Understanding Personal Theory for Elementary School Teachers Implementing Curricular Change

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession in the United States is at a crossroads because the educational pendulum has swung to a rigid assessment model, which often conflicts with the responsibility of teachers as educators. Teachers are encouraged to instruct using prepackaged curricula developed from mandated national and state curriculum guidelines to enhance student performance on standardized assessments. Prepackaged curriculum mandates are commonly associated with benchmarks, which are discipline-specific content needed to achieve a specific skill. These benchmarks are standardized for each subject, and established by administration at local, state, and national levels (Christy, 2003/2004; Goldberg, 2004; Weaver, 2004). Standards are outlined for teachers to reach specific objectives for each subject taught based on grade level. Hence, teachers begin to respond by centering teaching to subject specific material, which in turn compromises critical learning opportunities (Christy).

Teachers who are overly subject-centered tend to teach mechanically and their unique values, beliefs, skills, and background disappear within the standardized setting (Weinstein, 2002). The subject-centered mandatory curriculum may take away from enrichment and skill enhancement activities, thus teacher autonomy and creativity are often stifled (Christy 2003/2004). The negative discernment of teachers further reduces

the desirability to enrich prepackaged curriculum when the opportunity arises. Any effort to enhance mandatory curriculum is viewed as futile, and as a result, creativity is lost (Aronowitz & Girouz, 1993; Weinstein).

Research studies have explored attraction to and how satisfaction is reached in the teaching profession (Pihie & Elias, 2004). Previously, teachers have equated the decision to become educators based on their love of children and youth, on the desirability to help students grow and become competent individuals, and the desirability to enable individuals to make choices in the classroom. Further, teachers state they felt a calling into the profession based on personal experiences with past educators and society (Ayers, 2001).

Professional training and personal experience combine to guide teachers in the classroom as well as direct teachers to assimilate information taught in traditional educational training programs. Personal experience inspires teachers to make connections between the required curriculum and practical classroom experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Thus, professional training and personal experience assist teachers in the development of curriculum, help teachers understand the importance of implementing new teaching techniques, guide teachers in the presentation of materials in the classroom to enhance student learning, and lead teachers to commit to curricular change.

Understanding and identifying the various influences on teacher personal theory is important to investigate as it can lead to re-examination of the current educational system and help educators chose arts integration. In order to determine how teachers continue to operate in a standardized environment while maintaining the desire to teach creatively, it is necessary for researchers to understand how teachers articulate personal views of the

current educational culture and what decisions are made to deviate from any scripted lessons and beliefs that lead to changes in teacher practice. This study attempted to provide an exploration into how teacher personal theories influence arts integration into the core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment.

Teacher Personal Theories

Teachers may be influenced by their educational beliefs, personal practical experiences, and views of creativity to filter information and make choices regarding teaching techniques. Personal theories may be developed and explained by describing and exploring these influences. Changes to personal theories are imminent as teachers continue to develop, learn, and mature inside and outside of the classroom (Sternberg, 1985).

One way to develop teacher theory is to describe how beliefs influence classroom practice (Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004). Beliefs may be defined as an individual's personal convictions, attitudes, principles, or opinions that guide behavior and are developed early in life (Pajares, 1992; Thomas & Pederson, 2003). These deep-rooted beliefs and values, referred to as personal theories, may influence the perceptions and judgments affecting classroom practices (Pajares; Sternberg, 1985). Personal theories help teachers make connections between their beliefs and classroom practice leading to the development of new teaching techniques and methods (Dweck, 1996; Hong, Chiu, Lin, Wan, & Dweck, 1999; McCoy, 2003; Plucker & Runco, 1998; Zhang & Sternberg, 1998). Thus, teacher personal theory may be influenced by educational beliefs and may lead to the decision to implement curricular change in the classroom.

Personal practical knowledge allows teachers to highlight personal experiences in their past with the intention of making future changes that are appropriate for learning in classroom situations while understanding and responding to the pressures of the present educational system (Clandinin, 1993). Teachers who emphasize personal practical knowledge while teaching are often at odds with the standards, percentages, and strategies utilized by the educational community today. The focus in the classroom turns to learning applicable to the students by using personal explanations to teach relevant concepts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

The language accentuated by the teachers who use personal practical knowledge differs dramatically from the language used today in the educational community. Language that describes the principles for standardization and high-stakes testing is less relevant for teachers who use personal practical knowledge. Teachers who are influenced by personal practical knowledge perpetuate language that involves the use of emotional, moral, and realistic meanings helping students make more defined connections to learning (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). In addition, personal theory may be influenced by personal practical knowledge allowing teachers to capture personal experiences pertinent to the learning environment, thus enhancing the curriculum (Clandinin, 1993).

Another factor influencing teacher personal theory is the view of creativity. Creativity plays an integral part in the educational environment. The creative contributions in education are often produced by teachers, in particular those who teach in elementary schools (Craft, 2000). Since creativity in adults is often suppressed through socialization that encourages conformity, the type of creativity that emerges will depend in part on the teacher personality and on the environmental influences where learning

takes place (Sternberg, 1995, 2006; Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2003). Eisner (2002) suggests allowing an individual's spirit or uninhibited self a space for creative outlet to occur freely fosters creative self-expression. Teachers who view themselves as creative have a freedom of spirit that is not bound by the standardization of the educational environment (Sternberg, 1985, 1986). Personal theory may be influenced by creativity allowing teachers to make decisions regarding arts integration to enhance curriculum.

Project CREATES

Teachers who participated in Project CREATES, a private grant-funded project, were investigated in this study. CREATES is an acronym for Connecting Community Resources Encouraging All Teachers to Educate with Spirit. Project CREATES uses a holistic approach to education, including the belief that the arts are core to learning (Connecting Community Resources Encouraging All Teachers to Educate with Spirit [CREATES], 2003).

The Project was initiated in August of 2000 in collaboration with individuals led by a newly funded foundation in a Midwestern city. The directors of the foundation invited an Educational Psychology professor and her former and current doctoral students to conceptualize a program for children to increase their awareness, enjoyment, experience, and performance in the arts. In 2000, a small pilot project was introduced to one elementary school principal, who accepted the invitation to co-create an arts integration model. Co-creation was defined as the process between transdisciplinary professionals working on products (CREATES, 2003).

Musicians from a philharmonic orchestra worked with the small groups of teachers from the pilot project during the first semester of the school year to develop lesson plans for integrating the arts across core curriculum. Teaching to the students strengths allowed natural talent in the arts to emerge. Artists assisted in the identification of student talent potential leading to the formation of talent development groups (CREATES, 2003).

In 2001-2002, a second school was invited to join the Project. Professional development experiences began after the second school was added. Teachers and community artists worked together to develop arts integrated curriculum. The professional development model used by CREATES was the STAR (Specific Target Actions for Renewal) Model, which included the five points of a star pertaining to arts integration. The five points of the star categorized some of the activities provided at the professional development sessions, including co-creation using external resources, internal resources, seminars across schools, collaborative planning within the schools, and teaching artists to include co-planning, co-teaching, and co-reflecting (Montgomery, 2006).

During the 2002-2003 school year, a third school was added. At the same time, a research component in conjunction with Oklahoma State University was initiated to document the role of Project CREATES in the three public elementary schools. A four-year plan was written for Oklahoma State University to fund staff and community artists' participation in the schools (CREATES, 2003).

The purpose of Project CREATES was to conduct research on methods that transform teaching and learning through the design and implementation of arts-infused

curriculum and talent development groups. The Project CREATES team consisted of graduate student researchers, professional researchers, public school teachers, public school students, arts resources coaches (ARCS), academic professors, professional musicians, and various community artists which were used to introduce new art forms to the teachers (CREATES, 2003).

Project CREATES helped the teachers understand how to develop and implement arts integration lessons within the standardized curriculum through a detailed professional development model. Teachers worked with Project CREATES to implement arts integration in the classroom through attending professional development experiences. This was accomplished by providing professional development opportunities to learn ways to integrate the arts, understand the principles surrounding arts integration, and introduce networking with other teachers. The educational culture, arts integration model, and professional development information were described as the Project CREATES foundational components (CREATES, 2003).

Educational Climate

The current political milieu largely requires teachers to educate based on standardized, mandated curriculum. Classrooms are typically not environments in which creativity is fostered due to the traditional organization of the classrooms, the lack of meaning in curriculum differentiation, and the lack of originality of teaching methods (Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow, 2004). Teachers respond by utilizing various classroom techniques to meet the educational guidelines established by administrators at the local, state, and national levels. The teacher response varies depending upon whether the

change is voluntary or imposed (Aronowitz & Girouz, 1993; Gary, 2002; Pihie & Elias, 2004). The influence to endorse curricular change, regardless of whether it is voluntary or imposed, is based on the teacher's prior education, classroom experience, and personal theory about education (Baker, 1994; Davis & Wilson, 2000; Dinham & Scott, 2000; Solomon, 1998; Wlodkowski, 1999).

Research suggests that teaching toward standardization and mandatory curriculum is in direct opposition to many personal theories of education. Educators need to find learning activities that are relevant, challenging, and satisfying (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000). Using benchmarks and mandatory curriculum stifles creativity, limits the use of new teaching strategies, and hinders teacher satisfaction (Eisner, 2002; Hufton, Elliott, & Illushin, 2003; Solomon, 1998). Conflict has arisen with teacher personal theories and the structured curriculum requirements. As a result, various models have been introduced in the public school system to provide school reform (Christy 2003/2004; Gary, 2002). Arts integration is one of those models.

Most teachers choose education as a profession to educate and empower students (Ayers, 2001; Baker, 1994). Relying on standardized teaching through mandated curriculum ignores the importance of teachers and the role they play in the educational experience. Rutstein (1992) affirms the student-teacher relationship is the most imperative relationship affecting education; hence to teach in an environment which ignores the relationship in favor of more automated learning decisions is problematic. Teachers should be interested in improving student learning instead of solely focusing on providing tools for students to pass standardized tests. The approach each teacher takes to curriculum development affects how students perform in the classroom. Educators who

initiate changes to standardized curriculum instruction have shown an increase in student learning in the classrooms (Harackiewicz, Pintrich, Barron, Elliot, & Trash, 2002; Harter, 1996; Sanacore, 1997).

Arts Integration as School Reform

Arts integration reflects the belief that any form of art such as music, dance, painting, poetry, and drama can be unified and taught with core subjects such as math, language arts, science to initiate and enhance learning in both areas. Using the arts encourages teachers to develop new teaching techniques and skills while covering the required benchmarks (Bresler, 1995; Werner & Freeman, 2001). Two of the fundamental values of successful arts integration are the beliefs that all teachers can accomplish integration without formal arts training and the process of collaboration is working together in a joint intellectual effort to enhance learning (Gary, 2002).

Some theorists suggest that artists must be specialists in the arts to effectively teach art to students (Gary, 2002; McKean, 2001; Zimmerman, 1997) . Arts integration theory recognizes the teachers who are not adequately trained in the arts may have more difficulty taking the necessary initiative to infuse the arts into core curriculum. This difficulty suggests that these teachers may experience feelings of inadequacy and become overwhelmed when implementing arts integration (Gary; McKean; Zimmerman). However, arts integration theory postulates that all teachers can use creative self-expression to enhance teaching strategies without formal training (Gary).

Learning through collaborating with arts educators in professional development experiences is one way to ameliorate these feelings. Arts integration models explain the

process of integrating the arts in the classroom through collaboration. Traditional art models refer to the collaboration, co-creation, and co-teaching process as integration (Gary, 2002). The term arts infusion takes this concept one step further by implementing a seamless integration of the arts with core subject knowledge in the classroom. Arts infusion suggests the arts are not just helpful, but needed in every aspect of curricula to foster learning (Bleedorn, 2003; Werner & Freeman, 2001). Integration or infusion of the arts throughout curriculum enhances education by giving meaning to the core subjects.

Many examples of arts integration models exist in the public schools including; MUSICLINK (Haroutounian, 2000), SPECTRA+ (Luftig, 2000), TETAC (Walker & Parsons, 2000), and Project CREATES (CREATES, 2003). MUSICLINK explores student talent through music by using community artists, the public school system, and other community efforts (Haroutounian). SPECTRA+ is a school-wide multidisciplinary education program that uses the arts in each classroom daily (Luftig). TETAC is attempting to link comprehensive arts education into the standardized testing that impacts school reform in districts (Walker & Parsons). Project CREATES uses music, movement, drama, and visual arts to help students sustain learning through a holistic educational philosophy (CREATES). These programs attempt to achieve equity for all students through arts integrated curriculum (Gary).

Arts integration leads to a clearer understanding of various subjects through the description of one's personal history, values, and belief systems (London, 1994). Richer meanings and connections result because the experiences significant to an individual emerge through creative expression (Baker 1994; Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Eisner, 1998, 2002; Gary, 2002). Artistic expression arises out of culturally based

personal experiences and arts integrated programs become a valuable asset for developing cultural awareness and supporting teachers in an unfamiliar environment (London). Art is the vehicle for bridging the gap between knowledge and culture (Baker; Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr; Eisner 1998, 2002; Gary).

Teachers are products of personal experience and educational training (Baker, 1994; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000). Commuting to school and having a limited familiarity with the communities surrounding the schools can cause a cultural disconnection between the teachers and the students (Baker). Thus, teachers may struggle with maintaining cultural sensitivity in the classroom.

Although arts integration improves student learning and teacher satisfaction, not all teachers are comfortable making curricular changes. Current literature suggests that the requirements for high-stakes testing, inexperience with art related lesson plans, and the fear of appearing inadequate in the classroom may prevent teachers using arts integration in the classroom (Christy, 2003/2004; Deci, 1996; Dweck, 1996; Eisner, 2002).

Professional Development

Professional development provides educators opportunities to reinvent teaching by allowing them to engage in decision-making, inquiry, reflection, and community service (Risko & Bromley, 2001). Learning constructive classroom techniques for lessons leading to arts infusion can be accomplished through the professional development environment. Teachers who become actively involved in the professional development experience learn to create and implement new teaching strategies that can be employed in

the classroom leading to an increase in teacher autonomy (Hutchens, 1998; Solomon, 1998). More control over lesson plans, community resources, and administrative influences leads to higher job satisfaction (Maehr, Smith, & Midgley, 1990). The freedom to try new ideas and the opportunities for learning arising from arts integrated programs excites teachers and rejuvenates the classroom (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Pihie & Elias, 2004). Understanding the personal theories of teachers and how these theories influence curricular change will inform and strengthen the teacher education practice (Whitbeck, 2000).

Problem Statement

The current political culture largely requires teachers to educate based on standardized, mandated curriculum with regular and frequent assessment. Classrooms are not typically environments in which creativity is fostered due to the traditional organization of the classrooms, the lack of meaning in curriculum differentiation, and the lack of originality of teaching methods (Plucker et al., 2004). Teachers respond by utilizing various classroom techniques to meet the educational guidelines established by the school district. The teacher response varies depending upon whether the change is voluntary or imposed (Aronowitz & Girouz, 1993; Gary, 2002; Pihie & Elias, 2004). The influence to endorse or not endorse curricular change, regardless of whether it is voluntary or imposed, is based on the teacher's prior education, classroom experience, and personal theory of education (Baker, 1994; Davis & Wilson, 2000; Dinham & Scott, 2000; Solomon, 1998; Wlodkowski, 1999).

Teachers, like many others in helping professions, often find themselves at the mercy of lawmakers, politicians, and other external groups whose educational experience is limited to school attendance. The resulting policy and curricular mandates run counter to sound pedagogy, teacher experience, and more personalized instruction for students. The implementation of arts integrated curriculum affords teachers an opportunity to provide more personalized instruction while capitalizing on the desired outcomes of the structured curriculum. Arts integration represents a blending of multiple approaches to learning and incorporates this method of instruction into a rigid educational environment representing the blending of instructional approaches. Research is needed to more fully understand how teacher theory influences the process and decision to infuse the arts into this standardized, not fully receptive, environment. The problem to be investigated in this study is the link between teacher personal theory and how it affects teacher willingness to implement curricular change.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study is the concept of the five principles of learning organizations: personal mastery; mental models; shared vision; team learning; and systems thinking identified by Senge (1990). Senge described how the interactions between management, employees, and technical skill development act as a catalyst to understand the general principles, specific tools, and various techniques used in the business culture (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994). These same concepts can be transitioned into the educational environment. In fact, current research is focusing on understanding the five principles of the learning organization in the field of education

(Brown, 1992; Forrester, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1999; Lyneis, 1999, 2000; Lyneis & Fox-Melanson, 2001; Richmond, 1991, 1993).

The five principles of learning organizations provide educators a foundation to explore personal growth and development (Senge, 1990). *Personal mastery*, the first principle, transpires when an individual expands the personal capacity to create, and encourages individuals to establish and develop goals and purposes. The second principle, *mental models*, examines the various ways ingrained assumptions, generalizations, pictures, and/or images influence an individual's understanding shaping their interactions and decisions. The principle of *shared vision* binds people together for a common identity and sense of destiny. This principle is often described as the component that paints the picture while the thinking, not vision, reveals how to create the picture. *Team learning* provides an individual with the ability to suspend assumptions and enter into a dialogue of freethinking, identify unique abilities, and transform conversational and collective thinking skills. The final principle, *systems thinking*, is the ability to describe and understand the interrelationships that shape any organization, concerned with seeing the wholes, not just the unique parts of any situation (Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 1994).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand how elementary school teacher personal theories influenced their role of integrating the arts into core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment. Understanding teacher personal theories is accomplished by identifying and describing the influences that various elements had on teachers who participated in this process. Identification of these

influences provides Project CREATES staff and other educators with a more complete understanding of what enhanced programs, professional development sessions, and collaborative opportunities are needed to establish successful arts integration programs leading to improvements in variety of educational endeavors.

Research Questions

The following research questions helped guide the focus of this research:

1. How do personal theories of teaching and learning influence the decision to integrate the arts?

2. How has the implementation of arts integrated curricula changed teaching techniques in the classroom?

3. In what ways does the Iceberg Model provide a framework for understanding teacher personal theory and teacher change?

Significance of the Study

Little research has been conducted that illuminates teacher personal theory and how it guides teachers in the classroom (Goldman, 2004; Soleau, 1997). More importantly, it is imperative to question how the influences of teacher personal theory can inform higher education, governmental agencies, and school boards to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the teacher as educator, advancing student learning and ultimately leading to educational reform.

The broad range of knowledge available regarding teaching includes the importance of pre-service teacher training, arts and musically trained teachers, teachers who believe in creativity, theories that guide individual belief systems, and various aspects of current educational culture (Hancock, 2003; Pettus & Blosser, 2002; Plucker, et al., 2004; Rikard & Lancaster, 1999; Studer, 2004). While these topics are beneficial to the field of education, current research ignores the influence personal theory has on the implementation of curricular change in a standardized educational environment. This study investigated the influence of teacher personal theory on the implementation of curricular change in a standardized educational environment, in an attempt to broaden the research base and further develop theory in the field of personal theory, creativity, arts integration, and education.

Summary

Teachers have the responsibility of providing students every opportunity for learning by being social change agents who are responsible for educating future generations. Current legislation, at all levels, frequently requires the use of standardized testing and mandated curricular approaches to assess student learning. Teaching with mandatory rules causes a disconnection between the teacher's desire to teach and the required job. Teaching in this manner stifles creativity in the classroom leading to fewer opportunities for learning and authentic integration of materials. Problem-solving using higher level thinking skills is imperative to function in modern society hence, students should be offered these opportunities in the classroom. One way to bridge this gap and bring about authentic learning is through arts integration.

Arts integration provides richer learning experiences because art bridges diversity. Challenging teachers to infuse the arts in order to reach all students is essential and allows students to make connections with personal history leading to the development of higher level thinking skills. For the purpose of this study, it is important to gain an understanding into the influence teacher personal theory has on the implementation of curricular change in a standardized educational environment to help educators make decisions regarding arts integration, ultimately leading to sustainability of arts integration in the public elementary schools.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of literature explores and illuminates the spectrum of issues that should be addressed when discussing personal theory for elementary school teachers who integrate the arts in a standardized educational environment. The body of literature describing teacher personal theories was explored to understand the influences of teacher beliefs, practical teacher knowledge, and the meaning of creativity. A discussion of Project CREATES follows as it provided the context for this study. Current literature pertinent to educational climate, arts integration as school reform, and professional development experiences provided a foundation for understanding Project CREATES as the context of this study. Finally, a discussion of the five principles of learning organizations and the iceberg model was included to systematically describe influences on teacher personal theory. This literature explicates the influences that construct, define, and shape teacher personal theories.

Teacher Personal Theory

Teaches personal theories can be defined as deep-rooted belief system that allows teachers to distinguish between personal beliefs and traditional training while working in a standardized environment. Experts state that implied personal theories are intuitive

notions and informal operational definitions that influence teacher decision processes and can ultimately lead to curricular change in the classroom (Zhang & Sternberg, 1998). Discovering how personal theory develops lies in understanding the influences of beliefs, personal practical teacher knowledge, and the meaning of creativity for teachers. As teachers continue to develop, learn, and mature inside and outside of the classroom changes to personal theories are imminent (Sternberg, 1985).

Teacher Beliefs

Beliefs may be defined as individual personal convictions, attitudes, principles, and/or opinions that guide behavior and are developed early in life. Beliefs are not based on experience but are derived from unconfirmed information (Pajares, 1992). The early formation of teacher beliefs may be influenced by schooling, time, reasoning, and personal experience. However, once beliefs are formed they become deeply personal and are rarely influenced or changed (Pajares; Thomas & Pederson, 2003).

Getting teachers to change beliefs is difficult and several criteria should be considered before this can occur. First, teachers should be dissatisfied with their existing beliefs in some way in order for changes to be made in the classroom. Educators who are pressured in the classroom to make curricular change that conflict with their personal beliefs should be afforded the opportunity to experiment and find new ways to teach coinciding with personal beliefs. Teacher's educational beliefs might change if the teachers are provided alternative solutions useful to classroom practice. Finally, in order for teachers to consider changing current practices based on beliefs, the new beliefs

should have some connection with past teacher experiences for change sustainability (Prawat, 1992).

