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BOUNDARY BREAKING: HOW PRINCIPALS IMPACT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact site principles have on student engagement in the classroom through a sitewide art integration program with the outcome of increased knowledge in content areas. Researching the use of a sitewide art integration program at a Midwest high school, case study methodology was applied to administrator and teacher interviews using annual state test scores to triangulate for authenticity and impact. Six themes were identified from the interviews to have an impact on student engagement and increased content knowledge due to the art initiative. Those six themes were gathering teacher buy-in, the role of the administration, lack of enthusiasm, the impact of A Plus professional development, enhanced school climate and culture, the faculty demonstrated growth through A Plus, and student outcomes.

The results of the study indicated that principals do impact student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper knowledge of content matter. Four areas for future research developed based on study findings. Because the faculty at the school of study was all white, a study with a diverse faculty and school would add to the literature of principal leadership affecting student engagement in the classroom. Future study is necessary to examine how an intentional leadership theory can have a greater or lesser impact on a sitewide art initiative with an outcome of increased student engagement and deeper learning of content matter. A disconnect was uncovered between the teachers' perception of the climate of the school and the administrators' perception of the climate of the school related to the art initiative; therefore, further study could clarify this dissonance. Finally, students who had excellent ability on the end of year state tests had a lower performance outcome after the art initiative. This could

be due to some teachers' lack of enthusiasm for the art initiative. Thus, additional research is warranted.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem Statement

Many students are not engaged and active in their learning; therefore, site and district leaders must lead teachers to make curricular and pedagogical changes within the classroom to re-energize the learning environment (Goodlad, 1984; Finn, 1989; Larson & Richards, 1991; Newmann, Wehlage, & Lamborn, 1992; Steinberg, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1996; Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). Newman (1992) discusses the concept of engagement and why it is important, sharing why site leaders and teaching staff have such an obstacle in engaging students:

> Children are told by society that they have a problem (ignorance) that must be solved regardless of whether they feel a need for education. They are subjected to a program of labor that the teacher prescribes. The benefits of this labor are rarely self-evident to the student, partly because they are projected far into the future. These circumstances seem to diminish student trust in the professional, which is necessary if the student is to invest the considerable effort required for learning (p. 14).

Clearly engaging students is difficult when they are not interested in what they are told to learn and positive outcomes are seen many years in the future (Grannis, 1978; Deci, Nezlek, & Sheinman, 1981; Stodolsky, 1988; Shernoff, et al, 2003). When there is no connection to what they learn to their lives and interests, their engagement wanes; thus, their opportunity for learning deeply withers. This need to engage students in their learning is essential. However, people are complicated, and schools are made up of many unique individuals. Because schools are complex and constantly changing, there is no one right way for educators to engage students in the classroom. Nevertheless, an effective school leader recognizes multiple avenues in which

to engage students. One of those methods is through a cross-disciplinary approach, specifically through the use of arts as a way to engage and motivate students to learn.

Background to the Problem

Staring at the blank page before you / Open up the dirty window /
let the sun illuminate the words that you could not find / reaching for something in the distance /
so close you can almost taste it…
Natasha Bedingfield - Unwritten

For many students, if they don't see personal relevance in the classroom, they don't engage in the content at high levels. Therefore, active and engaged learning is decreasing in classrooms across America (Goodlad, 1984; Finn, 1989; Larson & Richards, 1991; Newmann, Wehlage, & Lamborn, 1992; Steinberg, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1996; Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). If site principals and other educational leaders do not adjust accordingly, society will see an America with few problem solvers and deep thinkers (Ravitch, 2010). Many students in the twenty-first century have spent their lives with technology such as games, cell phones, and other devices; thus, they are not geared to sit and learn as students did in the past (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). Consequently, many secondary students are bored, disengaged, unmotivated, and uninterested in school because of the lack of active, real world, interest connecting content (Fullan, 2014; Galeazzi's, 2015). "When people vary greatly, as school children do, and when they are pressed into work they have not chosen, it is foolish to expect them all to meet a set of predetermined standards;" (Noddings, 2013 p. 3) students are more engaged and invested in their learning when they feel a sense of ownership and are able to view their learning as relevant. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) assert:

> Connecting learning to students' real lives and aspirations is often what makes [learning] … so engaging for students. In many of our discussions with students, they said that

> learning in the 'old' way at school was all about learning the past. Instead, they wanted to learn in ways that connected to their futures (p. 15).

Thus, site principals can make space to lead their teaching staff in ways to engage students to learn in personal, applicable, and active ways in order to deepen the learning experience and knowledge students are gaining in the classroom (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014; Robinson, 2015).

Oklahoma City University created the Priddy Fellowship where teachers could come and learn how to integrate the arts across disciplines. At this institute, one visiting presenter shared the "nine Capacities for Imaginative Learning: noticing deeply, embodying, questioning, making connections, identifying patterns, exhibiting empathy, creating meaning, taking action, and reflecting/ assessing" (Garrett, 2013, p. 29). Art integration creates an opening for more passionate scholars, more engaged learners, and more dedicated students through the nine imaginative learning capacities. Davis (1999) states the "aesthetic education model, referred to the type of instruction where the arts were viewed as ways of knowing and where students were encouraged to construct their knowledge" (p. 14). Davis (1999) continues that the arts connect the cultures of the world. Thus, an art integration initiative will allow students to construct their own ways of knowing along with connecting them to other cultures as our world grows smaller and our community is globalized.

Allowing students to connect learning to their worlds through application of content through hands-on projects is important. Site leaders need to throw open the window and remind teachers of another way to teach beyond accountability testing, so they can help their students find joy in academia once again. Ravitch (2010) presents her epiphany when she shares "as I watched the choice and accountability movements gain momentum across the nation, I concluded that curriculum and instruction were far more important than choice and

accountability" (p.11). Educational site leaders must prioritize similarly: curriculum and instruction are the essence of what public education is for and about. It is the foundation of the workday and the product of the dedicated teaching profession. One way for educational site leaders to prioritize curriculum and instruction is to focus on ways to support student engagement in the classroom: one way is through art integration. Ravitch (2010) enumerates the reasons for a shift in pedagogy and site leadership:

> A democratic society cannot … prosper if it neglects to educate its children in the principles of science, technology, geography, literature, **and the arts** [bold emphasis mine]. The great challenge to our generation is to create a renaissance in education, one that goes well beyond the basic skills that have recently been the singular focus of federal activity, a renaissance that seeks to teach the best that has been thought and known and done in every field of endeavor" (p. 12).

A rich, broad, and deep education is the goal of all public education site leaders; however, too often bureaucracy, mandates, and other requirements choke the focus on curriculum and instruction out of educational leaders. The time is now to make a shift from exhausted acquiescence to focused leading with students at the forefront of the movement for engaged learning restored in each and every classroom across our nation.

Art integration throughout all classrooms allows students the opportunity to connect to their content through a specific interdisciplinary way, adding an active and contemplative element to student learning. Through specific and targeted application of art concepts within all content areas, research demonstrates students, especially struggling students, gain more in achievement on nationally norm-referenced tests (Rabkin & Redmond, 2006; Reardon, 2005). Other positive educational outcomes of an integrated art approach include students constructing

their own meaning of content material (Cousin, Martens, & Berghoff, 1998; Catterall, 1998; Gee, 2000), enhanced reasoning and problem solving skills (Cossentino & Shaffer, 1999; Warren 1993), long-term memory of content knowledge (Clinard & Foster, 1998; Davis, 1999), student reflection on content (Edmiston, 1993; Oddleifson, 1994), and student engagement in the content (April, 2001; Catterall, 1998). In order for sitewide art integration to be implemented with fidelity, teachers must be supported in their implementation of the initiative through a clear understanding of the reason for the curricular change; a strong understanding of research indicating students need active learning opportunities; and professional development prior to implementation (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012). Additionally, teachers would benefit from experiences that allow them to see art integration modeled within their content area (Leithwood, 1994); and if possible, support from resident artists (Remer, 2010).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study was to investigate how secondary site principals can positively affect student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge through sitewide art integration. A secondary school in the Midwest, that has integrated the arts sitewide for three years, was examined for the effect site leadership has had on student engagement in the classroom. Data were collected through interviews of administrators, teachers, and state annual testing data analyzing the art integration throughout all content areas for three years. The site administrators and teachers who have been at the school four or more years who attended before and during the art initiative, were interviewed using a semi-structured format to allow for open-ended responses that will yield in-depth data for analysis. State test scores were examined for any impact the art integration initiative may or may not have had on test scores.

The possible outcomes are that sitewide art integration does impact student engagement; however, the site leadership had little to no impact on this engagement. Sitewide art integration has a positive impact on student engagement with the outcome of deeper content knowledge, and site leadership played a large part in student engagement through this process. Lastly, student engagement might not be impacted in the classroom through art integration sitewide; thus, site leadership would not have impacted student engagement in the classroom.

Research Question

This study has an overarching question - how can principals, using an art integration initiative sitewide, ultimately affect student engagement in the classroom? The secondary question is if they affect student engagement in the classroom, is there an outcome of deeper learning across subjects? Leadership theories were contrasted with the data to discover how leadership in this study affected student engagement and deeper learning outcomes.

Art Defined

Art is defined as "the conscious use of skill and creative imagination especially in the production of aesthetic objects (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Thus, art is connected to aesthetic beauty and creativity. Eisner has studied art curriculum and art education for over forty years. He states:

> Once considered an elusive, almost mystical gift belonging to a special few, creativity is now being seen as a capacity common to all – one that should be effectively developed by the school. Once considered a rare type of behavior limited to the arts, creativity is now viewed as penetrating, to some degree, almost all kinds of human activity (2005)

If one is to look at art as creativity, then one can see the beauty of art in the creation of a baseball field or the creation of a garden. Art, when used in a school as a way for students to show what

they know, can be as widely understood and applied to almost any interest students have and can connect to the content being taught. Identifying math in music would be a way to show the content applied to art. One could also apply social studies to creating a menu. Building a chair could show the understanding of scientific principles. Art is so much more than painting, drama, music, and ceramics. It would be important for teachers to understand students may apply content knowledge to a wide variety of interests, so no student feels marginalized if they do not create something from the more classical art categories.

Significance of the Study

This study will add to the literature on secondary site leaders and their influence on student engagement in the classroom and ultimately deeper learning of subject area content. While Constructivism has been researched and studied for roughly a century, there is still a lack of consistent and productive use of site principals leading the teaching and learning in their buildings in this manner (Anamuah-Mensah et al. 2008; Annafo et al, 2018). Therefore, this study will give educators specific research indicating the effect secondary site principals may have on student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge using constructivist principles through a sitewide art integration initiative.

Theoretical Framework

Silverstein and Layne (2010) discuss how to use the arts to leverage learning in other disciplines. They write of the Kennedy Center's program Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA). CETA has a definition of art integration:

> Arts Integration is an APPROACH to TEACHING in which students construct and demonstrate UNDERSTANDING through an ART FORM. Students engage in a

> CREATIVE PROCESS which CONNECTS an art form and another subject area and meets EVOLVING OBJECTIVES in both (p.1).

Their use of capitals is to signify the importance of each word. Approach is to connect to a path or way to reach another person. Understanding links to the active engagement of the mind in the learning at hand. Art Form is about a creative work or product to connect to the content. Creative Process is the heart of art integration - it is more than copying, repeating, or following - it is about creating something original and of value. Art Connects to other disciplines, so learning is not in a silo; students can see learning is in all aspects of life, and disciplines connect and overlap in learning. Evolving Objectives ensures both art and the subject matter have objectives; however, those objectives are evolving as learning in the classroom is dynamic and changing, so too must the outcomes of the learning opportunities (Silverstein & Layne, 2010). Silverstein and Layne (2010) continue to explain art integration as "an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form" (p. 1). Because art integration is just not coloring a paper or adding an art component, Silverstein and Layne (2010) share a checksheet, so site leaders and teachers can be assured their integration of art has a deeper impact on the learning at hand (Appendix A). All areas of the checksheet must be answered in the affirmative in order to be assured art integration is happening versus just an addition of an art aspect to the lesson. This definition of art integration was the foundation of knowledge as this study continues. In addition to the understanding of art integration, this study is based on the Constructivist Learning Theory.

Dewey (1916, p. 20) shared with the world that "the social environment exercises an educative … influence" and, thus, the constructivist movement was born. For Dewey, the social learning process is one of observation in order to apply the knowledge to one's own previous

understanding (1933) in order to imagine a new knowledge construct. Thus, observation is applied in problem solving for out of the box thinking. This process is one of contemplating the problem "which leads to reflective thought, to conscious inquiry into the nature, conditions, and bearings of the belief...upon a firm basis of reasons (Dewey, 1997, p.5,6). According to Dewey, student interest should drive learning as well as hands-on learning: "Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results" (1916, p. 181). This connection to real world problems, even though written about a century ago, is still timely today. In whole, it is a process conceived of impulses and instincts, participation in activities, the physical environment, individual desire and independent thinking, unity of method and subject matter, the means to an end, and the mind bringing it all together for sense making (Dewey, 1916). Overall, Dewey saw learning as a natural progress of a child's curiosity of the world and one's natural interests:

> Building the idea of individualist development instead of the idea of top-down forcing; embracing behavioral freedom (democracy) as opposed to practice external discipline; practicing active education instead of passive learning from teachers and texts; embracing the thought of learning to use skills and techniques as a means to achieve one's goal instead of isolated learning by practise; taking advantage of the current opportunities and benefiting from these in the best way possible, thus becoming acquainted with an ever changing world (societal needs), rather than focusing on stationary goals while preparing for a distant future (1998, p. 22-23).

Dewey believed the learning experiences of the child were more important than the subject matter being studied (1916) since the experiences supported the learning process of applying new knowledge to older knowledge to create new understandings of how aspects of the world

worked. Dewey's work and other Constructivists connect to the need for leadership in art integration sitewide. Students need opportunities to learn, create, and demonstrate their knowledge through experience - not just lecture, worksheets, and note-taking. Creating is a learning experience.

Shared Leadership, Change Leadership, and Transformational Leadership all relate to this study of art integration. When leading an initiative a site leader must gain the support of the teachers who will be doing the work in the classroom; thus, shared leadership is needed in order for the initiative to have all elements covered and for teachers to feel an ownership in the initiative (Lambert, 2002; Putman, 2013). When instituting a change, site leaders are wise to acknowledge the work Fullan has done on Change Leadership to include the need for a "moral purpose, understanding change, developing relationships, knowledge building, and coherence making" (2001, p.137; 2007, 2014). Leithwood (1994) speaks of the eight elements to Transformational leadership which focuses on creating a lasting change through inspiration. If a site change has inspired the faculty and staff, it is more likely to continue and be implemented with fidelity.

Overview of the Methodology

This study will use interviews from case study as well as testing data to discover how a principal can affect student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge. The interviews of administrators and teachers allow for authentic reflection on how the initiative was implemented and monitored; while the test scores allow for a third element of data in order to triangulate the data.

Case study is a research defined by boundaries; moreover, a case study can be generalized to the population even though the study is focused on a specific boundary in time

and place (Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Merriam, 1998). In this case study the boundaries are the three years of the A Plus art initiative at a Midwest high school. The phenomenon being studied is the impact the principal had on student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge based on the art initiative.

Summary

We know many students are not engaged and learning at deep levels in the classroom (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014); therefore, site leaders must find alternative ways to lead the learning in their buildings. Dewey, Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky, and others have proven active, hands-on learning has a significant impact on learning at deep levels, applying knowledge, and engaging students in the classroom (Dewey, 1997; Piaget, 1973; Bruner, 1966; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, it is worth considering how the arts integrated sitewide can impact student learning. Initiatives happen when a site leader identifies the value in the process or program. Thus, it ultimately lies in the hands of site leaders to see that all students are engaged in learning within their building. A sitewide art integration program is one method leaders might utilize to impact their students' engagement in the classroom.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Boundary Breaking is a term Eisner (2005) uses to describe when "the individual sees gaps and limitations in the current theories and proceeds to develop new premises, which contain their own limits" (p. 9). With the current testing and accountability oppression, many teachers are not enjoying teaching (Erichsen, K., & Reynolds, J. (2020), and students are not enjoying learning. In order to shift the exhaustive work being asked of students through assessment after assessment and of teachers through analyzing data from all the assessments to identify student learning gaps, one should consider moving the data analysis to A,B,A benchmarks (A is the first benchmark test given in the beginning of the year, B is the second benchmark test given around December, and A is the same one given in the beginning of the year, so teachers can compare exact questions and answers to see growth) and use the time in between to analyze student mastery of content through art application. Eisner (2005) states the mechanistic aspect of teaching to assessments to analyze data does not allow for opportunities to follow student interest or the student comment that a teacher can use to dive deeper (p.5) into the current lesson or past lessons to connect learning throughout the semester and in other classes. The assessment and data analysis process is an assembly line approach (Godin, 2010) that does not work well in education anymore. We do not want every student to come out the same as the one next to him/her. Americans value individuality everywhere ***but*** in the classroom.

Diving into theory analysis, constructivism learning theory, leadership theory, and art theory all are essential to this study. Constructivism is the essence of how active learning promotes deeper learning. When students are allowed to apply content knowledge to a project, they learn at deeper levels. Leadership theory is essential to how one leads their site and the learning at their school. If a principal likes an initiative he or she is introduced to but has no

theory to support how the initiative will be implemented nor links the initiative to the school or district's purpose, then the ability of the initiative to be implemented with fidelity or sustainability is unlikely. Art theory is the more specific focus of how students learn through art application in the classroom. Using art projects to support all content areas is a way students can apply content knowledge to a project. Students learn at deeper levels when they apply classroom content. All these theories are presented in order to deepen the understanding and knowledge of the impact art plays in elevated teaching and learning practices. Finally, student engagement was analyzed through the lens of leadership theories to understand how this study demonstrates the impact site principals have on student engagement in the classroom.

Neurobiology and Human Learning

According to Caine and Canine (1995), brain-based learning acknowledges the brain learns best when information makes sense. Jensen, a researcher of the brain and learning, has come to believe the arts are just as important as other content areas in order for students to learn at deep levels. Jensen, in his book *Arts with the Brain in Mind (2001),* believes the arts encompass musical, visual, and kinesthetic aspects. His research shows music enhances the cognitive, emotional, perceptual-motor, and stress response systems. Jensen states, "Research from the studies discussed in this book and the experience of countless classroom educators support the view that visual arts have strong positive cognitive, emotional, social, collaborative, and neurological effects" (p. 68). In regard to being active, Jensen writes research, theory, and classroom experience all support the positive role movement has on learning. Brewer writes:

> Brain-based educators tend to support progressive education reforms. They decry the "factory model of education," in which experts create knowledge, teachers disseminate it, and students are graded on how much of it they can absorb and retain. Like many other

> educators, brain-based educators favor a constructivist, active learning model. Students should be actively engaged in learning and in guiding their own instruction. Brain enthusiasts see neuroscience as perhaps the best weapon with which to destroy our outdated factory model. They argue that teachers should teach for meaning and understanding. To do so … teachers should create learning environments that are low in threat and high in challenge, and students should be actively engaged and immersed in complex experiences. No reasonable parent or informed educator would take issue with these ideas. Indeed, if more schools taught for understanding and if more teachers had the resources to do so, our schools would be better learning environments (Bruer, 1999).

