her do her other work. – *Teacher*

Up close classroom contact with artists provided authentic artistic and academic learning experiences.

That's what I really noticed during both residencies: the interaction with the person. They're really enthralled by everything that person knows and does. They soak that up. – *Teacher*

They were very involved. They were eager. When she came, they were excited about it. They picked up on the concepts that she was teaching... They were very enthused, very involved. Because you can tell when you're reaching little children, because they're going to participate or not going to participate. And they all participated on a regular basis. – *Teacher*

Teachers told us that some children were better able to understand and retain information when learned through movement.

Through the dance they realized that “number” actually means “quantity”...and I think it had more meaning. They also began to learn placement, such as first, second, and third. And having [the artist] here, and them being able to visualize it and connect it to dance, really improved their skills. – *Teacher*

I have a few slow learners who are not doing so well academically, but they're very involved with the arts. They're very good artists and very good dancers. [It's] waking them up [to] another way of learning – *Teacher*

I had more 100s [test scores] on that unit than I've ever had. Normally we would use manipulatives to see what an incline plane is. But I think, because students all learn differently, this gave that extra little group that usually doesn't quite catch on the physicalness of it. They could feel it. – *Teacher*

The students achieved more when artists and teachers had high expectations for what they could achieve through the residencies.

“This is your performance. You are all capable of doing this. You have a lot of talent.” I mean, that was the big message they were always giving to the kids... I would say that the Interchange artists really put very high expectations onto our students. And that's not the case a lot of times. – *Teacher*

They wanted to share what they had worked hard on, and it made them work harder. – *Teacher*

Some teachers told us that the artist residencies improved student attendance. In surveys, about 21% of teachers reported that attendance improved because of the artist visits, with over half of the teachers “not sure” if there was an increase in attendance.

Student Attendance

ATTENDANCE	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Interchange residency improved my students’ attendance.	10.3%	10.3%	55.2%	17.2%	6.9%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 21% of teachers reported that Interchange residencies improved student attendance.

Learning through the Arts

In surveys, most teachers reported that Interchange instruction helped students understand academic concepts, but less than half claimed that Interchange improved students’ academic performance. The teachers’ distinction between academic “concepts” and academic “performance” is interesting and worth exploring further. It may be that teachers observed increased conceptual understanding but are reluctant to associate arts activities with improved test performance.

Learning through the Arts – Teacher Perceptions

ACADEMIC LEARNING	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Interchange program helped my students understand academic concepts.	13.8%	58.6%	20.7%	6.9%	0%
Interchange improved my students’ performance in academic subjects.	10.3%	34.5%	44.9%	10.3%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 72% of teachers reported that Interchange helped students understand academic concepts.
- 45% of teachers reported that Interchange improved students’ performance in academic subjects.

Learning through the Arts – Artist Perceptions

ACADEMIC LEARNING	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Interchange program helped students understand academic concepts.	34.4%	50%	15.6%	0%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 84% of artists reported that Interchange helped students understand academic concepts.

Teachers described how students developed a deeper understanding of academic concepts through experiential learning.

I noticed the children started using numerical sentences more. For example, they would say things like, “We have only 5 girls.” They also now count the number of children absent versus the ones who are present when I am doing attendance. Initially, the children would just name the child who was absent. Overall, I see an improvement in number sense. – *Teacher*

Some of my ESOL students could understand the concepts better than trying to understand the textbook. – *Teacher*

I felt that students made thematic connections between dances and literary works. – *Teacher*

Literacy and Writing

Some teachers requested residencies that would support literacy skills.

We wanted to focus on something that our kids really, really needed, so we focused on sight words for my first and second graders to help them read. – *Teacher*

Many of the projects emphasized planning, editing, and revising. In the less formal arts environment, teachers observed that students were more willing to work on the stages of the writing process, perhaps because they were more personally invested.

In their written work, I think one of the best things that’s come out of it is they’re much more willing to edit and revise. So before I was fighting tooth and nail: “Please go back and check your spelling! Please go back and do this!” They understood it was important. They wanted to do it. That’s, I think, one of the biggest and best things that they’ve learned. – *Teacher*

They’re still learning how to be creative writers. So it kind of took the fear factor away. What happened is that she allowed them to be able to tell her exactly through their motions what they were doing, and then they could associate words with those particular movements. – *Teacher*

Students were more likely to retain and use vocabulary when learned through an authentic context.

