

ARTS FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

**Artist, Teacher, and School Change Through Arts for
Academic Achievement: Artists Reflect on Long-Term
Partnering as a Means of Achieving Change**

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the four-year Arts for Academic Achievement project is to transform teaching and learning through partnerships between schools and artists and arts organizations. The theory of action underlying the initiative is that when teachers and artists collaboratively develop instruction that integrates arts and nonarts disciplines, instruction in nonarts disciplines becomes more effective and student achievement increases.

Unlike arts integration initiatives that focus on partnerships as a way to restore discipline-based arts instruction to the curriculum, the purpose of the Arts for Academic Achievement project is to strengthen instruction and improve student learning in nonarts areas such as reading and science. In this project, arts integration is not intended to replace the comprehensive, sequential arts instruction that is already provided by trained arts educators in the district. Instead, the project is based on the belief that students benefit from a curriculum that includes both disciplinary-based instruction in the arts and nonarts instruction that is enhanced by integrating the arts. The major issue of this project is not about which is better, disciplinary education in the arts or arts integration, but rather what, when, and how to use each in order to teach students most effectively.

This report is one in a series of reports based on research conducted for the Arts for Academic Achievement project by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement at the University of Minnesota. The purpose of this report is to describe artist perceptions of artist, teacher, and school changes that occurred as a result of long-term artist-teacher partnerships. Data were collected from individual and group interviews with twenty-three artists who had participated in the program for three or four years.

A unique feature of the Arts for Academic Achievement program was that it created a model for artists to work with schools in a way that support long-term partnerships. This long-term partnering allowed artists to move beyond the traditional *residency* model that had been encouraged by the Minnesota State Arts Board as the model for teaching artists to use when working with schools. By moving beyond the residency mentality, the new long-term partnerships created by artists and schools working together for many years created the factors necessary to effect change not only in the artists, but also in teachers and schools, which then could foster changes in student learning. Long-term partnerships allowed artists to become living resources for their schools. They brought permission to teachers and students to be creative and learn in new ways. In addition, they demonstrated in concrete ways how integration could be done successfully as well as how integration could provide new methods for reaching students that were otherwise underserved. Artists in long-term partnerships provided students, teachers, and schools with direct access to the arts as well as another level of emotional support for both teachers and students. Artists were also able to provide a bridge for schools to the community (parents, community organizations, etc.) and offered students a different way to view their world.

Significant changes in three areas were also supported by the long-term partnering model shaped by AAA: Artists, Teachers, and Schools. These changes ranged from personal rejuvenation to changes in practice and school climate. Artists felt they deepened their sense of mission and purpose and expanded their professional networks through participating in AAA. In addition, artists reported that they gained valuable assessment skills and became more involved with their own communities.

Artists felt that teachers made significant changes in their abilities to collaborate and partner with others. Artists also observed that teachers also grew immeasurably in their ability to integrate the arts and make practice changes. In addition, artists saw a rejuvenation in teachers who were part of the project; they had more excitement about and passion for teaching by the end of the partnerships than they did at the beginning. Finally, artists pointed out that teachers needed at least two to three years to make such significant changes in their professional lives and that the long-term partnership model provided the continuity necessary to make these changes.

Artists noticed that they had the ability to affect change at the school level through their long-term partnerships within these schools. Specifically, artists found positive changes in both school climate and the sense of community with most schools as a result of their arts integration work. Finally, artists found that after four years, the schools they worked with allowed them to take leadership roles within the schools, to truly become part of the school culture, and to move from being the “cream on the cake” to being the cake itself.

Introduction

Artists have been part of the school culture in various ways and to varying degrees for decades. However, until recently, artists typically either served as school specialists (teaching such subjects as visual arts and music and providing prep time for teachers) or as agents of artistic diversity, supplying each student in the school a chance to create a specific art product. The latter role, commonly known as the artist in residency model, is how most artists in Minnesota were accustomed to working with schools before the Annenberg project (Arts for Academic Achievement) started in Minneapolis in 1998.

In the Arts for Academic Achievement (AAA) project, artists and teachers were encouraged to work together to create lasting partnerships that would link artistic concepts with academic areas such as math, language arts, science, and social studies. The AAA project gave grants to over 44 schools in the Minneapolis school district for four years in an attempt to raise student achievement by changing the way teachers teach, students learn, and schools operate.

In one sense, each school site is a laboratory for how teachers and arts partners can work together to integrate arts and nonarts to improve teaching and learning. More than 100 arts partners, including arts organizations and individual artists in dance, theatre, visual arts, music and media are involved in the project, as well as certified visual arts and music teachers. After four years of partnering with schools to integrate the arts into the core curriculum, artists found several aspects of their work with schools had changed because of the AAA project.

This report is one in a series of reports based on research conducted throughout the Arts for Academic Achievement project by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement at the University of Minnesota. This paper will explore the changes reported by the several artists involved in the project in terms of what the artists felt they brought to the partnering relationship and their perceptions of changes in themselves, teachers, and schools as a result of their partnering relationships. Data were collected from individual and group interviews with twenty-three artists who had participated in the program for three or four years.

Methodology

Interview data were collected from twenty-one artists who had participated in the AAA program for three or four years. Interviews with the artists were completed in two phases. The first phase involved one-on-one interviews with persons who are leaders of performance groups and arts organizations. Five individuals were interviewed using a set of questions which evolved from prior informal conversations with artist leaders and from review of transcript data from the mid-year interviews with schools and their artist partners. Examples of questions posed for leaders of artists and arts organizations include:

- What impact has Annenberg participation had on your organization?
- How does your organization prepare artists to work in the schools?
- Have your relationships with schools and the community changed? How and why?
- How does your organization find artists who have an interest and skill in working with young students? What are your criteria?

The second phase involved the use of focus group interviews with groups of artists. Three focus groups of 4-6 persons per group were conducted, with a total of sixteen artists participating. A different set of questions was used for these groups as compared with the individual interviews, although some of the questions were related to what was asked of the artist leaders. The questioning route used for the groups was based on observations of their work in the school settings, as well as from the transcript data from the mid-year interviews. Examples of some of the focus group questions include:

- What have your most successful/substantive partnerships looked like? What made them successful?
- What do you think you bring to the arts-infused lessons that otherwise would not exist?
- How have your ideas about partnership changed? What is a true partnership?