Teacher beliefs are more influential than knowledge in predicting classroom behaviors when no consensus or appropriateness of beliefs are met (Pajares, 1992). Years of schooling both as a teacher and student have shaped the beliefs that inform educational practice (Thomas & Pederson, 2003). Thus, educational beliefs influence how teachers plan, make decisions for instruction, and implement changes in the classroom (Pajares). These decisions may lead to the formation of teacher personal theories.

Teacher personal theories may be influenced by experiences and beliefs (Bandura, 1986; Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000; Pajares, 1992; Prawat, 1992; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004; Thomas & Pederson, 2003). Personal theories help teachers make connections between beliefs and classroom practice leading to the development of new teaching techniques and methods (Dweck, 1996; Hong et al., 1999; McCoy, 2003; Pajares; Plucker & Runco, 1998; Zhang & Sternberg, 1998). Thus, teacher beliefs may provide a framework for classroom decisions (Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer).

Studying verbal expressions, actions, and behaviors of teachers can lead to a greater understanding of how decisions are made for educational practice based on personal and professional beliefs (Pajares, 1992). Teacher personal theory may be influenced by educational beliefs leading to the decision to implement or not implement curricular change in the classroom.

Practical Teacher Knowledge

Personal practical knowledge can be defined as the body of convictions that arise from experience, intimacy, social interactions, and traditional training, which are expressed in an individual's actions. Constructed both professionally and personally, personal practical knowledge is permeated through all experiences and actions of an individual (Clandinin, 1985). Personal practical teacher knowledge can be described as biographical, embodied in the individual as a person, and enacted through classroom practice (Clandinin, 1993). The teacher is not concerned with just the content or knowledge that is structured around traditional education programs but is situated in contextually relevant experiences (Clandinin, 1985). Every individual experiences and draws conclusions differently based on personal classroom experience (Clandinin, 1985; Clandinin & Connelly, 1986, 1990; Handal & Lauvås, 1987). The telling and retelling of stories helps teachers reflect on the meaning of the experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986).

Teachers' lives and histories are crucial in forming professional identity (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986). The educational profession cannot ignore the experiential history of the teacher, as it cannot be taught or learned in technical education programs. Personal experience becomes a way of legitimating professional practice and a resource for educators. In addition, experience can be described as the complete educational experience from pupil to educator (Clandinin, 1985; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). Hence, personal theory and practice are inseparable.

Teachers' images of the classroom materialize and expand as personal and professional experiences coalesce with each other (Clandinin, 1985). Theoretical

classroom knowledge and practical teacher knowledge combine to influence personal theory (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Handal & Lauvås, 1987). Practical teacher knowledge is learned in the classroom based on practice and experience, portraying teachers as knowledgeable persons who are composed of past experiences, present mind and body connections, and future plans and actions toward learning (Handal & Lauvås). Practical teacher knowledge is not only interested in the concepts, theories, facts, tasks, properties, and skills taught in educational programs; it is interested in what is revealed during observed classroom practices. These practices are referred to as reflective practice (Clandinin, 1985; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990).

Teachers reflect on the assignments that have worked to increase student learning and those that have not been successful. Based on practical knowledge and using personal filters, teachers decipher what curriculum should be retained and what should be altered for success in the classroom (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Reflective practice allows the teacher to synthesize technical teacher educational training with personal experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

Teacher personal theory is the integration and ever changing system of three components; personal experience, transmitted knowledge, and values. Transmitted knowledge is the experience and structure of the concepts, theories, beliefs, and language of the educational culture that is transmitted through learning. Values are strong determining elements of personal theory because teachers make judgments and decisions about what curriculum is useful. Teachers use transmitted knowledge, personal experience, and values to inform decisions for curricular change. There are an infinite number of possibilities for personal theories since individual experience differs. The

standardized educational culture allows many different influences on teacher personal theory to emerge (Handal & Lauvås, 1987). Theorizing for teachers occurs over time as new situations are encountered that question personal practical knowledge and personal theory becomes modified (Clandinin, 1993).

The Meaning of Creativity

Research has traditionally focused on who is creative, not what is creative (Plucker & Beghetto, 2004). There is no consensus as to whether creativity is located inside a person, in the actual product or outcome produced, or as the process of learning is discovered. Many misconceptions occur because a clear understanding or definition of creativity does not exist (Petrowski, 2000). Typically, these misconceptions have led to convoluted misunderstandings of creativity.

Plucker et al. (2004) discusses four typical misconceptions or myths of creativity that prevail in education. The first myth relies on the assumption that people are born to be creative with no capacity for enhancement. Although decades of research have refuted this myth, many teachers still espouse the notion that creativity is a rare trait that only certain people possess. Creativity being viewed with negative aspects of society generates a second myth. Teachers often view creative individuals as being a novelty in the classroom or a nonconformist to school rules. This misconception leads teachers to sometimes view creativity in terms of deviance and as a result shy away from fostering creative spirits. Thirdly, creativity is often viewed as a soft and fuzzy construct thus teachers may view creativity as a way to express idealism. The final myth of creativity is the belief that creativity is fostered in the group experience. Many teachers assume that

groups are more creative, which causes teachers to ignore personal needs, strengths and abilities of the individual (Plucker et al., 2004).

Creativity is described as the ability to think outside the box. Although creativity overlaps with intelligence there is much less emphasis on analytical abilities. Creativity concerns abstract problem solving and focuses on the ability of the individual to go beyond the ordinary limitations of self and environment (Sternberg, 1985; 1986). Creative people question assumptions, are sensible risk-takers, and take time to develop their own creativity (Sternberg, 1995). Theorists who study creativity recognize there are different types of creative contributions that exist in various fields. The leaders in the field often produce creative contributions. What is defined as creative by the field will be determined by the match between what the individual has to offer and the context in which the creativity is produced and valued (Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2002).

Creativity is an integral part of the educational environment and creative contributions in education are produced by teachers, in particular those who teach in elementary schools (Craft, 2000). Elementary teacher education programs require students to include art and music courses in their degree plan, whereas student teachers in the upper grades focus on virtually little if any art and music courses. Requiring mandated training in the arts allows elementary school teachers to be more flexible when using creative elements in the classroom than those who teach at the upper grades (Sternberg & Lubart, 1995).

Elementary teachers view their educational role as classroom leader and provider for the children (Craft, 2000). These teachers display creativity in a myriad of ways and processes; hence they can be defined as more creative (Sternberg et al., 2003). Since

creativity in adults is often suppressed through socialization that encourages conformity the type of creativity that emerges will depend in part on the teacher's personality and on the environmental influences where they instruct (Sternberg, 1995, 2006; Sternberg et al., 2003).

Teaching through creativity exposes the teacher to uncertainties that make it a fearful process because it involves risk and unconventional thinking which question current educational culture (Craft, 2000). The teacher should ultimately demand more of personal creativity when integrating the arts in the classroom (Cropley, 2001). This is especially difficult when schools reward safety and conformity, not risk-taking (Sternberg & Lubart, 1995). Educators should be willing to go beyond the normal educational standards and have a genuine passion for teaching and creativity. This leads teachers to design their own projects, assessments, and learning centers instead of depending on the school's standardization processes (Bleedorn, 2003). Teachers who view themselves as creative have a freedom of spirit that is not bound by the standardized educational environment (Sternberg, 1985).

Creative teachers serve as role models by allowing students the freedom to explore new ideas and expand creative processes. Providing a safe environment involves designing curriculum and testing that encourages creative thought (Bleedorn, 2003; Sternberg, 1995). Allowing ample time for students to work on the assignments is important to foster creativity. Teachers who value creativity understand that the creative process takes time and is often uncomfortable for those involved in the process (Cropley, 2001; Sternberg, 1995).

Teachers, who facilitate creativity successfully conduct classes informally, welcome outside views, allow students to choose their own topics, enjoy teaching more, and often interact with their students outside of school (Sternberg & Lubart, 1995). Designing curriculum for creativity involves understanding the needs of the whole person, becoming an owner of the project, deciding the relevance of the project, and allowing for extra time and space for learning to occur (Craft, 2000; Cropley, 2001).

This is accomplished with arts integrated lessons. Arts integration is not an add-on during a dedicated lesson but a general principle that should inform the instruction of the subject (Cropley). Creativity is a choice and can be developed. This process is realized when an individual decides to generate new ideas, analyze ideas, and promote ideas to others (Sternberg, 2006; Sternberg & Lubart, 1995). Individuals capitalize on strengths and compensate for weaknesses when using the creative process (Sternberg, 2006). Educators become self-actualized and find fulfillment when they are able to use and see positive results of creatively driven lessons (Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2001). Choosing a creative path is less about the ability of the teacher and more about the attitude of the teacher toward creativity (Craft, 2000). Teacher personal theories influenced by creativity may allow teachers to make decisions regarding arts integration enhancing curriculum instruction.

Project CREATES

Project CREATES was designed on a foundational belief that the arts are a vital student resource and can help transform teaching methods and learning. The four foundational principles of CREATES included: 1) inclusion of all learners to participate,

experience, and potentially excel in the arts; 2) an invitation for every student and teacher to participate in the project at their level of expertise, skill, or desired involvement; 3) participation in fostering positive thinking for teachers and learners; and, 4) realization that each learner is unique and respected for his/her own values and beliefs, and facilitates the ability to learn (CREATES, 2003).

The desire for equity was the heart of these principles. Equity can be described as allowing all students regardless of race, culture, gender, or socio-economic status the opportunity to participate in the art experience. Project CREATES used music and visual arts to promote learning. At the time of this study, Project CREATES was embedded in three metropolitan schools in a Midwestern state (CREATES, 2003).

Project CREATES was developed as a holistic approach to education that included the belief that the arts are important to learning. The holistic approach, whole child, believed that each individual was comprised of four parts: cognitive, body, emotional, and creative (spirit). Teachers had more opportunity to reach the whole child when all four parts are fostered. Creative spirit was the most desperately lacking in public elementary schools, and this compromised the capacity to meet every student's individual learning goals (CREATES, 2003).

The purpose of Project CREATES was to conduct research on the transformation of teaching and learning through the design and implementation of arts-integrated curriculum in three diverse metropolitan public elementary schools. The Project CREATES team consisted of graduate student researchers, professional researchers, public school teachers, public school students, Arts Resource Coaches (ARCs), academic professors, professional musicians, and various community artists (CREATES, 2003).

Teachers were provided professional development opportunities to learn various ways to infuse art into their lesson plans. Community artists attended the professional developments and were utilized to teach and expose the teachers to new forms of art. Project CREATES worked through talent development groups to identify musically gifted students and these students were provided additional resources to enhance and develop their identified talent. The resources used for talent development went beyond those which would have been accessible based on their family situations, financial backgrounds, and exposure to the arts (CREATES, 2003).

Educational Climate

Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act implemented in 2002, required national, state, and local school administrators to succumb to federal guidelines which determined curriculum in elementary schools across the United States. The emphasis was on high-stakes testing, prepackaged scripted teaching, and strict accountability all of which influence classroom practices (Keefe & Tollefson, 2003; Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2006; Price, 2003; Shepard, 2003). Teachers spent a lot of time in the classroom getting ready to give tests, teaching to the tests, or administering tests (Cameron, 2005).

Teachers are criticized or blamed by administration and the public when the students do not meet the mandatory guidelines for testing increasing anxiety of the teachers (McKean, 2001). Teachers fear they will lose jobs and increasingly teach to the test leaving little room for implementing arts integrated curricula (Price, 2003).

High-stakes testing reduces teacher instruction time with students (Cameron, 2005). This same high-stakes testing has driven the arts to the margins of the elementary schools (Zwirn & Graham, 2005). Some public schools have been forced to cut back or eliminate art and music classes from school curriculum because the emphasis is achievement on standardized tests (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2006). According to Zwirn and Graham (2005), many teachers have a desire to institute curricular changes that reach all students and help increase test scores. The teachers who have a strong knowledge base of a subject and whose beliefs are closely aligned with innovated teaching are able to consider the individual needs of each student (Brownell, Adams, Sindelar, Waldron, & Vanhover, 2006).

Arts Integration as School Reform

Arts integration can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century when progressive education was implemented in the school system. Progressive education relied on child-centered and holistic learning, which challenged students to see the relationships between the core subjects being taught. In the 1960's and 1970's, the educational culture revived the notion of arts integration when the concern for student learning shifted from a concept of achievement to experience. At this time, educators began to focus learning on the meaning that the subjects provided for the students and not rigidly on the content of the curriculum (Bresler, 1995).

Broudy and Eisner (Bresler, 1995) helped position the arts in the curriculum at this time when they demonstrated innovation and experimentation were central to the educational experience. Broudy explained that imagination, when cultivated through arts

education, provided a mechanism for understanding core curriculum (Bresler, 2002). Eisner described the arts as a way to transcend the cognitive and the affective allowing the individual to draw multiple meanings from the world (Bresler, 1995). Broudy and Eisner's claims of arts integration helped educators embrace the arts as necessary to learning (Bresler, 1995, 2002).

Arts specialists were once dominant in elementary schools but have dwindled in recent years due to school administrators focusing resources on improving test scores and remediation programs (McKean, 2001; Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006; Zwirn & Graham, 2005). The only exposure many students have with the arts is through arts integration programs (Mishook & Kornhaber). The arts used in conjunction with core subjects allow students to synthesize the knowledge of the subjects and the individual backgrounds, experiences, needs, and abilities of the students and provide a foundation for the uniqueness of each student to be reached (Bresler, 1995, 2002).

Arts integration can mean a variety of things in terms of content, resources, structures, and pedagogies (Bresler, 1995). Scholarly literature uses terms such as infusion, topics-within-disciplines, interdisciplinary, thematic approaches, holistic approaches, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, metadisciplinary, and transdisciplinary interchangeably to mean virtually the same thing in educational circles to describe arts integration (Bresler, 1995; Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006). Thus, educators are not in agreement as to what arts integration should look like and the role it should play in the educational environment (Mishook & Kornhaber).

Advocates for arts integration seek to establish a more solid role for arts integration within a mandated curriculum (Bresler, 1995; Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000).

Viewing the arts as central to core curriculum is important because all aspects of life can be linked through art when integrated with core subject innovative ways of thinking, understanding, and representing knowledge (Zwirn & Graham, 2005). Arts integration has the ability to humanize the educational experience for students and teachers (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006).

Most teachers have had little experience and exposure to the arts in traditional educational programs (McKean, 2001; Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006). Teachers who are not adequately trained in the arts may have more difficulty taking the necessary initiative to infuse the arts into core curriculum suggesting teachers may experience feelings of inadequacy and become overwhelmed when implementing arts integration (Gary, 2002; McKean; Zimmerman, 1997).

Teachers can learn to collaborate with artists and other teachers to successfully integrate the arts in the classroom (Bresler, 1995). Collaboration involves the teacher and artist working together to develop the curriculum, plan the integrated lesson, and focus on topics, ideas, and issues shared between core subjects and the arts. Developing the curriculum engages discussions of concepts and skills the teachers want students to learn (Anonymous, 2002; Bresler, 1995). The discussion should be ongoing between the artist and teacher to ensure that each understands the key concepts. Continual planning and reflection in collaborative groups help educators gain the depth and complexity of the key concepts needed for higher level thinking to occur (Anonymous).

Professional Development Experience

Professional development can be defined as the opportunity for educators to engage in decision-making, inquiry, reflection, community service, etc. (Risko & Bromley, 2001). Professional development should be conducted in an environment wherein teachers are able to network and overcome educational and political pressures that cause negative disintegration within the educational organization (Solomon, 1998). Thus, professional development becomes the key component to providing continuing education to public school teachers following completion of their required academic degree or certification requirements and thereby can provide teachers with the resources needed to learn how to successfully use arts integration with core lesson plans (Solomon).

Learning to teach is a lifelong professional endeavor requiring continual training and work experience (Eisner, 1998). Teachers should not be content with traditional training experiences as the only means for professional training. Educators should be willing to learn new ways of thinking and reaching students as the profession continues to evolve with the addition of new teaching strategies, techniques, and inventions. Promotion of possibilities, openness, opportunities, and a willingness to expand ideas about effective teaching through professional development experiences are not only helpful but essential (Ayers, 2001). Every successful profession continually evolves, including education. Expanding professional knowledge requires participation in learning experiences which involve discovering new techniques and strategies (Eisner, 1998; Gardner, 2000).

Co-learning occurs when teachers are positioned with other educators and work in teams in a learning environment. The most productive co-learning experience for teachers

is professional development. The traditional approach to professional development employed by many schools includes an emphasis on skill building and performance. A new approach, collaboration, suggests that multiple tasks for engagement should be emphasized with the goal of authentic learning and co-planning experiences. In addition, professional development may include evaluation through direct observation of teacher classroom practices (Eisner, 1998; Lambert, 1998).

Teachers should be provided with multiple opportunities to learn and stretch their own understandings of the relevant materials through interaction with other educators (Gardner, 2000). Professional development should be treated as an occasion to conduct personal research that facilitates growth (Eisner, 2002). An outlet for teachers to engage in the shared decision making, inquiry, dialogue, reflection, meditation, community service, peer coaching, and workshops is provided by this process (Lambert, 1998). Teachers who are willing to participate in learning experiences provide positive learning interaction models for other teachers, administrators, and students (Gardner). An individual can only be considered an experienced teacher when he/she has practiced a variety of skills, learned new processes, and expanded the knowledge base acquired through traditional educational opportunities (Eisner, 2002).

Attending professional development experiences can help teachers learn to use both external and internal resources and expose the myths surrounding creativity. Professional development is essential for teachers because it provides opportunities to develop creativity through immediate feedback from other teachers, allows collaboration on lesson plan development with other teachers and artists, offers experiential imagery experiences to see creativity as students would engage in the lesson, and helps frame and

reframe current classroom practices to include successful arts integration lessons (Craft, 2000). These sessions can provide a fostering environment that allows for the understanding and use of the five principles of learning organizations to explore personal theories.

The Five Principles of Learning Organizations

Examining and explaining the five principles of learning organizations (personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking) provides educators a foundation to explore personal growth and development (Senge, 1990). As teachers begin to build skills based on these five principles the educational climate is permeated and change is fostered (Lyneis & Fox-Melanson, 2001). Teachers using this approach are more likely to use curriculum that is learner-centered, interdisciplinary, and relevant to student learning (Lyneis, 2000).

Personal mastery can be defined as having a special level of proficiency in education (Senge, 1990). Personal mastery goes beyond the competence and skills of the teacher and helps them see the educational system more clearly (Nissilä, 2005). Teachers commit to becoming masters in education by committing to lifelong learning wherein they continually clarify and deepen personal visions, focus energy, and sees reality objectively.

Mental models may be defined as deeply ingrained assumptions, generalization, and images that influence an understanding of the world (Senge, 1990). Individuals make decisions about behavior based on these models (Forrester, 1996). How teachers view

education and take action is determined by the mental models (Nissilä, 2005). Classroom behavior may be influenced by teacher mental models (Forrester, 1996; Senge).

Building shared vision involves unearthing a sense of commonality that permeates through the field (Senge, 1990). The process of building a shared vision generates a sense of ownership among the participants in the organization (Fleischer, 2006). Teachers build shared vision by committing to the vision of education while continually developing their personal visions of education.

Team learning has three dimensions pertinent to the field of education. First, individuals in the team should think about the complex issues that are present in the educational culture. Secondly, there is a need to coordinate the actions of the entire team for learning to occur. Finally, the members of the team should understand their role of educator on the team as well as their role as individual educator (Senge, 1990). Teachers on a team should learn how to think through complex issues while discovering dysfunctional patterns that foster resentment and defensiveness (Fleischer, 2006). Individual skills of each teacher should be collectively discussed and utilized to ensure the standards in the educational environment are being met for success to occur in team learning (Senge).

Systems thinking is the final principle that integrates the five principles mentioned above into a coherent body for theory and practice by providing the framework for seeing the interrelationships of the parts. The forces that shape behavior and lead to change can be explored through the principle of systems thinking (Senge et al., 1994; Forrester, 1994, 1999; Richmond, 1991). Understanding how various systems are connected is imperative as jobs continue to grow in complexities (Richmond).

When curricular change is based on the systems thinking approach to personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team learning, teachers become active participants and help shape the educational climate. They accomplish this by providing a foundation for identifying unique parts of each relationship, describing the changes in the patterns, understanding the underlying structures existing in any relationship, and reflecting on individual values of education (Senge, 1990). The Iceberg Model is used pictorially to describe how the five principles work together to develop the whole (see Figure 1).

The Iceberg Model

The Iceberg Model identifies events, patterns of behavior, underlying structures, and mental models that exist for individuals (Senge, 1990: Sheetz & Yates, 2002). The premise behind this model is the things occurring and visible to the observer are only the tip of the iceberg. The foundation of the iceberg is often unseen, thus often pictured below the water line. Furthermore, the foundation of the iceberg is what supports the entire structure, influencing how events are constructed (Amorim, 2001; Sheetz & Yates; Shibley, 2001).

The events are the interactions easily observed by others. Patterns of behavior are the constantly changing interactions seen through the events as they are occurring. The individual who is observing the interactions often anticipates these patterns. The underlying structures are important as they describe and identify the rules and policies influencing the behaviors and events. Underlying structures can be defined as the root causes creating or driving the patterns. Finally, the mental models are the assumptions

and possible theories not typically discussed by the individuals although they guide the everyday interactions (Amorim, 2001; Sheetz & Yates, 2002; Shibley, 2001).