Teaching for meaning and understanding is the foundation of learning. Educators want their students to be challenged and to create meaning from new content. This connects to Piaget's concept of assimilation (1968).

Constructivist Learning Theory

"Before a child talks, they sing. Before they write, they draw. As soon as they stand, they dance. Art is fundamental to human expression." Phylicia Rashad

This study lives within Constructivist Learning Theory. Constructivism is a theory positing one gains knowledge and forms meaning from their own experiences (Piaget, 1968). Constructivism is an umbrella theory that houses several differentiating aspects of learning: individual, social, and contextual constructivism are all aspects of learning theory driving the research into art integration sitewide to engage students in deeper learning and knowledge acquisition. Individual Constructivism states "learning is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience" (Smith and Ragan, 2005, p.19). Another element of Constructivist learning is Social Constructivism. This aspect relates to the meaning derived from many perspectives and a collaborative atmosphere in the learning environment as well as

modeling from the "more knowledgeable other" and peers (Vygotsky, 1978; Bandura, 1977). A further aspect of Constructivist Learning Theory is Contextualism. With Contextualism, a focus is on learning in a real world environment (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

Piaget, a constructivist, believes humans must construct their own knowledge; it cannot be given to them. This is not a passive event where students gain knowledge through osmosis. Students must be active and engage in their learning; however, one must supply the learner with opportunities of stimulating interest and research (Piaget, 1973). Piaget was sensitive to the developmental stages of children, so no one would be required to learn a construct they were physically incapable of learning. The operational stages of learning are sensorimotor ages birth to two years old; preoperational two years to seven years of age; concrete operational seven to eleven years of age; and formal operational adolescent to adulthood (Piaget, 1953). Within these phases, Piaget also looked at how children would assimilate an idea into an existing understanding, how one might need to accommodate knowledge when it does not make sense with previous understandings, and then equilibrium comes when the accommodation has been accepted into fact and assimilated (1953).

Humans are social. From the beginning of time, we have sought to group together, to do life together. Self preservation was part of the desire to be a society rather than do life alone (Roland & Moriarity, 1990). In contrast to Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky do not believe in concrete stages of learning; they find learning is more iterative and nonlinear - an ebb and flow process that cannot be defined by strict borders. Bruner, a social constructivist, believes one learns from talking with others and through reflection (1966); thus, social interaction is paramount to learning. Bruner agrees with Piaget in that children are curious and natural inquisitors, and children should be active participants in their learning process (1966). Bruner

also believed one can learn through failure:

> If you can somehow make the child aware that his attempted answer is not so much a wrong answer, as an answer to another problem, and then get him back on the track, it becomes possible for the child to reduce the confusion that is produced by picking a wrong alternative. One of the things that, I believe, keeps us from exploring alternatives is precisely the confusion of making the wrong choice (1966, p. 526).

Bruner speaks of "economy, productiveness, and power" (1966, p. 525) when he speaks of learning structures. The idea presented is to simplify complicated ideas to the foundation of the content knowledge in a way anyone can comprehend. In this way, Bruner believes one should allow a student to use hands-on activities to learn, then display an image of the concept, then finally symbolize the concept, so that it may be applied in a wider vein. The ability to scaffold knowledge into more productive and complex understanding he identified as "spiral curriculum" Additionally, Bruner identified the power of making meaning by having language to identify the knowledge from that point onward, based on the hands on, image, and symbolization process of learning (Bruner, 1966).

In addition to Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner - Brown, Collins, and Duguid (both contextual constructivists) believe one should not separate what one is learning from how it is learned; thus, the learning experience and social nature of the learning experience are of as great an importance as the content itself (1989). The active process of students creating knowledge is central to deep learning. "Activity and situation are integral to cognition and learning" in order to produce results, and students should learn in an active way "and make deliberate use of the social and physical context" to support the cognition taking place (Brown, Collins, & Duguid,

1989, p. 32). So much of what is learned in school can be related to the social interactions within the classroom or building:

> The culture and the use of a tool act together to determine the way practitioners see the world; and the way the world appears to them determines the culture's understanding of the world and of the tools. Unfortunately, students are too often asked to use the tools of a discipline without being able to adopt its culture. To learn to use tools as practitioners use them, a student, like an apprentice, must enter that community and its culture. Thus, in a significant way, learning is, we believe, a process of enculturation...Students, for instance, can quickly get an implicit sense of what is suitable diction, what makes a relevant question, what is legitimate or illegitimate behavior in a particular activity. The ease and success with which people do this (as opposed to the intricacy of describing what it entails) belie the immense importance of the process and obscures the fact that what they pick up is a product of the ambient culture rather than of explicit teaching (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989, p. 33-34).

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) spoke often of reading, speaking, writing, and listening as a scientist/artists/mathematician/historian/farmer/_____ (fill in the blank). Learning is about how to write as a scientist; how to speak as an artist; how to construct equations as a mathematician; it is doing life in multiple disciplines correctly (CCSS Initiative, 2010). This is what learning should be, active, applicable to life, and attainable.

With the integration of technology in the classroom, project based learning, real-world application of learning, and group work, students are learning in collaborative environments translating to practical working relationships beyond school (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014; Newport, 2012; Robinson, 2013). Thus, it is Constructivist Learning Theory that is applicable to

art integration sitewide to engage students deeply and actively in their learning (Dewey, 1933; Bandura, 1962; Bruner, 1966; Piaget, 1968; Vygotsky, 1978; Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

Constructivism is essential to knowing how students learn best by applying content knowledge to a project or problem. Leadership theory is essential to knowing how to obtain the approval of the site staff of an initiative which translates to staff ownership and belief in the initiative. If a site principal demonstrates to the faculty why constructivism is essential to students' learning, and also has the leadership theory understanding to direct the implementation of the initiative, the students ultimately are successful and the initiative has the possibility of being sustainable.

Leadership Theory Driving Art Integration

Shared Leadership

Several leadership theories drive this research: Shared Leadership, Change Leadership, and Transformational Leadership. In addition several contemporary writers have shared leadership principles that relate to leading sitewide art integration change. Shared leadership theory focuses on the aspect that all those in a school site have the ability to lead in one way or another. In addition, the workload of a site principal is complex and dynamic (Pearce, Conger, & Locke, 2008) and often too much for one person to guide alone; therefore, sharing leadership aspects of a school is a wise choice in order to see site priorities accomplished successfully and fully. Moreover, shared leadership values the input of those who are working in the school site and their perspectives on aspects of school leadership (Putman, 2013). According to Lambert (2006), practices used by school site leaders who implement shared leadership include: clarity about self and values; belief in democracy; strategic thinking regarding school improvement now and in years to come; deliberate and vulnerable persona; knowledgeable about instructional

strategies and learning theories; and developing leadership capacity in others. Additionally, Lambert (2002) discusses what actions a leader will demonstrate when implementing shared leadership:

> Today's effective principal constructs a shared vision with members of the school community, convenes the conversations, insists on a student learning focus, evokes and supports leadership in others, models and participates in collaborative practices, helps pose the questions, and facilitates dialogue that addresses the confounding issues of practice. This work requires skill and new understanding; it is much easier to tell or to manage than it is to perform as a collaborative instructional leader (para. 30).

Shared Leadership sets aside the old "do it my way" of leading while sitting in an office like a throne, and instead says "we are better together" and works alongside those in their building to do the work together.

Shared leadership is vital to the success of any initiative in the twenty-first century. People want to know why things are happening, and they want to give their opinion and insight to the initiative about to happen (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). If a site leader doesn't listen to their people, the process will most likely be fraught with resistance, and the leader will struggle to see the initiative be successful. Many believe a leader needs "buy-in" from their people to be successful at leading a change initiative; however, more so than "buy-in", leaders need their people to own and believe in the shift taking place (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014).

Change Leadership

Change Leadership by Fullan has several key themes to include "moral purpose, understanding change, developing relationships, knowledge building, and coherence making" (Fullan, 2001, p.137). As an educational leader, a large part of the job is to support teachers as

they develop students to become problem solvers and deep thinkers in order to allow students the best possible future they can have. Thus, the educational leader has a daily moral purpose to his/her work. Nonetheless, change is messy. Therefore, one must understand change can be led and understood, but not managed or controlled (Fullan, 2014, p 33). Relationships are integral to everything that happens in change. Without teachers working together and with the educational leader, nothing will be accomplished (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). If there is no relationship to build upon, then how will site leaders support and encourage their teachers to do the work when teachers are tired in the middle of the year: exhausted from the long hours of grading and preparing for each new day. The relationships built between the educational leader and teachers and staff encourages the naysayers to listen to the reasons and research supporting innovation and change.

One aspect needed to sustain relationships with staff is Emotional Quotient (EQ): intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood (Goleman, 1995; Stein, & Book, 2000). In order to build knowledge, one must have a relationship with whom you are gaining knowledge from. Therefore, the two go hand-in-hand. However, Fullan (2014) states knowledge "only becomes valuable in a social context" (p 78). Brown and Duguid (2000) share "change will not happen or will not be fruitful until people look beyond the simplicities of information and individuals to the complexities of learning, knowledge, judgment, communities, organizations, and institutions" (p. 213). This knowledge sharing is part of the Professional Learning Community process DuFour and Eaker (2009) and Marzano (2007) speak of when they discuss working as a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Making progress among the messiness and chaotic nature of change is what coherence is about. A leader must allow for the growth that comes with stretching teachers out of their comfort zones in order to see better

outcomes for student achievement and deeper learning opportunities. It is making sense of the growth and innovation coming from this chaos that moves the school site to higher levels of student satisfaction and knowledge depth in subject areas.

In order to lead an art initiative, a site leader must take into account the aspects Fullan speaks of in Change Leadership. Part of Change Leadership incorporates aspects of Shared Leadership: the relationship building and listening to teachers and staff at your site. In addition, a site leader must be prepared to stretch his/her people in order to help them make room (accommodation and assimilation) for this new way of doing the work and the change in the site culture from one of possibly multiple choice test focus to one of active learning through hands on and collaborative work where students create an item to indicate their understanding of the content.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership focuses on eight different leadership qualities: identifies and articulates a vision; fosters the acceptance of group goals; conveys high-performance expectations; provides appropriate models; provides intellectual stimulation; and provides individualized support; additionally, a transformational leader will use contingent rewards and manage by exception (Leithwood, 1994). Creating and sharing a vision with the staff is most effective when everyone takes ownership in the creation of the vision; thus, inspiring the staff to implement the vision with fidelity. Fostering group goals requires a leader to give time for teachers to collaborate and work together toward their common purposes. Each educational leader hopes to have and hold high expectations, but those who really do will make sure their words and actions are filtered through the lens of excellence, so the staff understands this is how things are done here (Leithwood, 1994; Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). Modeling by the

educational leader requires a leader to have strong ideals and beliefs that shine through each action for the staff to see. An educational leader will stimulate their staff's intellect when they are challenged to see things through a new perspective in order to allow students to grow and deepen their learning opportunities. All of the above will be accomplished when a leader provides individualized support for his/her staff. This individualization goes beyond making sure each staff member has the capability to do the job asked of them and dives into caring about them personally as well (Leithwood, 1994; Lambert, 2002: Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). Letting the staff know what they have to do in order to be rewarded is the essence of contingent rewards. Leithwood mentions this is often seen as transactional, but it has the possibility to be transformational when it leads to stretching teachers' pedagogical beliefs. Managing by exception allows for an educational leader to focus on the important few elements decided upon up front and only those aspects that are large changes from the expected will the educational leader step in to handle.

The aspects of Transformational Leadership relate to art integration leadership in many ways. A site leader must be able to articulate the vision for the change, and why this shift in doing the work must happen. If this part is not conveyed correctly and clearly, the process will have many additional hurdles before success. Modeling expectations is essential to teachers and staff as well. Teachers want to do well, and they want to do what is expected of them; however, if they do not know what that is, the final product could be very different from the vision.

Not only does educational leadership theory apply to principals implementing a sitewide art initiative, but so also does contemporary leadership theorists. All three theories (Shared, Change, and Transformational) have aspects identified within contemporary leadership models. Daniel Pink and Seth Godin are a few of those researched for contemporary leadership theories

applying to a sitewide art initiative implementation. All are well known authors in their areas, with Pink and Godin authoring several books on the New York Times bestsellers list.

Contemporary Leadership Principles

Jon Gordon is a contemporary writer and speaker on leadership throughout America. He wrote several books and makes a living talking about *The Power of Positive Leadership* (2017). In this book, he discusses how we improve others through positivity. Gordon starts by sharing how important the culture of a business (or educational site building) is. His belief is that a school's culture will win over strategy. One can use data to drive instruction, but if a building's culture is one of laziness, me first, and a staff of clock watchers - the instruction driven by data will be less than stellar. However, if one has a school culture of teachers and staff who are all in and willing to do whatever is necessary to see students succeed in life and education, then learning will happen as the leader guides the teachers in best practices. Gordon (2017) believes we are better together. People must work together and share the load, so everyone wins. Gordon shares don't tell the world your mission statement; show the world your mission statement.

Gordon mentions that a positive leader must have a telescope and a microscope. When things are not going as planned, one must take out the telescope and look forward to the vision. However, a positive leader must also be in the details with a microscope and not just have their head in the stars with the telescope. Both are vital to keeping positive as a leader. Gordon shares a story of a man who ran marathons, and how this man was successful by not listening to himself; instead, this man spoke to himself. His inner thoughts could have said how tired he was, and how sore he was. That is what he would have heard if he listened to himself. However, instead the man spoke to himself saying he was close. He didn't run all this way to give up now. He kept speaking words of life and commitment, and he finished because he spoke to himself

instead of listening to himself. A positive leader will also transfer their belief and optimism to their staff. They will model the positivity and courage and belief that the work they are doing in the building is more than worthwhile - it is essential!

One can see the tie to Shared Leadership, Change Leadership, and Transformational Leadership as Gordon speaks of Positive Leadership. Gordon (2017) speaks of a leader who must have a vision (Transformational); this leader must develop relationships with his/her people (Shared and Change Leadership); and this leader must build people up, encourage them, and model the belief that this shift in the work is essential (Shared, Change, and Transformational Leadership).

Hargreaves, Boyle and Harris (2014) focus on positivity as well, including how to build others up and speak words of life to them. They share this positivity through six adjective phrases: dreaming with determination, creativity and counterflow, collaborating and competing, pushing and pulling, measuring with meaning, and sustainable growth. Dreaming is about being bold in reaching for the perceived unattainable, and working toward attaining that dream. One essential element of the bold dream is to connect the historical legacy with current and future plans. An example could be a school stating they are still going to teach students to learn at high levels, but they are going to boldly redesign how they accomplish the learning through evaluating different ways to group students, schedule the school day, and develop assessments. Counterflow leaders are those who do not follow others, but find their own path - "the road not taken" (Frost, 1916). Collaboration and competition may seem in opposition to each other; however, an uplifting leader will use both to motivate their teachers into greater success using all avenues to create the best culture and climate to support teachers in their classrooms. In order to keep the best staff; to grow teachers; and to continue the continuity of vision, professional

development, and contentment a leader must push their staff and stretch them to be their best as well and pull them in with supportive practices. Measuring with meaning as a leader means to protect teaching time and teaching expectations by limiting requirements to only those practices that yield the most benefit. The data gathered and studied should be specific to individual students in order to have targeted interventions (DuFour, 2004; Marzano, 2011). Sustainable growth can be achieved when a leader's expectation of growth is focused on the long haul and sustainability and not a quick fix.

Fullan (2014) mentions how no one gets better through evaluation. However, Fullan; Hargreaves, Boyle and Harris (2014); and Gordon (2017) would agree by working with those at the site and through positive and constructive comments, a leader can maximize the potential in the teaching staff. This is another essential for a site leader wanting to integrate art sitewide. With a focus on the positive, one must provide the professional development needed to give the teachers the knowledge and tools to do the work required. This connects to "knowledge building" of Change Leadership and the need to provide appropriate models as well as intellectual stimulation of Transformational Leadership.

Pink and Godin are contemporaries in leadership theory, but they do not specifically focus on education. However, their work impacts leadership in all areas including education. Pink in *Drive* (2011) states adults get too caught up in acting like adults. Leaders forget how to use excitement, engagement, and thrilling experiences to guide them in "flow" - the meaningful and electrifying work one does in order to have purpose in life: this connects to Godin's artist who is passionate about the work he/she is pursuing. In most schools, there is no time or anyone willing to allow an administrator the ability to work in their "flow". Unfortunately, many in educational administration are either ignorant to this or too caught up in bureaucracy to allow or

support those who are type “i” people to do the work that is purposeful and fulfilling to them. Thus, site leaders and teachers are shoved back to the 2.0 work (factory work) Pink speaks of if they get out of line. Todd Whitaker on Twitter tweeted “A mistake leaders make isn’t having ineffective people do important things, it’s having effective people do unimportant things.”

Pink and Whitaker indicate how a site leader must be aware the best workers are those who enjoy their job and see purpose in it. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) agree that teachers with a purpose are themselves engaged in the work they do. These are the types of teachers we want in all schools, as students will gain deeper knowledge if their teachers are empowered to do work they know makes a difference and has a beneficial impact.

Godin (2010) makes the argument that leaders need to be indispensable by being creative, bold, and risk takers in their sphere of influence. A linchpin is a dohickie that connects a thing-e-ma-bob. One cannot work effectively without the linchpin holding them together. Godin uses the factory mentality to illustrate how society no longer has jobs focused on production: that was in the past (Robinson, 2010). However, our schools have been created to produce cogs - those people who are obedient and willing to do what they are told in order to get a paycheck (Anyon, 1980). This was the case in order to produce cogs - factory workers who would not challenge their boss and would comply with complete acquiescence. Nonetheless, Godin states this is no longer reflective of society today. People don’t work for one company any more. That company no longer takes care of it’s worker and his/her family. It is the artist who is now needed in society. It is the one who is allowed to use their artistic abilities to solve problems who will flourish in life.

Godin continues that being an artist is being human. It’s about connection, problem solving, creating, leaning forward, and thriving. Art is never perfect. It is never defect free

because if it were, it would be an assembly and factory replication rather than a unique creation. It would become standardized. Godin shares how artists embrace the mystery of genius; they understand there is no perfection.

Speaking of a bored student, the reader is asked what learning will take place in a bored student's life? Very little to none. However, an artist leans in, one's posture is forward, excited for the opportunity to create; anticipating the ability to start. Why aren't schools like this? Godin believes schools stamp out the desire to create, examine, touch, search, and explore our surroundings. With standardized, data driven, rule encrusted learning environments, no wonder students are bored, refuse to sit still, and can't wait to escape at the last bell. Is this what we want?

According to Godin, an artist (read educational leader) must be fearless, bold, brave, and creative to challenge the status quo that is killing our students' desire to learn and create. This artist (leader) takes it personally. They are driven to make a difference - every day. This kind of leadership is an act of courage to create change in others. This leadership is a product of emotional labor. Labor - that is not a word to describe easy, lazy, or even peaceful. It describes work - relentless work. If it's easy and risk free, it's not art; it's not leadership. This type of leadership is about gifting the beauty of wonder; it is about reviving the teacher's and learner's soul.