All interviews, both individual and group, lasted 60-90 minutes and were audio-taped. This enabled the interviewer to interact freely with the group or individual. The tapes were then transcribed. The verbatim responses were systematically analyzed for common themes across respondents and for unique perspectives. Joanna Cortright and Kyla Wahlstrom developed the questions, and Joanna Cortright conducted both the individual and focus group interviews. For a complete copy of the questions, please see Appendix A.

Results

What Artists Bring

Artists bring a new dimension into the classroom when they partner with a teacher. Although some of the pieces they brought to the arts integrated lesson were obvious, such as their art-form or their tools, other pieces were less apparent. The artists who participated in interviews identified eight elements they brought arts integrated lessons, classrooms, and schools during the course of the AAA project: resources, permission to be creative, a knowledge of how to integrate, a way to teach to the whole child, access to arts beyond the classroom walls, emotional support for students and teachers, a bridge to the community, and an overall different way of looking at the world.

Resources. Artists said that the most obvious thing they bring to an arts integrated partnership is “knowledge of the art form.” This knowledge is what they are typically hired to bring and where they initially feel most useful in the partnering process. One artist shared, “We know a lot about production and things like that, so it’s allowing our expertise to come to bear on the curriculum.”

However, as they began the complex work of arts integration, artists found that they brought resources not only to the classroom, but often to the school as a whole, that went well beyond their art form. For example, another artist commented, “I have been able to come to the table as a resource, not only as a dancer, but as all the multiple things that I am, and I think it’s been a real asset.” In this sense, the artists themselves, with their varied backgrounds and arts expertise, became links to other opportunities and ways of doing things that teachers and schools had not been able to access before the partnerships began.

Permission to be Creative. Teachers themselves have indicated that artists allow them to try new things without having to be the expert (see Werner & Freeman, 2001). Participating artists reiterated this idea by saying, “Teachers feel like their creativity button has been pushed. . . . Their own creativity has been validated by the artist or by the process and they take that language and go forward.” One artist reflected on how teachers become involved with the creative process:

One of the things that I’ve found is either a fear of integration or teachers haven’t really had sufficient training in integration. What I brought is the idea that yes, you could use technology as an art and it wasn’t something to fear.

Some artists encountered a level of resistance from their partnering teachers when it came to actually participating in arts integrated lessons. These artists found that over time, however, their partnering teachers usually relaxed and found a way to actively participate. For example, one artist spoke about the different experiences he had with encouraging teachers to creatively participate in arts integrated lessons:

[One teacher] just jumped right in and looked foolish and so on. Other teachers might not say anything, just sort of sit at their desks and correct papers or whatever. But I have observed that you just have to do it. You have to participate in it. You have to participate in the art form to know the value of it.

Other artists found that teachers, like their students, craved permission to be creative. One artist noted, “With all the pressures teachers are under now to raise grades and cover curriculum, they almost need permission to take time with these projects and do the kind of work they enjoy doing, but seldom have time to.” Another artist commented, “I have seen that happen over and over in teachers that I’ve worked with personally and other artists I have worked with. . . . It’s a green light and they can’t see going back to teaching the way they used to.”

How to Integrate. One of the most interesting hallmarks of the AAA project was that it allowed grant sites complete control of how they chose to integrate the arts. This flexibility both supported and confused teachers. On one hand, it allowed teachers to create programs specific to the needs of their student population, but on the other hand, it did not offer a clear plan as to how to carry out the actual integration piece. Participating artists reported that they felt this was one of the areas in which they provided the most guidance. Artists found a sense of responsibility in creating integrated units that would not “add to the teachers’ work load,” but complement it. One artist commented, “I have been involved in residencies in the past where it seemed like it was adding all this extra classroom preparation and that is not my idea of the best way to go.”

Most artists felt they were responsible for guiding teachers in the art of integration. One administrator and artist from a local theater company noted, “Certainly our artists are now so well aware of the grad standards and what it takes to [integrate them] that they bring to their lessons not just an artists’ perspective, but an artist and teaching perspective.” Several artists specifically spoke about the difficulties they initially had in getting teachers to move beyond fun activities into a planned sequence of lessons that reach toward a larger curriculum-based goal. One artist commented:

We always try to bring out their goals when we have a planning meeting. Sometimes their goal is to have a [performance]. Well, why? Are we going to get them all jobs as performers? And sometimes the reasoning is, ‘That would be cute.’ I don’t consider that a very good reason to be in the school. That’s a waste of the kid’s time. If they have their ideas and goals together and they are involved in the thought process that helps a lot.”

Teaching teachers how to integrate often meant moving them from being focused on the final product to the process behind making that product. An artist outlined his process for encouraging teachers to think in terms of layering the curriculum. He said, “There is a way of planning lessons into a sequential number of small steps. To think about that as a way to structure your time in a class is very useful. The quality of learning is a lot higher when you are able to sequence things. Each activity builds on the last one.” Another artist added, “We take what [new teachers] are giving to us and we consider it, but we keep adding on top of it. We tell them, ‘We could just make a puppet, but what if we did a puppetry curriculum where they actually learned writing skills through puppetry.’ We start from where they are and make them aware of other possibilities.”

Methods for Teaching to the Whole Child. Artists found that arts integration was actually a conduit for teaching the whole child. They reported that the teachers they partnered with were able to use the integration process as a way to teach to various learning styles. One artist pointed out, “We try to make sure that every single student is active, that every single student has an opportunity to learn in a different way. That kind of teaching relies upon the seven intelligences, so we try to integrate that into everything we do so that every student has some hook into it.” As one artist who worked with Visual Thinking Strategies commented, “This component of the Annenberg project brings to teachers both a theoretical and practical way to engage children and to make the arts . . . truly accessible to everyone.”