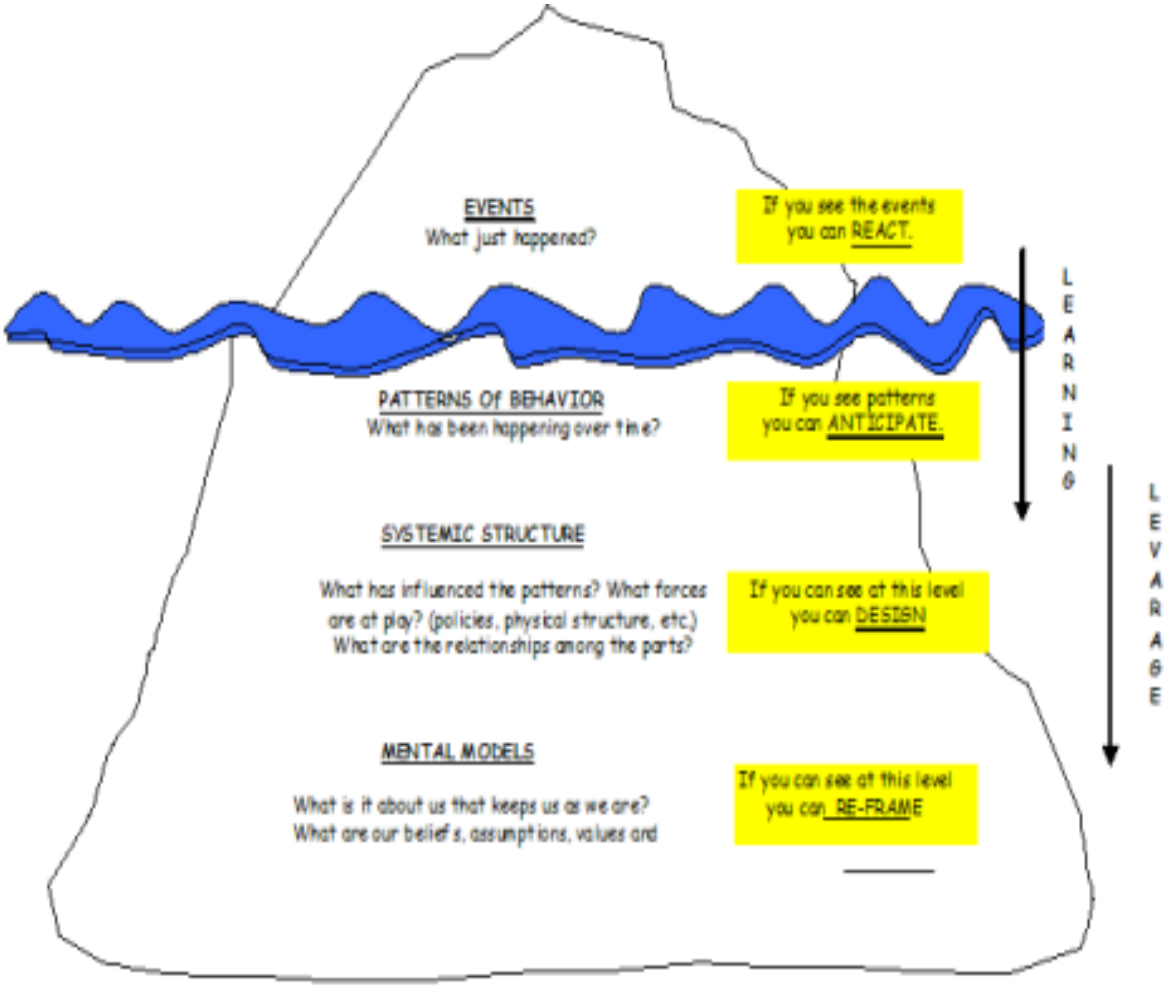

Figure 1: Iceberg Model Adapted from David Jolliffe presentation, Retrieved May 10, 2006 from http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/ned/files/links/2006_Presentatio_1.doc

Along with these four areas of interactions, the principles of learning and leverage play an integral role in determining human behaviors seen and unseen by others in the interaction. Learning occurs when observations are made and the individuals involved in the process begin to discuss the events observed. Leverage recognizes the patterns of behavior influencing the decisions being made by the individual. Leverage is most

effective when it gets to the core of the individual and accesses the assumptions made by the individual. Assumptions guide personal theories in an effort to gain an understanding and to change ingrained practices when they are incorrectly guided (Amorim, 2001; Sheetz & Yates, 2002; Shibley, 2001).

Viewing education through this model might provide a clearer picture by establishing educators as classroom managers. Teachers are incessantly engaged in the organizational culture of education and confronted with the desire to not only maintain but improve teaching techniques. The five principles of the learning organization is one way to potentially understand classroom interaction and curricular change as teachers are challenged to refine skills (Lyneis, 2000).

Summary

Many perspectives exist regarding teacher beliefs, personal practical knowledge, and creativity. The lack of clarification of what creativity is or how it is developed is cause for constant debate resulting in many teacher misconceptions. Understanding how personal theory develops provides insight into the influences of beliefs, personal practical knowledge, and the personal meaning of creativity for teachers. Teacher practical knowledge is obtained by instruction and observation in the classroom as well as personal experiences outside the classroom. Teachers evaluate and reflect on the obtained information and alter personal theory and curriculum as needed.

Teaching is a lifelong professional endeavor that requires continual training to make educators successful. One of the most comprehensive resources available to teachers is professional development. This process allows teachers to collaborate, mentor,

learn, discuss issues, and receive instruction in processes that are pertinent to their practical knowledge in a non-challenging environment.

The five principles of learning organizations (personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking) provide educators a foundation on which to build skills and implement change. Teachers using these principles tend to initiate learner-centered curriculum that is interdisciplinary in nature and more relevant to student learning providing the student with a user friendly type of instruction.

The Iceberg Model was discussed based on the premise that all things that occur and are observed are only the tip of the iceberg. The underlying support structure of the iceberg is submerged below the water line. Hence, the influence of how events are constructed is not always visible or observable.

This study will attempt to understand how teacher personal theory influences arts integration into the core curriculum while working in a standardized environment. Qualitative methodology, a method used to understand specific circumstances when little empirical research is available, will aid in this investigation. Identifying and understanding the influences on teachers personal theory are important to investigate as it can help educators make decisions for arts integration, ultimately leading to sustainability of arts integration in the public schools.

Chapter III

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to understand how teacher personal theory influences arts integration into core curriculum while working a standardized educational environment. In order to accomplish this, the qualitative approach of ethnography was employed. This chapter describes the three principles guiding the study, the research design, and credibility as important components of ethnographic methodology. Following this discussion, researcher procedures including a discussion on the selection of the sites, participants, methods for data collection, and analysis are presented.

Ethnography

The goal of qualitative research is to understand specific circumstances and how and why things happen in a complex world (Chambers, 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Qualitative research intersects various disciplines, fields, and subject matters to describe routine and problematic meanings and moments in individual lives. Qualitative methods researchers attempt to gain a clearer understanding of the subject being studied through varieties of methodological principles including the three principles of ethnographic research; naturalism, understanding, and discovery. Thus, qualitative research may be especially appropriate to use when a study, such as understanding teachers personal

theories, has little empirical research from which to draw information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The form of qualitative research employed in this study was ethnography.

The routine ways individuals make sense of the world in everyday interactions can be systematically studied using an ethnographic approach. Ethnography focuses on the meanings produced by individuals from their own perspectives in the natural setting (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). Three methodological principles: naturalism, understanding, and discovery, provide the rationale behind choosing an ethnographic approach to data collection (Genzuk, 2003). The principle of naturalism considers individual behavior captured in the participants' natural environment and not in an artificial setting in order to authenticate the data collected. The principle of understanding refers to the process of explaining human actions in relation to the culture in which the participants are based. The final principle, discovery, can be described as the research process where data emerges and changes over the course of the study based on the interactions of the participants with the researcher (Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993).

Three Principles Guiding the Study

Studying a phenomenon in the natural setting, called naturalism, is important because individuals derive meanings from their contexts as much as they do themselves. In addition, observing participants in the natural setting allows the researcher to consider the context in relation to the social events and processes being observed (Chambers, 2003; Genzuk, 2003). Behavior is best understood by considering the relationship to the

time and place that generated, embraced, and supported it (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The investigator engaged in the naturalistic environment does not confine attention to a few variables of interest or ignore the setting of the environment but rather takes into account all of the factors and influences in that context. Becoming a part of the surroundings minimizes the degree of the investigator's disturbance in relation to the phenomenon studied. Thus, the effect of the outside observer on the participants' behavior is minimized because the researcher has first-hand contact with the participants in their environment (Chambers; Genzuk; Lincoln & Guba). For this study, the researcher observed and interviewed participants in the classroom, school, and professional development settings; the natural settings for teachers.

The principle of understanding involves recognizing and validating the different ways particular groups and individuals orient themselves to the world in order to communicate across cultural boundaries (Rubin & Rubin). Culture is present when small and/or large groups share language and develop symbolic meanings to represent the group (Chambers, 2003). Learning to explore these words and symbols with richer connotative meanings for the people investigated provides the investigator with a depth of understanding legitimizing the group's behavior (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Thus, behavior is learned collectively and provides people with rules regarding the proper operation of the group in the social world (Rubin & Rubin). The researcher has to learn the culture of the group being studied to produce valid explanations for the behavior of the members (Emerson et al., 1995; Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson). One cannot assume that he/she understood another person's perspective based on ones own experience, rather the cultural meanings of the interaction

being observed should be documented by the investigator (Chambers, Emerson et al.; Hammersly & Atkinson, Rubin & Rubin). The researcher is not required to diminish or replace their own cultural values with those of the group but a level of self-awareness is imperative to maintaining the integrity of the data collected (Rubin & Rubin). To meet the principle of understanding in this study, the comments provided by the participants and the field notes collected by the researcher were interpreted to describe the cultural interactions of the teachers within the standardized educational environment.

Researchers conducting ethnographic inquiry have a general interest in the phenomenon investigated but are not limited by testing of explicit hypotheses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). Following the principle of discovery allows the investigator to approach a study without a set of hypotheses based on assumptions and the true meaning of the group is exposed. A number of possibilities to describe the interaction exist in the beginning stages of data collection. As the research proceeds and analysis occurs the focus on the phenomenon is narrowed, sharpened, or even changed dramatically from the original design (Genzuk; Hammersly & Atkinson). Developing the theoretical ideas that frame the descriptions and explanations of the subjects is regarded as a valuable outcome not a precondition for this form of research (Chambers, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Genzuk). In this study, the principle of discovery led to a slight revision of research questions and a modification of the overall research design as the main themes emerged from teacher comments. Although an initial research design was employed, the researcher did not engage in a set of hypothesis and assumptions to describe the teachers in this study (Genzuk; Hammersly & Atkinson). Through data collection and analysis an infinite number of possibilities for structured

themes relating to teachers personal theories influencing curricular change emerged and the researcher used the principle of discovery to modify the design when appropriate.

Utilization of a Team Approach to Ethnographic Research

In this study, a team approach to collecting ethnographic research, known as team ethnography, was employed due to the on-going commitment with Project CREATES and the schools. Angroniso and dePerez (2003) discusses the importance of using a research team in the field of education due to number of data collection opportunities and key issues that influence the culture. Data generated from team ethnography is complementary even when different researchers are involved because of the commitment of the organization or group conducting the research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1993; Lassiter, 2005). Utilizing a team approach allows more data collection to occur (Barab, Thomas, Dodge, Squire, & Newell, 2004; Woods, Boyle, Jeffrey, & Troman, 2000). For this study, three graduate research assistants worked together to gather the interview data from the teachers allowing for more comprehensive, in depth data collection (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser, 2002).

Change in the research design is expected during the ethnographic research process. There is a constant interplay between what one expects to find and what emerges from the data collected. The list of topics discussed moves the focus of the research from formal to substantive and generic to topical as new information is evaluated in the environment studied (Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). The researcher begins the field-work phase with general areas of interest and refines these to more precise categories as interaction occurs between the researcher and participants

throughout the course of the study. This is not done uni-directionally, but rather moves back and forth between the two analytic modes (Hammersly & Atkinson). The research team helps ensure the relevance of the research questions and the key issues and priorities to investigate (Averill, 2006; Lassiter, 2005). In this study, the researcher and research team worked together to refine the questions as the study progressed. Bi-weekly research team meetings were instrumental in the development of the questions (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser, 2002; Woods et al., 2000).

Another issue that shapes the ethnographic research design is the selection of the research setting and participants. The researcher or research team typically focuses on a community and selects informants who are believed to understand the activities of the community (Chambers, 2003; GAO, 2003; Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). The selection of a research site may emerge before the research problems are developed and is defined as opportunistic research. When this occurs, the collection of preliminary data often plays a key role in the development of research questions. Project CREATES had an on-going commitment to the schools, thus the researcher worked independently as well as in a research team for data collection and analysis. Working in ethnographic teams permitted data collection among more participants to take place in the natural setting leading to greater amounts of data collection to occur when the environment has many opportunities for research (Woods et al., 2000). A key concern for the researcher is identifying members of the community who are representative of the culture and is directly linked to the development of analytical ideas produced from the data collected (Angrosino & dePerez, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson). Using a team ethnographic approach to identify key members of the community allowed for variability

of the participants leading to the inclusion of teachers who might not have been selected without input from the research team (Averill, 2006; Lassiter, 2005). Choosing participants using a purposeful team approach allowed for typical, unusual, and maximum variation of the teachers to transpire (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The issue of access presents a problem commonly encountered by individuals conducting ethnographic data collection. The problem of access does not refer to just the physical entry into a setting but allows the researcher to penetrate the community being studied to obtain more truthful accounts of the phenomenon. This can be done through negotiation of the setting and the individuals who help control the environment and must be in the forefront of the researchers mind as constant and explicit discussion with the participants must occur. The researcher must be aware of the different roles he/she must negotiate to collect data (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, the issue of access was less a factor for the researcher and research team since there was already an established relationship between Project CREATES and the schools.

Studying human behavior using a non-human instrument does not provide as much information because certain characteristics unique to humans add to the desirability to collect data in the natural setting (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These characteristics include responsiveness, adaptability, holistic emphasis, knowledge base expansion, processual immediacy, opportunities for clarification and summarization, and the opportunity to explore atypical or idiosyncratic responses. The team worked together to understand the research experiences of each team member (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser, 2002). In this study, the researchers were utilized as the

primary tool for data collection and analysis following the team ethnographic approach (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993).

Responsiveness refers to the ability of the investigator to interact with the situation by responding to personal and environmental cues existing in the context studied (Lincoln & Guba). The researcher takes notes and/or asks interview questions when the opportunity arises and adapts the information by collecting information about multiple factors from multiple sources simultaneously (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Holistic emphasis permits the researcher to grasp the instantaneous elements occurring in the natural environment by viewing the pieces of the interactions as a coherent whole leading to the development of a complete story. Thus, the researcher is able to describe and explore many things occurring at the same time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba). Knowledge base expansion refers to the investigators ability to incorporate the non-verbal cues with common-sense to form an understanding of the social and organizational settings (Lincoln & Guba). This allows the researchers to expand subject knowledge to build insight into describing the phenomenon to others. The processing of data as soon as it is available to generate and test hypothesis while collecting data is referred to as processual immediacy and can only occur from the interaction with the researcher and the subjects. Asking questions of participants clarifies analysis leading to greater data credibility (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2003; Lincoln & Guba). Finally, opportunities arise for the researcher to summarize data, apply feedback to participants, receive clarification and correction from participants when necessary, and discard atypical or idiosyncratic responses that do not explain the investigated phenomenon (Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson, Lincoln & Guba). The

characteristics of humans as the primary source of data collection provided a unique understanding and perspective to data collections and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; GAO; 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson; Lincoln & Guba). Working as a researcher individually and on the research team allowed the human experiences of me and the other team member as data collectors to be discussed (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser, 2002).

A team ethnographic approach was used in this study to understand how teacher personal theories influence decisions for curricular change. The research questions evolved and emerged. Project CREATES schools provided a strategic venue for conducting research (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). The teachers chosen in this study were purposefully selected to represent the voice of the community studied. A total cultural immersion of the ethnographer was impossible due to the nature of the educational system that has a beginning and ending time and the recognition that teachers have other roles outside of the schools that the researcher could not possibly study (Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson). Data were collected from a variety of sources and occurred during scheduled intervals with the teachers. The data included for analysis were interviews, observations, and field notes. Data were collected in as pure a form as possible by the researcher not adding initial interpretations or assumptions, biases, or values to the data collection. A variety of strategies such as interviews, observations, and field notes was used and the categories for analysis were not defined prior to data collection. Instead, the emergence of themes transpired as the members of the study articulated their views during interviews, observations, and other document analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Hammersly & Atkinson; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Studying teachers who worked with Project CREATES allowed the participants to define the

complex issues that were embedded in the multiple educational systems, explore the many factors associated with teachers personal theories in order to understand them more comprehensively, and tap into the local view points of the teachers to understand how teachers personal theories influenced curricular change (Chambers, 2003; GAO, 2003; Genzuk, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson).

Procedural Considerations of Ethnographic Research

The issues of researcher bias and data credibility are important to discuss when ethnographic research is conducted. Research bias' refers to the inevitability of subjectivity to transpire when qualitative research methods are utilized. Subjectivity can be defined as the personal experiences, judgments, and feelings of the researcher or research team potentially influencing data collection and analysis (Armstrong, 1986; MacCoun, 1998; Mehra, 2002). In contrast, data credibility can be defined as removing the emphasis of investigator subjectivity to objective data analysis where techniques are used to ensure the findings and interpretations are dependent on the data themselves. Lincoln & Guba (1995) recommend a variety of strategies to ensure data credibility.

Understanding how one's personal interests influences the research conducted can be described as the beginning stage of researcher bias (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Mehra, 2002). Many individuals study subjects based on the personal history like class, race, religion, gender, historical position, and self-interest. Researchers choose a subject because they have a personal interest in the subject (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mehra). The researcher in this study was interested in the subject by nature of working with Project CREATES research team. Since the research team had a substantial interest in describing

the influences on teachers in the classroom, the research acknowledged and monitored the potential biases throughout the course of the study. One way to monitor researcher bias is through recoding personal reactions in a separate notebook to deal with the emotions encountered during data collection (Mehra). For this study, the researcher kept a separate notebook, from the field notebook, to write descriptions following interactions with the teachers and to document the research team meeting discussions where emotionality and personal experiences were often discussed. Maintaining this notebook, as well as sharing reactions to data collection during team meetings, helped eliminate potential researcher bias in this study. Finally, discussing emerging trends in the data analysis with members of the research team enriched the data analysis and helped limit biased researcher interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba; Mehra). Constant reflection and analysis allowed the researcher and research team to identify personal opinions, values, and beliefs that could have over-shadowed the actual data credibility.

All field notes which contained concrete descriptions of the classroom environments were placed in one notebook prior to them being word-processed to maintain data integrity. No initial interpretation of the original field notes occurred in the notebook. Interviews were all digitally tape-recorded and word-processed transcriptions were completed to ensure exactness of the data. The digital archive was kept in a location separate from the data after transcription. Data was interpreted after transcription, which further focused the thematic exploration on the data, rather than the collection. In other words, it facilitated a focus on what was collected rather than who collected it. Utilization of the word processed documents increased the dependability of the conclusions of the

study by demonstrating a progression of thoughts, ideas, and themes throughout the observational and data analysis periods (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Triangulation was used to increase credibility of data analysis. Data-source triangulation can be described as the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of field research (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). There are a number of kinds of triangulation that exist. One method referred to as technique triangulation occurred in this study when more than one method of data (observations and interviews) was collected in a range of environments (classrooms, meetings, professional developmental, and planning sessions) limiting the existence of serious threats of credibility. Data produced from different environments were compared as a basis for checking the interpretations used in this analysis. Using an ethnographic approach made it possible to assess the validity of inferences between the indicators and the concepts by examining the same concept from observations, interviews, and other relevant documents (Hammersly & Atkinson).

A second form of triangulation occurred when the participant accounts were considered for credibility through member checking (Angronsino & dePerez, 2003; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1993). Member checking is defined as both an informal and formal means for testing the categories, interpretations, and conclusions presented by the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Research done in collaboration with others is particularly useful in educational environments where member checking can emerge (Gerstl-Pepin & Gunzenhauser, 2002). The member checks arose during conversations with members of the study. In team ethnography, constant member checking reinforces

credibility of the study and the quality of data collected (Gerstl-Pepin & Gunzenhauser; Lincoln & Guba). Providing a written analysis of the data to Project CREATES members and teachers throughout the writing process helped ensured credibility of the data was maintained. Member checks allowed members of the research team to provide feedback on data interpretation and verified the accuracy of the interpreted meaning. Member checks strengthened the credibility of the research by allowing the participants to correct any errors of fact and/or interpretation by the researcher as well as providing additional information relevant to the study (Angronsino & dePerez; Hammersly & Atkinson; Lincoln & Guba).

The on-going relationship of Project CREATES, the research team, and the schools contributed to the credibility of the results. Working directly with the teachers through Project CREATES helped establish good rapport and build relationships and trust with the teachers. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility of the outcome of the data analysis is dependent upon the extent which trust has been established.