Well, they started using their vocabulary. After [the artist] came last Wednesday we were working the next two days on her poetry and I had kids saying, “Do I need to have a rhyme scheme with this?” and they never would have known to call it a rhyme scheme. They didn’t have that terminology before we started this residency. – *Teacher*

English Language Acquisition

Arts residencies provided an authentic learning environment that helped some struggling students succeed.

I think that we created a pretty positive space in which they felt comfortable sharing. And that made them feel successful and more interested in writing.
– *Teacher*

I believe it does [help English language acquisition], because they have found a comfort zone where they’re not afraid to write. I mean, you don’t have them saying, “I can’t.” – *Teacher*

We have a ton of poets now. I mean they have their little journals that they get, and you can just see them. They’re walking around with them. – *Teacher*

One of the participating schools had a substantial ESOL population, and teachers found the arts residencies helpful in creating a positive and effective learning experience.

We can see in their work samples that their writing is improving. Some of them might have given a single word to put in the pattern, and now they’re giving two or three words, so instead of just an elephant, they might say, “The big, gray elephant.” ... I think [what helped is the artist] having them get up and act out what we write. – *ESOL Teacher*

TEACHERS AND INTERCHANGE

Most teachers we surveyed worked in elementary schools.

	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
School Level	72.4%	13.8%	13.8%

Interchange teachers were most likely to be either very experienced teachers, or have little teaching experience. Over 41% of teachers had at least 10 years of teaching experience, and about 40% of the teachers had less than 2 years of experience. Few teachers had experience with arts integration before Interchange.

Teacher Experience

EXPERIENCE	1 TO 2 YEARS	3 TO 5 YEARS	6 TO 10 YEAR	OVER 10 YEARS
Years of teaching experience	37.9%	10.3%	10.3%	41.5%
Years of experience with arts integration	89.3%	7.1%	0%	3.6%

Teacher Professional Development

According to survey responses, most Interchange teachers believed that they developed their ability to integrate the arts through Interchange. A large majority reported that they will continue to use instructional approaches learned through Interchange. They gained a new understanding of what students can accomplish through the arts.

Teacher Professional Development – Teacher Perceptions

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
I have a better understanding of what it means to teach using an art form because of Interchange.	44.8%	31.1%	17.2%	6.9%	0%
Through the Interchange residency, I gained new insight into what children can accomplish through the arts.	46.4%	39.3%	14.3%	0%	0%
Through Interchange I've learned new teaching techniques or approaches that I expect to use throughout my career.	20.7%	62.1%	3.4%	13.8%	0%
Professional development through Interchange was effective in preparing me for the Interchange residency.	26.9%	34.7%	34.6%	3.8%	0%
Professional development through Interchange was effective in developing my ability to integrate the arts.	19.2%	42.3%	34.7%	3.8%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 76% of teachers reported that they have a better understanding of how to teach through an art form because of Interchange.
- 88% of teachers reported they gained new insight into what children can accomplish through the arts.
- 83% of teachers reported that they learned new teaching techniques or approaches that they will continue to use.
- 62% of teachers reported that professional development through Interchange was effective in preparing them for the Interchange residency.
- 62% of teachers reported that professional development through Interchange was effective in developing their ability to integrate the arts.

Artists observed improvement in teachers' skills in arts integration.

Teacher Professional Development – Artist Perceptions

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
The teacher gained new skills in integrating the arts.	30.4%	42.4%	21.2%	3.0%	3.0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 73% of artists reported that teachers gained new skills in integrating the arts.

Teachers learned new approaches to arts integration through collaborating with the resident artists.