Access to the Arts. As indicated by the previous comment, partnering with artists created a direct and accessible link between students and the arts. Artists felt that by *being* an artist and allowing students to have authentic arts experiences, they were able to give students access to the arts in a meaningful and significant manner. One artist asserted, “What I bring is the authentic relationship to the art rather than just the language because it’s who I am. It’s how I relate to the art itself. . . . Part of it is the idea that you can actually do this in your life as a living. You are there as that artist so it’s not only an idea --this person is doing that, so it becomes a reality of choices for better or worse.”

Another artist noted, “It’s accessible to them. Kids tend to think that artists are something else – something different from them. I try to let them know that an artist doesn’t look or act a certain

way, that art and creativity is in all of us. And if you want to let it out and express it you can. I try to address what we are dealing with as people first.” Another artist stated, “The fact that you could be a drummer or an actor or a visual artist, spend all day in a studio and paint, for so many kids that never strikes them as a possibility in life. So they have a huge kind of a-ha in understanding the possibility that there’s something other than becoming someone who sits in an office or a teacher.”

Even arts organizations such as prominent museums and galleries and theaters in the area realized that students were much more likely to access their services outside of the classroom after one of their artists partnered with a school. A docent from a local museum commented, “By partnering one on one with teachers . . . there is a very concrete demonstration of the fact that the museum is in their classroom in a literal way as opposed to just figuratively.”

Support for Teachers and Students. Artists also felt that one of their gifts to the partnership was simply being another adult in the classroom. They pointed out that teachers were grateful to have another adult to communicate with during the day, as well as another adult to help direct students. One artist said, “I’m another warm body in that a teacher is teaching five different things in a day and I think as an outside person, I bring focus to a project.” Another artist shared, “One of the teachers has talked with me about the value of having another person there and being able to observe, work with, and learn from the artist.”

Artists also noticed that students benefited from simply having another caring adult in the classroom on a regular basis. For example, an artist who had been working with the same school for four years shared the following comment:

They invite a parent [to our production], if there's not a parent then an older brother or sister, a friend, a neighbor, or even another teacher. Sometimes when there's nothing like that, then I or the teacher become their official friend that comes to the show so they have somebody there that supported them.

Another artist commented,

“I think the more adults that they can see as people is a kind of a different thing, because teachers have a certain role, the parents have a certain role, the principal has a certain role, and now here comes another adult. And you have a different role that you can support them in.”

A Bridge to the Community. Some artists are themselves a bridge to the community for schools. A few of the artists were selected as partners because they live in the school community area or their children attend the partnering school. One artist became involved with his child’s school because he felt it was lacking an arts program. He said, “I know the school and I believe in the idea of the school and it’s a terrific kind of place where the kids develop. Where the one thing that I thought was lacking was the artistic programming, and so it was a chance to expand it, so it’s critical to me to see my kids as well as the other kids have a chance to be exposed to artistic thinking.”

Artists helped create programs that allowed schools to reach out to parents. As noted by one artist, “Annenberg is mostly for the students. . . .but community-wise, we make an effort to

include the parents. The school acknowledges that part of their learning experience has to come from home and has to have a support base at home, so we try to include family.” Another artist commented,

We've started bringing parents in at various intervals during the year and it makes the parents feel involved in their children's lives and the children feel proud and excited. And then you get to meet the parent and so when you talk to the kid the kid knows that you know their parent. And so it goes back to that old-time education system where the parents knew the teacher and the teacher knew the parent.

As noted in the Access to the Arts section, artists also created bridges from arts organizations to communities. Several theater companies, galleries, and museums found ways to directly reach out to school communities and invite them to use their services. For example, one large theater company allowed students to perform the plays they spent the year putting together on the stage of the theater. The education coordinator from that theater said, “We have done lots of family nights at the schools and for the first time last spring, we did a big event at the [theater] where the kids were on the main stage and for some reason the parents really came out for that,” to which another artist in the group responded, “Are you kidding? I got to see my son on the stage of [a nationally recognized theater]. I mean, he'll never be on the stage of [that theater] again!” Another theater regularly gave away tickets to any shows that were not sold out. One artist from that theater said, “If we have empty seats in the theater, we're calling an Annenberg site and giving them tickets and saying, ‘Bring your kids. Can you get them together to come tomorrow?’”

A Different Way of Looking at the World. Finally, artists felt that they simply brought “a different way of approaching the world” than teachers and students normally experienced. For example, one artist said, “its how I relate to the art itself, the spirit that I bring to them, and how I think and how I can open this world for them to think in, which isn't in straight lines. It's a different way of weaving your life.” Another artist commented, “You bring yourself as a person, an outside person with a completely different background and completely different set of everything to a classroom that's usually already set up. So you bring in this new expression of kind of a sense of anticipation and wonder and expectation, too. You bring in that as somebody who is not of the school and not of the classroom and not necessarily a parent.” One artist surmised, “I think that when an artist goes into the classroom they're giving the child or the student an opportunity for self-discovery that they may not have gotten through just the standard curriculum.”

Changes Through Long-term Partnership

All of the artists who participated in the interviews asserted that long-term partnerships were the key to the success of the AAA project. These artists believed it was only through long-term partnerships that significant changes in teaching, learning, and school community were possible. Artists also found that long-term partnerships allowed partnering artists to grow and change as well. In this section, the growth artists observed in three areas, artists/arts organization changes, teacher changes, and school changes, is explored

Artist and Arts Organization Changes

Expanded Networks. Artists who were involved in the AAA for the duration of the project found that one significant change in their professional lives was the expansion of professional networks from which to draw support and find work. Since many local artists rely heavily on community support to recognize and support their work, but participation in AAA was advantageous as the artists found that schools and other community organizations began to seek them out to form partnerships. For example, one artist within a small arts organization noted, “It has been a huge boost because more schools are out looking for things to do. There is a larger pool of schools to work with.” This artist also noted that formal networks of support have been created due to the need for schools and artists to find partnerships that fit their needs. He said, “It has also created the education network so that when you do something well, your name gets passed around.”

Some arts organizations and independent artists found that the focus of their work changed greatly over the course of the AAA project, shifting from performance or product-based explorations to community partnering and educational alliances. One artist noted, “It has allowed us to grow as a program in a way that we weren’t able to before to the point where our work in schools accounts for more than one third of our work.”