Godin relates back to Shared and Change Leadership in the relational aspect of being a leader. In the social perspective of education today, a site leader must revive their teachers; appreciate their teachers; and speak life to their teachers. Building these positive relationships will enable a site leader to lead a vision the teachers become owners in, as well as, give teachers

room to try new ways to engage students knowing there will be an aspect of failure in trying new pedagogies (Bruner, 1966).

Just as one must understand best practices to support student content knowledge and application of that knowledge, so too must a principal know the best way to implement an initiative at his or her school. If one is to implement an art initiative, then one must understand and identify art. Is art only drawing and painting? Is creating a garden or a football field art? Therefore, an understanding of art is essential to understanding the case study.

What is Art?

Weitz (1956) states humans have tried to define art since Plato's time. There have been many aesthetic theories of art trying to do so: Formalism is the theory that art is to be defined by its form and style; it is a purely visual analysis. Voluntarism is the theory valuing the act of art as more important than the intellectual process of art: Voluntarism art "is essentially three things - embodiment of wishes and desires imaginatively satisfied, language, which characterizes the public medium of art, and harmony, which unifies the language with the layers of imaginative projection" (Weitz, 1956, p. 29). Thus, Intellectualism values the reason, choices, and intellectual background in creating the art more than the final product.

Emotionalism requires a response from those viewing the art; it values the expressive qualities, the emotion of art. Intuitionism is the theory that one intuitively knows or responds to art; there is a universal truth within the art that all will understand: Intuitionism "art is identified not with some physical, public object but with a specific creative, cognitive and spiritual act. Art is really a first stage of knowledge in which certain human beings (artists) bring their images and intuition into … clarification or expression" (p.28). Organic art is one that grows naturally

without undue force or interference from the artist; additionally, it is made up of wholes acting upon each other for a synergistic completeness.

Many say unless art is defined, how can something be called art? While many have tried to define art, Weitz (1956) shares "For, in spite of the many theories, we seem no nearer our goal today than we were in Plato's time" (p. 27). Weitz (1956) continues a:

> true definition [of art] is false. Its attempt to discover the necessary and sufficient properties of art is logically misbegotten for the very simple reason that such a set and, consequently, such a formula about it, is never forthcoming. Art, as the logic of the concept shows, has no set of necessary and sufficient properties, hence a theory of it is logically impossible and not merely factually difficult. Aesthetic theory tries to define what cannot be defined in its requisite sense (p. 28).

The very nature of these claims lacks validity in that they cannot be confirmed or unconfirmed. Weitz questions their empirical nature, and points out their circular and incomplete nature. Several times Weitz points out the futility of trying to define art:

> aesthetic theory is a logically vain attempt to define what cannot be defined, to state the necessary and sufficient properties of that which has no necessary and sufficient properties, to conceive the concept of art as closed when its very use reveals and demands its openness (p. 30).

Weitz uses the analogy of games - what is a game? There are many types of games: board games, baseball, football, volleyball, golf, cards...and on. How can one define games in such a way that all are clear? Thus it is with art. There are many types; therefore, there is no one way to define it. There are similarities, but no one common thread.

Weitz also uses the analogy of novels: are certain literary works considered novels? One must compare to others that have already been identified as novels to see the commonalities in order to make a decision. Because art is continually evolving, there is no exhaustive list of what is art or not. He ends his article with the idea that the previous theories discussed all have relevance, and should be valued as parts of art to consider. However, one should keep an open mind as one encounters art and seek less to define it and desire more to appreciate aspects identified in aesthetic theories.

The Importance of the Arts

Thomas Merton states, "Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time"(1955); additionally, Oscar Wilde speaks of art as "the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known" (Wilde, 1867); and Elbert Hubbard proclaims "Art is not a thing—it is a way" (1928). In an EBSCO article, Wolfe shares "...literature and the arts teach: the world is an ambiguous place, and art and literature are needed to cultivate the imagination's awareness of how tricky it is to get things right" (Beer, 2010, p.21). When contemplating art, thoughtful sifting might conclude - art is reflective.

Dictionary.com states art is the quality, production, expression, or realm, according to aesthetic principles, of what is beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance. Due to this subjective nature, many elements of creation could be argued as art. Thus, if we want students to think, reflect on content, and then apply that knowledge to something they create to indicate their mastery, many outside-the-box creations could be argued to be artistic projects to demonstrate content mastery. It is the passionate explanation of the connection of the created piece to the content that will allow a teacher to identify if the student understood the objective that was taught.

According to Detlefsen (2012), a/r/togrpahy is the work of an artist, researcher, and teacher. Detlefsen states (p.4):

> The method of a/r/tography is grounded in the work of Irwin and Springgay, among others, and emphasizes "the roles of thought, not as separate entities, but as connected and integrated identities that remain ever present in our work" (Springgay et al., 2008, p. 28). As Irwin (2004) states, a/r/tography is about each of us "living a life of deep meaning enhanced through perceptual practices that reveal what was once hidden, create what has never been known, and imagine what we hope to achieve" (pp. 35–36).

Art, then, is about communication in diverse ways in order to express knowledge, truths, and emotions.

Sir Ken Robinson while discusses his work in the UK in education shares his view on creativity:

> Creativity draws from many powers that we all have by virtue of being human. Creativity is possible in all areas of human life, in science, the arts, mathematics, technology, cuisine, teaching, politics, business, you name it. And like many human capacities, our creative powers can be cultivated and refined. Doing that involves an increasing mastery of skills, knowledge, and ideas (Robinson, 2015, para. 4).

Robinson continues that creativity is a dynamic process of trial and error; where one must make connections, cross disciplines, and identify analogies. A creative learner will refine, judge, and refine again until their piece is exactly what they hoped or as close as they can get. There is an abundance of reflection, metacognition, and grit involved with the creative learner. Robinson (2015) puts it this way:

> The real driver of creativity is an appetite for discovery and a passion for the work itself. When students are motivated to learn, they naturally acquire the skills they need to get the work done. Their mastery of them grows as their creative ambitions expand. You'll find evidence of this process in great teaching in every discipline from football to chemistry (para. 7).

This process is what a site leader will engage their teaching staff in sharing with students. Site leaders should allow teachers the autonomy and freedom to leave the multiple test behind and pursue trial and error and creation - which will ultimately end in deeper learning experiences for all.

Art In All Things

One must expand the typical view of art. At its core, art is reflection. One must study and understand minute details in order to render an art piece to represent the idea or item. Smithrim & Upitis (2005) describe a high school art class:

> An Appalachian art teacher ... taught the following in his high school visual arts program: macrame, pottery, fibres, weaving, drawing, photography, silk-screening, papermaking, batik, stitchery, quilting, lettering, and airbrushing. Music education now includes, in addition to the traditional trio of choir, band, and orchestra, computer-assisted composition, steel band, fiddle, folk music, popular music, soundscapes, music from many cultures, jazz band, jazz choir, Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, guitar, synthesized music, technological enhancement of sound, and more. With enough variety in arts curricula and modes of arts experience, gender differences in arts preferences may well decrease, and student preferences, engagement, and achievement in general could be further altered for the better" (p. 123).

One can see that art is so much more than taking a piece of charcoal in hand and putting it to paper. According to Johnson (2010), "Golf course architecture is considered an art" (p. 2). There are five design principles to designing a golf course: aesthetics, playability, naturalness, originality, and strategy. The land becomes the canvas, and the bunkers, hills, and brush the tools (Johnson, 2010). Eisner (2005) states in his book *Reimagining Schools*:

> What the artist and the creative scientist have in common is that both are makers of form (Read, 1944), one qualitative, the other theoretical, who offer us images of the world. When the images are well crafted they provide compelling schemata that capture both our attention and our allegiance (p. 113).

Here, Eisner clearly connects art to the work of scientists as well as those typically thought of as artists. Each person has their own creative work within; each person has a desire to share their creation, their work with the world or their small piece of the world.

Knuth (2007) researched the history of art. Art started out within education as the liberal arts - not fine arts. These liberal arts were "grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy" (p. 668). Knuth points out that three of the seven are used in computer science - which Knuth believes is an art. At the time of the original liberal arts, art was concerned with man's intellect and its freeing nature in contrast to the strict parameters of manual work such as plowing. Knuth sees computer science as both a science and an art (p. 669); just as Marzano (2007) sees teaching as both a science and an art. According to Knuth,

> A scientific approach is generally characterized by the words logical, systematic, impersonal, calm, rational, while an artistic approach is characterized by the words aesthetic, creative, humanitarian, anxious, irrational. It seems to me that both of these

> apparently contradictory approaches have great value with respect to computer programming (p. 670).

His desire is that one would see art in the form of computer programming. He wants computer programmers to write beautiful programs.

Therefore, from pottery to papermaking and from golf course design to computer programming, art is found in many areas not always identified in proper fine arts. One should open the mind to the wonders, beauty, form, style, aesthetic and alluring qualities in all areas of life and work.

Having identified art, the question remains, how does it relate to student engagement? Understanding how students are engaged is essential to recognizing how art can be used for engaging the minds of students in deep learning of subject area content. Moreover, if a site principal does not recognize student engagement, the leaders will struggle to appreciate the need for a sitewide art integration initiative.

Student Engagement

According to Lamborn, Newmann, and Wehlage (1992) student engagement is "active involvement, commitment, and concentrated attention" to the tasks, mastery of content knowledge, and skills related to classroom learning. In addition, they assert engagement is not just about completing work; it is about concentration and a student's effort to learn - an investment in learning at deep levels - identified through "intensity of student concentration, enthusiasm and interest expressed, degree of care in completing the work...these elements help activate underlying motivation and create conditions that may generate new motivation" (p. 13). Student engagement is clearly multi-dimensional, complex, and can be elusive; nonetheless, it does connect to deeper learning, student persistence in overcoming obstacles both academic and

social, and better behavior (Newmann, 1992; Green & Miller, 1996; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2011; Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012).

"The empirical evidence is encouraging as it demonstrates that students who learn collaboratively achieve higher grades than students working independently" (Senior & Howard, 2015, p. 1); supporting this Singh (2003) and Garrison and Vaughan (2008) state educators must realize learning can take place outside the lecture, seminar, or tutorial. Educators must recognize the social nature of their students, and allow for wider exploration of learning opportunities for students. Senior and Howard (2015) believe that "student based engagement behaviors may serve in effective pedagogy" (p.1). Engaged students tend to challenge themselves, persist through difficult content, and enjoy learning (Rowe & Rowe, 1992; Finn et al., 1995; Klem & Connell, 2004; National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, 2004), and educators know students learn at deeper levels if they are engaged in the content.

Students are engaged in learning when they enjoy going to their school: this is intuitive. However, studies prove the intuition: Ladd, et al. (2000), Noddings (2003), Suldo and Huebner, (2004) all concur that students who like coming to school are more engaged in the classroom. Additionally, students experience increased success in school as they move advance in grade levels because of their positive experiences at school which leads to more engagement in academic and social learning (Fredrickson, 2001).

Using Art to Engage Students

Art, in all its many forms, "stimulate[s] the brain. They ignite creativity and provide students with opportunities to critically interpret the world around them" (Appel, 2006, p. 15). Art engages students through the joy of creation, developing attention to detail, finding alternative ways to express one's self, knowledge, and feelings beyond words (Eisner, 1994,

2002; Greene 1995). Smithrim and Upitis (2005) studied how the arts across the curriculum affect student engagement, and stated "our analysis provided strong indications that involvement in the arts went hand-in-hand with engagement in learning at school"...specifically "cognitive, physical, emotional, and social benefits of learning in and through the arts" (p. 120).

According to Trusty and Oliva (1994) students benefit from art integration through engagement leading to motivation to learn not just academic content, but also elements of a hidden curriculum to include: a better understanding of other races and people groups to reduce prejudice; a reduction in violent reactions; better risk takers because there is no one right way or answer in art; more sociable because they learn collaboratively and work in groups; and it enhances self-esteem. In a concrete way, art allows students to give form to their learning experiences (Eisner, 1998); students become engaged by creating a physical element to represent their abstract insights and observations of the content.

In From Sage on the State to Guide on the Side, King (1993) states students need opportunities to get involved in the lesson at hand. Students need opportunities to reflect, synthesize, and evaluate their learning rather than sitting and listening to a lecture with the expected outcome of regurgitating the information on a multiple choice test. King (1993) reminds leaders that when students are engaged in learning something new will be born:

> such as a cause-effect relationship between two ideas, an inference, or an elaboration, and it always leads to deeper understanding. However, students do not spontaneously engage in active learning; they must be prompted to do so. Therefore we need to provide opportunities for active learning to take place. A general rule of thumb might be as follows: for each major concept or principle that we present, or that our students read about in their text, we structure some activity that requires students to **generate** meaning

about that concept or principle. For this approach to be effective, students must use their own words and experiences (p. 31).

Therefore, the outcome of active and engaged learning is one that is creative; one that is reflective; and one that has personal relevance to the student.

Leadership Positively Affects Student Engagement

Because principals are removed from the classroom, their effect on student engagement is through their work with teachers - most specifically as instructional leaders (Quinn, 2009, p. 449). School leaders drive how a school is organized - core instructional programs; strategic priorities; buffer external distractions; develop teacher leaders; provide resources, professional development, and collaboration opportunities; feedback; direct the learning climate - all of which affects the learning and engagement capacity within classrooms (Bryk, 2010). In 2008, Leithwood et. al. stated recent studies indicate significantly positive effects school leadership has on student engagement (p. 29).

Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) in their examination of the effect of principal leadership on student engagement found there was a weak but ***significant*** effect of the principal leader affecting student engagement in the classroom (bold italics mine). According to Hallinger and Heck (1998), there are four practices that influence the effect a principal has on student engagement in the classroom: purposes and goals; school structure and social networks; people; and organizational culture. However, in the Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) study, they researched three of the Hallinger and Heck practices along with two others: Purposes and goals, planning, organizational culture, structure and organization, and information collection and decision making. The outcome of the study is that while impact on student engagement is difficult to pin down; nonetheless, the outcome of all but structure and organization were loaded at .85 or

higher. Structure and organization was had a weaker relation at .76 (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999, p. 692). Thus, a principal does affect student engagement in the classroom in a meaningful way.

According to Quinn (2002), there is no one right way to lead a school as a site principal; however, focusing on management alone will leave students and teachers in a vacuum of vision and leadership for creating a culture of engaged learning:

> Principals must provide instructional leadership to facilitate and promote active learning experiences for all students. Through their words and their actions, principals model the importance of students being actively engaged in their learning and highlight the achievement gains that are a product of this engagement (p. 452).

Quinn's (2002) study focused on how principals could encourage and collaborate with teachers to create an environment that values and supports student engagement (p. 452). The results of the study are that site leadership does impact instruction; this impact is most clearly seen at opposite ends of the engagement spectrum - either high or low student engagement (Quinn, 2002). Quinn ends his study with the comment:

> The pursuit of student success is the essential goal of our schools. To attain this goal we must provide the finest possible instruction in our classrooms. A strong instructional leader is not necessary in providing exceptional teaching that occurs in isolation. Such leadership is however crucial in creating a school that values and continually strives to achieve an exceptional education for all students (p. 461).

Thus, pockets of rock star teaching can happen with or without a principal who is dedicated to the engagement of students in the classroom. Nonetheless, to give all students the opportunity to learn in a rock star teaching environment, site principals must focus on being an instructional resource.

Leadership of Art Integration Effects on Student Engagement

Hands-on, active learning with real world connections are great, but if they do not connect back to content standards, they are being used as time fillers and do not have deep, positive learning outcomes (Beane, 1997). Thus, the use of arts integration sitewide to engage students in hands-on, active learning with real world connections to content standards - has the potential to impact students' educational lives and futures significantly. This will only happen randomly in some classrooms for some students - if school leaders do not take the initiative to instill curriculum changes for our students now. The beauty of arts integration sitewide is that it opens the doors to all types of learning: STEAM, design based learning, PBL,maker spaces, and more. Art, at its core, is reflective, and that is the goal of active, hands-on learning with real world connections - for students to reflect on the content standards and indicate how they have mastered the concepts in a real, active, hands on, engaging way.

Dr. Elliot Eisner has studied art and art in education his whole life. Eisner started out as a painter, but he also taught at Stanford University. Additionally, he was past president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the National Art Education Association, the International Society for Education Through Art, and the John Dewey Society. Eisner (2005) states that educational leaders must develop and support teachers who are educational connoisseurs and critics. An educational connoisseur is one who knows the history, social context, deep insight, and details of the content at hand. One who can take a small detail and make it come alive as if squirming right underneath students' noses as they look closely and examine it for themselves. To know the background aspects that speak into the content requires one to know what is typical of the work and what departs from the normal in that content. The critic takes this knowledge and shares it with others in a way they can understand (p. 48-51).

This critique requires the "artful use of language" (Eisner, 2005, p.54) in order not to offend in the critique but to add to and help improve future attempts at the same or similar project. Connoisseurship and critique should pair with the overwhelming focus on scientific approaches to learning in order to "open a window" (Eisner, 2005, p.58) through which learning can engage students in active ways to think outside-of-the-box. An example of Eisner's belief of art in education can be seen when he speaks of a fifth grade class learning about slavery prior to and during the Civil War. Eisner states:

> What students learn about slavery will be shaped by the kind of messages they are given… Through narrative and prose that exploits the capacity of language to generate images and to foster feeling, an effective picture of the period can be rendered and secured. Of course, to secure this picture students must know how to read not only clipped, factual accounts but also literary accounts... They must be sensitive to the melody, cadence, and metaphor of language if the text contains them...but...literary text cannot tell all. The music of the period, the hymns, the chants, the rhythms of Africa can also help students gain access to the period. And so can Matthew Brady's photos and Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and Gettysburg Address. So, too, can the mythology of the slaves and their homespun stories. Further, it would be useful for students to create their own plays about the period and to act them out. It might be useful for them to perform the dances and to eat what the slaves of the period ate. A model of curriculum that exploits various forms of representation and that utilize all of the senses helps students learn what a period in history feels like. Reality, whatever it is, is made up of qualities: sights, smells, images, tales, and moods. First-hand experience is simply a way of getting in touch with reality. In our schools we often rely upon conceptually dense

> and emotionally eviscerated abstractions to represent what in actuality is a rich source of experience. To compound thing further, we require students to tell us what they have learned by trying to fit it into one of four alternatives [on] a multiple-choice question (Eisner, 2005,p. 110).

For students to create and experience the learning opportunity described above, they would have to be connoisseurs and critics of this moment in America's history. This idea of being a connoisseur and critic is best modeled and supported by site leadership, to support teachers who do this work, in order for students to benefit from learning in an environment and culture that appreciates connoisseurship and critique over multiple choice tests.

Summary

Theories supporting this case study are constructivist in nature along with several leadership theories promoting teacher leadership, teacher voice and choice, along with contemporary leadership theories focusing on building a climate within your site that values the passion each teacher brings to their craft (Vygotsky, L., 1978; Bruner, J., 1966; Piaget, J., 1953; DuFour, R., Fullan, M., 2001; 2004; Godin, 2010; Pink, 2011). Leaders must value and support those in education who are creative and look outside the box to engage students in content standards and lead with passion, so students master the content in a joyous and engaging way.