It was thrilling. It really was...I learned a lot from [the artist]. I learned to go beyond the textbook, to get the children's attention. Go beyond just simply reading, and have them go out and do their own research and do some hands-on things to get them motivated and excited. – *Teacher*

It really was a learning experience for me and I feel we really made gains on our own professional development. Yes, we've heard about kinesthetic learning a million times. Actually incorporating it has been another thing. – *Teacher*

I loved it. It gave me an avenue to be creative, which is something I like to do. Also, it built my confidence, too, in that they got really into it and I saw and I learned techniques that I'm going to use next year. – *Teacher*

Collaboration between Teachers and Artists

Most teachers successfully collaborated with the visiting artists. Teachers responded very positively to survey items about collaboration, with few negative responses. Most teachers reported that they planned effectively, participated in classroom instruction, and extended the instruction after the artist visits.

Collaboration – Teacher Perceptions

COLLABORATION	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Interchange teaching artist and I were effective in collaboratively planning the residency.	48.3%	34.5%	6.9%	10.3%	0%
I had regular and meaningful communication with the artist during the residency.	48.3%	34.5%	6.9%	10.3%	0%
The artist and I made adjustments to the residency curriculum to ensure effective instruction.	60.7%	25.0%	3.6%	10.7%	0%
I participated in classroom instruction when the artist was present in my classroom.	48.3%	41.4%	3.4%	6.9%	0%
I continued teaching the residency content between, and after, the artist visits.	41.4%	41.4%	3.4%	10.3%	3.4%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 83% of teachers reported that they effectively planned the residency with the artist.
- 83% of teachers reported that they had regular and meaningful communication with the artist.
- 86% of teachers reported that they made adjustments to the residency in collaboration with the artist.
- 90% of teachers reported that they participated in classroom instruction with the artist.
- 83% of teachers reported that they continued teaching residency content between, and after, artist visits.

Artists also responded positively to questions about collaboration, although somewhat less so. For instance, only 58% of artists reported that teachers continued Interchange instruction after their visits, as compared to 83% of the teachers. 69% of the artists said that teachers joined them in classroom instruction, while 90% of the teachers claimed they taught together.

Collaboration – Artist Perceptions

COLLABORATION	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Interchange teacher and I were effective in collaboratively planning the residency.	39.4%	27.3%	18.2%	12.1%	3%
I had regular and meaningful communication with the teacher during the residency.	46.8%	21.9%	21.9%	9.4%	0%
The teacher and I made adjustments to the residency curriculum to ensure effective instruction.	40.6%	34.4%	15.6%	9.4%	0%
The teacher participated in classroom instruction during my visits.	43.7%	25.0%	6.3%	12.5%	12.5%
The teacher continued teaching the residency content between, and after, my visits.	39.4%	18.2%	21.1%	15.2%	6.1%
The classroom was set up appropriately for my visits.	45.5%	33.3%	9.1%	12.1%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 67% of artists reported that they effectively planned the residency with the teacher.
- 69% of artists reported that they had regular and meaningful communication with the teacher.
- 75% of artists reported that they made adjustments to the residency in collaboration with the teacher.
- 69% of artists reported that the teacher participated in classroom instruction.
- 58% of artists reported that teachers continued teaching residency content between, and after, their visits.
- 79% of artists reported that the classroom was set up appropriately for their visits.

Interchange staff was highly effective at planning and coordinating with schools, and matching teachers with artists. Teachers liked working with Interchange and felt the organization was responsive to their needs.

This is people coming in and saying, “Tell us what you want. How can we work with you? How can we collaborate?” And that’s what I like about this, because they’re coming in and respecting the fact that I am the teacher in the classroom, and I may have some ideas. – *Teacher*

Teachers and artists were expected to co-plan the residencies. However, the amount of planning prior to, and during residencies, varied across the Interchange sites. Clearly, the experience was more successful for artist-teacher teams that were able to sufficiently plan in advance, and share feedback throughout the process. Often the teachers would take the lead in determining academic themes or topics, and the artists would then design instructional strategies based on their art form.

We planned weeks at a time, so that was helpful... We’re all on a time constraint, but it just seems like the kids get more out of it and we’re more successful when we’re more organized and planned in depth. – *Teacher*

Some residencies did not devote enough time to co-planning the residencies. The teachers felt that the residencies could be substantially improved with more planning.

We only have met for maybe an hour, total. – *Teacher*

It was apparent from our interviews that the residencies with the least planning and participation by teachers also had the weakest instruction.

