SELECTED FINDINGS
FROM THE KS/MO KENNEDY CENTER PARTNERS IN EDUCATION TEAM

Integrated Arts Education Program Evaluation Project – 2019
Report prepared by
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This report presents the results of a project evaluation of the Integrated Arts Education Program administered by the KS/MO Kennedy Center Partners in Education Team. This partnership is made up of representatives from the Johnson County Community College, Carlsen Center, Shawnee Mission Public School District, Kansas City Young Audiences, and the Liberty Public School District. All partners are in the Kansas City Metropolitan area. A quasi-experimental, pre/post with comparison trial took place in twelve elementary classrooms matched by grade level. Results show that arts integration teaching methods significantly improve educational outcomes. Arts integrated teaching techniques led to improvements in knowledge of core subject content, enjoyment of learning, engagement, and creativity. These improvements were statistically significant. The findings provide evidence that arts integration teaching methods can produce a significant, positive impact on the educational development of elementary students.
The following are selected findings from the evaluation of the Integrated Arts Education Program (IAEP) administered by the KS/MO Kennedy Center Partners in Education Team. Findings are discussed based on the research questions guiding the project.

Do students learning “core” content through the IAEP understand the material as well as their peers using traditional teaching methods?

1. Students learning with arts integration teaching practices improved their test scores on core content at statistically significant rates and learned core content as well as their peers learning with traditional teaching methods.

Does the IAEP increase students’ enjoyment of learning activities and inspire them to learn more?

2. Students learning core content via arts integration techniques enjoyed learning at a significantly higher rate than their peers learning using traditional instruction methods.
3. Students learning using arts integration techniques were inspired by their Teaching Artists to learn more.

Does the IAEP impact student and teacher desire to engage and participate in the arts?

4. Teachers were inspired to foster relationships with their colleagues to further support arts integration in their schools.
5. Both teachers and students reported a strong desire to engage in learning when the Teaching Artists were in their classrooms.

What other benefits does the IAEP offer teachers and students?

6. Students reported significant gains in creativity and creative thinking.
7. Teachers believed they gained knowledge and skills that were useful in their classrooms and reported they gained confidence in using arts integration techniques.
WHAT THESE FINDINGS TELL US:

Students involved in the IAEP improved their scores on core content assessments at statistically significant rates and learned just as well as their peers in traditional teaching environments. Students learning with arts integration techniques exhibited an improvement of **36.53%** from pre- to post-test, and students learning with traditional techniques had an improvement of 35.37%.

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Students involved in the IAEP improved their scores on core content assessments at statistically significant rates and learned just as well as their peers in traditional teaching environments. Students learning with arts integration techniques exhibited an improvement of **36.53%** from pre- to post-test, and students learning with traditional techniques had an improvement of 35.37%.
Students learning core content via arts integration techniques enjoyed learning at a significantly higher rate than their peers learning using traditional instruction methods. 86% of students strongly agreed and the remaining 14% agreed that the arts integration workshops helped them have fun learning. In comparison, only 30% strongly agreed and 57% agreed that they enjoyed learning with traditional instruction. 13% did not enjoy learning with traditional instruction.

Student comments included:

“I really liked Mrs. Nickerson and had fun learning with her. She was nice and I had a great time.”

“I liked that he was funny, and made the learning fun.”

“I liked how he made everything fun but he also had us focus on learning and listening.”
Students were inspired by their Teaching Artists to learn more. 32% of students strongly agreed and 54% agreed that their Teaching Artists inspired them to learn more. Although not statistically significant, it is higher than the 24% of students learning via traditional teaching methods who strongly agreed and 54% who agreed they were inspired to learn more.

Further evidence of inspiration from their teaching artists is evident in these student comments:

“It helped me be not so shy!”

“I liked when John was here. He made me feel more confident about myself in front of other people and adults.”
Teachers who participated in the Integrated Arts Education Program built a community of support and network of allies. 97% of teachers were inspired to foster relationships with their colleagues to further support arts integration in their schools.

Teacher comments include:

“Great collaboration time with new friends!”

“This was a fantastic session. I enjoyed being able to work with educators outside of my current district.”
Teaching and learning with arts integration practices is highly engaging. Both teachers and students reported a strong desire to engage in learning when Teaching Artists were instructing. 100% of teachers believed their students were highly engaged during arts integration lessons.

Teacher comments include:

“It is highly engaging, so it reduces or eliminates behavior issues. It allows students to use a variety of learning styles, reducing frustration and increasing learning. It can easily cross into all curricular areas, which increases student understanding of the concepts being introduced.”

“I think it can engage more students and that will help keep them attentive and more engaged in the lessons.”

“I think it got more students that are not as interested in coding engaged in the process more.”

“The students looked forward to the artist’s visits and were highly engaged during the lessons.”

“The arts integration practices are a way to keep students engaged and focused. The students are actively involved which curbs behavior concerns. It allows students and teachers to be more creative and incorporate a variety of techniques which engages different areas of the brain.”
The Integrative Arts Education Program provides students with the opportunity to be creative. 64% of students strongly agreed and 34% agreed (98% total) that working with a teaching artist helped them be creative. For students learning with traditional instruction, these numbers were much lower. Only 16% of students strongly agreed and 57% agreed (73% total) that traditional instruction helped them be creative.
97% of teachers who participated in IAEP professional development sessions gained knowledge and skills that are relevant and useful in their classrooms. In addition, 97% of teachers reported they gained confidence in using arts integration processes in their teaching environments.

Teacher comment:

“This is one of the best PD sessions I have been to. I thought he was an excellent presenter and the information was so valuable. I loved that it was hands on. I feel I can do this [arts integration] after being there.”
This investigation is the first attempt at a quasi-experimental, pre/post test, matched pairs trial examination of the Integrated Arts Education Program. This program was implemented in two different school corporations and crossed the Missouri/Kansas state line. Results show arts integration teaching methods significantly improve educational outcomes. Arts integrated teaching techniques led to improvements in knowledge of core subject content, enjoyment of learning, engagement, and creativity. These improvements were statistically significant.

The teachers and students who have participated in arts integration programming are highly enthusiastic about the program. They see near immediate results in their classrooms including better behavior, higher levels of engagement, and an ability to reach all students regardless of ability level. Arts integration is a powerful learning tool. And as one participant stated, “I felt empowered as a learner. I learned a new way to provide evidence and I'm looking forward to sharing it with my team.” This study indicates the arts integration practices used in the Integrated Arts Education Program are making a difference in the Shawnee Mission and Liberty Public Schools.