As Godin (2010) states, we are no longer a production society. We no longer need or value those who do things the same way in the same manner. Educational leaders must lead their teachers out of the "old" way of doing things and get our teaching staff to break out of the production mentality and dive into the creative and engaging hands-on way of allowing students to demonstrate what they know beyond the typical and unimaginative multiple-choice test. These tests do not allow students to argue their point of view; they do not allow students to

present a valid but opposing view to the topic at hand; these tests are focused on promoting robotic learning that does not enhance our culture or country (Shepard, L. A., 1991). Allowing our students to provide commentary to their answers, to argue the validity of their stance in opposition to others will allow them to learn grit (Duckworth & Duckworth, 2016), to understand there are many perspectives to a topic, and to listen without judgment to oppositional opinions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter provides the methodology of the case study by describing the epistemological perspective which is situated in constructivism, the aim of the study, an overview of the study, an introduction to the participants, data collection and procedures, data analysis, ethical considerations, and a summary. This study was conducted in order to discover how leadership affects student engagement. The research questions specifically are how can principals, using an art integration initiative sitewide, ultimately affect student engagement in the classroom? The secondary question is if they affect student engagement in the classroom, is there an outcome of deeper learning across subjects?

Epistemological Perspective

"To practice any art, no matter how well or how badly, is a way to make your soul grow."
Kurt Vonnegut

This study is situated within the constructivist learning theory, specifically investigating individual, social, and contextual constructivism. Individual Constructivism states "learning is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience" (Smith and Ragan, 2005, p.19). Social Constructivism relates to meaning derived from a collaborative atmosphere in the learning environment as well as modeling from the "more knowledgeable other" (Vygotsky, 1978; Bandura, 1977). Contextualism focuses on learning in a real world environment (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

Aim of the Study

The goal of this study was to understand how effective principals develop art integration school wide in a socially constructed and contextual way. Because the desire of the study was to identify how a site principal can impact student engagement within the classroom by implementing

an art integration initiative in secondary schools, a qualitative study was necessary to understand how participants "make meaning of their own lives, experiences and cognitive processes" (Brenner, 2006, p.357). In order to fully flush out the data and understand the effect this initiative had on the learning, a quantitative element analyzing state annual test scores was used to help triangulate how the beliefs of those interviewed connect or contrast to test data. The school of study was chosen because it has recently integrated arts across the curriculum sitewide; additionally, this school was recommended by the Executive Director of Oklahoma A Plus Schools as a school worthy of study.

Case Study Overview

While the research blooms most from interviews from the case study, the need for a quantitative measure was necessary to fully understand the effect the sitewide art integration had on student engagement and ultimately learning. The use of the test data provided a more robust understanding of the value the sitewide art integration had on student learning (Green, Caracelli, and Graham, 1989; Johnson and Turner, 2003; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). This study developed foundationally from the interviews, which were conducted first. The test data were collected after the interviews to see if the beliefs of the interviewees supported or did not support the test data. The emphasis on the interviews is essential to understand the process of the implementation as well as the perceived impressions of the teaching staff regarding the art integration initiative (Creswell et al., 2003).

A qualitative case study is necessary to understand how participants "make meaning of their own lives, experiences and cognitive processes" (Brenner, 2006, p.357). Case study focuses on "discovery rather than confirmation, [and] insights from case study can directly influence … practice (Merriam, 2006, p. 19). Additionally, Flyvbjerg (2011) states "one can

often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods" (ibid., p. 305). Using case study methodology, the data collection was through unstructured interviews in a public high school in the Midwest.

Case study is used when one wants to understand an identified group. Merriam (2009) states case study research focuses on a bounded system. This research, according to Flyvbjerg (2011), has specific parameters: it is a specific unit with identified limitations; it is thorough and in-depth with a focus on detail and vibrancy; has a specific time and place; and strains to understand the context connection within the data. Case study is set apart in that its data collection is focused on the boundaries of the research identified prior to the study. A case study is only as valuable as the significance of the data to be collected and studied (Stake, 2000). A challenge in case study is to focus on the "unit of analysis, not the topic of investigation" (Merriam, 2009, p. 41). Therefore, in this study, the leadership practices regarding the sitewide art integration at the school during a three year span are the identified boundary and unit of research. The context this case study lives within is the current testing and data driven oligarchy educational leaders maneuver through daily.

Case study is the appropriate research method for this study due to the need to identify the boundaries of the three year art integration and the leadership processes affecting the initiative. The evaluative nature of this study prescribes a need for case study (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Stake, 1981; Patton, 1987, 1990, 19966; Greene, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) as the outcomes were compared to leadership theory to see how the principal conducted the initiative, how student engagement was affected, and how end of year state test data improved or did not improve. Due to the need to better understand the program's outcomes in regard to leadership,

student engagement, and content knowledge, case study was the suitable choice for research (Kenny & Grotelueschen, 1980).

Research Question

This case study focuses on how site principals affect student engagement in secondary classrooms through sitewide art integration. Site principals affect the learning culture of a school, and this can affect the engagement of students in the classroom. Therefore, this case study aims to answer the question how principals, using an art integration initiative sitewide, ultimately affect student engagement with the outcome of deeper learning across subjects?

Appeal for Case Study

Case Study is the appropriate design because the data collected were from the three year span of the art integration at this school. Prior to the implementation, the school did not have a sitewide art initiative. However, after the art teacher convinced the principal to go to an A Plus informational meeting, the school embarked on this journey. It is within this three year boundary that this case will gain insight into principals affecting student engagement, which is why case study is the appropriate choice for the research design. According to Merriam (1998) case study:

> Offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon. Anchored in real-life situations, the case study results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon. It offers insights and illuminates meanings that expand its readers' experiences. … case study plays an important role in advancing a field's knowledge base (p. 41).

There is some research indicating educational leadership positively affects student engagement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Lopykinski & Wholeben, 2003; Cudeiro 2005; Price, 2015).

Conversely, there is little research on site leadership affecting student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge through an art integration initiative.

Similar studies analyzing student engagement have used case study in order to understand the phenomenon within the bounded system of time and event. Saeed and Zyngier (2012) used case study in an elementary school to see how motivation influences student engagement. A case study was applied to Angelaina and Jimoyiannis' analysis of student engagement using a collaborative online blog (2012). Case study was used by Smagorinsky et. al (2007) to examine how student engagement relates to high school students' learning of grammar. Walker (2022) studied student engagement in online and brick and mortar schools using case study to identify how twenty teachers engaged students. Prior to the pandemic, Borup (2019) used case study to analyze the engagement of students in learner to learner opportunities within an online high school setting. These are just a small sample of the many uses of case study as a research method to understand a phenomenon within a stated place and time.

Research Context

Oklahoma City University (OCU) received a Priddy grant for teachers and professors to learn how to infuse their classrooms with the arts (Garrett, 2013):

> O C U ' s Priddy Fellows met weekly during the spring and fall semesters to examine research on teaching and learning, explore ways to improve their teaching, promote creativity, and utilize appropriate technology into their courses. At the end of each spring semester, members of the Priddy Fellows Learning Community participated in a weeklong retreat. During each of these annual retreats, members of the Priddy Fellows Learning Community traveled to a different venue, including Santa Fe, Chicago, San Francisco, and New York City, to participate in unique arts-immersion experiences.

> Visionary scholars and leaders in creativity and teaching visited the campus, stimulating and stretching the imaginations of our faculty. Guest speakers included Sir Ken Robinson (author of Out of Our Minds: Learning to Be Creative), John Cimino (CEO of Creative Leaps International), Dee Fink (author of Creating Significant Learning Experiences), Ken Bain (author of What the Best College Teachers Do), Susan Wolcott (scholar on critical thinking), Randy Bass (leader in the scholarship of teaching and learning), and Mike Wesch (2009 CASE National Professor of the Year) (p. 28).

OCU's initiative was promoted from academic leadership though not K-12 public education leadership. Therefore, this study will help fill in the knowledge gap lacking in K-12 leadership literature and study.

The school in this study is a Midwest high school located in the suburbs situated thirty miles from the nearest city of roughly 396,000 people. The school lies in a town with a population of 2,170 with a high school student body of 244. Of the two hundred and forty-four students, 58% are male and 42% female. 14% of the students are on an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), 15% qualify for free lunch, and 9% qualify for reduced lunch. The ethnicities of the 244 students are 93.4% white, 2.4% black, 2.4% Indian or Alaska Native, and 1.6% are unclassified. The school employees 25 teachers with a breakdown of 40% male faculty and 60% female faculty.

This school implemented the A Plus art initiative. The requirements of the A Plus program were to implement the essential eight strategies. Those eight strategies are increasing art instruction and fostering two-way integration of the arts, taking an integrated, thematic approach to the curriculum, tapping into multiple learning pathways, emphasizing hands-on

learning, enriched assessment, increasing professional collaboration, and strengthening school partnerships (A+ Schools Program, 2001).

Participants

The principal, counselor, art teacher, and core subject teachers (English, math, science, history) are the focal participants in this study. The sampling is purposeful in that there is one principal, so he was interviewed, and there is one counselor, and she was interviewed. The exact core teachers were chosen by those at the school. These participants were interviewed to gain many perspectives on the engagement of students within the classroom and the aspects of leadership that have been most impactful in a successful implementation of the sitewide art initiative. This school site has twenty-five teachers and two hundred and forty-four students. Fifty-eight percent of the student body is male; forty-two percent are female. Fourteen percent of the student body is on an Individual Education Plan (IEP); while twenty-four percent of the student body qualifies for free and/or reduced lunch. The ethnic breakdown is as follows: ninety-four percent white, two percent black, two percent Indian, and two percent are unclassified.

Data Collection and Procedures

Using a qualitative case study, a secondary school in the Midwest - one that integrated the arts sitewide for three years - was examined for the effect site leadership had on student engagement in the classroom. The site administration and teachers who have been at the school four or more years were interviewed using a semi-structured format to allow for open responses and digressions the interviewee feels are important to share about the engagement students are or are not experiencing in the classroom because of art integration sitewide. Unstructured interviews were the essence of this research. Using a Thematic Analysis method to structure the

analysis of the data will allow for creative and subjective analysis by the researcher to draw in depth connections from the data through coding and theming. Additionally, end of year state test scores were used as the third data source to triangulate for meaning between the three: administrative interviews, teacher interviews, and test scores.

Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured, so the participants can tell their stories; however, this method allows for the researcher to ask probing questions to gain deeper knowledge and understanding when necessary (Merriam, 1998); additionally, "finding one's own style as a focused conversationalist and feeling comfortable with informants is the key to a good interview study" (Brenner, 2006, p. 368). The ideal question is one that is useful in having a participant express information and personal opinion. These ideal questions also reveal positive and negative aspects of a program (Merriam, 1998). An example of an ideal question would be "What is the ideal outcome of an art initiative sitewide?" Additionally, it is imperative the interviewer be as objective as possible, so questions are asked to get to the central issue or concern without contaminating the interview with preconceived notions (Seidman, 1991). These interviews were digitally audio recorded and transcribed. The interviews are expected to be 15 to 30 minutes in length. Field notes were collected immediately after interviews to record any insights, impressions, or connections the researcher made in the field (Van Maanen, 1988; Eisenhardt, 1989). The interview questions were focused on how each participant understood the art initiative implementation and process successes and shortcomings. Each question was selected to gain insight to the leadership of the art initiative and the student engagement outcome. The questions were vetted by the dissertation committee, and the interview questions

can be found in Appendix B. The administrators did have one additional question that was not asked of the teachers: "what was your role in the A Plus initiative?"

As a researcher with a constructivist lens, this study is one where the researcher is seen as a part of the research. Fine (1994) speaks of working the hyphen as a researcher:

> By working the hyphen, I mean to suggest that researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations. I mean to invite researchers to see how these 'relations between' get us 'better' data, limit what we feel free to say, expand our minds and constrict our mouths, engage us in intimacy and seduce us into complicity, make us quick to interpret and hesitant to write (Fine, 1994, p. 72).

Cunliffe and Karunanayake (2013) build off Fine's work on hyphen spaces to identify four distinct hyphen-spaces researchers should be aware of: insiderness-outsiderness, sameness-difference, engagement-distance, and political activism-active neutrality. As a fellow educator, the researcher has insiderness with those being observed; however, the researcher is an outsider in that the researcher does not work in their building or state. In a similar vein, working on one's Ph.D as well as being a building administrator, the researcher may be viewed as having a more advanced education and knowledge than the teachers, and, as thus, the researcher is different. To get the best data possible, the researcher will need to connect and develop a rapport to demonstrate a sameness with the staff one is observing. The sameness is the researcher's deep interest in the work they are doing as well as what is best for students no matter where the work is happening. Participants react to notions of sameness and difference naturally (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013). Participants also see the researcher as engaged or not whether they are an insider or outsider. Though the researcher is clearly very engaged in this topic, it was important

to let the participants know one is engaged without giving an unknown preconceived idea one would prefer interactions a specific way, so the researcher's data is not tainted. According to Cunliffe and Karunanayake (2013):

> The hyphen-spaces of political activism and active neutrality are about the politics of positionality— how we experience, interpret, and act upon commonalities or differences; how we make judgments about the lives of others relative to our own cultural, ideological, and knowledge community (Fawcett & Hearn, 2004; Stanley & Wise, 1990); and whether we foreground the experiences of marginalized and oppressed groups as a means of motivating social change (p. 380).

Thus, as an interviewer, the researcher cannot help but affect the natural process of the interview; however, by being aware of the hyphen spaces, one can minimize or maximize where necessary to keep the collected data as pure as possible.

Data Analysis

Once the data were gathered within the confines of the boundary of the three year A Plus art initiative, the sifting for meaning began. Creswell (2013) describes this as "a process of pulling the data apart and putting them back together in meaningful ways" (p.199). The interviews were transcribed, coded, and themed into major and minor categories. The transcription was conducted using Dragon Dictation and the theming and coding was analyzed using Nvivo software. Coding consists first of initial coding where data are put into categories line by line or word by word (Charmaz (2006). The outcomes of these groups become themes. This initial coding often produces hundreds of themes; thus, additional reduction is needed. One way is through axial coding. The smaller themes are regrouped under bigger umbrella themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The responses from the survey and notes from observations were

coded and themed as well. The data was analyzed for intersectionality between the leadership practices identified to promote and implement art integration to affect student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge.

The data were analyzed through Thematic Analysis as a method for the sifting for meaning. Thematic Analysis is a very focused way of looking at themes within data. Within Thematic Analysis several questions must be answered such as what data represents a theme? How much repetition of a construct will become a theme? Must all themes have the same quantity of support to become a theme? (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Prevalence is not the most important factor in finding themes within the data; keyness - representing important data relating to the research question is essential when identifying themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Using an inductive approach, the data was coded without preconceived ideas about which coding frames and themes the data will fit into. Thus, the thematic analysis is data driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Analyzing the data at a latent level will add a deeper description to the data and themes as well as connect to the constructivist perspective of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Burr, 1995). Ultimately, Thematic Analysis requires a search for meaning across the data looking for repetition; however, there is no one exact number of repetitions that will set the significance of the theme. The significance lies in the analysis of the researcher in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there are six phases of Thematic Analysis: "familiarizing yourself with your data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and producing the report."

Familiarizing Yourself with the Data

Before any formal coding is started, the researcher will transcribe the interviews. In this aspect an initial review of the data has started. Once transcribed, the researcher will read through

the transcripts to get more familiar with the content and notate any concepts that seem interesting or state elemental concepts. This immersion in the data is the foundation which the coding and theming was built upon (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Generating Initial Codes

Using the initial list created in the first phase, the researcher will continue to sift for meaning and looking for repetition of ideas and patterns in shorter data segments. The data are then tagged with possible topics/codes they support. The researcher will also look for data outliers that may inform the research in an oppositional way (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Searching for Themes

Once all the coding has been completed, the individual codes were grouped into broader concepts or themes. The coding and themes are revisited to see where there are overarching themes and sub themes within the data. Some of the codes may not fit into the theme categories, so these might be put into an "other" category, so that possible outliers are still considered for importance in the research. The themes should have a hierarchy of importance at this point; however, no codes and themes should be thrown out before the next phase of reviewing (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Reviewing Themes

Now that initial themes have been created, the researcher will sift further to analyze the themes and codes for coherence. The codes were revisited to confirm they fit in the identified theme. Themes were analyzed for accuracy and compatibility to the overall data. While doing

so, some themes may not have enough support to be kept, other themes may need to be combined, some themes may need to be divided for more accurate analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Defining and Naming Themes

To name the themes, the researcher will need to define the elemental aspects of each theme. Throughout this process, the researcher must continually go back to the data to make sure each theme is not too complex, so the narrative coming from the themes is clear and relatable to the context of the research. This narrative should not just rephrase the interviews but draw out the nuggets of importance the researcher identifies as well as relate back to the research question that is driving the overall narrative. Each theme should tell a story of the data in its theme, connect to other themes, and then to the research question and the complete work (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Producing the Report

The researcher takes the themes and data and compellingly explains the validity of the data and worth of the research. The findings from the data should be clearly communicated, so the critical reader can follow the process and understand the path the researcher took as well as the final gathering of evidence to support the research as a whole (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). The six-phase process of Thematic Analysis is not linear. The process is recursive and iterative as the researcher looks at and refines understanding and multiple meanings within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Ethical Considerations

Epistemology relates to one's theory of knowledge. The researcher's epistemology is through social construction; believing one learns from the path one walks on this earth as one engages with others through his/her experiences on the journey. Axiology reflects the study of the nature of values and value judgements. The researcher's axiology stems from her desire to do life with others: believing one should work to build others up, to represent the truth, and to do good for others. One should speak life into those they meet, so others are encouraged and move forward with a straighter back than before the encounter. Thus, in this study, it was important for the researcher to represent the focused and important work this principal engaged in with his teachers, so students are engaged in the classroom and achieve at deeper levels than before. The nature of being, how one lives in the world, is the essence of ontology. As a constructivist, it is important that the house, where the researcher lives, be aligned. The researcher's ontology is a belief that there are many roads leading to a destination: not one right road, but many different ways to accomplish a goal. The researcher believes in working with others, sharing experiences to relate, understand, and express knowledge with others. The practice of the work one does is praxeology: the ethical deliberation of purposeful human conduct. The reason for this work and this paper is to share one way site leaders can affect student engagement in the classroom.

The positionality of the researcher is one of a school administrator for ten years and a teacher for seven. Having the belief that educators are in schools to help students learn at deeper levels, develop good character, and desire to be life-long learners, the researcher finds much of the current accountability bureaucracy obstacles to the work of a school: teaching content in an engaging way, so students learn deeply and broadly. Being a constructivist, the researcher believes the work of Dewey, Bandura, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner among others are all

essential to engaging students in learning, especially after COVID-19. The researcher also believes leading a school is a high calling, and the work accomplished affects students' lives forever. Therefore, there is an incredible responsibility to do the work of leading a school, in every way but especially teaching and learning, with fidelity, honor, and intention.

When entering into a research project, one must submit their study plan to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This study was presented to the University of Oklahoma's IRB for approval. The approval was given by the University of Oklahoma for the study to progress. Therefore, there is an outside board assessing the validity and safety of the study in order to make sure no one is mistreated or endangered during a study.

Trustworthiness

The interviews were conducted over two days at the school. The interview results will give a more holistic understanding of the leadership practices required to integrate arts into classrooms sitewide to affect student engagement. Any questions within the research were member checked for accuracy.