If there was a way to actually make it... a little deeper for the kids, like having it build into a project, or something where they’d actually be applying skills more than just experiencing dance, that would be nice. I think that having more planning time together, we might be able to come up with something rather than just using [dance] as a review tool. – *Teacher*

Most teachers participated in the instruction along with the artists.

I think that gets the kids more interested in it as well, to see me be a part of it.
– *Teacher*

In the best residencies, teachers and artists bonded and developed rich, comprehensive learning experiences for students.

That was a complete collaboration, where I worked very much in concert with [the teacher]. I really felt a tremendous connection with her. – *Artist*

I just felt the whole time like [the teacher] was on the same page with me. She would take what we did in class and complete it, go on with it. We communicated well and I think we listened to each other. – *Artist*

Arts Integration in the Classroom

Almost half of the teachers reported using arts integrated approaches at least once a week, with about 14% of the teachers using arts integration almost every day.

Frequency of Arts Integration by Participating Teachers	
Less Than Twice a Month	17.2%
At Least Twice a Month	34.5%
At Least Once a Week	34.5%
Almost Daily	13.8%

Almost all teachers reported that the Interchange helped them integrate the arts. Most teachers described themselves as confident in teaching the arts. The teachers were more likely to state that they use the arts as a tool to teach other subjects than to claim that the arts are fully integrated with their curriculum.

Arts Integration

ARTS INTEGRATION	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Interchange residency helped me integrate the arts into my classroom.	34.5%	62.1%	3.4%	0%	0%
The Interchange residency helped me teach academic subjects in new and productive ways.	27.6%	58.7%	10.3%	3.4%	0%
I often use the arts in my teaching.	27.6%	41.4%	17.2%	13.8%	0%
I am confident in teaching the arts.	13.7%	51.9%	20.7%	10.3%	3.4%
The arts are fully integrated into my curriculum.	10.7%	25.0%	28.6%	32.1%	3.6%
I use the arts as a tool to teach non-arts subjects.	27.6%	55.2%	10.3%	6.9%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 97% of teachers reported that the Interchange residency helped them integrate the arts into their classroom.
- 86% of teachers reported that the Interchange residency helped them teach academic subjects in new and productive ways.
- 69% of teachers reported that they often use the arts in their teaching.
- 66% of teachers reported that they are confident in teaching the arts.
- 36% of teachers reported that the arts are fully integrated with their curriculum.
- 83% of teachers reported that they use the arts to teach non-arts subjects.

Teachers valued the opportunity to teach in and through the arts. Some teachers told us that they had wanted to bring more arts to their classroom, but were unable to until they participated in Interchange. They were seeking additional opportunities to support artistic expression and hands-on kinesthetic learning, areas that were not always a priority due to curricular mandates and standardized testing.

I’m an art person, so I like that type of activity: the visual arts, the dance. It seems like we can’t get a chance to do those types of things with the kids as much as we would like. – *Teacher*

[In teacher training]...they tell us to do hands-on stuff with the kids, and then you get into the teaching and the standardized tests and you just – it’s nice to have a reminder of what the kids really are capable of. Because they just were like shining stars. I just get goose bumps to see my kids perform like that. – *Teacher*

I’m very comfortable with it. However, I don’t really get the chance to [use arts] very often, just because of strict curriculum guidelines and things like that.
–*Teacher*

Teacher Buy-In and Support

We asked teachers to identify the most valuable component of the Interchange residencies. Teachers cited the unique learning opportunity for their students, their interest in observing student growth and their collaboration with artists.

Teacher Survey Question: What was the most valuable component of the Interchange residency? Please explain.

Teachers valued the opportunities that their students received, and enjoyed observing their students' growth and self-expression.

- The residency offered new opportunities for my students to express themselves through outlets that I myself may not have been able to provide.
- I enjoyed seeing my students express themselves through movement and acting.
- If you want students to learn, your objectives must be meaningful to them. The mixture of speech, song, and dance were tools of learning.
- They learned wonderful things about poetry and how to use language. Through these classes students developed a deeper understanding of vocabulary.
- Giving the students an opportunity to express themselves and their feelings through movement.
- The residency let the students create and interpret stories through movements.
- The most helpful aspect of the residency was that it taught students that learning can be active, and that learning can go beyond traditional classroom activities.