Researcher Procedures

The researcher's role in this study consisted of involvement on the CREATES research team as an individual researcher and in collaborating for team ethnography. I participated in data collection by observing and interviewing the majority of the teachers for this study. I met with the teachers to conduct interviews, observe classroom interactions, and observe teachers attending professional development experiences to gain a greater understanding into the professional lives of the teachers. I talked to the teachers on various occasions, observed the teachers networking with each other, and observed the

interactions between the teachers and the artists. The data collected in this study by the researcher spanned over a calendar year lending to the credibility of the research. Prolonged engagement is defined as the investment of sufficient time to achieve a certain purpose, learn about the culture, test for misinformation produced by participants or the research, and build trust leading to an increase in credibility of the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

An ongoing research commitment to the teachers existed thus various amounts of time were spent with each teacher based on the availability of the teacher for observation, the teachers commitment to Project CREATES, and the use of artists in the classroom. My role in the schools was a non-participant observer, specifically observing the participating classroom teachers and their interactions. I was not there to take detailed field notes on students, either individually or as a whole to document individual student performance, rather it was important to document the interaction between the students and teachers leading to changes in curriculum. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe observation as a non-participant as only having one role to play in the environment; researcher. In this study, I did not participate in the lesson planning or delivery of professional development activities or lessons in the classroom, but was a participant by the nature of the researcher's role. I recorded the interactions in which I participated and observed by taking detailed field notes. During the observations, I sat in the back of the classroom or professional development sessions, to take field notes for at least twenty minute intervals multiple times, and did so for each teacher who participated in this study. When students inquired about my presence in the classroom environment, I stated that I was only there to take notes in order to describe what was going on in the

classroom (Angrosino & dePerez, 2003; Lincoln & Guba). The research processes was completely overt; the teachers and school were fully aware of the reasons the researcher was in the school and classroom (Lincoln & Guba). Additionally, because CREATES research staff were frequently in the classroom, there was a familiarity on the part of the students, and less likelihood of environmental interference. Reflective field notes were written during the observations, following interviews, and during informal meetings with the teachers (Emerson et al., 1995; Hamersley & Atkinson, 1993; Lincoln & Guba; Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Understanding of the research team's involvement and impact on the environment in this study was important to document as a form of team ethnography (Angronsino & dePerez, 2003). Data generated in research teams by different researchers is often complementary (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1993). More ground can be covered, more cross-checking can occur, and wider perspectives can be described when members of a research team work together (Woods et al., 2000). The three graduate research assistants worked together to gather the interview data from the teachers allowing for more comprehensive, in depth data collection and the avoidance of potential observer bias (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser).

The research team conducted bi-weekly meetings to gain a clearer understanding of what was occurring in the schools. The research team consisted of two Principal Investigators, the Professional Development Coordinator, the Project Manager, three graduate students, including myself, and two Arts Resource Coaches (ARCs). The research team meetings were instrumental in informative collaboration and constant comparison of the data analyzed (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser, 2002; Woods et al.,

2000). The team worked closely to develop a comprehensive understanding of the emerging themes, as well as constant comparisons of the data (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser; Woods et al.). The team worked together to understand the research experiences of each team member (Gerstl-Pipen & Gunzenhauser).

Research done in collaboration with others is particularly useful in educational environments where member checking can emerge (Gerstl-Pepin & Gunzenhauser, 2002). Member checking is defined as both an informal and formal means for testing the categories, interpretations, and conclusions presented by the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The member checks can arise during conversations with members of the study. In team ethnography, constant member checking reinforces credibility of the study and the quality of data collected (Gerstl-Pepin & Gunzenhauser; Lincoln & Guba).

Selecting Research Sites

Three public elementary schools associated with Project CREATES for the integration of arts into core curriculum were purposefully selected for this study. The district where these schools were located has fifty-seven elementary schools, fifteen middle schools and nine high schools. In order to maintain confidentiality of the schools involved in CREATES, random names have been assigned; School A, School B, and School C (CREATES, 2003).

Since Project CREATES existed in all three schools and many of the services were available to the teachers including professional and talent development groups, school researchers, and community artists resulting in a blending of resources, the researcher purposefully elected to treat the participating teachers as an aggregate, rather

than exploring data on a “by school” basis. Taking this approach to sampling all three schools, allowed the researcher to gather as much information as possible to detail any specifics that might arise from teachers given rise to the uniqueness of each context investigated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although all three schools where teachers were sampled were a part of the same school district, the site-based differences in each school allowed for broader theme development and eliminated the potential to focus on a singular school culture and environment. This in turn, expanded the potential for the generalization of generated themes.

The first school investigated, School A, had a mixed population of students with a large representation (approximately 50%) of Hispanic students. This school was opened in the late 1990s as a result of two elementary schools merging. School A was the largest Project CREATES participant school with over 1000 students and 60 staff, over 50 of whom are teachers. School A was targeted by Project CREATES because it was classified as an at-risk school. The large population of the students using the federally funded lunch program supported the school’s reports of students having high levels of poverty. The dynamics of this environment were constantly changing due to size and the degree of student influx, as well as the quantity of substitute teachers and new teaching assignments. The ability to teach effectively was challenged as teachers were reassigned to new classrooms. Reassignment occurred, according to the schools web-site, due to increases in special populations, English as a Second Language (ESL), Special Education classes, or shifts in student enrollment.

Another notable characteristic of this school site were the challenges associated with the large Hispanic student population. Culturally this may have caused some

teachers anxiety. Often teachers had not received multicultural populations training from traditional formal education programs. Students from diverse backgrounds and their teachers held differing opinions regarding eye contact, personal space, and verbal communication. The result dictated teachers spending extra instructional time on rules and behavioral issues as discussed by the teachers (CREATES, 2003).

School A was affected by the large number of transfers that occurred during the school year. School boundaries included the various community shelters serving students and their families who have been abused, neglected, or are living in poverty. Students from the shelters tended to be more transitional, and were more sporadic in attendance patterns, thus causing the school's average daily attendance and average daily membership to fluctuate dramatically during the course of the academic year. Teachers might have a student for as little as one day. These students spent the majority of the day talking to counselors, connecting with community resources, and completing assessment tests. This challenged the teachers to become flexible in their infusion of the arts due to the changing classroom dynamics (CREATES, 2003).

School B, the longest duration Project CREATES school, had a student population which was over 90% African-American. This was a mid-size school with about 300 students and 20 staff, primarily certified personnel. The 2004-2005 school year started with School B integrating another elementary school into its population when an "at-risk" elementary school was closed. This assimilation in student population caused some anxiety for the teachers as they had little access and low levels of familiarity with the immediate surrounding community. Additionally, most of the parents had never been involved with the arts in a formal way. Some maneuvering on the part of CREATES

helped the parents understand the importance of arts infusion in their child's learning processes. Teachers reported struggling with maintaining cultural sensitivity in this school (CREATES, 2003).

Despite the struggles at School B, it was the first school to become totally immersed as a Project CREATES school. The principal required all teachers to participate in Project CREATES. This requirement caused some difficulties following the Project CREATES model, which enveloped participation of teachers by invitation. By mandating that all teachers used arts infusion the principal changed the model of the project. This total immersion caused some conflict for the project team as well. Since the model of Project CREATES was constantly emerging, the team worked hard with School B to ensure that the teachers were not forced to participate but chose to infuse arts based on the merits of the outcomes (CREATES, 2003).

School C was a more recent addition as a Project CREATES school. The student population was primarily Caucasian (64%). This was considered a mid-sized school with an estimated 300 students and 20 staff. The poverty level of this school increased while the behavioral problems decreased in the past few years. School C was viewed by the district as a desirable school and open transfer policies encouraged a regular influx of students not included in the demarcated boundaries. Very few students were outbound transfers. Test scores for the students remained above average for several years. The school web-site reported teacher attendance at this school was very high causing fewer substitute teachers to be required.

Although most staff members did not live in the surrounding neighborhoods, they nurtured relationships with their student's families. Several teachers completed home

visits for their students every year and are rarely turned away by families. Most patrons of School C appreciated the feeling that education was a collaborative effort which required a positive existing relationship between the home and the school. Administration at School C encouraged parents and grandparents to volunteer and support the school while engaging in various activities and field trips (CREATES, 2003).

Although the three schools had differing class sizes, the data collected on the teachers did not appear to show differences in the types of arts integration experiences that were conducted in the classroom. Class size and cultural demographics did not seem to influence teacher personal theories for arts integration.

Participant Selection

During the 2004-2005 school years, sixty-two teachers participated in Project CREATES. Of the participants, 56 were female and 6 were male. Although sixty-two teachers participated in Project CREATES, not all demographic data were available at the time of this study.

The total population of Project CREATES teachers averaged 11.42 years of teaching experience. The range of years in the profession was from 1 to 36. Project CREATES teachers had 1 to 33 years teaching at the same school with the average tenure being 6 ½ years. The participating teachers held various degrees including 18 teachers holding Baccalaureate degrees, 17 teachers held a Master degree, and 2 teachers with Doctoral degrees. The Project CREATES team worked with six National Board Certified teachers while three other teachers were in the process of completing their certifications. Twenty-five Project CREATES teachers had participated in some form of private arts

lessons. The average training for art lessons such as piano, drama, dance, etc. was 4 ½ years as reported by the teachers.

A purposeful sample was drawn from the total population of the Project CREATES teachers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Sixteen teachers were chosen for the sample constituting 25.8% of the Project CREATES teaching staff. The participants were purposefully selected from the pool of teachers who had been involved with Project CREATES at some point in the program. The researcher, along with members of the research team, purposefully chose teachers using various criteria including; willingness of the teachers to participate in an additional interview, availability of the teacher to be observed during professional development experiences, desirability of the teacher to discuss arts integration in the classroom, and accessibility of the researcher to view collaboration lessons. Since the researcher was assigned to School A, had a prolonged engagement with the teachers, and a majority of the Project CREATES teachers worked at the school, eleven teachers were chosen from this school. Along with these teachers, input from the research team led to the sampling of five other teachers from the other two schools; two from School B and three from School C. The researcher chose cases that provided typical, unusual, and maximum variation to occur among the teachers (Lincoln & Guba). Pseudonyms were given to the participants to help preserve confidentiality and foster greater expression. The teachers were given assigned names to match the school where they taught.

Basic demographic data was provided for each respondent in Table 1. The demographic data was obtained from Project archives and included gender, age, race, school, grade assigned, degree with National Board Certification, years at the current

school, total years teaching, years working with Project CREATES, and formal arts training.

Table 1: Demographics of Respondents

Respondent	Age	Race	School	Grade Assigned	Degree/National Board Certification	Total Years at School	Total Years Teaching	Years working with Project CREATES	Formal Art Training
Ms. A1	34	NA	A	5	M	2	6	2	Y
Ms. A2	37	C	A	1/7	B	11	12	4	Y
Ms. A3	46	C	A	2	B	11	17	2	Y
Ms. A4	31	C	A	P	I	6	6	1	N
Ms. A5	0	H	A	4/E	B	3	4	2	N
Ms. A6	25	C	A	0	B	3	3	2	N
Ms. A7	40	C	A	0	B	6	17	2	Y
Mr. A8	36	H	A	5/E	B	7	7	2	N
Ms. A9	40+	C	A	4	C	10+	15+	3	Y
Ms. A10	51	C	A	5	B	4	16	3	Y
Ms. A11	47	C	A	9	I	9	9	4	Y
Ms. B1	34	C	B	4	B	9	10	3	Y
Ms. B2	46	AA	B	9	B	2	3	2	Y
Ms. C1	58	C	C	8	M	33	35	4	Y
Ms. C2	46	C	C	P	B	2	8	2	Y
Ms. C3	33	C	C	3	N	9	11	4	N

Note: Codes are as follows: Name* (Pseudonym used), Age (0=No age given, 2=20-29, 3=30-39, 4=40-49, 5=50-59, 6=60-69, 7=70-79, 8=80-89, 9=90-99), Race (AA=African American, C=Caucasian, H=Hispanic, NA=Native American), School (A, B, C), Grade assigned (P=Pre-Kindergarten, E=English as a Second Language, 0=Kindergarten, 1=1st, 2=2nd, 3=3rd, 4=4th, 5=5th, 6=6th, 7=Special Education, 8=Art, 9=Music), Years teaching experience (01-40), Degree/National Board Certification (B=Bachelor, C=Bachelor w/certification, I=Bachelor in process cert, M=Master, W=Master in process cert, N=Master w/certification, D=Doctorate, Z=Doctorate w/certification, Y=Doctorate in process cert), Formal Arts Training (Y=Yes, N=No).

Prior to data collection, qualitative interview questions (Appendix A) were developed to understand how teacher personal theories influenced arts integration into

core curriculum while working in a standardized environment. The data collection using these specific research questions was conducted in 2005 after the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained (Appendix B).

Interview Process

Qualitative, in-depth interviewing provided a mechanism for exploring and understanding what Project CREATES teachers thought and felt about their teaching experiences. Interviews allowed the researcher to reconstruct the meaning of social events despite not personally experiencing them (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The interviews were used as modifications or extensions of ordinary conversations and could be described as a conversation with a purpose (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rubin & Rubin). The primary difference between interviewing and conversations is that the researcher listened intently to the subject for verbal and nonverbal cues to better understand the phenomenon. The second characteristic was the requirement for the researcher to understand, acknowledge, and gain insight into the lives of the interviewees. Finally, the researcher identified the relevant content from each interview and made necessary changes to match what each interviewee stated (Rubin & Rubin).

In-depth, semistructured, topical interviews were conducted to understand the influence of teacher personal theories on implementing curricular change. Semi-structured interviews are used in an attempt to gather specific information. The researcher guided the discussion by asking questions pertinent to the topic. Topical interviews explored the what, when, how, and why something occurred in the environment (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Main questions were the core of topical interviewing and allowed the

interviewee to express knowledge and thinking while narrowly guiding the participants toward a topic. The researcher designed the interview questions (Appendix A) following these guidelines. Probes were used to encourage the interviewee to expand on the information provided through the main questions. Steering probes were employed to keep the teachers on target by restricting the questions asked to describe the influences on teacher personal theories. Along with steering probes, experience probes were used when the researcher wanted to know what the teachers knew first hand about arts integration principles, teaching techniques, and creativity (Rubin & Rubin).

Teachers interviewed for this study included grades Pre-K through 5th, Special Education, Art, and Music. Interviews following this protocol were conducted to understand the influences on teacher personal theories when curricular change was implemented. Prior to the interview, each participant received a copy of the signed consent form (Appendix C). Interviews were conducted for 20-45 minutes and whenever possible, each participant was interviewed at least one day apart from each other. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed using a word processing program. Field notes were recorded following each interview session to provide descriptive accounts of the interviews (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

Observational Data Collection

Direct observations allowed the researcher to focus on the here-and-now experience as viewed by the participant (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, Project CREATES teachers were observed during planning sessions, lessons, and evaluations. By spending time with the teachers, the researcher and research team gained a sense of each

teacher successfully negotiating his/her classroom to infuse arts into the core curriculum. Since the researcher and research team had prior knowledge of the teachers in this study, purposive sampling was used to maximize the scope of information obtained (Lincoln & Guba). Observations in the natural settings were used to render descriptions as open-ended narratives of the interactions occurring in the environment (Angrosino & dePerez, 2003). The sixteen participants were observed thirty times in their classrooms to describe the interactions of the teacher using arts integration. All participants were observed at least one time with several observations coded for most of the teachers. Each observation lasted from 20–60 minutes.

Other forms of observational data collected included professional development, performances, teacher stories, and meetings. Twenty-eight observations were coded in an attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of the arts integrated teacher experiences. During the observations, field notes were written to capture and preserve indigenous meanings for this study (Angronsino & dePerez, 2003; Emerson et al., 1995). These notes were word processed and researcher memos and reflections pertaining to the observation were added for meaning prior to data analysis (Emerson et al.)

Use of Archival Data

Archival data was available for analysis due to the on-going research commitment with the schools. Twenty-three archival interviews and thirty-one archival observations were included for analysis. All data available to the researcher regarding the teachers sampled were analyzed. Since archival data were used for this study all forms relevant to IRB approval are included in Appendix D.

Data Analysis

Data cannot be viewed as prearranged ideas but rather should be recognized as being constructed from the interactions between the researcher and the sources of information collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). At the beginning of the data analysis, the data obtained from each source were subject to a continual process of review at bi-weekly Project CREATES research team meetings. During the meetings, constant insight into the occurrences with the teachers, schools, district, and students were explored and discussed. Researchers on the team took notes during the meetings to provide a clearer understanding of the emerging themes. The notes from these meetings helped the researcher understand the beginning stages of the data analysis (Lincoln & Guba).

Data analysis occurred in two steps. First, the researcher had to purposefully contemplate and contextualize what was occurring while interpretations were generated by examining the documents to develop smaller categories. This step can be referred to as open coding. During open coding, the researcher analyzed the individual interviews and observations line-by-line to formulate ideas, themes, and issues (Emerson et al., 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). By setting up a few main coding categories, the researcher made a list of concepts to explore when reading through the documents for data analysis. When important information did not fit into the existing categories, the researcher added a new category to the coding scheme. Whenever a new category was added, the researcher reread the documents and recoded the material to ensure that the data analyzed fit the category selected for the theme (Rubin & Rubin). During open coding, the researcher used post-it note flags and made notes on the documents to identify themes relevant to this study. The researcher placed the data identified by the post-it note flags and notes on

3 x 5 note cards. Once all the material was collected the researcher began to analyze the note cards within and across the categories established. This was done through focused coding (Rubin & Rubin).

Focused coding allowed the researcher to concentrate on the ideas and concepts that formulated the themes. Once the concepts and themes emerged, the researcher had to put them together to develop an integrated explanation of teacher personal theories. This was done by following a two-phase process that examines and compares data within and across the categories. Coding within a category was used to develop different perspectives to explain the same phenomenon. The researcher used the themes to explain teacher personal theories by combining parts of each theme in a category to develop a coherent narrative. Coding across categories allowed the researcher to make linkages across the categories. The researcher was able to make linkages that were much less obvious by putting the related ideas close to one another even when these ideas were not raised at the same time or by the same participant (Emerson et al, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Coding within and across the categories occurred when the researcher sorted these 3 x 5 note cards into the similar categories leading to the development of themes identified to collectively describe teacher personal theories.

Summary

Ethnographic methodology was used in this study to understand how teacher personal theories influenced curricular change for sixteen teachers who worked with Project CREATES. The research approach used for data collection and analysis were individual and team ethnography where the primary source of data included interviews,

observations, and field notes. Using a two-fold coding system, data analysis led to the emergence of themes articulated by the participants in this study. Data integrity, triangulation, and trustworthiness increased data credibility.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

This study analyzed how elementary school teachers involved in Project CREATES personal theories influenced arts integration into the core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment. The three specific research questions that guided this study were: 1) How do personal theories of teaching and learning influence the decisions to integrate the arts? 2) How has the implementation of arts integrated curricula changed teaching techniques in the classroom? 3) In what ways does the Iceberg Model provide a framework for understanding teacher personal theory and teacher change?

Responses from sixteen teachers through 39 interviews and 89 observations/field notes were analyzed to illicit themes pertinent to teachers' personal theories. Three primary themes emerged from the data. The themes included: *Teacher Change; Educational Dissonance; and Teacher Awareness*. Each of these themes was divided into pertinent sub-themes to garner a more comprehensive understanding of each theme.

The themes should not be considered an exhaustive account of teachers' personal theories, but should be viewed as a way to provide some insight into the teachers' experiences as they implement curricular change in a standardized educational environment. The data used to describe these themes was supported by the literature and

was supplied by the researcher analyzing the statements used by the respondents and is presented in their own words. The findings of this study are not considered generalizable and only provide a glimpse into the intricacy of teacher personal theory for those who chose to integrate the arts in 3 out of 57 elementary schools in one Midwestern public school system.

Direct quotations of the participants have been modified for grammar or language when appropriate for readability.

Responses to Research Questions

Research Question One;

How do personal theories of teaching and learning influence the decisions to integrate the arts?

Teacher Change

Teachers discussed how they began to make changes in the way they presented content of the core curriculum by using arts integration. Two key areas emerged as subthemes were identified that guided the delivery of core curriculum in the classroom. The subthemes were named: 1) connecting with content and 2) connecting with others to teach. *Teacher Change* was examined through the responses of the participants to provide a discussion of the influences teacher personal theory has on implementing curricular change in the classroom.

Connecting with Content

Teachers reported being under tremendous pressure to increase student test scores, teach students to learn specific benchmarks, and help students reach specific grade levels while resources were continually diminishing in the current educational system (A1, 02-16-05; A2, 12-06-05; A3, 12-29-05). Teachers had to find ways to meet the expectations of the job with less support (A1, 02-16-05). Arts integration was one vehicle used to help meet these expectations (A1, 02-16-05).

Kindergarten was one area where arts integration lessons were expected to be used with the standardized teaching curriculum (A4, 12-06-05). Teachers in the upper grades were not as lucky. The expectations for testing and the pressures placed on the teachers increased as students aged, hence finding ways to integrate the arts was more difficult for teachers in the upper grades (A1, 02-16-05, 03-16-05). Teachers reported struggling with the desire to provide students a break from the traditional teaching and testing expectations while meeting the responsibility of teaching students curriculum. Teachers discussed the difficulties meeting these expectations on a daily basis (A1, 02-16-05; A2, 12-06-05; A3, 12-19-05; A4, 12-06-05).

Students learned more when they enjoyed the experience (A3, 01-21-06). Teachers discussed the difficulty and responsibility of ensuring students enjoyed the learning experience while covering the required objectives (A1, 02-16-05; A3, 01-21-06). Lessons where arts integration was used provided pleasant experiences because they enhanced learning by allowing students to make connections to real life experientially (A2, 12-06-05; A7, 06-17-05). “Arts integration enriches the learning experience for students. I have learned how to use arts integration to make learning deeper and richer for

the students" (C2, 04-04-05). Students were lost in the fantasy side of the art experience and did not realize they were truly learning the key pieces of the objective (A2, 12-06-05). The established objectives were no longer difficult for students and they began to pass the objectives before they realized the objective had been met (A2, 12-06-05; A7, 06-17-06).

Teachers discussed what they had learned about the natural integration of the arts with core curriculum. Ms. B2 vocalized, "I am a music teacher and I honestly didn't realize that all the subjects and art meshed together so well. [After learning about arts integration] I can now see that music is in everything; it [Music] is pertinent to writing, science, and social studies" (01-23-06). Ms. A11 concurred, "As a teacher I try to find ways to make connections between the core curriculum and music. It makes me tremendously excited when the students make the connections. It is just awesome!" (06-15-05). Ms. A5 agreed, "The arts have helped me open up as a teacher a little more. I approach teaching differently now that I use arts integrated lessons. The way I teach writing or grammar is different than I used to teach it even though the content is the same. The lessons aren't as dogmatic as they used to be" (01-21-06). Ms. A9 recognized this as well saying, "There is no reason teachers should not teach reading through the other core subjects like Social Studies. Science has natural measurements for math. Teaching through integration makes sense" (12-19-05).