Finally, AAA supplied artists with professional development opportunities that not only helped them create better partnerships with schools, but also created a new network of support for teaching. Artists also spoke about the insularity of their worlds prior to the AAA project and how the project helped them to connect with other artists and create a professional community. One artist said,

Because I work at a theater and I'm there every day, I know my five colleagues . . . my nuclear world is relatively small. One thing that I appreciate about the Annenberg project is that you meet a lot of people, you hear a lot of ideas, you get reinforced in the things you are playing with and you feed off the new community that is out there that you are now tapping into and its not just a community, you are getting to know them, you are being introduced to them beyond just the discipline of theatre – and that's been great.

One professional development program that the AAA project co-created and sponsored with other arts movements in Minnesota was the Urban Retreat for the Arts, an annual arts integration conference that brought teachers together with artists from all over the state to explore how arts integration partnerships could improve student outcomes and schools. Many artists found that this retreat alone offered them much needed professional development and networking opportunities. For example, one artist stated, “Especially through the Urban Arts Retreat, with many many people there, I have gotten work from that, gotten connections, and have seen other people's work, and have been inspired by it. That's been the most amazing experience for me and that's where I've gotten the greatest sense of community.”

Deepened Sense of Mission. Independent artists (not affiliated with a larger arts organization) and artists who were part of larger organizations found that through the long-term partnerships of the AAA project they were able to either identify mission statements for their work or deepen existing organizational missions. For example, one artist noted, “I prefer the long-term

relationship; perhaps it's a longer visit each time with the students or maybe it's repeated visits that have made it much more clear in my mind the type of work that is spelled out in our mission." Another artist commented, "I would like to say a huge thank you on both a personal level and organizational level for [this project]. I feel it has elevated us. I mean, it has elevated [name of organization] to a completely different level than we were at before this. Without it, we wouldn't have been there."

Ideas of Partnership. Artists' ideas of partnering changed dramatically from the beginning of the AAA project to the end. All of the artists interviewed indicated that AAA introduced a new way of working with schools that supported a "true partnership" between artists and teachers. This new approach to partnering focused more on long-term, co-teaching relationships and less on traditional residencies where the artist came into a school for a short period of time and worked insularly with students on a product-focused project. The new model of working with a classroom teacher to integrate the arts into everyday learning challenged artists to work beyond the residency model to a more equitable partnering model. One artist found, "When I first started working with the third grade teachers, I thought that what they wanted from me was what I had to offer. And I thought, oh, I guess that's what a partnership is, they take and I give. And what I've found is that they give me as much as I have given them." Another artist added, "A partnership is not a partnership without all of those components: the teacher, the student, the parent, the principal, and the community."

Most artists found that they were surprised by this new form of partnering at first, but then grew to expect it from each partnership after that. As one artist commented,

It was amazing for me, as an artist, to feel that this was a two-way street. It wasn't just me going to try to fulfill the teacher's needs, but now I go in wanting to have my needs fulfilled, too. I want to learn as an artist, too, and this is where my venue is going to be and I want the same equal footing. I didn't realize that until I had a teacher who was so in tune with that that I realized what a partnership could be."

Some artists also found that when they did come across teachers who still espoused the traditional residency model, they had a difficult time accepting that as a partnership. An artist from a larger arts organization shared,

You have to go with what you are given sometimes. You can't create a marriage by will. But, you are assigned a job, you are in it together and sometimes it works out really great, but a lot of times it's a little of this and little of that and you just kind of stumble through it.

Change in How Artists Define Successful Partnerships. Beyond changing their expectations for what partnerships could be, artists' ideas of partnership also changed in two fundamental ways: how they defined success and how they worked to move beyond the residency model. Artists found that one major component of their idea of partnerships was how they defined success. In the past, many artists defined a successful partnership as one where the product they were creating with students turned out well. However, through the new partnering model, artists found that they were less concerned with the product and much more concerned about the depth of the partnership and the connections being made between arts and non-arts concepts. To this end, the relationships created with teachers and schools became very

important. One artist noted, “A successful partnership is one where the teacher is so in tune with the arts and how it is integrated. If the teacher really understands arts-infused curriculum, it’s amazing to work with those teachers. If the teachers understand it in theory, but don’t really know how to practice it, it’s a little bit difficult. If however, the teachers don’t even care, it’s like trying to pull teeth.”

An additional element of redefining “successful partnerships” is that artists and teachers require some philosophical alignment on how to teach. Artists asserted that successful partnerships now need to include an actively engaged classroom teacher who is somewhat pedagogically aligned with them. One artist summarized this sentiment most clearly when she said,

When I think of an ideal partnership I think of someone who philosophically is very similar to me. He or she may look at things differently, but we can find a medium ground. And that’s hard because we’re dealing with a population of people that all have different teaching styles, and ways of approaching kids. So sometimes I know my teaching style may not jive with the other teacher and how do we find that out? Then the whole partnership becomes a way of just finding dialogue and a meeting ground and then that is a successful partnership.

Another artist noted,

What [AAA partnerships] have made me realize is that I want to really work with a group of people who I can speak to honestly -- that we’re on the same page or we’re in the same book, we don’t even have to be on the same page, because that way we’re all constantly being fed and we won’t hopefully get bored with each other.

The last component of redefining partnering for many artists was “leaving a legacy.” Artists felt that success meant more than just creating a one-time product – it meant inspiring teachers to incorporate the arts even when the artist was gone. As one artist reflected,

[It] put a structure under what I was doing so that we could talk about it in a way that it would make sense to other teachers, so that maybe my work could live without me – that I wouldn’t always have to be there; that we could put together curriculum packages and things that could then go on and live other lives other places where I wasn’t necessarily there.

Another artist noted that a legacy could also mean that the teachers she worked with were rejuvenated so that after the artist was no longer part of their lives, they would still want to integrate the arts. She said,

Success is when people want to do more. Everybody leaves wanting to do more because their synapses have been fired to such a degree that they couldn’t do it exactly the same way anymore. Instead, they’ve learned, “I did this well. I want to do it that well and now that much better.”