Teachers appreciated collaborating with the artists. Teachers felt the artists were flexible and knowledgeable.

- The most valuable component of the residency was the artists themselves. They showed my students different perspectives on the world.
- The instructors were incredible and flexible! They really knew how to connect with middle-schoolers.
- Having someone who was an expert about pottery come in and teach students how to make their own, and provide all of them with materials necessary to do this.
- The collaboration between our two teachers and our artist. Good communication helped us to have students prepared when the artist came.

Overall, teachers expressed strong support for the program. Most teachers told us that the residencies provided a unique learning opportunity for their students.

I just think it's a great program. I really do. I just wish more people would take advantage of the opportunity. – *Teacher*

[The artist] had...a museum curator come and bring in samples of things that were from our St. Louis history museum to show the children. She had a lot of photographs. She had objects. So they learned what people wore, what implements they used, things they cooked with, what rich people had that poor people didn't have. Just a range of things that they got to see firsthand that they may not have ever seen if they didn't get to go to a museum. – *Teacher*

Challenges for Teachers

We also asked teachers to identify the most challenging component of their Interchange residencies. Teachers cited the need for more planning and instruction time, and difficulties with engaging students.

Teacher Survey Question: What was most challenging about the Interchange residency?

Teachers wanted more time for planning, scheduling, and implementing activities.

- Planning and coordination between the artist and teacher to make sure we know what will be taught and both of our roles during the time together.
- Scheduling around school schedules was the most challenging. I found the artists to be very flexible.
- Scheduling a time that would not be interrupted.
- Schedule changes and incorporating it into the curriculum.
- Time.....We needed more time....

Some students were resistant and did not want to participate in the activities. Some teachers found it challenging to engage all their students.

- Making sure that all students were involved in the activities.
- I had a few students who did not want to participate and acted out every time the artists were in the classroom.
- Getting the students to accept the fact that these artists, though they do not speak like the kids do and are not from the neighborhood, have something valuable to contribute.
- Working with students that continue to have disrespectful and defiant behaviors.

SCHOOLS AND INTERCHANGE

Over half of the surveyed teachers reported that Interchange improved student peer behavior and student-teacher relationships. Less than half of the teachers believed that Interchange improved overall school climate. Few teachers thought that Interchange increased parent involvement.

School Climate

SCHOOL CLIMATE	SA	A	N	D	SD
Students' peer relations and behavior improved because of the Interchange residency.	13.8%	41.4%	31.0%	13.8%	0%
Working with Interchange has improved our school climate.	13.8%	31.0%	44.9%	6.9%	3.4%
Working with Interchange has increased parent involvement in our school.	3.6%	10.7%	39.3%	21.4%	25%
Working with Interchange has improved relationships between teachers and students.	24.2%	34.5%	37.9%	3.4%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 55% of teachers reported that students' peer relations and behavior improved because of Interchange.
- 45% of teachers reported that Interchange improved their school climate.
- 14% of teachers reported that Interchange increased parent involvement.
- 59% of teachers reported that Interchange improved relationships between teachers and students.

However, the interviews and observations offered a fuller picture of the impact of Interchange on some participating schools. One principal told us how Interchange was invaluable for connecting with English language learners. The arts helped bridge cultures and provided opportunities for students with different languages and backgrounds to work together and express themselves in other ways. It also provided ESOL students with the opportunity to use English in a different context.

With us having 52% population of ESOL students here, it gives the kids a chance to connect visions from their homeland in some instances with their new environment here in this country. The artists bring a lot of movement to it, which adds a lot of physical activity. It's also very well organized, very fast paced. It has very high expectations of all the students, and it's very stimulating for them.

– *Principal*

Principals supported the presence of Interchange in their schools. About two-thirds of teachers “strongly agreed” that their administration supported participation in Interchange. About one-fourth of the teachers were uncertain about the principal's support.

School Leadership

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	SA	A	N	D	SD
Our school administration strongly supports the arts.	57.1%	7.1%	21.5%	14.3%	0%
Our school administration strongly supports our participation in Interchange.	65.5%	10.3%	20.7%	3.5%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

When aggregating “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings:

- 64% of teachers reported that their school administration strongly supports the arts.
- 76% of teachers reported that their school administration strongly supports participation in Interchange.