Teaching student objectives through visual, musical, or dramatic arts to enhance the mandated curriculum was exciting for teachers and made teaching more enjoyable as reported by some teachers (A2, 12-06-05; A6, 12-06-05). Ms. B2 agreed stating, "Arts integration has definitely enhanced my teaching techniques and taught me all the things I

can do for the students to make them see the importance of the arts in relationship to everything in life" (01-23-06). Ms. A1 discussed an arts integrated lesson she did with fractions and music. "The experience was so much fun and my students learned so much. I was able to get the arts integrated with the core curriculum and see how creative my students really are" (02-16-05). Ms. A5 agreed saying, "Arts integration has been mind building for me as a teacher. I now look for ways to enhance my lessons and improve my teaching. Arts integration gives me a little bit of hope that I can do something different [in the classroom] rather than just following a book or a script. Using the arts in the classroom has set me free" (01-21-06).

Connecting with Others to Teach

Teachers were traditionally trained to work independently in the classroom (C2, 04-04-05). The expectation of arts integration for the teachers to work together garnered great discussion as a topic (A1, 02-16-05; A2, 06-03-03; A3, 12-19-05; A4, 12-06-05; A6, 12-06-05; A7, 06-07-05; A10, 12-16-05; A11, 06-15-05; C2, 04-04-05; C3, 12-16-05).

Understanding how teachers changed by connecting with others to teach core curriculum was another area explored. Teachers were required to be the expert in the classroom. Ms. C2 reported that she was used to being the "lone ranger" in the classroom (04-04-05). Working with other teachers to create a learning experience might be a foreign concept (A1, 02-16-05). Ms. C2 discussed this saying, "When I was teaching before using arts integration, I was into my own thinking, my own ideas, my own creativity, a little bit of my own arrogance about my own ability as an artist. Now I

realize if I am willing to open up to the experience and collaborate with another person the teaching that can come out of it is better than I could have ever dreamt of" (04-04-05). Collaboration didn't have to be fifty-fifty since teachers had various strengths (A7, 06-17-05). Each teacher showcased his or her strengths in the classroom to enrich the lessons and made the learning experience more meaningful for the students (A7, 06-17-05).

Teachers discussed how collaboration may transpire across all grade levels and subjects. Ms. A1 relayed her experiences through a story:

> "Sometimes it is easier to collaborate with teachers in different grades because you can look at the idea you are trying to teach at an easier level. The younger teachers have a different perspective and it has really helped to work with them instead of just other fifth grade teachers. Working with the teachers in the other grades brings in a fresh perspective and helps me to see things differently" (02-16-05).

Ms. A11 agreed, "I am flexible as a co-creator. If the grade level teachers will tell me, a music teacher, what they are working on, I can give them more ideas of how to integrate the arts in the lesson. Knowing what the other teachers are working on allows me to create my own integrated lessons in music as well" (06-15-05). Ms. C3 concurred, "As teachers we are always looking at ways to meet the needs of the 5th grade curriculum and the 2nd grade curriculum so we have to work together to find the best solutions" (12-16-05).

Teachers responded that collaboration takes place in many environments (A4, 12-06-05; A6, 12-06-05; C3, 12-16-05). During a planning session, Ms. A4 was confronted

with the desirability to teach a new lesson to Kindergarteners. She relayed the story, "When planning to teach a lesson with other Kindergarten teachers I said, 'Why don't we teach something around Valentines Day?' The other teachers looked at me like I was crazy but I continued. 'I was thinking we could teach something about papermaking because we use paper to make Valentine's [cards]. The other teachers got so excited about the concept and we did it" (12-06-05). Ms. C3 discussed the most likely place for collaboration to occur in her school. "The teachers collaborate all the time in the hallway. Constantly looking at the curriculum and finding new ways to teach the students the benchmarks is important. With different planning periods and limited time, we find any place we can to talk and generate ideas" (12-16-05).

Many teachers enjoyed the networking and availability of having other teachers to collaborate with to generate new ideas for teaching (A11, 06-15-05). Team teaching was one way collaboration occurred in some of the schools. Ms. A6 and Ms. A4 were team teaching during this study and discussed the enjoyment of working with each other to bring in new and unique perspectives in the learning environment (12-06-05). Ms. C3 agreed, "I work better in a team. I am a better teacher when I have other teachers to bounce ideas off of and somebody that can help me" (02-20-04). Ms. A2 continued, "I work cooperatively with the teachers who come into my classroom. When we come up with a project or creation that can help me in the classroom [to teach the ideas] it is great" (06-03-03). Working with other people opens the gate of creativity for the teacher (C2, 04-04-05).

Teachers described working with artists and the ARCs as a way to connect with others to teach and how this had changed their teaching. Artists were brought into the

classroom to teach concepts in unique ways (A3, 12-19-05; A7, 06-17-05). Teacher expectations were set a little bit higher when artists were involved in arts integration (A4, 12-06-05). Some teachers reported that they enjoyed bringing artists into the creation process to connect the content to the core curriculum (A3, 12-19-05; A7, 06-17-05).

Teachers reported that they were cast into a supportive role when the artist entered the classroom because of the expertise of the artist (A7, 06-17-05). Teachers who were not as comfortable with art were likely to sit back and let the artist teach the lesson. Ms. A7 provided some discussion of this concept saying that it was easier to let the artists strengths come through and to know the limitations as a teacher (A7, 06-17-05). Participation in the art experience for teachers and students was enriching when teachers are connecting with others (A11, 02-11-05). Ms. A11 discussed the enjoyment she saw when the teachers were experiencing the art lesson as well as the students (02-11-05).

Students were allowed to have fun in the classroom by experiencing the arts integrated lessons (A3, 12-19-05). Teachers discussed the desire for student enrichment through experiencing arts integration with artists in the classroom. Ms. A2 began, “When Leslie [ARC/drummer] came into the class and worked with my students for spelling it was fun. The kids were chanting the spelling words and would actually practice singing them in their heads. When I was giving the spelling test, I could see students tapping out the words with their pencils. The experience was like teaching the students to use a musical pneumonic device” (04-28-05). Ms. A10 continued, “I like bringing in the artists because it helps the problem students find their niche. The artists bring a different perspective and a different view. The students who can’t sit in their seat and do the stupid seat work shine and do the creative stuff. It is such a wonderful surprise for me when I

see this happen [with my students]. Co-creation experiences allow me to experience this occurring in my classroom" (03-16-05). Ms. A11 agreed, "Every week when I work with an artist it is an incredible experience. Even though we have different teaching styles we teach well together. The students love to see us co-create. Co-creating lessons make a difference in the lives of the students" (02-11-05). Ms. C2 concluded, "We did an African rowing song with Leslie and the children learned how to use the sticks to make a beat. Students were totally captured by the experience. The light bulbs were going off and you could see the students making connections to prior knowledge. That experience is going to be with the students the rest of their lives" (04-04-05).

Teachers discussed making connections and looking at the content differently when they worked with the artists in the classroom (A11, 02-11-05). Working with artists to teach standards by creating a meaningful and fun learning environment was important to teachers. Ms. A3 and Ms. A4 discussed this concept stating that students were learning through the fun experience and they didn't even know they were learning (A3, 12-19-05; A4, 02-08-06).

The Arts Resource Coaches (ARCs) provided a solid foundation and model co-creation for the teachers (A1, 02-16-05). Ms. A11 explained that she enjoyed having the ARCs come into the classroom because they were able to show the teachers how to co-create a lesson plan correctly (10-29-03).

The implementation of arts integrated lessons occurred as teachers connected with the content they were teaching. Control of the classroom was lessened as teachers let chaos reign when arts integrated lessons were used to connect core content to learning. Along with connecting to content, teachers discovered that opportunities for connecting

with others to teach were everywhere. Instead of relying on set planning meetings, teachers began to meet in non-traditional places and times. Working with other educators provided opportunities for teachers to develop arts integrated lessons that enhanced the strength of the teacher and collaborator. Changes in teacher practice, influencing teacher personal theory, occurred when the teachers connected with the content and others to implement arts integrated lessons with core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment.

Educational Dissonance

District mandates and administrative culture were one of the first places teachers felt pressure in the current educational climate. Teachers discussed how the mandates to maintain a uniform classroom environment, teach using established and scripted curriculum, and the requirement for high-stakes testing shaped personal theories of education. Four areas emerged from the data describing the conflict teachers faced when trying to implement curricular change in the current educational climate. The subthemes included: 1) leadership, 2) permission to teach, 3) curriculum, and 4) assessment. The responses of the participants were examined to provide a discussion of the educational dissonance as it influences teacher personal theory leading to the implementation of curricular change.

Leadership

Standardizing the classroom environment was stifling to many of the teachers and increased the stress level of the teachers (A6, 05-14-05; C2, 04-04-05). The Teacher's Guidebook, provided to each teacher in the district, described the design of the

classroom. According to the guidebook, each classroom teacher will add lamps, paint, fabric, plants, and music to create a welcoming environment for the students. The rooms were required to be free of clutter and painted in neutral, non-distracting colors that were calm, cool, and relaxing (C3, 10-19-05). Ms. C2 described the mandated classroom environments as "creating mediocrity" and "robotizing the classroom" (04-04-05). Standardization "dampens the spirit of the teacher" (C2, 04-04-05). Ms. A2 agreed stating, "The district changes are stifling [to me as a teacher]" (04-28-05). The district is letting the teachers know that "they [the teachers] can not be trusted to create a proper learning environment for the students" (C2, 04-04-05). Ms. A3 reiterated, "The administration tells you what to do all the time. It has gotten harder to ignore the mandates" (12-29-05).

Support from leadership was a key area discussed by teachers influencing arts integration. Ms. C3 stated, "My principal is very supportive of the arts in this building. He knows how life changing arts integration is for the students. It meets the needs of our students when no other program can meet their learning needs" (02-20-04). The same feelings were felt by Ms. A2 who stated, "My principal sees the needs for arts integration because she is well aware of the different modalities of our students. She understands that not all kids are book and pencil kids" (12-06-05). Finally, Ms. A4 commented, "My principal backs up arts integration. That is the reason we have so many teachers involved in Project CREATES. If the leader didn't believe in it [arts integration] it would not be in the school" (12-06-05).

Teachers described the pressures leaders received from the district to improve test scores with or without using arts integration (A4, 12-06-05; A10, 06-17-03; C3, 12-16-

05). Ms. A6 addressed this saying, “My principal is most concerned with the benchmarks. If we can teach [an arts integrated lesson] using the benchmarks we are fine” (05-14-05). Ms. A2 agreed, “Reading and math take precedence with my principal. If we can teach reading and math integrating the arts, she is all for arts integration” (12-06-05).

Permission in Teaching

Another place teacher’s responded by stating they felt pressure to conform to mandates was in the implementation of set curriculum (A7, 05-04-05; A9, 12-29-05; A11, 06-14-05). Curriculum written and used in the public schools was situated around benchmarks and introduced to the teachers as a state mandated structured system. The primarily responsibility of teachers was teaching the state mandated objectives to the students (A9, 12-29-05). Ms. A7 discussed the responsibility of even kindergarten teachers to make sure the students were meeting the benchmarks and passing the grade level tests (05-04-05). The benchmarks had been instituted as a way to improve test scores on the standardized tests (A9, 12-29-05). Clearly written objectives helped the teachers cover the material necessary to pass the tests. The state mandated objectives were written for every grade level and had improved since they were first created (A9, 12-29-05; A11, 06-14-05). According to Ms. A9 the state mandated objectives were more developmentally appropriate, specific, and clearer than ever before (12-29-05). At the beginning of the school year each teacher was given the benchmarks and lesson plans were developed around the benchmarks. Ms. A11 discussed the responsibility of each teacher to develop the benchmarks around the state mandated curriculum requirements (06-11-04).

Teachers responded by stating that the state mandated objectives were not negative. Ms. A10 believed that by having the state mandated objectives clearly posted in the classroom she is able to stay focused as a teacher on her lesson plans (03-16-05). Ms. A6 said that using the standards made it easier to encompass all subjects into lessons (05-14-05). “You can bend them, move them, and stretch them to fit whatever subject you are studying” (A6, 05-14-05). Ms. A7 agreed, “If I see there is something that isn’t in the benchmarks that my students should know, I just add it in there. That is my job. I don’t find it difficult because it is what I am required to do” (05-04-05).

Although teachers understood the importance of the state mandated objectives and incorporated them in lessons, some concerns were voiced regarding the limitations placed on teaching (A9, 12-29-05). One concern was that set curriculum restricts creativity in the classroom (C2, 04-04-05). Teachers voiced concerns regarding including creative projects when they were focused on improving test scores (A3, 12-29-05). Another concern was that students were less active in the classroom when the focus was on assessment (A5, 01-21-06). Finally, elementary school teachers felt a civic responsibility to teach all subjects (A9, 12-29-05). Teachers expressed concerns with the elimination of subjects such as science and social studies since the state mandated objectives and standardized tests were geared toward reading and math (A3, 01-21-06; A6 05-14-05; A9, 12-29-05).

Teachers described feeling less permission to teach using arts integration when the focus was on curriculum and assessment. Ms. A9 remarked that her creativity as a teacher had been limited because of the state mandated objectives stating “I haven’t done creative things in my classroom [this year] because you know we are back to the state

mandated objectives. We are very targeted, very focused on just the academics for our students" (12-29-05). Ms. A3 agreed, "There is less art in my classroom then there used to be. We are too busy teaching to use it [art] anymore" (01-21-06). Teachers were pressured to teach the benchmarks, not allowing time for creativity in the classroom. The pressure placed on the fifth grade teachers was greater because of it being a testing year so time was not allotted for art lessons. Ms. A1 explained that she had less time for arts integrated curriculum planning before the fifth grade placement test (02-16-05).

Teachers responded that teaching focused on assessment and curriculum mandates impeded student learning. The curriculum was designed to rely on rote memorization, content knowledge, and comprehension questions, not creativity and authentic learning (A3, 12-29-05). Ms. A2 commented saying, "Having a set curriculum that has to be followed step-by-step is basically spoon feeding the children" (12-06-05). In addition, Ms. A5 expressed concern for teaching under these guidelines. She stated, "The students are learning all the academics. They are learning to put sentences together and are learning vocabulary words. But they want to be more active and they don't just want to sit down" (01-21-06). Commenting further that, "We don't teach our students to be creative. We don't let them express their creativity in other areas. We are only concerned with reading, writing, arithmetic, and stuff like that" (A5, 01-21-06). Ms. A9 followed up saying, "There was controversy [by other teachers] when the students did better in my classroom because I used art lessons. I started slowing down with the art lessons and focused on the academics" (12-29-05).

Elementary teachers discussed the desire and enjoyment in teaching all subjects. However, administration had declared the teachers had to focus on the subjects covered

on the standardized tests allowing teachers to teach the other subjects after testing was complete (A1, 02-16-05). Many teachers were frustrated with this requirement stating that a few weeks did not provide adequate time to cover an entire subject (A3, 01-21-06; A6 05-14-05; A9, 12-29-05). Science and Social Studies were the subjects abolished most often by administration. Ms. A6 was one of the first teachers to voice concerns commenting:

> "I was told not to teach science or social studies until the fourth quarter after all the testing was complete. That made me really sad as a teacher. The teachers were told to focus on the reading and math series. My students are in Kindergarten. So I feel the pressure is already there for students to prepare for testing" (05-14-05).

Ms. A3 agreed stating, "I was originally hired as a Science/Social Studies teacher. But I was moved to 2nd grade when the subject specific teachers changed" (01-21-06). Ms. A9 echoed these sentiments saying, "We were told not to teach handwriting, not to teach social studies, not to teach science. Math and reading are the only subjects we were supposed to teach. You cheat the heck out of the students when you do that" (12-29-05). The desire to teach subjects that were pertinent to the students and enjoyable to the teachers was voiced by Ms A9. "I feel obligated to teach my students American History. The students are interested in it. When the moment is there I teach it. My students know more about American History than the fifth graders who took the test on it because I teach it from my heart" (12-29-05).

Curriculum

Teachers stated commercial programs introduced in the school added time to their schedule while taking time away from teaching. Several teachers described the addition and implementation of one of these programs, Target Teach, a company brought into the school district by administrators to improve test scores during the second semester of the 2004-2005 school year (A1, 02-16-05; A3, 12-29-05; A9, 12-29-05; A10, 03-16-05; A11, 02-11-05; B1, 01-23-06; C3, 12-16-05). A few teachers were chosen from each school to attend the training. The teachers who attended the training were told to return to the school and train the other teachers. Ms. A1 was among the first teachers to attend the training. Upon returning she stated, "the addition of Target Teach is stressful and difficult right now" and was concerned with the amount of time it would take to implement this new program (02-16-05). Ms. A11 stated concerns about the amount of time necessary to implement Target Teach (02-11-05). Ms. A9 validated the stress caused the first year of the program. She stated, "Last year was among the most stressful years teaching ever. It was unbelievable the amount of pressure it [Target Teach] places on us" (12-29-05). Even though the addition of Target Teach was stressful, the district believed it was a good program that could improve test scores.

Target Teach targeted a specific skill the children were going to be tested on by taking the standards and objectives (benchmarks), established by the state and national government, and clarifying them for teachers and students through strategy lessons written to unpack the objectives and tie the objectives back to the books (A9, 12-29-05). The lessons were used to help teachers focus the learning on the important concepts and were written using kid friendly language that every child could understand (A1, 02-16-

05; A9, 12-29-05; A11, 02-11-05). Ms. A10 remarked, “I have three notebooks now that I have to figure out how to use and teach with” (03-16-05).

Target Teach used three week strategy lessons to cover the objectives and benchmarks for each grade level (A9, 12-29-05). Following each lesson, the students were given a test (A3, 12-29-05). The test was used to measure the knowledge and comprehension of the students for each lesson (A9, 12-29-05). Ms. A3 discussed the test saying the test was designed to assess the concrete knowledge of the students who used rote memorization to remember what they were learning in the classroom (12-29-05). Strategy lessons were scripted and took about thirty to forty-five minutes per lesson (A1, 02-16-05; A9, 12-29-05). Each lesson was so time consuming that Ms. A11 voiced concerns that teachers would begin to only use Target Teach and the arts would be taken out of the classrooms (02-11-05). Ms. B1 validated this concern saying, “I haven’t really done a lot of arts this year because I have been focused on Target Teach” (01-23-06).

Teaching using the Target Teach curriculum caused two major problems for teachers. The first problem discussed was the lack of permission to teach (A9, 12-29-05; C3, 12-16-05). The second problem was the implementation of more testing (A3, 12-29-05; A10, 03-16-05). Teachers voiced frustrations over being handed scripted lessons. Ms. A9 was one of the most vocal stating, “the lessons are scripted which is not natural for me as a teacher. When I teach using the strategy lessons I try to stay close to the script so that I am sure to cover every point in the lesson.” (12-29-05). Ms. C3 followed up saying, “The thing I hate about it [Target Teach] is that they give me a book and a script on how to teach. I hate the script, I hate the book. I might get fired for saying this but my book is over there and I have never opened it all year” (12-16-05). A third teacher chimed in, “I

get to teach for three weeks, take a test, and then teach the next thing for three weeks. I am only teaching the students the knowledge and comprehension questions that I know are on the test. That is all I have time to teach" (A3, 12-29-05). Testing was the second major problem discussed. Ms. A1 stated that although "Target Teach is geared toward student learning, we all want better test scores so testing is a part of it" (02-16-05). Ms. A11 was concerned that since "Target Teach involves more testing and the students are sick of testing" it might be more stressful on the students (02-11-05). Ms. A9 concurred stating, "I hate that we have to sit down and take tests every three weeks" but added that "the tests are short and are good practice and training for the students (12-29-05). Ms. C3 stated, "It is a little absurd to be testing children every three weeks. They are too young to be tested. We spend hours two mornings testing and the students are only in second grade" (12-16-05).

Although pieces of Target Teach caused frustration for the teachers, benefits of the program were acknowledged by some teachers. Ms. C3 emphasized this by saying, "One good thing about it [Target Teach] is that it forces me to look at the objectives because they are the things that the students need to know" (12-16-05). Ms. B1 added, "I really like Target Teach although it does cut out time for a lot of other things" (01-23-06). Ms. A9 described teaching a lesson using Target Teach. She explained that "if I had taught the lesson without the script I probably wouldn't have covered every single point in there specifically. If I had not been following the script I would have made assumptions that everybody knew things that they didn't know" (12-29-05).

Assessment

Teachers voiced concerns over the pressures to attain high scores on assessment tests. Arts integrated lessons were often the first lessons removed from the classroom since the schools are behind academically (A3, 12-29-05; A9, 12-29-05). Teachers were pushed to use only those lessons pertinent to standardized testing (A6, 05-04-05; A11, 02-11-05). More programs were introduced to the schools that administrators believed would make a difference in student learning and the arts were viewed as an add-on (A11, 02-11-05). Ms. A10 acknowledged this problem saying, "We don't have much time to do arts integration because we are so far behind academically. We are pushed to do academics all the time. The students don't get to play, well I don't want to say play, but that is the way administration looks at the arts [integrated lessons]" (06-17-03). Ms. A11 agreed saying that the administration continues to bring in commercial programs to try and increase test scores without meeting the needs of the teachers or the students (05-29-05)

Teachers reported feeling frustrated because they want students to succeed on the standardized assessments. Ms. A5 remarked, "When a student takes a standardized test and passes he/she is okay. But that doesn't measure the whole child" (01-21-06). Ms. A10 added, "It is frustrating because you want the students to meet success on the standardized tests but they don't and it is sad because the students want to succeed" (03-16-05). Mr. A8 stated, "I don't want to teach students to pass a test. I want to teach them what is important" (01-21-06).