Desire to go Beyond the Residency Model. The participating artists all asserted that they were no longer satisfied with the traditional residency model. One artist and arts organization administrator compared the residency model to a UFO in that the artist lands, completes her mission in the school, and then simply gets back into the UFO and vanishes. She said,

It's not the UFO model, as I put it. The landing, doing the thing, and then leaving. It's really about what I'm here to try to enhance, embellish, infuse – what it is I do with what you've already got going on. I don't want to be landing from outer space. I want it to make sense." Another artist commented, "I think Annenberg has spoiled me. . . . I'm not happy to just go in and do my song and dance and basically 'perform' as a teaching artist. I want to come in and really connect to what's going on in the school. If that doesn't exist in a school, I'm really lonely and not very inspired to be there.

Part of moving beyond the residency model is the desire to have a commitment from schools to partner with an artist for several years. Artists indicated that once they changed their ideas about partnerships, they sought long-term partnerships with the potential to last beyond one or two years. They articulated a need to be part of something larger and with more impact than the traditional residency model could support. One artist declared,

I am at the point where I need some commitment. I would like to know that I am going to be in this school for three years or . . . five years if I would commit to them and they would commit to me. I could see going in and planting some seeds that I would be around to see bloom. I would be investing in the children. If they feel that investment, then they blossom. I feel the same way. I want someone to invest in my work so it's not just those five hours in that one classroom.

Another artist went on to say, "Artists can't see only coming in and doing a one day workshop with the [residency] model any more, even though that still exists in the repertoire. But they see, 'Wow. I could really infuse this and talk to the teacher about going further with this.'" The artists also stressed that they desire long-term commitments from the schools so that they can feel part of the larger, integrated whole – not just an accessory to the fragmented school year. "You feel like you are part of something bigger, not just 'we are going to hire you. Come in for three days and then go away.'"

Having the long-term partnership and moving beyond residencies also allow artists to redefine (or in many cases define for the first time) the idea of *arts integration*. One artist pointed out, "With Annenberg, I saw this as a very different kind of thing. This was more directed toward curriculum and real learning and real partnering with teachers and less worrying about how it's going to look at the end. More really looking at what's the most valuable thing we can do with the arts here in learning how to teach curriculum together. A lot less [final product] focus for me with Annenberg and a lot more focus on my personal relationship with teachers and really partnering with them. I really focused in on "What are the needs of this teacher? What are their problems? Where can this help them out?" Rather than focusing so much on myself which is what I usually do during a residency – really bring all new stuff rather than fit into something that is already happening.

Another artist reiterated this sentiment when he said,

With a residency you usually come in and you do some planning with teachers, but generally there's very little time for planning and you spend most of the time talking about how you are going to set up the schedule and what the program is going to look like at the end. The product --that's very important. A residency is really focused on a

week or two or three weeks and you are working with a core group of kids you see a lot and you try and see all of the kids in the school a little bit, so that the PTA and PTO are happy that their funding didn't just get spent in one area. Often times there is money coming from another source that funds your more intensive work with a core group, whereas with Annenberg, generally, the money is all core group. You are working with two or three groups of kids, two or three teachers and you don't have this responsibility for the whole school. Your real responsibility is focusing in on effective teaching and working together with this teacher, and I was ready for something like that. With Annenberg we set the schedule more on what's the most effective way to use me with this curriculum or these goals we have for this learning that we want to see happen.

Artists reported that they quickly realized that integrating the arts meant helping teachers go beyond the idea that this project was “just an add-on” like past residencies. One member of an arts organization commented,

There are many arts organizations and artists out there who kind of have their own prepackaged thing that they do in schools, which is fine, but from the teachers point of view and a partnership point of view, that becomes another thing you have to add in. If it is a true partnership and they have a piece of curriculum that they need to get across to students and they want some help doing that, we help them do that, so it isn't something added, but something that fits in to what they are doing already.

Artist Rejuvenation . Going beyond the residency/UFO model to becoming part of something larger and longer-lasting made many artists feel re-energized about partnering with schools. The participating artists had a need to share their gratitude about being part of AAA during the interviews. Nearly all of the artists made comments about how much they had grown as artists and teachers through the project. For example, one artist said, “It's a real kick to have the teachers appreciate the work you're doing and to realize that frankly we're as an organization we are giving so much. We are so behind this project 100% and to have them know that is a really great thing. . . .Just a huge thank you on both a personal and organizational level for that.”

Artists and arts administrators who work in arts organizations also expressed gratitude for the project and experienced their own rejuvenation. For some, the project re-energized the artists within their organization and thereby energized the organization itself. As one artist noted, “The quality of the work has increased and the commitment level from the artists that we employ has really changed. It's given a new spark for the work that they do with students.” Some arts administrators also expressed being very thankful for AAA because it allowed them to enter the schools again and become involved in ways that they had not been able to for many years. For example, one arts administrator shared,

I don't know that I have ever had the opportunity to say how gratifying this work is for me, on a personal level. . . . There's also a real joy in being able to walk down the halls of a school as an administrator of an arts organization and have everybody know you, say hello to you, and ‘Hey, what are you doing here?’ It's a real treat to feel at home in the schools. I think that is one of the best things for me as an arts administrator. Sometimes

administrating projects can be a very lonely business because you don't get that daily feedback of how you're doing.

Assessment Skills. One of the expectations of the AAA project was that schools would assess their individual programs using the action research model. Artists found that this expectation helped them to think about evaluation of their own work. One artist reflected,

I've learned about not only how to really infuse and make impact, but also how to assess that. I've learned a lot about assessing and thinking about goals in a way that I hadn't thought about them before. That's been really valuable to me.