Potential Research Bias

Because the researcher is passionate about students having opportunities to apply their content knowledge to real world scenarios, the researcher must work hard to keep from leading participants to answers the researcher might be hoping to hear. As a constructivist, the researcher has a deep belief that allowing students to be active and collaborative in the classroom far beyond the sporadic active learning experience is essential to building problem solvers, growth mindsets, and engaged life-long learners.

Quantitative Analysis

The state test scores, used as one of the data sources for triangulation, were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive analysis is used to identify trends and relationships in data (Byrne, 2002; Blaikie, 2003; Lawless et al., 2010). Because it is useful to identify trends over time, it is ideal to be applied to the test scores in order to identify the impact from the A Plus initiative on state end of year test scores. Using descriptive analysis the researcher compared annual state test scores in science, math, and English over four years: the three years of the initiative and the year prior to the start of the initiative for comparison. This gives a baseline in which to look at the following three years of the sitewide art initiative annual state test data and its effect on engagement and learning in the classroom.

Limitations

The limitation of this study is that the test data was collected from the state department of education, and one year of science testing data is missing due to no tests being conducted in science for that year.

Summary

This case study is foundationally the qualitative interviews with administrators and teachers adding end of year state tests to triangulate the data collected. Case study was the appropriate design for this study as the study is bounded by the three year art integration program. It is also essential to understand the impact the principal had on the engagement of students in the classroom through the decision to implement the program by interviewing the administrators and teachers. The test data is significant to the study in that it confirms much of what was recorded by the interviewees. These data findings are presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Data, Analysis, and Results

Introduction to the Findings

This study focused on how site principals are able to engage their students in the classroom through a sitewide art initiative. Thirteen of twenty-five staff members were interviewed regarding the implementation and follow through of the A Plus program at their suburban Midwest school. The previous chapter discussed the process for data collection while the current chapter focuses on the results from the administrator interviews, the teacher interviews, and the annual state test scores.

The findings are presented in two sections: the first is qualitative analysis of the administrators interviews and the teacher interviews; the second is the descriptive quantitative analysis of the annual state test scores. Within the qualitative analysis, examples of the interview analysis process were shared to include theme gathering. Within the themes, subthemes were identified, and from subthemes codes were ascertained. The quantitative test scores are presented and compared to the interviews to confirm or disconfirm the qualitative analysis, and a summary of the findings are offered.

Data Analysis

"Creativity is the power to connect the seemingly unconnected." William Plomer

The purpose of this case study was to examine how principals, using an art integration initiative sitewide, ultimately affect student engagement with the outcome of deeper learning across content areas. This chapter presents findings utilizing three data sources: interviews of administrators, teacher interviews, and state test scores. Chapter 4 is organized into two sections. The first section is organized by qualitative findings from the interviews of administrators and teachers. The data were revisited multiple times in a cyclical manner to identify recurring trends

and emerging themes. The second section provides the state test score data for the year prior to the art initiative and the three years following the implementation. The test data is compared with the six themes to triangulate the data for a more cohesive understanding of the art initiative and the impact the principal did or did not have on student engagement in the classroom with the outcome of deeper content knowledge.

Qualitative Analysis

Themes and subthemes were identified based on the interviews of both administrators and teachers. Identification for each theme and subtheme and illustrative quotes for each theme are included. Four administrators were interviewed: the principal, assistant principal, counselor, and the state A Plus director. Nine teachers were interviewed: a band teacher, two social studies teachers, two science teachers, two English teachers, a math teacher, and the art teacher. A more robust description of these interviewees may be found in Appendix C.

The audio recordings of the administrator and teacher interviews were transcribed using Dragon dictation software. Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis (TA) (2006), a six-step process of data analysis well-suited for a variety of research designs, was used. In the first step, one must be immersed in the data, reading and reviewing all transcripts, so a thorough understanding of everything participants said during their interviews is acknowledged. In step two, a reading line-by-line through each transcript and highlighted passages of text salient to the research question is essential. These highlighted passages were stored as nodes in NVivo 12, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software designed to help researchers manage large amounts of textual data. Using NVivo, nodes are the passages identified, and researchers assign a

brief, descriptive title to each node in NVivo or use the participant's own language for a title. The researcher created titles during this step. An example of this process is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Example of Raw Data Titles

Raw data	*Assigned title*
"…you know, every time you know, we try to meet as teachers and talk about how we're integrating arts into the classroom…we get ideas from each other…"	Sharing ideas with other teachers
"…leading the group and, you know, being excited about it…if whoever was in my position wasn't buying into the program…it wouldn't work…I was able to go to those summer institutes…"	Role of administration
"…I haven't found that I'm doing that much different. Um, you know, anything addition…I think in one class I may have added a little project…overall I really haven't done anything much different…"	Has not changed teaching approach

The completion of generating initial titles led to the third step of TA; thus, the search for themes began. In this step, the process of combining titles related to one another ensued, thereby reducing the data into a smaller overall number of categories. These categories became the initial themes. A more in-depth review of the initial themes allowed for a manipulation of categories into more concise sections within these themes. These new, more specific sections became the

subthemes. A short title was assigned to each new category (themes and subthemes) reflecting the original titles contained within. If any titles generated in step two did not fit into these categories, they were retained in a category titled "other," for later consideration as outliers.

Table 2

Overview of themes and subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
1. Gathering teacher buy-in	1a. Role of administration
	1b. Challenge getting teacher buy-in
2. Lack of enthusiasm	2a. A Plus is just a new term for an old method
	2b. A Plus led to clashes between teachers
	2c. Expressed pessimism toward A Plus
3. Impact of A Plus professional development	3a. In-services provided are the best
4. Enhanced school climate and culture	4a. A Plus created a positive climate and culture
	4b. Experienced greater cohesion
5. Faculty demonstrated growth through A Plus	5a. Implementing fine arts in the classroom
	5b. Incorporating other aspects of A Plus
	5c. A Plus enhances classroom instruction
6. Student outcomes	6a. Impact of A Plus on student performance
	6b. Students engage in and enjoy class more
	6c. Targeting multiple intelligences

Theme 1. Gathering Teacher Buy-In. Statements made by participants about the challenges of gaining teacher buy-in and the role of administration in this process led to the creation of this first theme. Participants who spoke of generating teacher buy-in appeared invigorated by the new A Plus curriculum. Based on these participants' statements, three subthemes supported this theme: challenge getting teacher buy-in, teachers felt invigorated, and role of administration.

Subtheme 1a. Role of administration. Three participants spoke of the role of administration in generating teacher buy-in for the A Plus initiative. Importantly, ten participants

did not speak at all of the administration. The statements of participants who did discuss the role of administration in the A Plus initiative are included to highlight they were in the minority. While these were not discrepant cases, meaning they did not make contradictory statements to other participants, these participants were the only ones who spoke of the role of administration at all in the A Plus initiative, which was part of the overarching research question addressed in this dissertation. For this reason, this subtheme was included.

Participant 3, the school principal, believed it was his role to generate enthusiasm and teacher buy-in surrounding the implementation of the A Plus initiative. He recalled being told whoever was in his position needed to buy into the program because if he did not, the program would not work. He believed he should be "leading the group and…being excited about it." The summer institutes he attended with teachers at the school were "probably the exciting part of that," as they served to generate his own enthusiasm that he could bring back and share with teachers. Participant 8, the director of the A Plus pilot program, said the principal was very excited to be part of the program. Participant 8 noticed this of the principal "when he saw the enthusiasm in the schools that first summer in Emporia…when he saw the enthusiasm at that three-day workshop or program, he got more excited," she said. Participant 8 also noted the superintendent was very positive and had indicated to her that the middle and elementary schools in the district want to be involved in the A Plus initiative as well. Participant 8 stated she could tell the superintendent was involved in and supportive of A Plus because he provided leadership. When asked what Participant 8 meant by this, she said "he comes up with ideas, and he listens to the faculty." For Participant 8, this was the definition and exhibition of leadership.

Participant 6, the school counselor, also spoke of the role administrators played in generating teacher buy-in for the A Plus initiative. Participant 6 said the principal was involved

in the planning of professional development (PD). “They’ve been on board,” she said, referring to the role of administration in initiating A Plus. “I mean, they jumped on board, they took their role…in trying to get people to join in,” she continued.

Subtheme 1b. Challenge getting teacher buy-in. The principal, Participant 3, and assistant principal, Participant 10, both shared the challenges they experienced when generating teacher buy-in for A Plus. Participant 3 expressed some frustration toward the teachers who were less enthusiastic toward adopting A Plus curriculum. He said:

> …there’s probably still an element of, “well, why don’t they…why didn’t that person do a little bit more here?” You know, “Why didn’t that person maybe contribute more, when we have common plan time?” Um, and again, I think it goes back to those people, probably teach the way that they were taught, and maybe have tunnel vision a little bit…I still think we have work to do with those…

Participant 3 still struggles to “advance the ball” with those teachers who were less excited about A Plus. He was excited to do something different, stating, “if it wasn’t this initiative, I think that’s what I’d be pushing for anyway, you know?” He did not want the school to stay status quo “in any capacity.” He wanted teachers to be on board with change and improvement and moving forward, whether that was with A Plus or another initiative that would ultimately benefit students.

Participant 10, the assistant principal, said one of the biggest challenges he faced was “tryin’ to light the fire of the staff that wasn’t able to go [to the PD retreat].” He noticed a difference in enthusiasm levels between those teachers who attended the initial summer A Plus retreat and those who did not. “The staff that went, everybody was all in,” Participant 10 said, “Like, oh, this is great, this is really good stuff.” The challenge was to bring on board the

teachers who did not participate in the first summer workshop. Though he did not fault those teachers who opted out of the initial workshop, given they were not mandatory; he understood many had other summer jobs they were required to work. He acknowledged the challenge of getting teachers who didn't attend the summer training excited about A Plus.

Theme 2. Lack of Enthusiasm. Many participants spoke positively about A Plus and the way in which incorporating this initiative in their classrooms enhanced their teaching and benefited students. However, other participants were less enthusiastic about the school's adoption of A Plus. Statements some participants made, both those who were excited about A Plus and those who were not, indicated a tension between teachers. Those participants who spoke positively about A Plus acknowledged that not all teachers were on board with A Plus, and this caused conflict among faculty. Statements participants made about the lack of enthusiasm for the art initiative fell into three categories, which became the supporting subthemes for Theme 2: A Plus is just a new term for an old method, A Plus led to clashes between teachers, and expressed pessimism toward A Plus.

Subtheme 2a. A Plus is just a new term for an old method. Several participants felt they were already incorporating important aspects of A Plus in their classrooms, so they believed the A Plus initiative was just a new term for the teaching methods they already implemented with students. Participant 10 noticed teachers "don't want to recognize [A Plus] or promote it." He believed some teachers thought "we've done that before…this is good for kids, that's why I keep doing it." So while this did not necessarily mean teachers were uninterested in A Plus,

Participant 10 thought resistant teachers did not recognize a significant change to their teaching methods coinciding with the implementation of A Plus.

Participants 2 and 9 also believed they and other teachers were already implementing A Plus-style teaching methods in their classrooms. “There are very few teachers that just lecture and that’s it,” stated Participant 2. He continued, “I think the definition of A Plus is so broad that it almost hinders it, because, like, some of this stuff is what most teachers do anyway, so if we’re already doing it, then what is the point of A Plus?” He believed the teachers who were less excited to implement A Plus were already using A Plus teaching methods. “The art integration initiative is something, basically, that we were already doing in many of our classrooms, but not identified that way,” he shrugged.

Perhaps because participants were already using A Plus-style teaching methods, two participants felt A Plus was simply a new way of framing older methods. Participant 2 said, “Essentially, what I’ve gathered from it is that as long as you don’t lecture and have them take bulleted notes, you are A Plus. That’s, I mean, it’s generally good, teaching practices regardless of whatever you call it.”

Participant 13, a science teacher, admitted to being one of the teachers who was less enthusiastic about A Plus. He sighed, “When we had workdays and things like that, we had people come in and teach us some of the things.” He identified the basis of A Plus sounded like other teaching programs and methods: “the core of it is a lot of, you know, teaching principles that have been around for quite a while.” Seeing the similarities between A Plus and older, more well-established teaching methods made Participant 13 less excited about A Plus.

Subtheme 2b. A Plus led to clashes between teachers. Three participants described the clashes taking place between teachers upon implementation of A Plus. Participant 2 stated other

teachers felt A Plus was "kinda forced on us." He could understand these teachers' perspectives. He did not "want that to seem defeatist," but tried to understand this from the perspective of those teachers who were not on board with A Plus. Still, the negativity of those teachers who did not want to implement A Plus was palpable. "They were a hindrance on everyone else who did wanna learn," said Participant 2. This same participant indicated this hindrance might have been mitigated if teachers had the option to opt out of participating in A Plus and could continue using their time in and out of the classroom as they saw fit rather than for A Plus Professional Development (PD). Participant 2 also noted the lack of follow-up to the A Plus PD was problematic. He believed the lack of monitoring the A Plus initiative may have been a factor which contributed to teachers' lack of enthusiasm for A Plus. This was particularly offensive to those who believed the curriculum changes were forced on them, and then no one followed up to ensure A Plus was implemented.

Participant 4 described clashes and resistance to the A Plus initiative. "Between teachers there have been clashes, I think," she remembered. Though not overt, Participant 4 said the clashes occurred: "that resistance is there, and, but that resistance happens no matter what kind of initiative you have. There will always be some who are resisting it." Despite this, she believed these clashes "happen with lots of initiatives we've had."

Participant 13 shared his perspective on the tension between the teachers who were for and those against implementing A Plus at the school. He believed a minority group of teachers led the charge in support of A Plus, and this small group was responsible for making the decisions on behalf of the rest of the teachers. "I was not part of that and it just, all of a sudden, it seemed like about a handful," described Participant 13, "it was probably a handful of our, you

know, I know it was our art teacher, our band…English teachers…our principal. And so that would have been the group that…made most of the decision."

Subtheme 2c. Expressed pessimism toward A Plus. Some participants spoke of their outright pessimism about the A Plus initiative, while other participants noted this pessimism from other teachers. When asked if she thought those teachers who did not participate in the A Plus PD were less enthusiastic to implement the initiative, the art teacher (Participant 11) said, "Yes." Participant 6, the school counselor, was another participant who noted the pessimistic attitude some teachers at the school adopted toward A Plus. She relayed:

> I think there's just some people that don't feel, they don't feel like there's a place, or it's like, "don't tell me I have to do one more thing with my kids, when I want to be doing this." Although we did everything in seminar, which was not the class time. But they could choose to do stuff in their classrooms if they wanted, or…Sometimes there's just people that drag their feet, and unfortunately, one, two, three tend to cause a little more.

Participant 6 also noted by the third year of the initiative, teachers seemed to feel "over this." She said, "I think the first two years were pretty good. I think the third year we met a little…probably the most resistance" from teachers over the A Plus initiative. One such teacher was Participant 13; "when it was introduced to us, it was, honestly, not my wheelhouse, as I'm a science teacher. So, it wasn't anything I was really excited about doing." He admitted:

> I will say that I was one of the naysayers about the whole thing, because I kind of…look, teaching has a…every five, six years something new comes round and this is the greatest thing ever, and this is the way you're supposed to teach. And most of the time when you

look at it, it's the same strategies just kind of changed, and things like that. So, I'm, you know, kind of negative sometimes when it comes to new things.

Theme 3. Impact of A Plus Professional Development. Participants were mostly positive about the professional development they received related to the A Plus initiative. Statements seven participants made contributed to the generation of this theme. Participants' responses coalesced into one supporting subtheme, in-services provided are the best. Despite these positive opinions about the A Plus PD, Participant 10 pointed out the school administration was not responsible for hosting the in-services, and when administration restructured the school day this led to a decrease in A Plus PD participation, according to Participant 5.

Subtheme 3a. In-services provided are the best. Participants described the A Plus professional development (PD) in-services to be some of the best PD opportunities they had experienced as teachers. Additionally, as Participant 6 stated, school administrators were right by the teachers' sides during the in-services, learning about A Plus as the teachers were. Participant 1 stated at the time of his interview, the school was preparing for their final A Plus in-service. He said of the A Plus PD, "it's been really good. I think it's been great for our staff." Participant 10 described the in-service PD as an "eye-opener" for how to bring fine arts into the classroom.

Participant 11 described the A Plus in-services as "some of the best professional development that we ever have received as teachers, and I've taught 23, 24 years." She believed this way because, as she said, "it was applicable to what we were doing to the classroom. Every classroom." Participant 5 also stated, "the summer in-service that we went to that first summer was probably the best [PD] that I've ever had." She continued, the group in attendance "was very excited about it because…the professional learning was just so incredible." Participant 4 felt the same: "all of the summer workshops that we have done…have been the best to me." Further, she

stated, “The A Plus initiative is not just the arts, but it’s a whole lot of other things, which is why I think the in-services have been really important…we have focused on other things, too.”

Theme 4. Enhanced School Climate and Culture. One benefit A Plus provided teachers and, more importantly, students, was a more positive school climate and culture. Eight participants spoke of the way the A Plus initiative translated to a better climate within the school among teachers and between teachers and students. The statements fell into two subthemes supporting the creation of this theme: A Plus created a positive climate and culture, and experienced greater cohesion.

Subtheme 4a. A Plus created a positive climate and culture. Participants noted how A Plus improved the school’s climate and culture. Participant 10 said the “culture and climate, it feels, just, better.” Participant 4 believed A Plus “has improved the climate of the school…I think students just appreciate learning so much more.” She described this improved climate in the following way:

> [The students] are much more receptive to what you have to teach them too, because you’re giving that opportunity for them to express themselves, and you’re giving them feedback that is…you know, you are accepting them because they’re expressing not just some work…they’re expressing themselves and you’re accepting them, and so there’s a better relationship and that helps too.

Participant 8 also noted this improved atmosphere; “the students want to come to school.” She continued, “They don’t want to skip school. They don’t want to drop out. They want to come to school because the arts have been brought into the classroom. It’s more active learning. They’re

a part of it." Both teachers and administrators noted the positive impact on students and student engagement in the classroom which positively affected climate and culture.

Subtheme 4b. Experienced greater cohesion. A significant reason teachers and administrators believed school culture and climate increased after A Plus was implemented related to teachers feeling a greater sense of cohesion and collaboration. Participant 1 said, "I think it's brought everybody together into a pretty cohesive unit." The principal, Participant 3, said the dialogue established in common planning times as part of A Plus created cohesion among teachers. He stated:

> For two years, we met during common plan time, and we had groups of students, anywhere from two to five, that met and talked about lessons that they have going on, in their classroom, that…have some arts, you know, incorporated and all…any time you bring 'em together like that. And, you know, that encourages cross-curricular, and oh, people walk away thinking, "You know what, I ought to try that," or, "Here's how I can see that working in my content area and all."

Participant 8 described her surprise at seeing how the teachers came together surrounding the A Plus initiative: "the one thing that surprised me the most is the collaboration, the comradery that is built." She continued, "It's just beautiful how they trust. And the main thing is basic: trust. They trust each other now." Participant 13 described how this worked a bit more:

> We've attempted to, you know, find ways. You know, every time, you know, we try to meet as teachers and talk about how we're integrating arts into the classroom, and

> different ways. And then, you know, we have a…we get ideas from each other. I've made some changes in my classroom, uh, as a science teacher.