Measuring learning based on the benchmarks was discussed by the teachers as being stressful. Testing was so stressful that many teachers became discouraged and

overwhelmed (A2, 04-28-05). Ms. A1 stated, “I am just going through the motions as a teacher [before the test]. But once the test is over it is like I can breathe again. It is like all the weight has been lifted and we are able to do a lot of different things in the classroom” (02-16-05). Ms. A2 echoed these sentiments saying, “We are so test, test, test driven. Each year seems like a lit bit more [focused on testing]. That is the sad thing about curriculum now” (04-28-05; 12-05-06). Ms. A11 added, “The teachers don’t have time to teach because they are always testing. That is a valid argument, if all you do is test you have not time to teach and you are not getting anywhere” (02-11-05). Even kindergarten students were tested using a benchmark test called DIBLES (A6, 05-04-05; A7, 05-04-05). DIBLES was a test conducted three times a year to assess reading skills. The test covered everything from oral language to sounding out nonsense words, letter and sound identification, reading frequency, and reading fluency. Ms. A7 remarked that the addition of the testing from kindergarten helped her see the levels of her current students before continuing with the lesson plans (05-04-05).

Tests were written in unsuitable language for lower socioeconomic student populations, thus some students did not fare well when they were required to participate in testing (A5, 01-21-06). Standardized tests were often paper and pencil tests (C1, 07-22-05). Ms. A10 eloquently addressed this stating, “I think they [administration] are frantically trying to figure out how to make low socioeconomic students perform on tests that they have no background to take. They test on environmental problems in the Florida Everglades. These students [at my school] have never been to Florida. They don’t know what an Everglade is. They don’t have the vocabulary to read the story, much less the answer to the question. So we do poorly on the test” (03-16-05). Ms. A5 reiterated

stating, “A lot of times the assessment is frustrating because you know some of these students are bright but the tests don’t show it. The language is a barrier” (01-21-06).

Teachers reported that testing limited creativity and placed restraints on the time they could spend being creative in the classroom (A2, 04-28-05). Ms. A10 acknowledged this saying, “Testing is so stressful. I almost feel guilty when I do something creative [in the classroom]” (A10, 03-16-05). Ms. A1 agreed, “Testing limits creativity because I get so focused on what I have to teach that once the test is over I have great ideas that I can teach again” (02-16-05). Student creativity was limited as well. One problem with the test was the design creativity tests (A10, 03-16-05; A11, 02-11-05). Ms. A2 addressed this saying creativity could not be assessed using paper and pencil tests and the assessments designed to test music and art were written this way (12-05-06). Tests that were developed in this manner did not allow students to showcase their abilities in art or music. Ms. C1 added these tests required students to have the necessary vocabulary, not the creative ability, to pass the test (07-22-05).

Teachers expressed feelings of conflict between teaching and the current educational environment causing educational dissonance. Standardized classrooms, instituted by leadership, appeared sterile and cold to the teachers. Teachers discussed feeling forced into teaching commercial curriculum that was intended to improve test scores. Providing teachers with set curriculum equated to feelings that administration didn’t believe in the teachers’ ability to provide quality education to the students and thus the teachers did not feel they had permission to teach. High levels of frustration were reported by teachers as the prescribed curriculum increased testing at all levels of the elementary school. Teachers expressed concerns with giving students paper-pencil based

tests that consisted of inappropriate language to measure learning. Furthermore, they theorized that their personal theories were influenced by the educational dissonance created in the standardized educational environment.

Teacher Awareness

Teacher awareness was presented by describing the teachers set beliefs, values, and principles toward education. Teachers believed it was imperative to reach higher levels of thinking, make connections through experience, and expressing creativity in the classroom in order for real learning to occur. They felt this could be done through teaching with arts integrated lessons. Teaching became meaningful again when the students who were traditionally unsuccessful academically began to succeed in an art integrated environment. The creative spirit of the students was brought out during arts integrated lessons. Teachers who once viewed student creativity as deviant or fluff obliterated this notion as they saw successes and increased self esteem occurring in the classroom. Personal definitions of creativity were questioned as teachers began to learn that creativity had many meanings. Four sub-themes emerged under *Teacher Awareness* to understand and describe this theme: 1) reawakening, 2) arts as real learning, 3) creative spirit, and 4) creative self. The responses of the participants were examined to provide a discussion of the awareness of the teacher as it influences teacher personal theory leading to the implementation of curricular change.

Reawakening

Teachers reported being deeply concerned and frustrated with the current bureaucracy that focused on testing not learning. Students were tired of testing and stated it was difficult to teach for learning when everything was geared toward assessment and rote memorization (A3, 12-29-05; A9, 12-29-05). Focusing teaching on assessment did not allow students to make connections and learn authentically instead students were memorizing information to pass tests (A1, 02-16-05; A3, 12-29-05). Ms. C3 addressed this saying, there was so much more to teaching than helping students pass tests (12-16-05). Ms. A11 agreed, "I am not here just to teach students subjects [to pass tests]. I am here to make a difference in the lives of students" (02-11-05). Ms. A9 followed up, "I teach because I was called to teaching. Teaching is the most important thing I do in life" (12-29-05). Teachers continually struggled with the need for assessment and the desire for student learning through expression.

Teachers stated that creativity was one outlet for student expression especially for those students who did not fare well on traditional tests. Ms. C3 acknowledged that many of her students who struggled with academics were very creative in the classroom (12-16-05). Creativity could be expressed through the implementation of arts integrated lessons (A9, 12-29-05; A11, 02-11-05). Teachers were forced to deal with student's who fear failure when implementing arts integrated lessons in the classroom (B2, 01-23-06; C2, 04-04-05; C3, 12-16-05). Ms. C3 remarked, "I think it is important as teachers to experience the things and emotions our students go through [to better understand the student's feelings] when using the arts for learning" (02-20-04). Ms. B2 stated, "I never want my students to feel inferior when working with music. In music there is no such

thing as a mistake. You can improvise and no one will know you made a mistake. This helps my students feel better about themselves" (01-23-06). Ms. C2 agreed, "Teaching [using the arts] allows you the power of interpretation. I can choose how to interpret what is happening [in my classroom] and I always choose to interpret it in an empowering way so students feel successful" (12-16-05). Mr. A8 followed up stating, "I help the students learn in all different ways. I treat them the same way I would my own daughter. I don't want them to focus on mistakes. I always tell my students, a mistake is a chance to learn something" (01-21-06).

Once the fear of failure was addressed, arts integrated lessons helped students make connections in the classroom, ultimately leading to student learning and success, generating excitement for teachers (A9, 12-19-05). Ms. A1 exclaimed, "I don't see the enthusiasm in my students when I teach using traditional lessons compared to arts integrated lessons" (06-17-05). Students remembered what they were learning and made deeper connections when they used arts integrated lessons in the classroom (A1, 02-16-05; A9, 12-19-05). Ms. A3 referenced an arts integrated lesson she did with her students saying they were able to recall more information from that lesson than with a traditional lesson (12-29-05). Ms. A9 agreed, "It is empowering to me as a teacher to teach students to think and be successful" (12-29-05). Ms. A1 reiterated stating, "Seeing the light bulbs go off [when learning through the arts] is amazing and that is the reason I became a teacher" (02-16-05). Ms. A9 continued, "Getting students to use higher level thinking skills and to know they have really learned [something] is priceless" (12-29-05). Ms. C2 followed up saying, "You have to be intentional about where you are going [when you

teach arts integrated lessons]. When the students make the connections it is a powerful thing" (04-04-05).

Teachers discussed feeling reawakened as teachers when arts integrated lessons were used in the classroom. Ms. C2 stated eloquently, "The day I think I know what teaching is, is the day I will turn in my badge. The thing I love most about teaching is not knowing [what each day and each new experience will bring]" (12-16-05).

Arts as Real Learning

Teachers described arts integration as the desire to use art activities with everyday, core curriculum. The arts were not separated into an 'art class' but were naturally occurring in all learning (C3, 12-16-05). Teachers stated that arts integrated lessons were not the same as being in music and art class where there was an expectation for performance (A3, 12-29-05; B1, 01-23-06; B2, 01-23-06). Mr. A8 stated that when students were required to perform they were less likely to enjoy the experience than when it was a truly arts integrated lesson that focused on learning (01-21-06). Arts integration gave teachers more tools to use in the classroom like curriculum mapping and organizers. Ms. C2 remarked that arts integration allowed her to fill up her toolbox with more tools for teaching than ever before (12-16-05).

Teachers described the changes made in the classroom after understanding the importance of arts integration to student learning. The changes included the design of the classroom and the teaching techniques that were employed by the teachers (A7, 05-04-05). Teachers discussed teaching through arts integration as more hands on and active (A2, 06-03-03; A5, 01-21-06; B1, 01-23-06). Ms. B1, Ms. A2, Ms. A5, and Ms. C3

discussed the enjoyment of being able to teach students in an experiential environment while allowing the control of the classroom to fall into the laps of the children (A2, 06-03-03; A5, 01-21-06; B1, 01-23-06; C3, 12-16-05). Ms. C2 reiterated saying that teaching through arts integration allowed her to question some of the traditional philosophies of teaching (12-16-05). “As a teacher you had to let go of convention and enjoy the experience so the students would have the same experience” (A11, 06-17-03). “When I first started teaching, my students were all in rows. Now I allow more group activities and the increase in noise levels don’t bother me as much. I know the students are actively learning” (B1, 01-23-06). Ms. A9 agreed, “Arts integrated lessons are not quiet or neat. You will not see the same thing at one table that you will at another table. The students talk a lot” (12-29-05). Ms. C1 concluded, “I see so much value in teaching with the arts” (07-22-05).

Teachers explained that using arts integration in the classroom was more enjoyable than the requirements in the current educational culture. Ms. A3 exclaimed, “I am more excited to teach than ever and I am happier than I have been in a long time [when I get to use arts integration]. I am no longer trudging to the next subject. [When I am involved in arts integrated lessons] I am more relaxed teaching the students than when I am shoving information down their throat” (12-29-05). Ms. A2 continued, “It [arts integration] has given me a new way of teaching things. I have always used the arts in teaching and I enjoy the arts. Teaching through arts integration allows me to cover all the modalities of the students and that helps me see the connections they make” (12-06-05).

Teaching through arts integration was reported as a little more personal to the teachers and students as it allowed for freedom of expression in the classroom. The

lessons gave children something to “hang information on” and met the emotional needs and creative needs of the children (A9, 12-29-05; A11, 06-17-05). Ms. A11 described arts integration as honoring the whole child while teaching students to think for themselves (02-11-05). Ms. B1 agreed saying that arts integration gave students permission to be different than other students in the classroom or school (01-23-06). Learning became real to the students when arts integrated lessons were implemented in the classroom (A11, 06-17-05). The concrete information was cemented through arts integrated application of the concepts being taught (A6, 12-06-05).

Teachers stated they believed that arts integration provided every child the opportunity to be successful. Ms. A4 remarked, “There are always one or two students [in the classroom] that art is going to be what gets them to learn” (12-06-05). Ms. C1 agreed, “The arts give students who don’t [traditionally] shine in the classroom a place to shine and a way to feel good about themselves” (12-26-05). Ms. A2 continued, “Arts [integration] lets students express themselves without any negative recourse or effect. Students are allowed to express themselves freely and wholly. This is especially valuable for students who are not traditionally successful in the classroom” (12-06-05). Ms. C3 concluded, “Arts integration meets the need of every child and does not care if you are the lowest or the highest learner in the classroom. Everybody gets to succeed” (12-16-05).

Arts integration ministered to the whole child by helping them understand traditional educational success was only one measurement of a human being. Arts integration taught the students to make connections. Ms. C2 stated, “I can see the deep connections the children are making” (04-04-05). Ms. A2 exclaimed, “The students are

able to build their backgrounds through experiential learning. I can actually see the inner artists come out [of the students]" (06-03-03, 12-06-05).

Creative Spirit

Teachers reported having difficulty fostering creative spirit when learning was based on measurable objectives and testing (A3, 12-29-05; A11, 03-16-05). Teachers stated they experienced frustration in this culture expressing the desire to teach creatively. Ms. A5 verified this stating, "Teaching has to become more than just reaching objectives and passing tests" (01-21-06). Teachers did not want to assume students were failures based on measured tests. "Our students have not necessarily been successful academically and they need another way to express themselves. Creativity gives them that option" (A9, 12-29-05). Teachers enjoyed teaching creativity to students. Teaching became more personal when creativity was involved in the classroom (A5, 01-26-05; A8, 01-26-05).

Creativity ministered to the whole child and reached them through all avenues as verified by Ms. A11 (02-11-05). Ms. A1 agreed saying, "Students learn about respect, cooperation, and responsibility when teachers foster creativity" (02-16-05). However, most students rarely get a good start with creativity. Classrooms and teachers often unintentionally stifled creativity with the requirement for perfection. Mr. A8 relayed many teachers turned students off to creativity by placing parameters on the creativity process (01-21-06). This dampened the creative spirit of the child (A11, 02-11-05). "A lot of children have been pulled back from creativity and have already lost the creative spirit. This breaks your heart as a teacher" (A9, 12-29-05). When standards were placed on the

experience, students have more difficulty believing in their own creativity (A5, 01-21-06). Students enjoyed learning and were less inhibited when they were not focused on perfection and there was not a pencil and paper standard. Ms. A6 addressed this saying that her students liked the freedom to create without a lot of direction (05-14-05). Ms. C2 eloquently agreed stating, “You can not standardize the human spirit. When you start trying to do that you are going to kill the human spirit” (04-04-05).

Creativity manifested itself in different ways with students. Ms. A9 explained, “I see creativity in different ways in my students. Sometimes creativity is the child who says I am an individual. I am different. My spirit can not be contained. You can try to contain me but my flamboyancy is going to come out. Other students show creativity by finding a different solution to a math problem” (12-19-05). Ms. A6 agreed, “I tend to put my students in two different categories of creativity, being artistically creative or being analytically creative. Students in one category do not mean they are smarter than students in the other category. Some students are problem solvers and thinkers, more logical people. The other students can just make wonderful things” (12-05-05). Mr. A8 continued, “You can guide creativity [as a teacher] but you can’t teach someone to be creative. Creativity is something that has to come out of the individual” (01-21-06).

Teachers affirmed to students that it was okay to have a creative spirit that allowed them to act and think differently than other students. Ms. B2 expressed this to students saying, “I make it comfortable for students to express their creativity. I tell the students to do whatever they feel comfortable doing [in the classroom]” (01-23-06). Ms. A9 agreed, “Students will be successful when they are allowed to show you what they know through a creative experience” (12-29-05). Ms. A10 concluded, “The spirit of the

individual will come through when learning creatively and the learning is beautiful" (06-17-03).

Teaching using creativity allowed the students to visualize and see the concepts they were struggling to learn. Students did not realize they were learning the same concept when creativity was employed in the classroom because the lesson was fun and not tedious (A5, 01-21-06). Many teachers discussed arts integrated lessons where the students exhibited learning state mandated benchmarks without the students being aware they were learning the objectives (A3, 12-29-05; A10, 06-17-05; A11, 06-11-04). Ms. A7 remarked, "When a child is engaged in learning and doing a lesson and enjoying the lesson the student is successful" (05-04-05). Arts integrated lessons stayed with the students, increased knowledge, and made learning applicable to everyday life. When situations arose to teach using creativity it was important to go with whatever was available to the teacher and provide the information to the students. Ms. A6 agreed, "Learning doesn't have to occur through worksheets" (05-14-05).

Creative Self

Initially, teachers reported struggling with understanding the concept of creativity pertaining to self. Possessing Big "C" creativity akin to artistic talent was viewed by some teachers as the only way to be creative. This concept was described by many teachers working with Project CREATES. Ms. A4 remarked, "I don't have any artistic talent, thus I am not creative" (12-05-06). Ms. A5 agreed, "I don't think I am creative. Creativity means you had to be an artist" (01-21-06). Ms. A6 concurred, "If I were to think of creativity like an artist I would think that I wasn't very creative. From a hands on

or artistic standpoint I am not a creative person" (12-06-05). Ms. A2 agreed, "I think of creativity as an artist, a painting, a masterpiece in different ways" (12-06-05).

Viewing creativity as Big "C" limited the teachers' ability to be creative in the classroom. Teachers stated to be creative you had to create something new and unique (A2, 12-06-05; A4, 12-06-05; A9, 12-29-05). This limited view of creativity was captured in Ms. A3's feelings; "I find creativity outside of my comfort zone. I can't create anything. I can copy anything [I am given] but I can't create it" (12-29-05). Ms. B1 agreed, "I don't feel very creative at all. I can recreate something but I don't feel creative. I struggle with coming up with things on my own" (1-23-06). Ms. A11 concurred, "I don't think of myself as creative because [when] I create it is within boundaries. Give me a white piece of paper it scares me to death. I don't have a clue [what I can put on the paper] to make it look good. I need [to be provided] more boundaries and directions to [be] creative" (06-17-05).

Teachers stated that initially they did not believe they had a creative self but changed their minds after exploring creativity further as they worked with arts integration lessons and Project CREATES. Some people only realized they are creative when someone else showed them they were creative remarked Ms. A1 (06-17-05). The traditional views held by teachers about creativity evolved for many teachers as they became more involved with Project CREATES. Ms. A7 stated, "Creativity can be an outward product or an inward satisfaction. Creativity is the willingness to learn, to change, and to seek out knowledge that is sometimes outside of your comfort zone." (06-17-05). Ms. A9 stated, "Creativity is much more experiential. Creativity is about the journey and the growth experienced by the individual along the way" (12-29-05). Ms. B1

agreed, “Creativity can be anything. Just pulling stuff out of the box is one way to be creative” (01-23-06). Creativity took freedom and involved having an open mind and the ability to think outside the box. Many teachers discussed the responsibility of the teacher to keep an open mind and be a nonconformist for creativity to occur (A4, 12-06-05; A10, 06-17-05; A11, 06-17-05; B1, 01-23-06). One way this can occurred was when teachers were provided the flexibility to improvise in the classroom.

Teachers realized that everyone had the ability to be creative even when they didn’t know they were creative which allowed the teachers to integrate the arts in the classroom with less anxiety and fear of failure. Ms. A5 discussed this saying that she had worked hard on overcoming her own fear of looking silly in the classroom because she did not think of herself as a creative person (01-21-06). Mr. A8 remarked, “Arts integration has helped me come out and be more creative” (01-21-06).

Teachers discussed that individuals had different creative abilities and gifts. Ms. A10 stated, “I believe every human on the planet is creative” (06-17-05). Ms. A5 agreed, “I know that I am creative because creativity means you don’t have to be great. [Creativity] can be the little things that add up to make a difference” (01-21-06). Ms. A9 concurred, “I am creative! I am happiest when I am doing creative things. I feel refreshed and renewed when I do that. I feel satisfied [as a teacher]” (12-29-05). Ms. A2 added, “I think my creativity is being able to best educate my children who are my masterpieces. To see them successful is my reward [as a teacher]” (12-06-05). Ms. C2 summed up creativity eloquently stating:

> “Creativity is the fountainhead of my spirit. Every human being is creative and me as an individual; creativity is what fuels and passions me and sets me free. I

> see every child that walks through that classroom has a distinct gift to give. The raw material of who they are when set free has something massive to contribute to life. And I am here in the classroom to do whatever I can do to take that raw material like the dirt and the rocks and the grass that is stirred was like stirring my own soul" (12-16-05).

A new awareness of teaching was theorized by teachers as arts integration allowed them to be reawakened in the classroom. Teachers expressed feelings of empowerment and excitement toward teaching when the arts integrated lessons were used in the classroom. Real learning was discussed as the arts provided students the opportunities to make connections between core curriculum and practical knowledge. The creative spirit of the student was fostered as teachers saw the connections being made in the classroom. Teachers reported excitement when students who struggled academically were encouraged to use creativity for learning. As students began to use creativity, teachers began to see creativity in themselves. Teachers began to understand that individuals are creative in many different ways viewing the creative self as necessary to teaching. *Teacher Awareness* provided a catalyst to understand how teachers theorized about using arts integrated lessons in the standardized educational environment.

Research Question Two:

> *How has the implementation of arts integrated curricula changed teaching techniques in the classroom?*

In order to respond to this question, an analysis of the responses by the participants regarding the Project CREATES program was discussed. CREATES staff worked with teachers, artists, and the school leadership to develop arts integrated experiences in the classroom to increase student learning. Unlike many commercial programs that are introduced into the school with a focus on increasing test scores, the Project CREATES program used the principles of arts integration to enhance the core curriculum, making learning practical for students. Teachers responded that the arts were not a fill-in to mandatory curriculum but rather an integral piece that enhanced student learning especially when students were challenged academically. Providing support through professional development experiences in a non-challenging environment allowed the teachers to collaborate, mentor, learn, discuss issues, and receive instruction in processes that were pertinent to arts integration and increased teacher commitment to the arts. Participants made changes to teaching techniques as evidenced through discussions of student learning, teaching through the arts, creativity, and professional development.

Teachers reported the benefits students received when arts integration was taught in the classroom. The arts integrated lessons gave teachers permission to creatively apply the benchmarks to everyday life making learning applicable for the students. Ms. C2 stated that “Arts integration is the place where the arts occur inside the curriculum in a seamless infusion like breathing” (12-16-05). She further stated that the students learn to make connections when the arts integrated activities are seamless (C2, 12-16-05).

Teachers discussed how the concepts in core subjects were taught very differently when arts integration lessons are used, leading students to make connections and remember the material taught (A9, 12-29-05). The subject of social studies was

mentioned by teachers to discuss this concept. Ms. A3 stated that as a teacher you become less concerned with the memorization of important historical dates and rely more on visual art or music to help students connect with the period being studied (12-29-05). Thus, arts integration became the "curriculum that has the dance of the arts inside of it" (C2, 12-16-05).