Artists found that working with the same project and teachers for several years afforded them the luxury of learning how to do assessment and continue to improve the process over the duration of the project. An administrator of an arts organization said,

It has changed the way our organization looks at partnering with schools and looks at evaluation, too. Even the research and evaluation component that Annenberg brings has had a profound effect on how we do things. ... Because of my feeling that the arts need to be evaluated not unlike any other content area, I have always told my artists to think along those along those lines, but this project sort of was the backing to some of that knowledge. And I think the way Annenberg came into this whole project and frankly scared so many people by saying, 'You have to be able to evaluate this. This is a research project.' Those words were really drummed into people in the first couple years. Now it's not so scary any more. Telling an artist you need to come up with a pre- and post- test of vocabulary words surrounding your art form is something they are used to hearing now. At first it was like 'What!?' But now I think they fully comprehend the purpose of it and the value in it. They're not just doing it because they're told they have to do it, now they're doing it because it tells them a lot about the effectiveness of their teaching.

Community Involvement. In the previous section, the artists' role in creating bridges from schools to the larger community was discussed. However, staff from participating arts organizations also indicated that the AAA project also helped their institutions become more involved in the community. Independent artists and small arts organizations did not feel a significant change in their connection to the community, although the large, well-known arts organizations in the Twin Cities area believed that the long-term partnerships they created with schools helped them to transcend their own organizational walls and become more aware of and more responsive to the communities they serve. One staff member of a large museum in Minneapolis shared,

We have the principal of the [the neighborhood school] come and talk to our staff. And it's not always just about the project; it's really about public schools, public education, and our community. You know we're the [name of museum] -- we get funding from the whole Hennepin County area property taxes. It has been an opportunity to demonstrate that relationship and build on it and foster caring. Our staff know something about what's going on in schools now, and they're listening up, they're paying attention.

An education coordinator from a large theater company in Minneapolis added,

We did a big event at the theater where the kids were on the main stage and for some reason the parents really came out for that. It was great for me to see a huge institution like [our theater] take a risk, invest in the kids, and for the parents to come out and to see that.

Some organizations even changed their focus to become more responsive to the needs of the community after being a part of AAA. One administrator from a literary arts organization provided insight about how youth programming is now an integral part of their community outreach,

When we were founded 17 years ago it was really an organization for artists and people seeking studio space. . . . The education for youth didn't come for [a while] . . . and now it is our largest audience and our youth program has quadrupled in the past year. . . . The Annenberg project has given me an opportunity to support the artists that we work with and support the schools by sending extra staff. We've had some really good experiences, and we are able to provide more individualized attention.

Other Changes in Artists and Arts Organizations. When asked if they had changed, personally and professionally, the participating artists said that they had. Aside from the five areas listed above, many artists cited more general changes that had to do with their overall skills as teaching artists and partnering arts organizations. One artist who was part of a small theater company, said, “It has completely changed the educational department of [our company]. It has changed the way artists prepare, the way artists teach, and the way artists collaborate.” Many artists agreed that long-term partnerships enhanced all three of these areas. One artist noted,

I found that the collaboration enhanced my creative process. We spent a lot of time in collaboration on how to improve students’ group dynamic skills – as opposed to my saying, ‘You go here and you go here,’ which is what I used to do. I would think, ‘Why is this not working?’ . . . I realized that I needed to take a step back and create the building blocks for students to be successful, and ‘what are those building blocks? What’s important to convey?’ I began to see what the dynamic structures were and how I can work with students to pull out their strengths and weaknesses. I’ve never had the luxury to do that except in an Annenberg setting where you are a partner over a prolonged period of time.

An integral part of creating these long term partnerships was learning the “language of school” As noted by one artist, “I’ve learned a lot. It’s hard to pick apart, but in general, the infusion, the language has become a lot clearer to me. It’s easier for me to translate it now” was a common sentiment among the artists interviewed. One artist summarized this idea best when she shared,

It seems a lot simpler now to meld ideas together. When we talk about interdisciplinary in an arts organization or as an artist, you're speaking multiple arts disciplines. When a teacher says interdisciplinary, they mean math and science, or English and math, or English and music, or I should say English and one of the standard R's. Interdisciplinary now means really crossing math and dance to me.

Teacher Changes

Many of the effects of long-term partnerships on teacher practice through the AAA project have been documented previously (see Werner, 2001; Werner & Freeman, 2001; and Werner & Ingram, 1999). However, it is important to note that the essence of the changes reported by teachers and researchers in previous reports were also reported by the artists that were interviewed: changes in partnering/collaboration, changes in integration, changes teacher practice, and overall rejuvenation in teaching. The artist interviews took place near the end of the project; therefore, the participants had the luxury of four years of experience with the project. As a result, the artists added another factor in teacher change: the learning curve.

Changes in Partnering/Collaborating. Artists indicated that at the start of the project, teachers were concerned that arts integration would be “one more thing they have to do.” As one artist commented, “There was a tangible fear that I experienced on their part that it’s more thing and they are not exactly sure how it would tie into the standards and curriculum. But, once they loosened up, they began to see and understand.” The artists believed it was their responsibility to help teachers through these fears by creating partnerships unlike they had ever know before. These were partnerships that nurtured both the artist and the teacher and allowed them to move beyond their preconceived ideas about the collaboration into the real work at hand. One artist shared that he had worked with teachers in another state to incorporate theatre into the classroom before he moved to Minnesota. He reflected that when he was hired by an AAA school that had been working on the project for a year already, he was prepared to have to teach them how to effectively collaborate with him. He said,

Coming to Minnesota, I'm ready to give my spiel about how they have to stay in the room with me and they were ahead of me . . . They wanted to be there, all the teachers were volunteers – nobody was assigned to me, as a matter of fact, they had to compete to see who was going to get the artist. They wanted to be in the classroom, they wanted to be part of the decision-making and understanding what am I doing and why am I doing it that way? So, in the cliché way, we are helping the teachers learn how to fish, instead of feeding them one fish at a time.

Other artists noted that the teachers they worked with changed dramatically in what they expected out of partnerships after working in a long-term partnership with an artist. One artist said,

[Now] they are used to people coming from outside the building and teaching with them. They used to feel self-contained, where they thought they had everything they need. Now they are more used to the idea that people will come in; we will teach *with* them, learn from them, and this will happen all the time.