Participant 11, the art teacher, provided some examples of the collaborations she has done with other teachers under the A Plus initiative. She collaborated with a science teacher on projects with glass fusing and material science. She also worked with an English teacher on a project where students wrote and made books, and she has integrated art projects in collaboration with a music teacher, where students painted to music. Participant 11 said "some colleagues I just really naturally click with," making these collaborations easier.

Theme 5. Faculty Demonstrated Growth Through A Plus. Participants discussed applying what they learned at the in-services and other A Plus PD training and incorporating these new concepts in their classrooms. Through integrating fine arts and other aspects of A Plus, participants believed they enhanced their classroom instruction. In turn, this seemed to generate more student enthusiasm. Statements participants made about the growth they perceived through the A Plus initiative fell into three subthemes: implementing fine arts in the classroom, incorporating other aspects of A Plus, and A Plus enhances classroom instruction.

Subtheme 5a. Implementing fine arts in the classroom. Five participants spoke of the way they incorporated fine arts into their classroom curriculum. Participant 1 believed incorporating fine arts into his classroom was "a neat challenge for me." He described using painting, creative writing, and drawing in his concert band classes. Participant 2 offers students a choice of presentation types in his social studies classes. He stated:

> Sometimes, presentation is whatever they would choose to do… Um, kinda morphed into a lot of one-day projects, at least once a unit, where here's the information. You have a whole block, you have until the end of the block to create a presentation and present the

> information to your classmates, and it goes pretty well. Uh, they've done plays, and they've done like, they'd come up with skits to sell their invention, like the telephone or the airplane or whatever. Uh, they did really good ones over the Holocaust.

Participant 4 also incorporated fine arts projects into her science classes. She described a periodic table project she did with her students. "So they make posters, they choose any kind of object, any kind of things that they are interested in that they could, um, categorize and make a periodic table out of," Participant 4 said. She continued, "They have to have some similarities in the ideas that are in the periodic table that go into their poster…those are very creative now. They're very artsy and beautiful." She also described other ways she incorporated fine arts into her science curriculum. One activity incorporated a music lesson when teaching her students about velocity. She described:

> …as the music played, and then trying to distinguish between when the velocity was staying the same, but it was a certain velocity. There's a slow velocity, a fast velocity and then when there's acceleration, when it's changing from one to another. So, that was one. I've also done music with…I also have to try to get across the metric system.

Participant 5 believed incorporating art into her English and journalism courses was "really easy for me to implement." The A Plus initiative made her "more aware of" her students' needs and that she had to "find a way to put [fine arts] in and…still get the content that I need to get." Thanks to A Plus, she tries to find different ways to teach curriculum, so students do not get bored. Participant 7 also believed incorporating arts into the math classroom was easy. "To be honest," she said, "it was really easy for the math department to incorporate it, because our

curriculum honestly already has a lot of that built into it, we just didn't know it." She said it was "natural" to think outside the box and teach math through incorporation of arts curriculum.

Subtheme 5b. Incorporating other aspects of A Plus. One aspect of A Plus participants highlighted was in addition to incorporating fine arts into the classroom, students now had options for their assessments. This was something even the school counselor, Participant 6, has tried to incorporate when working with students. She said, "I think I've tried to incorporate and to think about using different methods of having kids…if I ask them a question or I ask them to turn something into me, giving them different options to turn it in." Two other participants described these options as well. Participant 7 said instead of having students complete paper and pencil activities, they now "practice math activities through maybe acting or singing."

Participant 9 provided students with options for their assessments: "a good example would be that for some major tests, I give an assessment B, which would be an alternative assessment other than the paper and pencil." He continued:

> So, this would be an assessment B in which the…in which they identify the main points in the unit or, um, by a variety of things. They can choose what they like to do. So, I've had some students rewrite the story. I've had some students act out the story. I've had some students put it to a rap. I've had students make a book…whatever they like to do, whatever they enjoy, they feel strong…I let them use that mode.

Subtheme 5c. A Plus enhances classroom instruction. By incorporating the different components of A Plus, administrators and teachers felt classroom instruction was enhanced. Participant 8, the director of the pilot program, said she noticed "how the teachers are opening up

and becoming so much more creative in their lesson planning." Participant 3, the school principal, said "we've definitely grown because of [A Plus]." He noted:

> Some teachers wanted to start it the year before, but we weren't quite ready. You know, there were some other people, I think, that needed to be convinced, that needed to uh, to be allowed to be, maybe even heard, and all. So, I think, um, I sit back and kind of listen to all the input…to hear what I think is the best for us, and it's not always majority rules, you know? It's, sometimes it's "here's what's best for us."

Similarly, the assistant principal (Participant 10) said, "teachers have benefitted from [A Plus]." He continued:

> It's been invigorating for the teachers to look at something with a, through a new set of lenses. Um, to be challenged…They like it because they're challenged…It has enhanced what we're doing. Um, and I think I've said it earlier, but I think it…it gave our staff a real shot in the arm…even the ones that…kind of begrudgingly do it…It gives them a new perspective. And maybe for a veteran teacher that has been at it awhile and got things set in a routine, um it just gives them new lenses to look through things.

Theme 6. Student Outcomes. The goal of implementing the A Plus initiative was ultimately to improve student engagement in the classroom and performance on end of year assessments. Participants believed A Plus had positively impacted students, even though outcomes were not measurable through test scores at the time of the interviews. Participants' statements about these improved student outcomes fell into three subthemes: impacts of A Plus

on student performance, students' engagement and enjoyment in class, and targeting multiple intelligences.

Subtheme 6a. Impacts of A Plus on student performance. Participants believed A Plus had positive impacts on students' learning in the classroom. The staff acknowledged there was a lack of metrics or data confirming these beliefs, but some participants did notice students performing better in class following the implementation of A Plus. Participant 2 said, "the results of my tests aren't any better than they have been," attributing this to different grade levels. "[A Plus curriculum] resonated well with a few of the juniors, but it seemed to, that kinda stuff goes over much better with the sophomores, but I think they're more art inclined," he explained.

Participant 7 noted students who were previously struggling in math class have improved under A Plus curriculum. "I've had other teachers…paras have told me that when they see those low kids move up, it's something they remember," she said, "they think [A Plus] really helps with the retention piece for those low kids." However, she also acknowledged the teachers and administrators did not specifically track performance metrics related to A Plus for their students. Participant 11 also said, "I don't have any data" she could use to support this increased student performance.

Participant 12 asked rhetorically, "Does it help everybody? I don't necessarily think so, 'cause we all learn a little bit differently, but I do like the fact that, you know, it's another way that kids can learn." Later in his interview, he summarized other participants who also spoke about improved student outcomes not measurable through metrics and data. He continued:

> I think it definitely helps the kids get to know the material better. Um, because I think they can visualize the sequence of, you know, an election year and what goes on and specific steps along the way and by, you know, putting that in an image…Thinking

about, okay, you know, "how do I take these words and put them in a picture?" and I think that kinda burns into their head a little bit better. And I think they do a better job of remembering that material through [the process of applying content to an art project].

Administrators also believed students were improving under the A Plus initiative. The principal, Participant 3, discussed classrooms stating, "today, as opposed to five years ago, I think [learning] would be enriched, it would be better…I'd still see growth." However, he recognized growth was difficult to quantify without metrics: "that's probably the hardest, maybe, thing to measure." He believed the challenge was tying any improved test scores back to A Plus as the reason for the increases. Additionally, he acknowledged the school already scored above the state average prior to the A Plus implementation.

The assistant principal, Participant 10, also believed it was difficult to quantify how A Plus has benefitted students. "I don't know if we could put a number on it, what it's done for us," he said. However, he believed because teachers were implementing fine arts into their respective subject curricula, "our kids have a heightened awareness of the fine arts, or, maybe, a heightened level of interest…so, for them to be able to take that stuff and use it" was something he believed was beneficial for students.

Participant 8, the state director of the A Plus program, also expressed her belief that A Plus has benefitted students. She discussed a Spanish class, where "the teacher and the students made up songs. And [the Spanish teacher] said, when it comes test time, she can see the kids lipping those songs." The state director also shared how A Plus curriculum has supported a deeper understanding of class material for students, rather than simply memorization. She

believes the administration is in the process of gathering data to measure student outcomes, which administrators will be able to analyze to measure student growth.

Subtheme 6b. Students engage in and enjoy class more. Participants identified students were more engaged in their classes and exhibited increased enjoyment of learning in the classroom. "I think it's opened up some kids to what we're doing in class," said Participant 2, admitting the curriculum "probably went over better with freshmen" than with other grade levels. Participant 4 stated, "I think students just appreciate learning so much more. I feel like [A Plus] is a way to entice students to learn science because a lot of them come in not liking science." This participant noticed her students demonstrated deeper engagement in her science class, which she believed was fundamental for them to learn. Her students indicated "much more engagement, which is, you know, you're not going to get them to learn unless they're engaged. I think [A Plus] increases that, so it's gotta help learning because otherwise they're not tuning in."

Participant 5 spoke of the increased level of critical thought her students applied to their assignments during the A Plus initiative. She elaborated:

> Instead of, you know, that being like a question on a worksheet where they would've just talked about it for 30 seconds, and written an answer and moved on, it ended up turning into what I thought was gonna be, like a 30-minute thing. It took a day and a half of class to do it…the conversations they were having as they were talking about what she was feeling and how they were going to put that onto the paper somehow was incredible. The depth of their critical thinking was just amazing to me.

Participant 11 saw "kids more engaged" as a result of A Plus, which she attributed to greater diversity in classroom activities and assignments. She thought A Plus provided a powerful mechanism for students to engage in hands-on learning. Participant 11 stated, "I think that's a

good thing, especially with teenagers. They don't want you to tell them what to do…if they have some ownership…then you get a lot more out of them." Participant 13, who expressed pessimism about the A Plus initiative, also admitted "some of the kids enjoy what we do…some of them enjoy the hands-on stuff."

The principal and A Plus program director also noted increased student engagement. Participant 3 stated students interviewed about A Plus spoke positively about the art initiative. The students valued A Plus because they were able to overcome learning hurdles they might not have without the hands-on application of content to art projects. Participant 8 saw students and teachers happier after A Plus was implemented. "Everyone cares about coming to school because they don't know what to expect, because the teachers have opened up and gone more creative…hands-on and active with their teaching," she relayed.

Subtheme 6c. Targeting multiple intelligences. Participants appreciated the A Plus program's design of targeting multiple intelligences. Applying different learning styles to their teaching strategies, the faculty saw improved student outcomes when students were allowed to indicate their knowledge in alternative ways. Participant 3, the principal, said, "My initial goal, from my perspective, is just that staff members would…recognize…learning styles of kids." Participant 9, an English teacher, also stated a goal of the program was "to include multiple intelligences, or presenting units and lessons in a way that multiple intelligences were built in." The school counselor, Participant 6, noticed this as well; "it was good for us to learn the different learning styles for kids." She observed before A Plus, "we missed the boat a little bit, maybe not emphasizing as much about learning styles."

Even the two self-described pessimistic participants indicated they believed the program helped target a variety of learning styles, which benefited students. Participant 12 admitted some

students are not interested in integrating fine arts into the classroom, "for the ones that do, I think it's good for them to show their creativity. I think it gives them a lot of confidence, helps their self-esteem." Participant 13 felt similarly stating:

> As a teacher, you need to try to reach, you know, this kind of student that learns this way, and this kind of student that learns this way…some are auditory, and some are visual…So A Plus, that's a big thing, is trying to reach some of those kids that don't…that can't just read a book or listen to a lecture, you know.

Thematic Structure of Findings

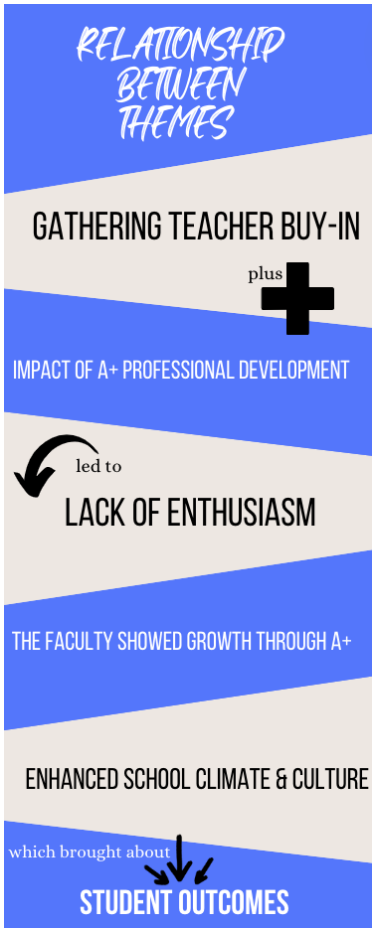
After analyzing the six themes (gathering teacher buy-in; lack of enthusiasm; impact of A Plus professional development; enhanced school climate and culture; faculty demonstrated growth through A Plus; and student outcomes), the themes were filtered to find specific subthemes. The subthemes (1a. role of administration; 1b. challenge getting teacher buy-in; 2a. A Plus is just a new term for an old method; 2b. A Plus led to clashes between teachers; 2c. expressed pessimism toward A Plus; 3a. In-services provided are the best; 4a. A Plus created a positive climate and culture; 4b. experienced greater cohesion; 5a. Implementing fine arts in the classroom; 5b. Incorporating other aspects of A Plus; 5c. A Plus enhances classroom instruction; 6a. impact of A Plus on student performance; 6b. students engage in and enjoy class more; 6c. targeting multiple intelligences) were analyzed again more thoroughly for specific codes within the subthemes.

A careful examination of all themes, subthemes, and their associated codes (Appendix E and Appendix F) occurred to ensure proper placement. Then a final sifting proceeded to compare codes against one another, and moving the codes or retitling them as required. After this step, the final name for each theme was defined based on its contents and its relationship to the

research question: how do principals, using an art integration initiative sitewide, ultimately affect student engagement with the outcome of deeper learning across subjects? This demonstrates the recursive nature of analyzing the interviews. The final thematic structure presented in Figure 1 illustrates an infographic of the relationships between these themes. In step six, the findings are presented from this analysis, which appear at the end of this chapter.

Figure 1

Infographic of Relationships Between Themes



Quantitative Analysis

Aggregate site test scores were collected from the state department of education for the site for the years 2016 - 2019 in the areas of math, English, and science. No data were reported

for the 2016 year in science. All other 2016-2019 reported scores were charted looking for growth between 2016 and 2019 in each subject area for those with Effective Ability.

Figure 2

Math Scores from 2016 - 2019

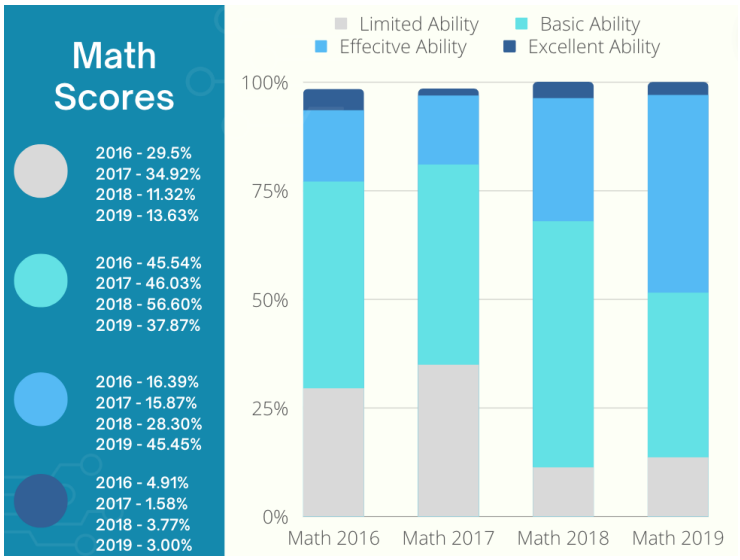


Figure 3

Math Effective Ability Scores from 2016 - 2019

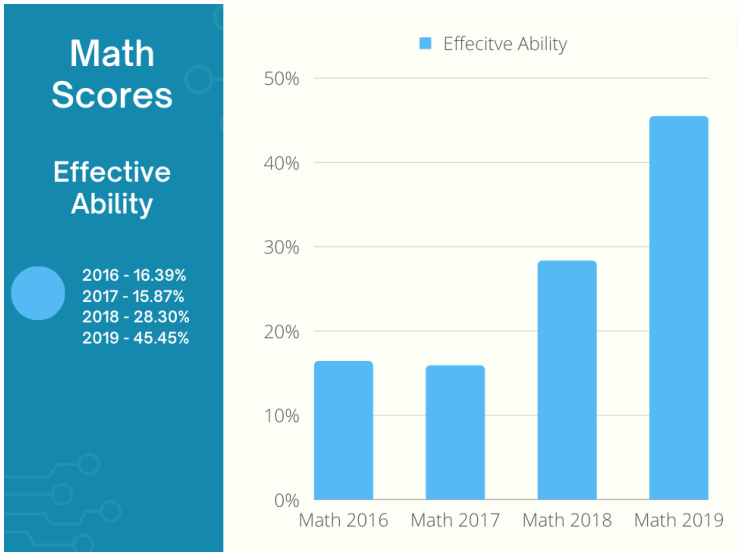


Figure 4

English Scores from 2016 - 2019

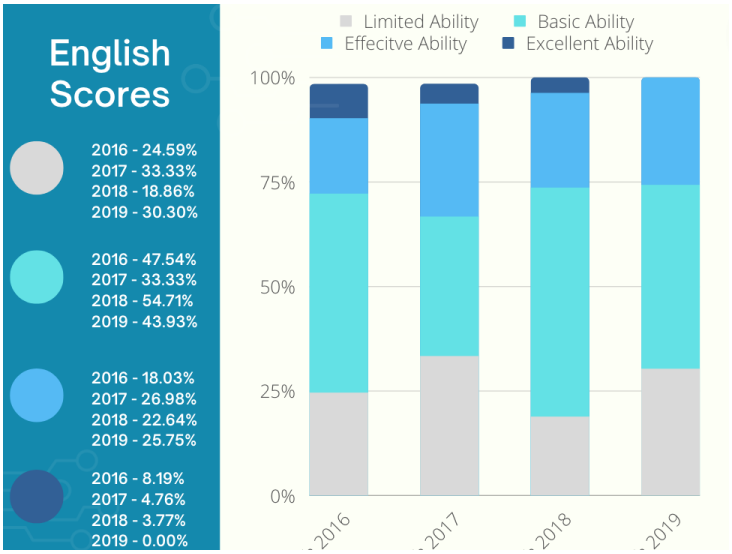


Figure 5

English Effective Ability Scores from 2016 - 2019

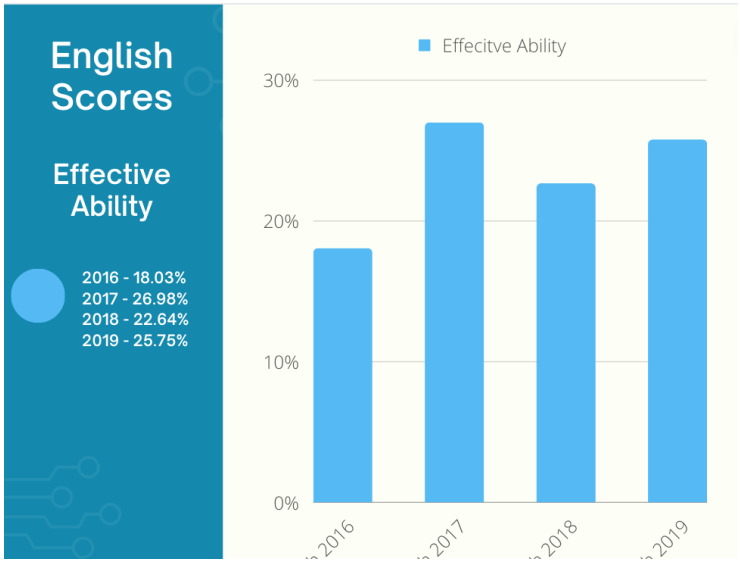


Figure 6

Science Scores from 2017 - 2019

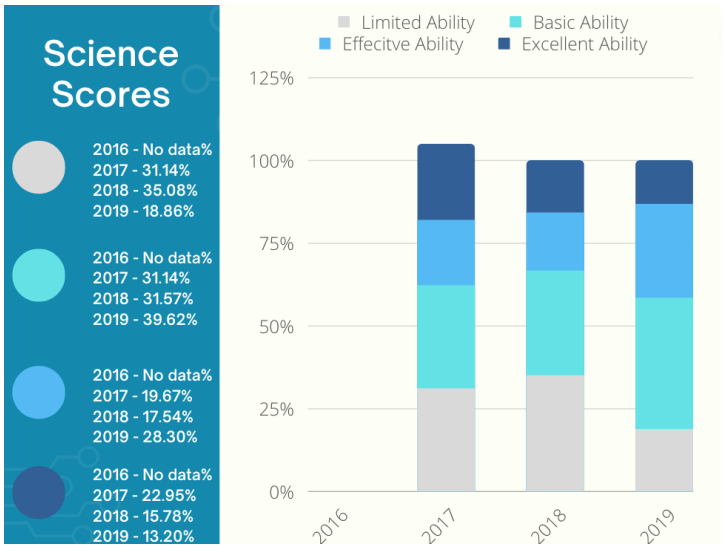


Figure 7

Science Effective Ability Scores from 2017 - 2019



End of year state test scores were analyzed to determine how the sitewide art initiative affected student learning. The data indicates an implementation dip for those with excellent ability. An