Principals supported Interchange because it provided unique educational and artistic experiences for their students that they otherwise would not have had.

Part of my responsibility here is I jealously guard and then support the efforts from Interchange and Springboard and COCA because I know that my kids here have no other access. I have no earthly idea where I would go to pursue this level of artistic engagement. – *Principal*

Interchange has been completely flexible and willing to make things work out. I want to be sure that it works, and that everybody senses that it’s a valuable thing, and wants to come back to it. – *Principal*

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Artists and Interchange

We asked artists if participating in Interchange had changed their teaching practice. Most artists stated that Interchange helped them develop new teaching strategies. They worked more closely with classroom teachers than they had in the past. Some artists stated that they already had substantial experience with arts integration and that Interchange had not changed their approach to teaching.

Artist Survey Question: Has participating with Interchange changed the way you teach?
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Artists gained new insights about teaching and developed new instructional strategies.

- Through my experience with Interchange I am learning how to better monitor my students as they work, to ensure they are staying on task. I am also learning how to better present and explain academic concepts.
- I learned to ask more questions [and] to check student understanding and retention, and also to spend more time moving and less time talking.
- It made me re-examine the role science plays with movement. It has given me another angle to come from when explaining certain movement and steps.
- I have had to learn to think on my feet like crazy.
- Being able to plan and also think on the spot and change things according to the kids and the teacher and their interactions.

Artists learned to collaborate effectively with classroom teachers.

- The structure of Interchange allows me to be much more collaborative with the classroom teacher than I often have time to be.
- It helped me teach more as a team rather than as an individual presenting a program. We planned before each class and debriefed after each class. We made plans and changed them as necessary, spending, for instance, several sessions on sonnets when the kids did not get it... We learned from each other.
- It has certainly reaffirmed that collaborative teaching is the only way for a teaching artist to be successful in someone else's classroom and have a lasting effect on the students.

Some teaching artists felt that Interchange did not change their teaching methods, due to their prior experience with arts integration.

- Not really. I have been at this kind of teaching for so long it is in my blood. I have always had as a mission integrated arts teaching.
- I do realize that by integrating the arts into history lessons the students did get more out of it rather than just reading out of a textbook and answering some questions. I do not think it has changed the way I teach, but built on how I already taught.
- Not really... I have had arts integration process as the skeleton of my teaching. I have written curriculum and taught to this process for many years and still am passionate about it.

We asked artists to identify the most valuable component of the Interchange residencies. Artists emphasized benefits for students and the opportunity to effectively collaborate with teachers.

Artist Survey Question: What was the most valuable component of the Interchange residency? Please explain.

Artists stated that seeing students benefit from the program was most valuable. Artists observed that students were more engaged, were better able to retain

information, and expressed themselves through their artwork, performances and writing.

- Watching the students understand the connections between their vocabulary words and the movement we used to demonstrate their meanings.
- Viewing the students as they gained genuine understanding of historical content with an arts focus.
- Being able to go talk to kids individually and get them to express and be confident in themselves.
- We allowed the students a lot of choice in the direction of the drama activity, so they were more invested in the story we were exploring about a Mississippi steamboat. It was the students' idea to introduce runaway slave characters, which allowed a wonderful learning opportunity to introduce what life was like for slaves in Missouri, in addition to our study of Mark Twain and life on the river.
- I really enjoyed observing the students connect to this period of history and for them to demonstrate that they genuinely understand the importance of the arts from an historical perspective.
- Students gained a much deeper level of knowledge and understanding by “moving through” the concepts they had only talked and written about before.

Artists valued the opportunity to collaborate with classroom teachers.

- I think that it was having teachers who fully collaborated with me, worked along with me in the classroom, and used the days I was not there to continue the work we were doing.
- Working in tandem with the teacher.
- Collaborating with the teacher and trusting her to know her students.
- The best part was the incredible teamwork we had. [She] was such a good teacher. She was open to my ideas, but had her own, as well, and was willing to add her thoughts. We were both flexible.
- The potential interaction with the teachers. A real effort to integrate the arts into the classroom curriculum.
- The most valuable component of this program was working with [the teacher] and bouncing ideas, even last minute ideas, off of her to make the program even more intense.