In some instances, the idea of what a partnership could accomplish changed so dramatically that it led teachers and artists to co-create documents, guides, and even performance packages for teachers around the state. One artist shared that she and her partnering teacher have led several workshops on how to integrate dance and math. Another artist noted,

The crowning achievement was being able to sit in this very room [at the Perpich Center for the Arts] with six of my favorite teachers I've worked with and write the curriculum, write the performance packages with people who were inspired to do this: two great

music teachers, two wonderful media teachers, a math teacher, and then lots of other people helping us with things (the music coordinator for the district and others). To have the funding to do that – to sit down for two days and pull all that together was unbelievable. I was excited and we worked really hard. I have just never had an experience like that. That project will live on and go to all kinds of different places because of that [level of partnering].

Changes in Integrating: Going Beyond Activities. In the previous section, “What Artists Bring”, artists’ knowledge of how to integrate the arts into long-term partnerships was discussed. What has not been discussed, however, is that this knowledge of integration was then passed on to teachers who were able to use the concepts taken from the integration experience and translate them into other areas of the curriculum. As one artist commented,

The relationships with the teachers and seeing them light up and finding out how you communicate your own ideas, where they would get it and see it, and it would be an ‘A-ha’ experience for them. They would see what it is that we were doing and how it was affecting the kids and then the collaboration would be really intensified.

Artists indicated that when they first began working with teachers on AAA, many teachers were reluctant or uncomfortable with integrating the arts and often took a back seat to the artists. One artist said, “When I would talk to the teachers and say, ‘this is what I’m going to try,’ they would just look at me like, ‘Oh, go ahead. I’ve never thought about that.’” The artists claimed that because of the long-term partnerships, they were able to demonstrate concretely how teachers could go beyond activities to making deep connections through integration. An actor artist stated,

I’ve had some teachers that didn’t know how to participate in many respects simply because they were unfamiliar with what I was doing. You can give them hand outs, you can explain it, but until you actually do it and interact with kids and they see what you are doing, they won’t participate.

Another artist added, “Once we got done with the first unit, the teacher said, ‘I get it. That makes sense. I never thought of approaching it that way before.’”

Changes in Teacher Practice. After learning how to collaborate and integrate the arts with an artist partner, teachers became more comfortable adopting these new methods of teaching into their daily practice. One artist noted, “Working in long-term partnerships and working with the same teacher year after year, we’ve seen many of the teachers blossom.” Another artist added, “Teachers are now looking at this as another way to approach the curriculum.”

Artists shared many stories about the process of teachers learning how to use integration in their everyday teaching practices. For example, one artist from a small arts organization shared,

A classic example is in one of the Annenberg projects. We sat down with a team of teachers and in the beginning of the meeting one of the teachers came in and slammed her books down and said, ‘Who’s making me be here?’ That’s where she started from at the planning meeting, but by the end of the process, she was 180° in the other direction. She was so glad to have had us in her classroom and to see the effect that it had on the students and the curriculum, and realized that it was not something that she had to do as

an extra on top of everything else, but that it fit in with her curriculum and enhanced her student's understanding of the curriculum. She actually became a spokesperson for that to other teachers.

Another artist spoke about a teacher who, because of the long-term partnership through AAA, was able to move from non-participation to active integration in his daily teaching practices. She said,

We have been working with a teacher at [an elementary school] for four years and the first year he would not participate at all. We try to get them to participate as much as possible and one of our objectives by the end of the year is to have them teaching 50 percent of the curriculum, working hand –in-hand with the actor educator. He wasn't doing any. The second year maybe 10 percent of the time we started to see him do some things, but he wasn't doing any of the vocal parts. Now, he runs the program on his own and we just come in every month to give him an extra boost. He'll say, 'I can do the curriculum part, I can do the syllabus, but I'm not an actor. So it helps me so much when your actors can come in and either give them some of the acting vocabulary or help us put together a display.' So we have found a medium with him and he keeps the program going on his own, which is amazing when you think about where he started from.

Teacher Rejuvenation. Teachers themselves have reported that being part of the AAA project and having the luxury of working closely with an artist over an extended period of time gave them a sense of rejuvenation in their teaching. The artists who participated in the interview process also asserted this sentiment about teachers. One artist said,

I see the arts are what gives a flavor to the meat and potatoes of what they teach in the schools, what gives a distinction to it that otherwise is just out of the book and rather repetitive. And I think for the teachers as well, it takes them a little bit outside of their typical day-to-day things, and all of a sudden they get really excited about things.” Another artists noted, “[Teachers] are excited by the possibilities of what they can do, and that opens the door for them, then I think that’s a break.

Artists found that the teachers who were used to working in the residency model and had to work hard to change their ideas about partnership were very energized by having an artist partner. For example, one artist commented, “They are really excited that you’re there. They are really excited that the artist is in the classroom – great things are going to happen.” Another artist added,

The arts integrated into the curriculum and into the school day can energize teachers. We all know what it does for kids. It keeps them in school, keeps them interested, helps kids who aren't paper and pencil learners to show their stuff from time to time, but it's the *teachers* who are so revved up, so excited by it.

Learning Curve. The participating artists had been with the AAA project and working with teachers to integrate the core curriculum from three to four years, depending on the partnership. Artists found that, in general, the first two years of the partnership were spent learning how to work together and understanding how to integrate the arts. It wasn't until the third year that both teachers and artists felt comfortable enough with the project and the partnerships to make the "significant changes" they were looking for. Artists said things like, "These projects take about three or four years to gel," or "It's important that teachers are given the time to mess up."

Some artists shared that they were feeling disappointed at first because it took the partnerships so long to cement. However, they quickly realized that almost every partnership was facing the same kind of time frame. For example, one artist said, "I was feeling badly at first, but I don't feel off-track because [the] teachers are saying it takes about three years to get this – to be able to duplicate it again."

Artists also noted that each partnership is unique and that there was no set standard for how long a partnership would take to affect lasting changes. One artist commented, "We find that each teacher works on their own time line. Some will take to it right away, others it has taken two or three years for them to want to come out from behind their desks." Another artist surmised, "It's like marriages, every partnership is different. You can't say this magic formula, A plus B, is going to result in a fabulous partnership. . . . Partnerships take time and funders that expect a miracle in a year, and will only fund something for a year or two at the most, are being misadvised."