implementation dip is when a program starts and because of the changes, the scores or responses actually decrease instead of increasing (Fullan, 2001). Additionally, the overall scores of those with excellent ability decreased over time. However, when looking at the effective ability over the years, one can see improvement in each subject area. Therefore, it appears as if art integration has a positive effect on those who struggle with state tests and a negative effect on those who typically are successful taking state tests. Comparing the end of year state test data with the six themes, the data confirms the A Plus program had a positive impact on gathering teacher buy-in, enhanced climate and culture, impact of A Plus professional development, and faculty demonstrating growth. Nonetheless, the end of year test scores denote the lack of enthusiasm from teachers affected those with excellent ability due to their scores decreasing over the three years of the A Plus initiative even though the scores of those with effective ability increased over the same three year timeframe.

Summary

Outcomes of this study indicated mixed opinions qualitatively and mixed results quantitatively regarding the A Plus pilot program implementation. Students who struggled academically saw improvement on test scores using the sitewide integrated art program. Of those interviewed, some participants were excited about the implementation of A Plus, while others expressed hesitation and even outright pessimism about the program. This pessimism permeated throughout the school, it even affected teachers who were excited about A Plus. While school administration was ultimately responsible for implementing A Plus at the school, participants identified the art teacher who first pushed for the school to be an A Plus pilot school. Administrators like the principal and superintendent were supportive of A Plus and its implementation and participated in the A Plus in-services for professional development

alongside the teachers. However, some participants noted there was little administrative follow-through after A Plus was implemented, and these participants felt more teachers would have been invigorated by A Plus had the initiative been monitored.

While participants were unclear as to the impact the A Plus initiative would have in relation to state test scores, the state test scores indicated A Plus had a positive improvement in scores for students who struggled most on end of year state assessments. Test scores of those students who excelled at taking end of year state tests revealed a drop in scores during the A Plus initiative. Most of the site staff saw positive changes in student engagement and content knowledge which led many participants to believe A Plus had a positive impact on student learning. This was especially the case with students who were not top assessment performers previously since through A Plus, teachers were able to target the multiple learning styles of their students. Additionally, all the interviewees were white. How this data impacts those schools with more diversity is unknown.

Chapter 5: Findings, Conclusions, and Suggestions for Further Study

Introduction

This case study examined how or if secondary principals can affect student engagement in the classroom through a sitewide art integration program. The data were collected through interviews of school administrators and teachers in a midwest high school as well as state annual test data. Specifically, the research question driving the study was how do principals, using an art integration initiative sitewide, ultimately affect student engagement with the outcome of deeper learning across content areas? Ultimately, the research indicated principals do impact student engagement in the classroom and the engagement does influence deeper learning in the classroom.

Summary of the Study Findings

Six themes emerged from the interview data:

- Gathering teacher buy-in
- Lack of enthusiasm
- The impact of the A Plus professional development
- Enhanced school climate and culture
- The faculty demonstrating growth through A Plus
- The student outcomes of the A Plus program

These six themes were sifted for connections to the annual test scores as well as theory to support findings and conclusions.

Gathering Teacher Buy-in Findings

According to Turnbull, "teachers who participate in reform implementation decisions will have increased buy-in, be more motivated to take action, and thus have greater impact on school reform" (2002). Teacher buy-in is defined as:

> teachers' perceptions of five related issues: (1) whether teachers believed they had a good model for their school; (2) whether the model helped them become better teachers; (3) whether they were personally motivated to make the model work; (4) if [teachers] believed they were able to make the model work in their classroom; and (5) if they understood how the model was supposed to work to improve student learning" (Turnbull 2002, p. 243).

The principal, assistant principal, and counselor all spoke of how important it was for the administration to get teacher buy-in for the A Plus program. According to the principal his role was "buying in, and kind of, uh, you know, leading the, leading the group and you know, being excited about it. Um, you know, they did say, you know, if, if my, whoever was in my position wasn't uh, buying into the program and all, you know, it wouldn't work." The assistant principal spoke of buy-in as "you set it up, or you frame it so that you give them these lining activities, and, then, they end up coming with, uh, ... They, they come up with it on their own, e-, eventually, and, uh, you know, they own the learning…uh, they own the new idea." The counselor stated it this way: "[the administration has] been, they've been on board. I mean, they jumped on board, they took their role, they did, in trying to get people to, uh, join in." From the principal, to the assistant principal, to the counselor they all recognized the need for teachers to want to implement the A Plus program.

While the administrators believed teacher buy-in was important, according to the principal, only half the teachers ever went to the summer training. All the teachers were required to attend A Plus training when it was offered during the traditional school year and on campus. According to several of the interviewees, there were definitely staff members who did not implement or enjoy the A Plus initiative. While there was no explicit data indicating "if [the teachers] understood how the model was supposed to work to improve student learning" (Turnbull, 2002), it is likely this lack of intentional connecting the initiative to increased student outcomes could have impacted those who refused to participate in the A Plus art initiative.

Nonetheless, the test scores demonstrate enough teachers bought in to the A Plus initiative to increase the test scores of those who typically struggle on state end of year tests. The results of these tests illustrate those with Effective Ability on the math state end of year tests rose from 16.39% the year before the implementation to 45.45% the last year of the A Plus art implementation. The English test scores demonstrate an initial 18.03% passing rate the year before implementation of the A Plus program to 25.75% passing rate the third and final year of the initiative. There were no science state test scores the year before implementation, but the first year of the A Plus program the passing rate was 19.67% and the final year the passing rate was 28.30%. These scores demonstrate enough of the teachers bought into the initiative in order for it to translate to improved test scores for those students who normally struggled on end of year state tests.

Lack of Enthusiasm Findings

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines enthusiasm as 1) a strong excitement or feeling, or 2) something inspiring zeal or fervor. The connection between teacher enthusiasm and student

achievement has long been researched, with some studies finding positive relationships between these two factors (Coats & Smidchens, 1966; Rosenshine, 1970; McConnell, 1977; Armento, 1978; Land, 1980). Interestingly, Bettencourt, et al (1983) found there was no evidence of teacher enthusiasm increasing student achievement.

While representing a minority of teachers at the school, those with a lack of enthusiasm for the A Plus program were intent on not integrating it into their classroom curriculum. The lack of enthusiasm grew beyond the minority of teachers to permeate those who were originally very enthusiastic as the program continued. This change in perception of the program could be attributed to the lack of monitoring and follow through of the program by the administrators. According to participant 2:

> there was no follow through anywhere really about if we're even doing it. Um, we had people come in and you know, watch all of our classes but it was all volunteer. So people who weren't doing any of the stuff anyway, they're not gonna volunteer to have people come in and watch their classes. There was no follow through on from administration to say are we actually doing some of these things? You know, we spent all this time and all this training. Are, is any of it actually getting done?

Additionally, participant 5 stated:

> I don't think our administration has bought into, they don't ... KESA, which is our, you've probably heard KESA which is all the accreditation, they don't, they're so stressed about meeting that and doing all that, that they haven't quite realized that that just falls right into A-Plus and if you're doing A-Plus, we're gonna meet KESA without any problems

> and all the requirements that KESA is asking of us, but I don't think they've quite seen that or even maybe wanted to see it.

Both of these participants were excited about the A Plus initiative and implemented it in their classrooms. However, at the end of the three years, their comments and body language indicated their enthusiasm had waned due to the lack of follow through and support from the administrators beyond the principal and assistant principal being in the training with the teachers. It's also possible the value the principal placed on this initiative was not very high as he stated in his interview that "some of the professional development seems probably pretty, pretty elementary maybe, in some ways, you know, I mean, drawing pictures." Even if he never stated his belief to the teachers that some of the strategies seemed elementary, it is quite probable he unconsciously displayed this sentiment.

Test scores for those who typically do well on end of year state exams did plummet. Students who excel in education often are sensitive to subtleties. Those with excellent ability on the state end of year exams had math passing scores the year before the A Plus implementation of 4.91%. At the end of the three year program, those with excellent ability had a passing rate of 3%. Those with excellent ability in English had a passing rate of 8.19% the year before implementation, and their score was 0% the final year of the A Plus program. Science did not have a score the year prior to implementation; however, the first year of the A Plus initiative, those with excellent ability had a 22.95% passing rate on the end of year state exam, the last year of the A Plus program the passing rate of those with excellent ability dropped to 13.20%. Therefore, the test scores signify a negative between student engagement and the outcome of deeper learning in connection with teachers' lack of enthusiasm in the A Plus initiative.

The Impact of A Plus Professional Development Findings

Professional development (PD) is the training teachers receive each year from their school site or district. Some specific PD is required by each state's State Department of Education, but most schools offer additional PD for their teachers to support their initiatives or to deepen teaching strategies, so students learn at higher levels. According to Bredeson, principals can impact PD significantly through "1. the principal as an instructional leader and learner; 2. the creation of a learning environment; 3. direct involvement in the design, delivery and content of professional development; and 4. the assessment of professional development outcomes" (Bredeson, 2000). From the interviews, it is clear the principal created a learning environment for the teachers to receive the A Plus PD and work collaboratively. He states the teachers are given twenty minutes a month to get together and discuss how they implement A Plus in their classrooms or to collaborate on projects. There are also three half days of A Plus PD each year with an additional two days of optional A Plus PD in the summer. When asked if he uses any of the A Plus strategies in PD he delivers for the school, he replied no. When the counselor was asked if testing data was analyzed to see the effect of the A Plus initiative, she said she never thought of that, and no it had not been collected or analyzed. When the principal was asked the same about testing data to support the impact of the A Plus initiative, he said:

> it's really hard to tie, I think, the, uh, take the data and say, 'Well, that's-that's a positive sign, that raised', and you know, to identify, 'Well, that's because of this, well, is it because of this, or this, or a combination of things?' Uh, that's, that's probably the hardest one to answer, 'cause how do ya, how do ya tie the data to that, and knowing that, that's the reason for an increase?

Thus, the impact the principal had on the A Plus PD was to create a learning environment. Nevertheless, the impact of the A Plus PD was significant to most teachers at the site because all the interviewees stated the PD was worthwhile (even those who did not want to use the A Plus strategies in their classroom). Participant 3 shared "I've been involved in, um, the ... all of the summer workshops that we have done and the, uh, in-services that we've had during the school year have been the best to me." "The summer in service that we went to that first summer was probably the best [professional learning development] that I've ever had" shared participant 5. Participant 11 stated:

> [A Plus] was some of the best professional development that we ever have received as teachers, and I've taught 23, 24 years. So I mean, it was applicable to what we were doing, so to the classroom. Every classroom. It wasn't just that the art teacher has to teach reading.

Therefore, the A Plus PD provided was exceptional, valued by most, and identified as useful by all.

Just as Teacher buy-in had a positive effect on student achievement for those with effective ability, so too does the A Plus Professional Development. The Effective Ability on the math state end of year tests rose from 16.39% the year before the implementation to 45.45% the last year of the A Plus art implementation. The English test scores demonstrated 18.03% passing rate the year before implementation to 25.75% passing rate the third and final year of the initiative. The first year of the A Plus program the science passing rate was 19.67% and the final year the passing rate was 28.30%. These scores illustrate the initiative improved test scores for those students who normally struggled on end of year state tests.

Enhanced School Climate and Culture Findings

Jerald (2006) describes "a truly positive school climate is not characterized simply by the absence of gangs, violence, or discipline problems, but also by the presence of a set of norms and values that focus everyone's attention on what is most important and motivate them to work hard toward a common purpose." School culture is the guiding beliefs and values demonstrated through the way the school operates (Fullan, 2007). Fisher indicated "School culture can be used to encompass all the attitudes, expected behaviors and values that impact how the school operates" (2012). Therefore, climate is how the school feels, and culture is what the school is known for and how it operates. Participant 2 stated:

> Don't want that to seem defeatist, but trying to look at it practically that some of those guys, it was just a, they were a hindrance on everyone else for who did wanna learn, and they are time not to say hindrance as like a negative towards them, but their time probably could have been better spent doing other things that um ... were, they were more positively uh, uh inclined to go do and um, would it maybe have helped a little bit, happier staff and that kinda stuff?

Participant 4 states A Plus "has improved the climate of the school, and, um, I think students just appreciate learning so much more." When asked to explain further, she stated she meant the climate of the classroom. The climate of the school was not so improved, because according to her, a fifth to a quarter of the teachers were opposed to A Plus. When discussing climate, the counselor had this to say:

> The climate and culture, those things are important in a building. And I think any time we can use some type of initiative or some type of grant that we used a couple of years ago, I

> think it's good to try to bring us all together. And of course, my hopes would be that everybody could at least pretend to be on board…sometimes it affects the climate and culture for those that don't want to have anything to do with the A Plus. I think it's sometimes caused a unfortunate "mmmm" with- with staff. Because we all want, we all want us to do what's best for our kids. And sometimes people just don't think that's good for kids, so therefore they don't want to do it. I'm just being honest.

Participant 8, the state director, believed "the overall climate of the school, the collaboration of the teachers, the collaboration with the teachers and the students… I've seen total positive efforts on all sides, in the three years." Participant 10, the assistant principal, stated "culture and climate, it feels, just, better." Interestingly, the teachers believed the climate in their classrooms improved through A Plus; however, the school climate did not appear to improve according to the classroom teachers. The administrators believed there was an improvement in the school climate. This belief from those in administration may be due to a lack of awareness of what is happening in the school; a lack of desire to see the disconnect between those who supported A Plus and those who did not; or possibly a lack of developed relationships with teachers, so the truth was never shared with the administrators.

The improvement in effective ability test scores supports the improved climate in the classroom. Those who normally struggle on state end of year tests might have learned at deeper levels due to the improved classroom climate due to the A Plus strategies. Therefore, the Effective Ability on the math state end of year tests began at 16.39% the year before the implementation and rose to 45.45% the last year of the A Plus art implementation. The English test scores presented an 18.03% passing rate the year before implementation and resulted in a

25.75% passing rate the third and final year of the initiative. The first year of the A Plus program the science passing rate was 19.67% and the final year the passing rate was 28.30%.

The Faculty Demonstrated Growth Findings

The growth of the teaching staff, identified through the interviews, relates to implementing the A Plus strategies in the classroom. According to Clarke and Hollingsworth, teacher growth can be identified as "teachers as active learners shaping their professional growth through reflective participation in professional development programs and in practice" (2002). Participant 1 stated:

> it's been a neat challenge for me also to in, incorporate uh writing you know, some creative free writing into our, our concert band works, um I've had the students doing a lot of drawing. We've done some painting. We've done uh ... gosh. We've been, we've done, we've been dancing you know, uh during marching season we've done just some kind of study of the, the you know human form and body and movement.

Participant 2 was a second year teacher when A Plus was initiated, and he discussed how:

> at least once a unit, where here's the information, you have a whole block, you have until the end of the block to create a presentation and present the information to your classmates um and it goes pretty well. Uh, they've done plays, and they've done like, they'd, they'd come up with skits to sell their invention like the telephone or the airplane or whatever. Uh, they did really good ones over the Holocaust…we've done stained glass window projects… My whole thing is I have no idea what I'm doing anyway, so I'm open to new ideas and new ways of doing things, 'cause I already, I might as well try something different… I learned a lot from it.

Participant 5, a twenty-two year teaching veteran, stated, “it kinda revitalized me as far as it gave me a better, I don't know, I kinda found a renewed energy I guess and some new fun things to add to my classroom.” Participant 7 stated she uses the arts in every way in her classroom: singing, acting, dancing; “so it was kind of natural for me, I guess, to think outside the box and teach in that kind of way.” While there are many who stated the A Plus program enhanced their teaching strategies and challenged them to grow as educators, there were several who said they already implemented these types of strategies in their classroom and a couple teachers, like participant 13, who said “you know, honestly [A Plus is] not my wheelhouse.”

Most teachers talked about their own growth as an educator in their interviews regarding the A Plus program. This in turn could have had an impact on student learning as those with effective ability increased their end of year state math test score passing rate by 29.06%. Those with effective ability increased their English passing rate by 7.72%. Science scores increased by 8.63% for those with effective ability over the three-year span of the initiative.

Student Outcomes Findings

The student outcomes of the A Plus initiative were student performance and student engagement in the classroom. Student performance is a generalization the interviewees identified as “[A Plus] really helps with the retention piece for those low kids”, “it definitely helps the kids get to know the material better”, “[students have a] heightened level of interest”, and “A Plus curriculum has supported a deeper understanding of class material for students.” Engagement in the classroom is defined by Axelson and Flick as “how involved or interested students appear to be in their learning and how connected they are to their classes, their institutions, and each other” (2010). Participant 13 states “I think [A Plus] gets them more engaged.” Participant 7, the math teacher, believes “it enhances engagement, and it ... it really ...

In my experience, it really helps my low kids." She continues, A Plus strategies "enhance engagement [and] help retention" of the content material. The teachers "recognize the engagement of the kids, um, or the learning of the kids, or, the, you know, the joy, that, that it brings to the kids just by attacking the same problem from a different way," stated participant 10, the assistant principal. Participant 11 explained:

> I see kids more engaged, if that's ... I mean, like in different areas I see them that they aren't doing the same old, same old every ... you know, pencil and paper kinds of activities. So I think it gives them more diversification and they can differentiate and make things, so they can understand it better, so they have some ownership into it.