Teachers stated that using arts integration lessons intensified their desire to teach after working with Project CREATES (A2, 12-06-05; A9, 12-29-05; A11, 06-17-05; C1, 07-22-05). Ms. A5 stated, "Working with Project CREATES has been inspirational because it helps me think of all the reasons I entered the teaching profession. I wanted to touch the lives of students and help students help themselves [be successful]" (01-21-06). Ms. A6 agreed, "The students we teach are sometimes behind academically because of the language barrier. The arts allow the students a place to be successful and to showcase creativity" (05-14-05). Ms. A1 continued, "I have definitely changed as a teacher. I try to think of new ways to use the arts during every lesson. The arts help students succeed where they are sometimes behind academically" (02-16-05). Ms. C2 eloquently summed it up stating, "Arts infusion is not for the weary or the lazy. Teachers have to be attentive to what is occurring [in the classroom] and see how the children are learning" (12-16-05).

Teachers reported changes in teaching after learning to implement the arts into core curriculum. Ms. C3 stated, "Using arts integration in the classroom has definitely made me a better teacher. I don't think of myself as a teacher anymore. I think of myself as a facilitator who is always learning something. I am really excited about teaching again" (12-16-05; 01-25-06). Ms. A4 agreed, "I look at teaching in a different way. In the classroom I facilitate rather than teach. If I call it art I can justify it more than play" (12-

06-05). Ms. A6 concurred “I only use teacher directed instruction long enough to give the directions. After that the students are working together to form their own knowledge. That is where the real learning occurs” (12-06-05).

Teachers discussed how changes in their views of creativity were beneficial to using arts integration in the classroom. Ms. B2 began, “After attending the conference on creativity and the professional developments it made me see, I am creative because I can improvise and come up with new ideas in the classroom” (01-23-06). Ms. A7 agreed stating, “Creativity is whenever you are able to do anything and have success attaining the goal you set. Creativity is very subjective” (06-17-05). Mr. A8 reiterated, “Creativity is like a seed. You never lose it [and once it is planted] it is always something you keep” (01-21-06).

Professional development experiences, provided by Project CREATES, helped teachers learn to plan, collaborate, and network with others for teaching. Ms. A11 stated that “Professional development is a great place for teachers and artists to come together to plan lessons and tie them to the state standards” (02-02-04). During professional development meetings artists and teachers were able to schedule arts integrated lessons and collaborate lesson plans which were discussed as beneficial to the teachers (A9, 06-09-04; A11, 02-02-04). Teachers reported they enjoyed networking with other teachers to learn new strategies for teaching the standards (A4, 12-06-05). Ms. A6 stated, “Going to professional development and being around other teachers and networking is great. I am able to work with them and adapt ideas [from other teachers lesson plans] to fit my students” (12-06-05). Ms. A5 concurred, “Attending professional development gives me more ideas to implement in the classroom” (01-21-06). Ms. A9 verified this saying,

"Professional development has helped me become more enthusiastic as a teacher. Attending the professional development meetings is less stressful than thinking of lessons all alone. I don't have to come up with all the materials or ideas by myself. It is a lot of fun to plan with other teachers" (06-09-04). Ms. C2 summed it up saying,

> "Coming into Project CREATES I already considered myself as holding a lot of skills. But now with the dialogue and resources I have to pull from I have fed my toolbox. I had to buy a new tool box and totally go away with what I had. I have a whole new way of being [a teacher] and I am changed forever" (C2, 12-16-05).

Teachers began to change teaching techniques in the classroom as a stronger commitment of arts integration occurred after working with Project CREATES. CREATES provided teachers with opportunities for professional development experiences to learn how to integrate the arts into core curriculum. Professional development allowed teachers to congregate, collaborate, network, and discuss difficulties experienced making this process one of learning. The learning process helped teachers feel comfortable using arts integration in the classroom leading to a greater chance of sustainability.

Ms. C2 powerfully summed up her beliefs in arts integration after working with Project CREATES:

> "I am going to be the voice in the crowd powerfully speaking for arts integration. You will hear me roar!" (04-04-05).

Research Question Three:

In what ways does the Iceberg Model provide a framework for understanding teacher personal theory and teacher change?

In order to answer this question, the framework of the Iceberg Model was considered to address teacher personal theory and teacher change. Iceberg Model levels in this analysis were the events, patterns of behavior, underlying structures, and mental models affecting the Project CREATES teachers. Along with describing these four levels of interactions, the principles of learning and leverage are discussed. Relevant literature supporting personal theory and teacher change is included in this discussion.

The first consideration of the Iceberg Model was the events level. Events were the most easily recognized and discussed area because they are easily observed by others (Senge, 1990). They are separate occurrences that can be viewed by outsiders who may not understand the totality of the systems in place. Doel (2001) explained that an event is just a happening unless it tells us something about where it was derived from and where it is going in the system. The events in this study were the observed arts integration lessons, classroom environments, and professional development experiences. Each observed event provided little explanation into teacher theory because it merely described what could be viewed on the surface level. Isolated events provided little understanding of how teachers personal theories influence arts integration into the core curriculum since research affirmed personal theory had complex layers.

Patterns of behavior, the next level of the Iceberg model, were the constantly changing interactions that focused on long-term change and assessed the implications of

organizational trends (Senge, 1990). The first pattern of behavior that changed for the Project CREATES teachers was the way they connected with the content. Arts integration literature postulated that the arts should not be viewed as just an add-on to a lesson but as a seamless integration to teach core subject knowledge in the classroom (Bleedorn, 2003; Werner & Freeman, 2001). Bresler (2002) affirmed this by stating students synthesize the knowledge of subjects when the arts are used in conjunction with core subjects leading to a more enjoyable learning experience. Teachers began to integrate the arts more frequently in the classroom when they saw students making connections and enjoying the learning process.

The second pattern of behavior that changed was the teachers' desirability to connect with other educators. Instead of relying on set planning meetings, teachers began to meet in non-traditional places and times and began working with artists to facilitate lessons in the classroom. This provided a bridge between art and core curriculum. Just as arts integration literature postulates, teachers who collaborate are more successful with arts integration in the classroom (Bresler, 1995). Collaboration and camaraderie became an important component of teaching and patterns of behavior began to be understood by examining the underlying structures influencing the teachers.

Learning occurs when the individuals involved in the process begin to discuss how learning is occurring. The discovery of new ideas and understandings that directly lead to changes in behavior are vital to this process (Senge, 1990). Project CREATES teachers experienced the principle of learning in this study through professional development sessions. According to Senge, even when people have a common vision the way they see the vision emerging is different hence the team is viewed as the

fundamental learning unit. The professional development sessions provided a foundation for team learning to occur.

Teachers were given the opportunity to expand their knowledge of arts integration through attending these sessions, which promoted the possibilities for teachers to integrate and expand ideas for arts integration (Ayers, 2001). Teachers, artists, and CREATES staff congregated, collaborated, networked, and discussed arts integration.

During many of the professional development meetings, teachers became students as artists demonstrated how to integrate the arts into core curriculum. Following these experiences, teachers discussed feelings of trepidation experienced during the professional development meetings as they attempted to complete projects using the arts. Providing the teachers with the opportunity to experience arts integrated lessons as a student validated the feelings of fear and inadequacy often described by students when they were placed in similar learning experiences.

Professional development experiences allowed teachers to practice a variety of skills, learn new processes, and expand their knowledge base (Eisner, 2002). Teachers became actively involved in the professional development experience leading to changes in teaching by providing opportunities to engage in inquiry, reflection, and co-learning as the discovery of new teaching techniques and strategies occurred for the participants (Eisner, 1998; Gardner, 2000; Risko & Bromley, 2001). The Project CREATES teachers participated in the learning process during these sessions and they began to feel more comfortable using arts integration in the classroom. In addition, teachers were given the opportunity to use arts integrated collaboration to develop lesson plans between artists

and teachers. As the teachers became more informed and at ease the concept of arts integrated curriculum became more positive, leading to a greater chance of sustainability.

The next level of the Iceberg Model, underlying structures, was one of the most powerful elements of this model because it is rarely understood (Senge, 1990). The educational environment directly influenced classroom behavior for teachers participating in Project CREATES. For this study, the underlying structure of educational dissonance must be addressed as teachers tried to implement curricular change.

Project CREATES teachers reported feelings of frustration with leadership that focused on assessment and standardization. The administration believed that having a uniform classroom environment provided fewer distractions for the students leading to better learning environments. However, teachers reported feeling disheartened when classrooms were sterile. Another factor was teachers no longer had permission to teach students diversified learning when the quota of standardization was in place. Literature supported the teachers feelings saying that teachers are less likely to improve teaching when the environment consists of uniform classrooms, mandated curriculum, scripted teaching, and standardized testing (Christy, 2003/2004; Eisner, 2002; Hufton et al., 2003; Solomon, 1998).

Teachers reported feeling less in control of their educational environment as leadership introduced commercial curriculum programs, many of which had replaced arts integrated lessons. These prepackaged curriculum lessons focused on rote memorization and included additional testing for students, both of which placed more stress on both the student and teacher.

Providing teachers with set curriculum equated to feelings that administration didn't believe in the teachers' ability to provide quality instruction to students. Some teachers reported frustration with the new curriculum because many students entered the schools below grade level and teachers understood retention of knowledge was higher for lessons taught using arts integration. Bresler (1995) stated, students who were less academically oriented had greater opportunities for learning when arts integration was implemented.

Teachers stated the requirement for continual assessment was one of the most difficult pressures faced by teachers and was unreasonable. Many teachers in this study reported feeling tremendous pressure to ensure students did not fail standardized assessments. Classroom practice began to focus on testing rather than learning (Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2006; Price, 2003). This was reinforced as teachers told of spending all of their time in the classroom getting ready to give tests, teaching the curriculum geared toward passing tests, and/or administering tests (Cameron, 2005). This information defined the underlying structure of educational dissonance influencing teachers' personal theories and change.

The foundational level of the Iceberg Model was the mental models. Mental models shape how people act and behave. Senge (1990) described mental models as being simple generalizations or complex theories of self. Mental models are often not discussed but guide behavior. The mental models in this study referred to reawakening, arts as real learning, creative spirit, and creative self.

Project CREATES teachers described their set beliefs, values, and principles toward education. Teachers relied on personal experiences to help students reach higher

levels of thinking, make connections through experience, and express creativity in the classroom in order for real learning to occur. Literature on belief systems and values of teaching, as well as personal practical knowledge supported these ideas (Dweck, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Handal & Lauvås, 1987; Hong et al., 1999; Plucker & Runco, 1998).

Teachers reported that teaching became meaningful as students made connections through arts integration lessons. Student creativity that was once viewed as deviant or fluff was no longer a valid description as teachers saw successes and increased self esteem occurred in the classroom (Plucker et al., 2004). Arts integration became a catalyst for many teachers by bringing forth the creative spirit of the students during lessons. No longer viewed as an add-on, art integration became the teachers' responsibility for increasing student knowledge (Bresler, 1995).

Personal definitions of creativity were questioned as teachers began to learn that creativity had many meanings. Initially many teachers did not feel creative or describe themselves as such. The traditional definition of creativity permeated the teachers' vocabulary. Describing themselves as uncreative due to not being gifted in the visual arts was challenged as the teachers learned more about arts integration and creativity through working with Project CREATES. This view of creativity was validated through literature on teacher misconceptions of creativity (Plucker et al., 2004).

Teachers began to see that creativity manifested itself in a variety of forms and levels after working with Project CREATES. Those who were once uncomfortable creating in the classroom began to search for opportunities to teach arts integrated

lessons. Fear of failing was replaced by understanding the many components of creativity (Plucker et al., 2004).

New terminology was developed as teachers discussed creativity. Sternberg (1995) described making the transition from the old terminology to the new terminology surrounding the discussion on creativity. Terms such as open-minded, thinking outside the box, and doing something in a new way replaced the old vocabulary. Teachers began allowing themselves to step outside their comfort zone and experiences.

Teachers who were aware of their mental models could be described as having high levels of personal mastery. According to Senge (1990), individuals with high levels of personal mastery expand their ability to create results for their life according to their own desires. Teaching is a calling and not just a profession when personal mastery was employed (Senge). The principle of leverage shaped the mental models and personal mastery of the teachers.

Finally, the part of the Iceberg Model that refers to the principles of leverage was explored. Leverage recognizes the patterns of behavior as influencing the decisions made by the individual. It is most effective when leverage gets to the core of the individual and accesses the assumptions made by the individual (Amorim, 2001; Sheetz & Yates, 2002; Shibley, 2001). The principle of leverage refers to seeing where actions and changes in the current structure can lead to significant improvements (Senge, 1990).

Project CREATES and arts integration experiences helped teachers understand how to implement curricular change in the classroom while continuing to work in a standardized educational environment. Arts integration meant a variety of things in terms of content, resources, structures, and pedagogies (Bresler, 1995). Educators are not in

agreement on what arts integration should look like and the role it should play in the educational environment (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006). While arts integration had the ability to humanize the educational experience for students, most teachers had little experience and exposure to the arts in traditional educational programs (McKean, 2001; Mishook & Kornhaber).

The traditional views of education and classroom management practices were challenged when the teachers began to use arts integration in the classroom. When teachers saw what was happening to students, they excitedly relinquished control of the classroom. Teachers began to change from being an individual in the classroom to working with others for arts integration.

Working in cooperation with Project CREATES for arts integration, a shared vision was formed by the teachers. According to Senge (1990), shared vision provides a focus for learning as it fosters risk taking and experimentation of the individuals involved. Shared vision moves from the level of personal mastery and mental models into a group orientation (Senge). As teachers began to change they brought an energy, passion, and excitement that could not be generated from focusing on the rules of the standardized environment alone (Senge). They began to model the vision of arts integration as fundamental to student learning through continuing to work with Project CREATES.

Although the Iceberg Model provided a framework to describe some elements of teachers' personal theories and change, after reviewing the five principles of learning organizations obvious gaps exist in this model. The first problem was the reliance on mental models as foundational to teachers' personal theories.

Senge (1990) discussed that understanding all aspects of human behavior was complex. Many of the beliefs, values, and assumptions guiding behaviors are flawed. People believe their mental models are facts and not assumptions making it difficult to expect individuals to change behaviors (Senge).

In order to describe teachers' personal theories as a component of mental models there must be an awareness of the teacher to their existence. However, according to Senge (1990) many individuals are unaware of their mental models. When mental models are unnoticed they cannot be examined and thus don't change. Problems were encountered when trying to change behavior because the beliefs lie below the surface of individual awareness. Life is ever changing so it is important for individuals to change with it as nothing is fluid (Senge).

Another problem with the model was the inability to describe more than one system at a time. Although various components of teachers' personal theories and change can be discussed as patterns of behavior, underlying structures, and mental models, using the framework of the Iceberg Model only focused on one perspective and system at a time. By focusing on the teacher, many other perspectives and systems affecting teaching were ignored. Administration, educational culture, community, parents, students, etc. were all systems that influence how teachers make changes and support personal theories. However, the Iceberg Model could not discuss more than one system at a time as each level was impacted by a change in the other levels.

Finally, describing the principles of learning and leverage as being reliant on the context of Project CREATES was troublesome because teachers continued to learn even without a structured environment. Teachers attended continuing education courses and

experiences to increase learning. Professional development experiences through Project CREATES might have enhanced learning but cannot be viewed as the only opportunity for teachers to engage in learning. Leverage cannot be accounted for by explaining the contextual elements of Project CREATES alone as leverage occurred from various sources including but not limited to leadership, curriculum, and professional development. Providing an exhaustive account of the principles affecting learning and leverage may not be possible without understanding the breadth of systems facing the educational community today.

The Iceberg Model provided a foundation to discuss some elements of teacher personal theory and change. The principles of the learning organizations cannot exist independent of each other. The patterns of behavior began to change as mental models and personal mastery were challenged by the underlying structures. Viewing this shift in behavior had implications for long-term change (Senge, 1990). Using this approach was one way to understand how teachers' personal theories influence arts integration into core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment can lead to sustainability of the arts in elementary schools.

Summary

This study only touched the surface of possible influences on teachers' personal theories as human behavior is complex and convoluted. Three themes emerged to begin to understand this phenomenon. The themes were named: *Teacher Change*; *Educational Dissonance*; and *Teacher Awareness*. Each theme was further divided into pertinent subthemes to gain a clearer understanding of the processes involved in personal theory.

Teacher Change provided a discussion of the way teachers began to connect to the content and others to teach arts integrated lessons. *Educational Dissonance* offered a discussion of leadership, permission to teach, curriculum, and assessment. *Teacher Awareness* was developed by describing reawakening, the arts as real learning, creative spirit, and creative self.

The elements of Project CREATES were discussed as teachers examined how working with CREATES staff while attending professional development helped them integrate the arts into the core curriculum. Changes to teaching were reported by teachers after working with Project CREATES. Teachers discussed being provided with professional development opportunities to congregate, collaborate, network, and discuss difficulties experienced making this a process one of learning.

Finally, the Iceberg Model was discussed as a potential framework for understanding teacher personal theory and change. A discussion of the various levels of the Iceberg Model ensued. Some fundamental and theoretical problems with this model were discussed. In Chapter V, implications for theory, practice, and future research are addressed.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to understand how elementary school teacher personal theories influenced arts integration into core curriculum while working in a standardized environment. This chapter summarizes the study, provides conclusions based on the findings from the analysis of the teacher interviews and observations, offers limitations of the study, and discusses the implications for theory, practice, and future research in the field of education.

Summary of the Study

This study examined personal theories for those teachers who used arts integrated lessons while working in a standardized educational climate. Sixteen teachers from three public elementary schools located in a Midwestern state who worked with Project CREATES participated in this study. Fifteen females and one male with differing amounts of educational, professional, and formal arts training were interviewed and observed.

Qualitative methodology, through ethnography, provided the researcher with a means to explore and understand personal theory and change for teachers who integrated the arts into core curriculum while working in a standardized environment. Five

interview questions were selected following Rubin & Rubin's (1995) topical interview design and focused on the teachers' understanding of arts integration, the use of new teaching techniques for arts integrated lessons, the ways arts integration changed classroom lessons for the teachers, the teacher personal theories about how arts integration affected student learning, and the teachers' definition of creativity. Probing techniques, including steering and experience probes, were used to retrieve additional data pertinent to teacher personal theories (Rubin & Rubin). Observations of the teachers during planning sessions, lessons, and evaluation were conducted. Professional development experiences, performances, teacher stories, and various meetings provided additional observational data for analysis. During the observations, field notes were written to capture and preserve indigenous meanings for this study (Angronsino & dePerez, 2003; Emerson et al., 1995).

Sixteen teacher interviews were conducted using the interview questions (Appendix A) for this study. Thirty individual classroom teacher observations were conducted. Twenty-eight teacher interactions for these sixteen teachers were coded where teachers were observed outside of the classroom setting. The addition of twenty-three archival teacher interviews and thirty-one archival observations were included for data analysis (Emerson et al., 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Data was coded from interview transcripts, observations, and field notes to identify categories or themes. Coding was completed in two phases. Open coding was the first phase where the researcher analyzed the interviews, observations, and field notes line-by-line to formulate ideas, themes, and categories. The first phase of coding was followed by focused coding where the researcher concentrated on the ideas and

formulated themes relevant to teacher personal theories (Emerson et al., 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The data was organized to link the themes together to create a clear description of how teacher personal theories influenced arts integration into core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment.

The first theme named *Teacher Change* provided a discussion of the changes to teaching techniques that take place after implementing the arts integrated curriculum in the classroom. Teachers discussed being under tremendous pressure to increase student test scores, teach students to learn specific benchmarks, and help students reach specific grade levels while resources continued to diminish and less support was received from administration.

Two areas emerged from the data and were discussed by teachers as areas influencing teacher change. First, the teachers discussed the enjoyment of connecting with the content to make decisions for practice. Teachers learned through Project CREATES to use the arts as a mechanism for teaching core curriculum. Teaching arts integrated lessons allowed students to synthesize the core curriculum with personal experience. In addition, teachers changed the delivery of some core content in the classroom using integrated curriculum. The second area that influenced *Teacher Change* was connecting with others to teach. Teachers stated they enjoyed the experience of networking and collaborating with others to generate new ideas for teaching and learning. Connecting with others to teach is known as collaboration in arts integration literature. Study participants used these two areas to discuss how personal theories of education changed as arts integration was introduced into their standardized educational environment.

The second theme, *Educational Dissonance,* provided teachers with the opportunity to discuss how the standardized educational environment influenced classroom decisions and personal theories. Teachers felt pressured when implementing arts integration in the classroom and discussed four areas to clarify these pressures: leadership, permission to teach, curriculum, and assessment. Teachers stated they were less likely to improve teaching skills and techniques in the current educational system, which consisted of uniform classrooms, mandated curriculum, scripted teaching, and standardized testing. The section on leadership included a discussion of district mandates that required a standardized classroom environment, the pressure to use less arts integration when the students were behind academically, and the constant reminders of testing requirements. Teachers discussed the lack of permission to teach for learning and the requirement to teach for content acquisition. External forces that provided scripted curriculum were seen as both beneficial and challenging to the teachers. Teachers used the scripted curriculum to guide them in the classroom while constantly being aware of the requirement to learn one more way to teach. In addition, they discussed the pressures of continuous assessment resulting in a difficult and frustrating educational environment. Many of the mandated requirements did not allow teachers personal growth. Participants used these four areas to discuss how *Educational Dissonance* influenced teacher personal theories to integrate the arts in the classroom.

The final theme that emerged was named *Teacher Awareness* describing the influence of personal background and experience, professional training and classroom experience, and creativity of the spirit and self to understand how teacher theories influence arts integration. Four sub-themes emerged to help understand and describe

Teacher Awareness: reawakening, arts as real learning, creativity spirit, and creative self. Deeply ingrained assumptions shaped the foundational values for teachers and were the basis of teacher beliefs influencing personal theories. The foundational values were questioned when teachers were in conflict with the educational culture.

Teachers were provided an opportunity to enhance core curriculum using arts integrated lessons after joining Project CREATES. Providing support through professional development experiences in a non-challenging environment allowed the teachers to collaborate, mentor, learn, discuss, and receive instruction in processes that were pertinent to arts integration. This environment increased teacher commitment to the arts.