School Changes

Artists found that some long-term partnerships created through the AAA project fostered change that went beyond the participating classrooms to effect entire schools. Participating artists suggested three key areas of change at the school level: school climate/culture, sense of community, and reliance on artist.

Changes in School Climate/Culture. Artists who were interviewed asserted that school culture changed as a result of the partnerships created by the AAA project. In some cases the culture of the school changed to become more open to the arts in general. One arts organization found,

The climate of a school that has an Annenberg project changes in a way that is beneficial to us as an organization. Schools that aren't associated with Annenberg, or are just starting, sometimes have to start a lot further back.

One artist concluded, "[AAA] *builds* and changes the culture of the school it's in," while another noted,

Other partnerships are more like residencies and only the teacher knows who I am and it's about the culture of that school. Some schools don't have a specific arts culture, it's just not part of their life. At [my AAA school] I'm *not* a substitute teacher, I am part of the staff when I come in and I get treated that way. Everybody knows me there, I come in and they know what I do. Some of the teachers have connected me and with the students because we've been really lucky, we've had a lot of success at [this] school. All

of us have learned a lot, so there is a real positive energy or spirit that I walk into everyday.

Artists indicated that they worked to become not only aware of a school's culture, but also a part of it. As one artist stated, "I don't want to come in as a new person, a stranger, I really want to be part of their culture." Another artist said, "We were trying to affect the culture of the school because as a, visiting artist, you realize that you can have an effect on the school even if you are there for just a little while." A third artist summarized,

I liked that fact that you really could become part of the culture, you could go into it and the students would remember that they might have had a class with me when they were in Kindergarten and now they are in third or fourth grade. Because of the many many changes of their families, their schools, and our society, just to be able to be a force that comes in weekly and just does this over and over and over for years has been very good because you also are much more aware of the needs. You are much more able to identify some areas that you might really make a difference or feel that you could contribute something.

Changes in Sense of School Community. Artists also felt that the AAA project helped to foster a sense of school community that was not as apparent before the project. Artists indicated that students, teachers, and school staff went out of their way to meet and greet the AAA artist in each school because the partnerships became so well-known in most schools. At first, the artists felt they simply created a spectacle because they were "new and interesting", but eventually the artists felt that they contributed something more lasting: a focal point of commonality – a center for the school to gather around and begin to communicate with one another. One arts administrator relayed,

I was standing next to [an artist] yesterday in the hall at [a participating school], getting ready for a meeting and one of the classes dismissed at the end of the day and there must have been 40 kids that came up and gave her a hug. I was standing right next to her. I said, "I feel like I'm standing next to the most popular girl in Jr. High."

The continuity of the project helped artists create lasting relationships with students and staff alike. An artist said,

I've worked with the same school for four years. At that school, the principal knows me, the front office secretary knows me, the janitor knows me, and the teachers know me. I have worked with 50-65 students each year, so I know a lot of the student body. . . I am the common denominator in many cases. Annenberg provides the vehicle for discussions about what can happen, what is possible.

Almost every artist interviewed shared stories of how students would remember them for several years after having them in their classroom. Another artist said,

The opportunity to have an ongoing long-term partnership with the schools is phenomenal because what it means [is] . . . when we walk in the school, people recognize us, students recognize us, and they remember and connect their experiences with us. We've had the experience of working with a 3rd grade class and then a couple of years later working with the same students in 5th grade. That's an amazing experience, to walk into a 5th grade class and see half the

class' eyes light up and say, 'oh I remember you from 3rd grade, that was a really great time. I learned a lot.'

Changes in How Schools Rely on Artists. The final outcome of long-term partnerships on schools is how schools now rely on their partnering artist. Artists interviewed indicated that due to their continued involvement at their school sites, they have become integral parts of the school community by serving on committees, creating special school-wide events, and generally becoming an ambassador for positive change through the arts. For example, one arts administrator said,

We have seen it and it has proven itself to be true that long-term partnerships with schools are the way to go. You develop trust, they develop trust in you organizationally, and they allow you to take a leadership role position within their school.

Another artist said,

We have made huge attempts at sustaining partnerships beyond this project by writing grants; by finding other sources of funding for some of our school sites that have quite frankly become very reliant on us. They rely on what we can provide and they don't want to go back.

Artists found that they went beyond being an "event" within their schools, they became active partners in teaching and supporting student learning. They found that "there is a commitment that the school makes to the artist when you're a so-called partner, and not just an artist in residency." For example, one artist summarized what the partnership meant to her,

What I enjoy is the schools where I go back year after year. Those teachers know what I do and I'm not the event anymore. . . . I used to be the cream on the cake and all of the sudden, I'm the cake! I am part of the actual work, not as much a flash in the pan, but part of a long term partnership.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

Questions for Focus Group Interviews

1. Why are you involved in the AAA project?

Probes: * What have you gained/learned from your involvement?

* What do you think you bring to the arts-infused lessons that otherwise would not exist?

2. What makes a partnership successful? What makes a partnership less than successful?

Probe: * Have you experienced an unsuccessful partnership? What did you do about it?

3. How do you prepare yourself to work in a school setting?

4. How did you and your school partner build a successful partnership? Any advice?

5. What are your artistic expectations of students?

Probes:* How do you encourage a high level of artistry amongst students?

* How do you take students to a higher level?

6. If you were a member of the Annenberg Project design team, what might you have done differently?

7. What advice do you have for artists who are just beginning their work in school partnerships?

Questions for Arts Organization Representatives

1. Why are you involved in the AAA project?

Probes:* What have you gained/learned from your involvement?

* What do you think your organization and its artists bring to the arts-infused lessons that otherwise would not exist?

2. What impact has Annenberg participation had on your organization?

3. What makes a partnership successful? What makes a partnership less than successful?

Probe:* If you have experienced an unsuccessful partnership, what did you do about it?

4. How does your organization prepare artists to work in the schools?

5. How does your organization find artists who have an interest and skill in working with young students? What are your criteria?