We asked artists to identify the most challenging aspect of the Interchange residencies. Artists cited problems with student behavior and discipline, and lack of commitment by some teachers.

Artist Survey Question: What was most challenging about the Interchange residency?

The students' behavior and lack of discipline was the most challenging aspect of some residencies. A few teaching artists felt that they received little support from teachers or the school administration.

- One teacher was completely disengaged while I was teaching the class, leaving me to deal with almost all behavioral problems.
- The chaotic environment of the school.
- These students already had a bad attitude about learning and participating. So to change that in one day a week is very difficult.

Some artists struggled with applying appropriate content and instructional strategies for certain age groups or students with varied abilities.

- It was difficult to find or create poems that the children could understand – the language needed to be very, very basic – yet it needed to still possess poetic elements.
- The most challenging was the students. Their skills and levels differed so much from child to child. I had to have a wide open range of options for their abilities.
- The age range of these kids, 3-5, was really tough. Also we were in a classroom that was hard to set up adequately with enough space to move.
- The children were so young! So some of the concepts had to be really simplified.

Some artists stated that their collaborating teacher did not fulfill their obligations to the residencies. These teachers were unresponsive and seemingly unaware of their responsibilities to the program.

- In the beginning, I was under the impression that the classroom teachers would really be doing 50% of the curriculum, teaching things in between my lessons so the students were more engaged. But I ended up doing everything. She helped around the classroom with discipline and while I was in her classroom, but there was no help with planning or lessons in between my lessons.
- Communication and involvement with the classroom teacher was the hardest part. I gave her all of contact information, emailed her a couple times, and she never responded.

Overall, however, artists found the Interchange program to be exceptionally rewarding. In interviews, classroom teachers praised the artists' expertise, commitment and level of professionalism.

Recommendations by Teachers and Artists

We asked teachers and artists to tell us how they would improve the Interchange program. Some teachers stated that they would like stronger collaborations with artists with more planning and better defined learning objectives. Other teachers felt that the program is strong as it is, and would just like to participate more.

Teacher Survey Question: How can the program be improved?

Teachers recommended a stronger collaboration with their resident artists. Some teachers felt that responsibilities and expectations needed to be more clearly delineated.

- Only allow schools to participate that fully support Interchange. Especially with students participating/behaving properly. Staff/principal need to be clear what is expected from them.
- Professional development with teachers and artists that opens up conversations about communication, lesson planning, and management so both teachers have a common understanding and expectation of the time spent together.
- Maybe give more specific and limited choices for teachers. That way they are not just making it up as they go along, and the artist does not feel like they are unsure of what is expected of them.
- Making a bigger emphasis on planning the sessions. And professional development for the teacher as well as the teaching artist so both parties involved can better understand their roles and how their roles are integrated.

Teachers suggested that the program provide opportunities for more structured planning and preparation.

- More planning and communication between artist and teacher.
- The program could be improved by having more structured planning time with the teaching artist, and by using a backwards planning model to ensure that there is a strong academic component to the arts integration unit.

Teachers expressed support for the program and stated that they had no additional recommendations.

- It is fabulous! I'm addicted to Interchange. I want more, more more!
- The program is great!
- I really think the program was great as it was, and am hoping to use it again in the future.

Artists also recommended more structured collaboration with teachers. Some artists recommended extending the residencies.

Artist Survey Question: How can the program be improved?

Teaching artists recommended more opportunities for communicating with the teachers, more structured programs, and purposeful selection of teachers participating in the program.

- More planning time with the classroom teacher built into the schedule, before and during the residency. Higher expectations for participation by classroom teachers.
- The classroom teachers need to be more involved. They need to take more responsibility rather than just taking advantage of the teaching artist to come in and take over their class.
- A firm commitment from the teachers to be involved.
- Improved coordination between all involved parties: homeroom teachers, arts teachers, teaching artists.

Artists recommended that residencies be extended to include more instructional time with students.