The Iceberg Model, based on the five principles of learning organizations, provided a foundation to discuss teacher personal theories and change. The levels of the Iceberg Model included in this analysis were the patterns of behavior, underlying structures, and mental models. Along with describing these three levels of interaction, the principles of learning and leverage were presented. The Iceberg Model provided an initial framework but could not be viewed as a comprehensive model of teacher personal theories and change because some disparities existed. These inconsistencies included the inability to describe more than one system at a time, the requirement for teachers to be aware of their mental models, and the dependence on this model to only examine teacher personal theories based on working with Project CREATES.

Conclusions

The findings in this study indicated that teacher personal theories played an integral role in influencing teachers to implement curricular change in a standardized educational environment. There appeared to be many theoretical perspectives and practical personal knowledge that informed teacher theory. Ethnographic techniques were used to uncover the perspectives held by teachers. Conclusions from these findings are as follows:

1. Teacher personal theories were influenced by *Teacher Change; Educational Dissonance; and Teacher Awareness.*
2. Teachers accentuated arts integration lessons when students responded positively to instruction.
3. Educational discord occurred when teachers believed leadership did not support arts integrated curriculum.
4. Teacher personal theories were influenced by participation in arts integrated experiences.
5. Professional development experiences provided teachers with the tools and knowledge necessary to develop arts integrated lessons.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study was the role of Project CREATES in the three public elementary schools. This study assumed that working with the Project was the only way teachers could be provided the tools and information for successful arts

integration lessons. However, another arts integration program may have been just as successful.

Another limitation of this study was the inability of the researcher to be totally immersed in the educational culture. The researcher was unable to approach this study as a traditional ethnographer due to the established relationship of the researcher as a Project CREATES staff member. This limitation might have hindered the types of data collected as the researcher's role was totally overt.

The third limitation was the relationship between the researcher and the teachers. The teacher's answers to the specific interview questions may have been biased since Project CREATES was already in the schools and the relationship was established prior to completion of this study. This limitation might have hindered the authenticity of the interview data.

The researcher's lack of direction for guided observations caused another limitation of the data collected. The observations may have been incomplete because the researchers were unsure what information to document in the interactions. This limited the type of data coded for analysis.

The final limitation in this study was the amount of participants included in the data analysis. If the researcher had chosen a case study approach, more in-depth data collection might have occurred. Trying to divide time between sixteen teachers was difficult. The researcher had to depend on the data collected from the interviews as the primary source for analysis. This limitation might have hindered the interpretation of the data as heavily dependent on what the teachers said rather than what was observed.

Implications for Theory

The first implication for theory is to explore and explain how beliefs, personal practical knowledge, and the meaning of creativity influenced teacher personal theories. The early formation of teacher beliefs may be influenced by schooling, time, reasoning, and personal experience (Pajares, 1992; Thomas & Pederson, 2003). These beliefs helped teachers develop new teaching techniques and methods to employ in the classroom (Dweck, 1996; Hong et al., 1999; McCoy, 2003; Pajares; Plucker & Runco, 1998; Zhang & Sternberg, 1998). This study supported the concept that teacher beliefs influence classroom practice (Bandura, 1986; Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000; Pajares; Prawat, 1992; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004; Thomas & Pederson). Beliefs were a strong determining element of personal theory because teachers made judgments and decisions about what curriculum was useful and not useful to arts integration, teaching, and creativity based on their established values.

Personal practical knowledge is defined as the combination of traditional classroom training and personal experience. Literature on personal practical knowledge provided valuable insight into this study. Teachers are products of the past, present, and future experiences. The way a teacher defines the experiences affects personal theory. This study supported the concept that personal filters helped teachers decipher the choices they made for curricular change (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Instruction that valued creativity was viewed as an added bonus during this study. Many teachers discussed how personal views of creativity had changed after working with Project CREATES. Traditional views of creativity that had once permeated the schools were altered as teachers began to work with community artists, ARCs, and attend professional

development experiences. Teachers began to see creativity within all individuals, not just those who were gifted as artists.

Working with Project CREATES led teachers to identify three contextual areas that influenced curricular change as personal theory was modified. The three areas identified were arts integration, the current educational climate, and professional development experiences. Arts integration was the first area discussed. Teacher comments supported the many theoretical premises of arts integration. Teachers believed that arts integration should not be viewed as an add-on but rather as imperative to student learning and should be fully integrated into the core curriculum. The principles of collaboration and co-creation were readily accepted by teachers who were used to operating singularly in the classroom as supported in the literature (Craft, 2000; Eisner 1998; Gardner, 2000).

Another contextual area discussed described the current educational environment. Teachers commented passionately about the responsibility of increasing student test scores while differentiating learning as more than assessment. Many teachers felt that administrative guidelines stifled creativity making it more difficult to integrate the arts in the classroom. Illuminating educational systems issues added to this implication for theory that might ignore the educational context as influencing teacher personal theory.

The final area discussed by teachers was the impact professional development had on making curricular change. Teachers discussed that participation in the learning experiences helped them discover new techniques and strategies (Eisner, 1998; Gardner, 2000). Professional development provided the opportunity to use arts integrated collaboration to develop lesson plans between artists and teachers. Attending professional

development promoted possibilities in the classroom and expanded teacher ideas regarding arts integration leading to effective teaching strategies being employed (Ayers, 2001).

Teacher theory may be described using the five principles of learning organizations. The researcher used the five principles of learning organizations as one way to explain teacher personal theories as this might provide a familiar framework to those individuals who are not in tune with the educational culture. The interactions of the five areas: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking provided a foundation for exploring teacher personal theories. The principle of *systems thinking* helped describe personal growth and development of the teachers (Senge, 1990).

Senge (1990) defined *systems thinking* as the ability to describe and understand the interrelationships that form a whole. In this study, the whole refers to personal theory and change for the teachers. The teachers played an integral role in developing personal theories by being active participants, relying on a solid foundation of educational theory, working with Project CREATES by attending professional development experiences to expand teaching techniques and classroom practices, understanding and accepting the limitations placed on the teachers by the educational system, and constantly reflecting on and interpreting personal values of teaching, arts integration, creativity, and student learning. Although each teacher demonstrated pieces of each of the five areas in the learning organizational theory, the principle of systems thinking seemed most applicable to this study. Describing teacher personal theories using systems thinking is a new concept and adds to the implication for theory.

The Iceberg Model which is based on the five principles of learning organizations provided the framework to explore personal theory and change for teachers. The premise behind this model was that all things that are occurring and are visible to the observer are only the tip of the iceberg (Senge, 1990). Although the model was primarily established based on the observable measurements, conducting a qualitative study allowed the teachers to explain what was occurring under the surface as they were implementing curricular change in a standardized environment. A critical analysis of the Iceberg Model showed that some levels of the model provided a clearer description of teacher personal theory than other levels.

Some problems were encountered when trying to describe teacher personal theory in terms of the Iceberg Model. The assumption that teachers were aware of their mental models was not well supported in the literature (Senge, 1990). In addition, the complexity of describing teacher personal theories was dependent on only understanding one system at a time causing concern because teachers cannot operate in only one system. Although many systems are operating at the same time, the Iceberg Model can only discuss one system at a time because each level of the Iceberg depends on understanding and describing the other levels of the Iceberg.

Finally, describing the principles of learning and leverage related to the context of Project CREATES ignores the possibility of other systems. Without understanding the breadth of the educational system, it was impossible to discuss all the possible principles that affect learning and leverage for teachers leading to another implication for theory. Although parts of the Iceberg Model may be viewed as a foundation for describing

personal theory and change, many other pieces are missing when only one model was used to describe human behavior.

Implications for Practice

Teachers were able to use arts integration more effectively when they did not work in isolation. Allowing teachers to collaborate with other teachers in various grade levels, skills, and experiences was imperative for successful arts integration. Co-creating with artists allowed the teachers to demonstrate their own creativity. Opportunities for professional development encouraged teachers to implement changes in the classroom and work with others to learn and plan arts integrated lessons. Hence, teachers should be provided professional development opportunities pertaining to the implementation and creation of arts integrated lessons in order for programs to be successful.

Arts integration programs should be viewed as a seamless integration between the arts and core curriculum. Traditional training programs that consider the arts additional curriculum and not core to learning need to re-focus the lens. In addition, teachers must be provided the adequate resources to continue to develop and use arts integration in the classroom. Teachers no longer view art and music as a way enhance the curriculum but consider it an integral part of instruction. Changes can be made in the field of education to prepare teachers to use arts integrated curriculum in the classroom without further training.

Administration should be supportive in order for teachers to feel comfortable making curricular change. The requirement for standardization in the classroom and curriculum affects the teacher desirability to integrate the arts in the classroom. Teachers

must be given ample opportunities to continue using the arts in order for sustainability of arts integration programs. Commercial prepackaged programs added stress and convinced teachers they were inadequate professionals because teachers theorized education was primarily concerned with standardization and not individuality. In addition, implications for practice included the need for administrators to support teachers and arts integration programs for viability and retention.

Teachers who once viewed students as deviant or different have been provided opportunities to help these students excel in school. Creativity is harnessed and differences become less important. Arts integration bridges the gap between cultural, economic, racial, political, and religious differences allowing deeper connections to be discovered in the classroom. Students are provided opportunities to create products that enhance their lives and broaden their learning horizons. Knowledge retention improved when connections were made in a creative learning environment.

Students have many talents that are not always discovered through academic measurements. Arts integration demonstrated an affective way to improve student learning. Rote memorization did not help students utilize higher thinking skills. Students enjoyed learning when it was practical and applicable for everyday life. Schools supported student autonomy by allowing students the opportunity to succeed especially when challenged academically. Arts integration should be included in core curriculum as it can lead to greater satisfaction and higher thinking skills for students. The arts should not be viewed as an add-on to be taught only when all other benchmarks have been met.

The majority of this study was situated in elementary schools that were considered inner-city or at-risk schools, making it a unique study. The perception of the

school district according to the teachers was that low performing schools need the school district to make decisions for them regarding curriculum implementation. Students who attend at-risk schools are not the only students who can benefit from arts integration. All students and schools can benefit from the addition of arts integration programs (Bresler, 1995). Implications for practice included the need for administration to recognize and trust teachers, as they are experts in the field. Relying on teachers to make decisions is imperative to sustaining arts integration in the schools.

Support from the community was detrimental to the success of the Project CREATES arts integration program. Arts organizations should take an active role in the educational community by providing support to change educational policies, offering training and resources to teachers, and encouraging artists to work with teachers for arts integration to be successful. The chance for arts integration programs to be sustained in the school system increases dramatically when support is received from administration, teachers, parents, the educational community, and the professional arts community. Implications for practice include the need for the educational community to actively pursue resources to sustain arts integration programs.

Implications for Future Research

One implication arising from this study for future research is the indication that it was impossible to describe every influence on teacher personal theories. The topical structure of the qualitative interviewing questions guided the participants in their responses. Future research questions could be developed to include other possible influences on personal theory. Furthermore, guided observations would have provided

greater insight into teacher personal theories by providing similar information for each teacher studied.

Another implication for future study is the inclusion of quantitative measurements, such as counting the number of arts integrated lessons for each teacher. Counting the lessons, might provide greater insight into the level of integration that is occurring for the teacher. The level of integration may provide further insight into teacher personal theories by examining how often arts integration lessons are included in the curriculum. The numbers of times teachers use arts integrated curriculum may help describe the actual curricular change that is occurring in the classroom.

The inclusion of data regarding student learning outcomes is another area for future study. Many Project CREATES teachers discussed the expectations to increase student learning and the importance of increasing student learning during this study. However, it was unclear how this piece fit into teacher personal theory at this time. A further examination followed by more directed research questions regarding student learning might illicit further data.

Further research could be conducted following the case study paradigm. A case study could provide greater in-depth data that can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the influences on teacher personal theories. Finally, there is still much research that needs to be done to understand teacher personal theories for those teachers who are choosing to implement curricular change while working in a standardized educational system. This study opened a lot of doors to explore personal theories and change for teachers who implement arts integration in the classroom. Future research

could look at some the influences not explored by continuing data collection with the teachers to illicit further information on teachers personal theories.

This study only scratched the surface of describing the influences on teacher personal theories. The volume of data generated by Project CREATES researchers should be revisited in smaller chunks for further analysis since the research used in this study focused on only a few Project CREATES teachers and specific topical research questions. Future studies could add to the current study but focus on other factors influencing teacher personal theories. Further research is needed to inform the educational community, professional development coordinators, and local, state, and national governments as to the implications for allowing teachers to make decisions based on personal theory, which informs classroom practice leading to greater student learning and teacher autonomy.

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Zwirn, S.G., & Graham, M. (2005). CROSSING BORDERS: The arts engage academics and inspire children. *Childhood Education, 81,* 267-273.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Rubin & Rubin (1995) Topical Interviewing

1. What is your understanding of arts integration? How have these ideas changed since joining project CREATES?

    - *Probe for the influences as a teacher, creative person, and co-creator.*

2. How are you using new teaching techniques for arts integration lessons?

    - *Probe for examples of planning sessions, teaching experiences, collaboration, and evaluation.*

3. In what ways has arts integration changed how you teach?

    - *Probe for examples of how teaching has changed.*

4. What is your theory about how arts integration affects student learning?

    - *Probe for implicit theories.*

5. What is your theory of creativity as related to you as a creative person?

    - *Probe for meaning of creativity, involvement in creative experiences, what it takes to be creative?*

APPENDIX B

INSTITUIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date	Thursday, June 09, 2005	**Protocol Expires:**	**9/2/2005**
IRB Application	ED0367		
Proposal Title:	PROJECT CREATES - CONNECTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES ENCOURAGING ALL TEACHERS TO EDUCATE WITH SPIRIT		
Reviewed and Processed as:	Expedited (Spec Pop) **Modification**		

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s) **Approved**

Principal Investigator(s) :

Diane Montgomery
424 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Stacy Otto
216 Willlard
Stillwater, OK 74078

The requested modification to this IRB protocol has been approved. Please note that the original expiration date of the protocol has not changed. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. All approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB

☐ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

Signature :

Sue C. Jacobs, Chair, OSU Institutional Review Board

Thursday, June 09, 2005
Date

Pursuant to 45 CFR 46 www.vpr.okstate.edu/irb

APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

MODIFICATION

REC'D URC
JUN 07 2005

Submitted to the
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Please complete, sign, and date this form. Submit one copy of this form plus one copy of any revised materials to the Office of University Research Compliance, 415 Whitehurst, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-5700 (ph), (405) 744-4335 (fax), irb@okstate.edu. Modification may not be implemented until they have received approval. ***The approval of this modification does not change the original period of approval of your IRB application.***

Title of Project: Project CREATES – Connecting Community Resources Encouraging All Teachers to Educate with Spirit

Current IRB Approval Number: ED0367 ***Expiration Date:*** 9/2/2005

Principal Investigator(s): *I acknowledge that this represents an accurate and complete description of my research.*

Diane Montgomery	Diane Montgomery	May 31, 2005	montgom@okstate.edu
Name of Primary PI (typed)	Signature of PI	Date	E-Mail
School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology		Education	
Department		College	
424 Willard Hall		X9441	
PI=s Address (Street, City, State, Zip)		Phone	E-Mail
Stacy Otto		May 31, 2005	stacy.otto@okstate.edu
Name of PI (typed)	Signature of PI	Date	E-Mail
School of Educational Studies		Education	
Department		College	
216 Willard Hall		X9196	
PI=s Address		Phone	E-Mail

Adviser (complete if PI is a student): *I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected.*

Adviser=s Name	Signature of Adviser	Date	E-Mail
Department		College	
Adviser=s Address (if applicable)		Phone	E-Mail

Concurrence:

Signature of Department Head	6/3/05 Date
Signature of College/Division Research Director	6-6-05 Date

1. Describe in detail the proposed changes, to include any change in title, methodology, sample size, sample population, assent or consent form, recruitment of subjects, principal investigator(s), research sites, etc.

   The proposed adaptation is a formal qualitative instrument submitted for approval (Appendix A of this modification proposal). Originally, the interviews consisted of three general questions (what has been positive, what would you change, and what advice do you have for other teachers). The revised interview questions extend the inquiry to learn about the ways that teachers are building theory for arts integration and creativity to use CREATES project activities in their classrooms. Only teachers who are willing to participate in the additional session will be in this portion of the study. No other changes are requested.

   Teacher codes will be kept on one list (locked in one file in the researcher's office) that can identify the teachers who choose to participate in the interview process. Identification of the teachers will not be kept with the interview transcripts in order to ensure anonymity of the responses.

2. Explain the reason for the request if it involves the methodology/study design.

   The addition of new teacher interview questions is requested to help describe the influences on the teachers that infuse the arts as a means of understanding how these influences affect student learning. One member of the student research team, Charla Long, will be using this and other data for her dissertation research.

3. Do these requested changes pose additional risks to subjects? ____Yes __X__No If yes, describe.

4. Submit all materials that are being revised, and highlight changes. See attached

   The interview question list is attached.

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

'Project CREATES' 2003–2004 Program Data Collection
Consent Letter for Adult Participants

Dear Participant:

We have received grant funding to conduct a study of the Project CREATES' impact on three elementary schools in Tulsa. Over the 2003–2004 school year, we will document the implementation of the project. We are interested in the instruction associated with this program, student, faculty and staff involvement, curriculum materials and how they are used, and the various effects of the program.

Participating classrooms will be observed and activities associated with Project CREATES will be documented. As a part of collecting observational data, one or two researchers will sit toward the back of a classroom for a total of two to three hours during the regular school day. Observation of classrooms will be conducted at regular intervals at least twice a month per participating classroom. Also, as a participant, you may be observed within the common areas of the school and within staff and / or planning meetings, etc. During observations, we will be writing down information about the content of the class' discussion during the lesson as well as general comments regarding the lesson content, the materials used, etc., and some classroom activities may be videotaped.

Additionally, an average of three interviews will be conducted with each of the various participating faculty and staff members. These interviews will be audiotaped. All tapes will be kept in a secure location and when no longer needed, will be destroyed. All names and identifying characteristics of participants will be changed in field notes or papers in order to protect anonymity. This study will result in a report to the grantor, The Albert & Hete Barthelmes Foundation, and the analysis may also result in published articles, dissertations, and presentations at professional conferences.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw permission at any time. You may also decline to participate. You will not be penalized for withdrawing or declining. If at any time during this study you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may contact:

Carol Olson, Ph.D., Chair, Institutional Review Board
415 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078
(405) 744–5700

If you have further questions or concerns, please contact Diane Montgomery or Stacy Otto at the following addresses and telephone numbers. Thank you for participating in the study.

Sincerely yours,

Diane Montgomery, Ph.D., Professor, SAHEP
Oklahoma State University, 424 Willard Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405) 744–9441

Stacy Otto, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, SES
Oklahoma State University, 216 Willard Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405) 744–9196

Please indicate whether or not you wish to participate in this study by checking a statement and signing your name. Please sign both copies of this consent form and keep one copy.

_____I wish to participate in the study of Project CREATES and have read this consent form.

_____I do not wish to participate in the study of Project CREATES.

_____ _____ _____
Signature Please print your name here Date

APPENDIX D

INSTITUIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

ARCHIVAL DATA

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 2/3/2004

Date: Friday, February 07, 2003 IRB Application No ED0367

Proposal Title: PROJECT CREATES - CONNECTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES ENCOURAGING ALL TEACHERS TO EDUCATE WITH SPIRIT

Principal Investigator(s):

Diane Montgomery
424 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Stacy Otto
216 Willlard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and Processed as: Expedited (Spec Pop)

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,
Carol Olson

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Charla LeAnne Long

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL THEORY FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IMPLEMENTING CURRICULAR CHANGE

Major Field: Educational Psychology

Education: Graduated from Hill Haven Christian Academy, Tulsa, Oklahoma, May, 1991; received Baccalaureate Degree of Arts degree in Sociology from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, July 1995; received Master of Human Relations from the University of Oklahoma, July 1997; received Doctor of Philosophy from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, December, 2006.

Experience: Detention Counselor, Tulsa County, Tulsa, Oklahoma from 1995 to 1996; Primary Counselor, FIRST Wings of Freedom, Tulsa, Oklahoma from 1996 to 1998; Social Service Specialist II, Department of Human Services, Tulsa, Oklahoma from 1998 to 2001; Social Service Specialist IV, Department of Human Services, Tulsa, Oklahoma from 2001 to 2004; Adjunct Faculty Sociology/Psychology, Rogers State University, Claremore, Oklahoma from 2001 to 2005; Graduate Research Assistant, Project CREATES, Tulsa, Oklahoma from 2004 to 2005; Researcher, Metropolitan Library System, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma from 2005 to 2006; Educational Psychologist, United States Postal Services, Norman, Oklahoma from 2006 to present.

Name: Charla LeAnne Long Date of Degree: December, 2006

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL THEORY BUILDING FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IMPLEMENTING CURRICULAR CHANGE

Pages in Study: 151 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major Field: Educational Psychology

Scope and Method of Study:

This dissertation reports a qualitative study to understand how elementary school teachers' personal theories influence arts integration into core curriculum while working in a standardized educational environment. The context for this study was Project CREATES (Community Resources Encouraging All Teachers to Educate with Spirit). The purpose of Project CREATES was to conduct research on methods that transform teaching and learning through the design and implementation of arts-infused curriculum in three metropolitan schools in a Midwestern state. Sixteen teachers were studied using an ethnographic approach to collect and analyze data. Data consisted of multiple interviews, observations of classrooms, and other relevant documents. In addition, archival data was analyzed.

Findings and Conclusions:

Three thematic areas emerged that have implications on teacher's personal theories: Teacher Change; Educational Dissonance and Teacher Awareness. Each of these themes was further divided into pertinent sub-themes to garner a more comprehensive understanding of teacher theory. A critique of the Iceberg Model (Senge, 1990) was presented as a way to understand the complexities of teachers' personal theories. Identifying and understanding the various influences on teachers' personal theory can help educators make decisions for arts integration, ultimately leading to sustainability of arts integration in the public elementary schools.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Diane Montgomery