- It would be wonderful if the artists could be in the classroom more than once a week.
- I would love to see the artists have more time with the students and the teacher. I know that there is the issue of the classroom teachers feeling like they need to be spending a major part of their time dealing with testing issues and that does get in the way.
- I would love to see the amount of time that we spend with the students increased.
- I think the program could have been longer. It would have been nice for the students to put together more of the quilt in the end rather than just me, but we ran out of time!
- I think this program could have been improved if it was a little longer.
- It would be great to have more time to spend with them and create a full show that they could present at their school.

Teachers and artists recommended improving professional development in arts integration.

I think Interchange needs to continue to do as much professional development as possible with classroom teachers and with teaching artists. And they need to bring in master teachers who are masters at arts integration, which is different than just being a master artist. And if those need to be from outside of St. Louis, I think that's good. – *Artist*

Some teachers and artists recommended site-based professional development as opposed to larger workshops.

[It would be good] to see them hire someone who functions as a master teaching artist, whose sole job is to help coach and support the collaborations and the actual pedagogy. – *Artist*

I would say to keep [teachers] involved, there just needs to be ongoing dialogue... We've talked a lot about just how terribly isolating it is to be a teacher, or to be a teaching artist for that matter. But you know, even if you have peers around you, you're in your classroom by yourself, you're doing your own thing, and you don't really have that many people to rely upon for best practices, for feedback, in a way that's safe... So I think any opportunities that can be built in with professional development where there's a chance to share best practices and for people to really talk about what they're learning, what they're doing, almost in an informal way [would be very valuable]. – *Artist*

CONCLUSION

Overall, we found Interchange to be highly effective at providing quality arts integration to participating schools. The program was well organized and implemented by Interchange staff.

Most collaborations were very positive learning experiences, and several were exceptionally strong. Teachers and artists both found the partnerships to be exceptionally rewarding. Teachers and artists planned their lessons and developed new instructional approaches. Students gained skills in the arts, learned and retained related academic material, and developed social and personal skills that should help them succeed in school. Overall, students were highly engaged by the artists and excited to participate.

However, a significant minority of the collaborations had problems with commitment of teachers, discipline issues and lack of adequate planning. These are common problems with startup urban arts partnerships. They can be addressed through continuing to engage and build support among school principals, ensuring that the collaborations match the needs of teachers, and setting aside adequate program time for artist-teacher planning.

Interchange had some notable strengths for a young partnership program;

- Most partnership activities are authentic learning experiences, combining arts processes and related academic subjects.
- The communication between Interchange and the schools/teachers appears to be strong and responsive. Most teachers like working with Interchange and feel the organization is responsive to their needs.
- Teachers' content expertise is usually tapped when developing curriculum for residencies that was linked directly to learning objectives.

- Many residencies were well-planned and reflected committed collaboration between artists and teachers. Some collaborations need an additional focus on planning and setting instructional goals.
- In the best residencies, teachers were active participants in planning, setting objectives, and classroom instruction.
- The support of principals was cultivated by Interchange staff. Principals expressed strong support for the program.

Program Recommendations

- We recommend that Interchange expand professional development opportunities through additional teacher workshops, mentorships, and peer observations. Professional development could be site specific, in addition to larger summer institutes. Teachers and artists can use feedback and support through on-site mentoring. Teachers and artists would also benefit from observing peers in other classrooms and schools.
- Additional professional development for teaching artists would help the artists learn more about school settings, curriculum issues and developmentally appropriate instructional strategies.
- As the program develops, a cadre of experienced teachers and master teacher artists can serve as site-specific mentors for professional development and support of individual collaborations.
- Many collaborations would benefit from more attention to specific learning objectives, both within the arts and other academic areas.
- As much as possible, classroom instruction should include rich, high-quality arts learning experiences as well as high-quality instruction in other school subjects. Arts integration should go beyond providing instruction through different learning domains (such as hands-on or kinesthetic approaches) or using the arts to illustrate or provide access to other subject content. There should be high-quality instruction in both the arts and other academic areas.
- Teachers can use additional professional development and support in assessment of learning through arts integration. The assessment should be rooted in their own teaching practice and should be professionally valuable to the teachers and artists, and not just done to comply with an administrative mandate. Development of a culture of inquiry and reflection within Interchange will greatly strengthen the program over time, and ultimately help sustain the program.