Given Axelson and Flick's definition of student engagement as "how involved or interested students appear to be in their learning and how connected they are to their classes, their institutions, and each other" (2010), it is clear the faculty see student engagement as the first aspect of how interested student are in learning and their class.

The end of year state test scores are a reflection of student interest in learning. Overall, those who struggled with these state tests improved their testing scores to move into the effective ability category; thus, improving their scores over the three years of the initiative. Those who had excellent ability decreased their scores over the three years of the initiative. Students' math passing scores decreased by 1.91% over the three years of the A Plus initiative. Those with excellent ability in English decreased their passing rate of 8.19% with a final passing rate for excellent ability of 0%. Science decreased their effective ability passing rate by 9.75% over the life of the A Plus initiative.

Conclusions

According to the interviews, the sitewide art integration did have a positive effect on student engagement in the classroom. For those teachers who implemented A Plus in their

classrooms, the secondary principal had a positive effect on student engagement in the classroom through the sitewide art integration initiative. For those who struggle with the traditional cumulative multiple choice test, the student engagement transformed into academic knowledge and success on annual state tests. For those who normally succeed on traditional end of year tests, the research indicated the initiative had a negative impact on their end of year state test scores.

According to Dewwy, Vgostsky, Bruner, and Piaget, students learn best when they apply their knowledge to a project or problem. Dewey reminds site principals to "give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results" (1916, p. 181). The interview and test score results both demonstrate this to be true. When the teachers asked students to create projects based on content knowledge, the students were more engaged, and those who typically did poorly on state tests improved their test scores. Vygotsky reminds educators students need to be challenged by meaningful activities (1978). Thus, in this study the use of projects to challenge students to apply content knowledge in the classroom revealed success related to deeper learning of content knowledge for students. Hands-on learning was essential to Bruner's belief about student learning (1966). Bruner believed applying knowledge through hands-on application was a step in the process of scaffolding knowledge: from shallow content knowledge to deeper content knowledge. Piaget (1973) reminds us students must be active in their learning; therefore, the application of the A Plus initiative is essential to allowing students to be active in applying their knowledge in the classroom. Hence, the engagement of students in the classroom through the sitewide art integration initiative was successful as these powerhouses of educational theory have demonstrated.

Shared leadership is a process of listening to the faculty and working together for the good of the student body. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) note the need for leaders to hear their staff; however, they also state the staff must own the shift about to happen versus buy-in to the new initiative (2014). The principal in this case did listen to several of the staff when he agreed to proceed with the sitewide art initiative the art teacher had requested; nonetheless, there was at least one dissenting participant stating he never had the chance to say no to the initiative. Therefore, one aspect of shared leadership was illustrated from this principal as he initiated the program because he required eighty-five percent of the staff to vote for the initiative before he would approve A Plus. However, the principal and a few others interviewed spoke of buy-in. The principal believed creating buy-in was an essential part of his role in the initiative. In the interviews, one can tell the difference between those who "owned" the shift to art integration from those who bought-in to the program. The art teacher, science teacher, a social studies teacher, and the music teacher are those who owned the initiative and will continue doing the work because they see it as essential to helping students learn and retain content knowledge. Most of the others had "buy-in", so after the second year, they were becoming tired of the process and were ready for the end of this initiative according to the counselor. According to Lambert (2006), shared leadership practices include: clarity about self and values; belief in democracy; strategic thinking regarding school improvement now and in years to come; deliberate and vulnerable persona; knowledge about instructional strategies and learning theories; and developing leadership capacity in others. Thus, the principal in this study demonstrated a belief in democracy as he tried to listen to some of his staff. According to participant 2, there was no monitoring of the initiative, so no one had to implement it if they did not want to, and he declared there were definitely some who did not want any part of A Plus.

There were aspects to developing leadership capacity in the art teacher who brought the art integration initiative to the principal and helped lead the implementation process initially. The other aspects of shared leadership are not apparent from this study.

"Moral purpose, understanding change, developing relationships, knowledge building, and coherence making" (Fullan, 2001, p.137) are essential elements of Change Leadership. The counselor said the role of the administration was to sit in on the training sessions with the teachers. The principal said his role was to get buy-in. The assistant principal said his role was to be a team player and attend the training sessions too. The principal recognized the art integration initiative was good for the school, but there seemed to be a lack of Change Leadership knowledge, forethought, or follow through after the initiative began and the training sessions were attended. The principal approved the initiative and allowed A Plus to provide PD; however, there was no moral purpose statement given prior to the initiative, no knowledge building on why this initiative was so important to student success, and no coherence making as no one looked at test scores to see if there was improvement in content knowledge, nor were there interviews or surveys from the principal or district asking students how they felt about A Plus in regard to engagement in the classroom.

The eight elements of Transformational Leadership are: identifies and articulates a vision; fosters the acceptance of group goals; conveys high-performance expectations; provides appropriate models; provides intellectual stimulation; and provides individualized support; additionally, a transformational leader will use contingent rewards and manage by exception (Leithwood, 1994). The data from this study do not indicate the principal articulated a vision. The A Plus staff would have done so in their PD, but there is no evidence the principal shared the vision and how A Plus was essential to the success and growth of the school. While the teachers

were given time to meet together in order to develop cross-curricular plans, there was no monitoring of this process. Not one interviewee mentioned group goals; they only mentioned the implementation was not monitored. Again, there is no evidence high-performance expectations were given, but there is evidence from the assistant principal that the initiative was not tied to teachers evaluation, nor was the initiative required to be implemented by all teachers. In connection to providing appropriate modeling, there is evidence from the assistant principal that modeling of the A Plus initiative was not demonstrated by the principal. The assistant principal did say those who implemented the A Plus program were more satisfied teachers. This could be from being stimulated intellectually, but he did not state that specifically. There was no mention by anyone of the principal giving individualized support for the initiative more than the A Plus PDs given to all the teachers. Again, there was no data supporting contingent rewards. Participant 2 did mention the only ones who came to see him implementing the A Plus initiative were from outside the school, and no one gave him constructive feedback which he was eager for since he was a new teacher. Because there was no monitoring of the initiative, there was no managing by exception. Several teachers mentioned others could opt out if they did not want to use the A Plus strategies in their classroom since the principal did not tie the initiative to the teachers' yearly evaluation or even monitor it in the classroom.

Given the results of the current study, there appear to be gaps in the principal's leadership of this initiative. While there were aspects of Shared Leadership (Fullan & Langworthy, (2014), not every teacher felt they had a voice or were listened to. Analyzing Change Leadership (Fullan, 2001) requires the leader to connect initiatives to moral purpose, understanding change, knowledge building, and coherence making. This study indicates there was no evidence of a

conscious plan to discuss and create a connection between A Plus and moral purpose, understanding change, knowledge building, or coherence making.

Recommendations for Future Research

Possible future research could include the following four items identified within the case study:

- This study was of a small Midwest high school in which all the interviewees were white. In order to see if the results are repeated in the same way, high schools with different demographics with a diverse teaching faculty should be researched.
- A study focusing on the principal's leadership theory and monitoring of the initiative is necessary. Specifically, a study with more in depth analysis of a principal leading an art initiative with an identified leadership theory guiding the implementation.
- This study uncovered a disconnect between the teachers' perception of the climate at the school and the administrations' perception related to the A Plus initiative. Further study is needed to understand what caused this lack of coherence.
- Additional research is needed in order to see if the lack of enthusiasm from the teachers negatively affected those students who typically would have excellent ability on the state end of year exams.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The interviews and end of year test data demonstrate hands-on learning using an initiative, such as the A Plus program, is successful in deepening learning of content in the

classroom. This study is important because educators are dealing with the fallout of COVID-19. Students came back to the classroom after COVID-19 lacking intrinsic motivation and a desire to excel (Hamlet, 2022). McKenzie (2022) states the average student instruction during COVID-19 was 90 minutes. With students back in classrooms and learning time back to the traditional seven or more hours a day, students are fatigued and are no longer conditioned to spending hours learning at deeper levels. McKenzie (2022) suggests project based learning (PBL) is a program designed to engage students post COVID-19. According to McKenzie, PBL "is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge" (2022). PBL connects deeply to the A Plus strategies of being "grounded in arts-based and hands-on learning experiences, and provid[ing] integrated and authentic connections to real life application" (Appendix D).

Summary

This study confirms what Constructivists have been writing about since Dewey introduced the idea in 1933. Students learn deeper when their learning connects to real word problems, hands-on application of content, and learning socially from those who are more knowledgeable (Dewey, 1933; Bandura, 1962; Bruner, 1966; Piaget, 1968; Vygotsky, 1978; Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). In the post COVID-19 classroom, the need for this kind of learning is more essential than ever.

The conclusions of this study support the need for students to have hands-on learning opportunities in the classroom. Hands-on learning allows for deep learning of the content for those who struggle on the end of year state tests; this was illustrated through the improvement of

those with effective ability on the end of year state tests. While this study demonstrates those who improved the most from this type of learning were students who typically struggle in the classroom, this type of hands-on learning will have a wider, positive effect post COVID-19 due to the lack of engagement of so many students who are now back in the classroom. Therefore, art can be a way to allow students from any background, social economic status, marginalized class or not to feel empowered to learn at deep levels and apply content knowledge with security and a sense of self efficacy. Eisner wrote of art:

> in addition to their expressive function, the arts perform another function of critical importance…I have emphasized the contributions that the arts make toward helping students recognize that problems are not restricted to those having single correct answers, that form and content interact, and that purposeful flexibility is a mark of fluid intelligence coping with the vicissitudes of the unpredictable. But I have neglected a contribution that is surely as important. That contribution hinges on a distinction between expression and discovery. In the arts, students learn that some kinds of meaning may require the expressive forms that the arts make possible. In this sense, the arts expressively represent; they provide the forms through which insight and feeling can emerge in the public world…But the arts also make discovery possible. Discovery occurs as students learn through adventures in the arts something of the possibilities of human experience (2005).

Therefore, deep learning can take place as students apply content knowledge to an art project where they express and discover more about the content as they engage with both cerebral knowledge and physical manipulation of materials to express their understanding of the content. Therefore, it is imperative site principals consider leading their faculty with an intentional focus

on how to improve student engagement in the classroom using Constructivist learning theory as well as leadership theory to guide the initiative implementation.

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Appendix A: Art Integration Checklist

ARTS INTEGRATION CHECKLIST		
APPROACH TO TEACHING		
1. Are learning principles of Constructivism (actively built, experiential, evolving, collaborative, problem-solving, and reflective) evident in my lesson?	Yes	No
UNDERSTANDING		
2. Are the students engaged in constructing and demonstrating understanding as opposed to just memorizing and reciting knowledge?	Yes	No
ART FORM		
3. Are the students constructing and demonstrating their understandings through an art form?	Yes	No
CREATIVE PROCESS		
4. Are the students engaged in a process of creating something original as opposed to copying or parroting?	Yes	No
5. Will the students revise their products?	Yes	No
CONNECTS		
6. Does the art form connect to another part of the curriculum or a concern/need?	Yes	No
7. Is the connection mutually reinforcing?	Yes	No
EVOLVING OBJECTIVES		
8. Are there objectives in both the art form and another part of the curriculum or a concern/need?	Yes	No
9. Have the objectives evolved since the last time the students engaged with this subject matter?	Yes	No

Appendix B: Unstructured Interview Questions

1. What is your name, what is your position at the school, and how long have you worked at _____ High School?
2. Please tell me about the art integration initiative.
    a. Whose idea?
    b. How did it happen?
    c. Is it effective?
    d. Student engagement?
    e. How did that come about?
3. (For principal only) -
    a. If not mentioned, what belief or style of leadership did you lead from regarding this initiative?
    b. If not discussed, as a leader, how did you support this initiative?
4. Wrap up questions if needed -
    a. Is there anything else would you like me to know about this program?
    b. Is there anyone else I should talk to about this initiative?
    c. Are there any documents that you would like to share?

Appendix C: Participant Demographics

Participant Demographics

Participant	Job	Years at School
1	Band director Feels A Plus has been good for the faculty and students, and A Plus has allowed him to mix more with HS as he's been in the MS most of his career at the school. He feels A Plus allowed him to bring other contents into his classroom, but the reverse, music in other content classrooms, didn't happen as much as he would have liked. He said in the 3rd year of A Plus, the faculty was able to convince the principal to take back the 50 minutes of A Plus collaboration time and put it back into content/classroom time. Talking about his favorite part of the program, "some of the more memorable and enjoyable lessons that I've done have been where we set our instruments down and … enhance our musical experience with, with one of the other fine arts … whether that be writing or ... I've brought a little bit of science and stuff into it … projects that … [students] just enjoy."	16
2	Social studies teacher He was in his second year of teaching when they started A Plus, and states that A Plus is successful based on the students and if art resonates with them. He shared, "essentially what I've gathered from it as long as you don't lecture and have them take bulleted notes, you are A Plus." He says that's good teaching no matter what you call it. The students who do not participate in the A Plus work are those who won't do anything anyway. At one point, he	4

	mentioned the only ones to come observe his work in the classroom with A Plus were those from outside the district. His administrators never did. He feels feedback from his principal would have been helpful, but those from outside told him good job, and that was it. He yearned for constructive criticism.	
3	Principal Feels A Plus was good for the school, and his part of leading the integration was buy-in. He shared, "We did take half of our staff, three consecutive Summers, and just kinda thrived from there, and I think we just uh, did things better, did things more intentional, as far as integrating arts." His response to being asked if the initiative was successful was yes because "I think it's brought staff together."	7
4	Science teacher Believes that A Plus has had a positive impact on the school and her students: "I feel like it has, it has improved the climate of the school, and, um, I think students just appreciate learning so much more. Um, and for me, being a science teacher, it-it has given me the opportunity to connect with students in different ways." When asked about the outcome of A Plus, she replied, "I feel like it has, it has improved the climate of the school, and, um, I think students just appreciate learning so much more. Um, and for me, being a science teacher, it-it has given me the opportunity to connect with students in different ways." She was sad to see A Plus end.	17
5	English teacher She felt the A Plus program "revitalized" her and gave her a "renewed energy" for teaching.	18

	One way she saw A Plus help in the classroom was “last year I had a junior group of boys, that class, it's two thirds boys. Um, so A-Plus kinda came at a nice time for me when I had them, I had to realize oh God, I gotta get them out of their seats a lot more … I've started to really put more games and getting up out of their chair and movement type things.” She loves the A Plus program, but feels the administration was indifferent. Because the administration's focus was on accreditation, they didn’t see the positive force A Plus was and could be for meeting accreditation needs.	
6	School counselor Feels A Plus is good for students who are not always great test takers: “Because the student that has anxiety about a test, or has ... just really clams up because they don't have good study habits, their anxiety ... If they are able to do something through, uh, video or a piece of art or being able to write a poem or write something that would reflect what they've learned, I think that's a good, a good piece for kids.” She said she never had a conversation with students prior during and post A Plus. They didn’t track testing data either to see the effects of A Plus academically, so her feeling that A Plus positively impacted student achievement was just an intuition.	12
7	Math teacher She believes A Plus enhances student engagement and it really helps her low students by “practice[ing] math activities through maybe acting or singing and ... instead of just like paper-pencil.” Other teachers have told her when the low students move up, they remember what she taught using the arts, and it helps them retain their math knowledge. She mentioned	4

	that not all teachers are using A Plus, and that not all the teachers were on board with the program.	
8	State Director of A Plus program When asked about the effect of the A Plus program at the school, her response was “I see the students happier. I see the teachers happier. Everyone cares about coming to school, because they don't know what to expect, because the teachers have opened up and gone more creative with their ... and hands on and active with their teaching.” She said one of the pillars of A Plus is collaboration, and that trust was built out of the collaboration. The teachers trust each other now when they didn’t in the beginning.	3
9	English teacher He feels that A Plus has already been integrated into classroom teaching for a long time, just not with that specific name. He sees it more as student choice in assessments: how they demonstrate what they know. He does think teaching with the arts engages students and challenges students.	31
10	Assistant principal He felt “you know, by bringing these concepts into your classroom, and your content area, it's gonna make your teaching more effective. So, um, those are the big takeaways.” He admitted his role was pretty limited with A Plus. He was more of an encourager of the program. He went to the trainings, so he recognized them when he observed in classrooms. He said their evaluation is not tied to A Plus in anyway. However, the difference he sees from those teachers who use A Plus and those who do not is satisfaction. Those who intentionally use A Plus in the	8

	classroom are more satisfied with their teaching position.	
11	Art teacher She is the one who brought A Plus to the school. She loves the program, but she feels that the administration created a divide between teachers who are pro and those who are con A Plus since it is not a required initiative. When the staff first voted to do the A Plus initiative, 85% were on board. Now, she believes it would not pass a simple majority vote. While she loves this initiative and believes it is good best practices, she is discouraged by those who are negative and do not implement A Plus in their classrooms.	17
12	Social studies teacher He does not implement A Plus in his classroom. He said he thinks it's "nice to have arts and crafts day sometimes." He said he teaches mostly college credit dual classes, and he doesn't see how A Plus pertains to those classes. He did appreciate the art projects revealed around the campus and said it helped him build better relationships with students by seeing their talents.	15
13	Science teacher He was not excited about this initiative at the beginning, but after some PD, he realized it was "teaching principles that had been around for quite a while… just kind of bundled into a new package…". He already did labs and hands-on activities, but he did change up the way his students took notes. He said he thinks he's one of the more negative staff members regarding A Plus. He did say he didn't notice any test data from his students indicating growth during the A Plus years, but he felt overall the strategies	6

helped struggling students most.

Appendix D: A+ Commitments

National A+ Schools Consortium

A+ Essentials: A Set of Commitments ™

A+ Essentials revised and adopted by the National A+ Schools Consortium, October 2016.

Arts	Curriculum	Multiple Learning Pathways	Experiential Learning
In A+ Schools the arts are: • experienced daily through instruction, integration and exposure • inclusive of drama, dance, music, visual arts, creative writing and media arts • included in curriculum planning and design • integrated in all content areas • valued as essential to creativity, learning and personal experiences • a part of the school's internal and external identity	**In A+ Schools curriculum is addressed through:** • developing teacher skills in creating effective and engaging instruction • ongoing curriculum exploration and planning • intentional two-way integration of the arts and other disciplines • horizontal and vertical alignment of standards • enhanced conceptual connections • collaborative development of integrated lessons and units	**In A+ Schools multiple learning pathways include:** • Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory and practice • brain research and brain-based philosophies • a focus on building 21st century and higher order thinking skills • creating and balancing learning opportunities that support the whole child • intentional opportunities for students, families, community to develop understanding of how people learn	**In A+ Schools experiential learning:** • creates student engagement • is grounded in arts-based and hands-on learning experiences • provides integrated and authentic connections to real-life application • models the creative process and inquiry-based instruction • allows for understanding of entry points and differentiated instruction • provides multifaceted assessment opportunities
Enriched Assessment	**Collaboration**	**Infrastructure**	**Climate**
In A+ Schools enriched assessment is: • a reflective practice that is designed for learning • inclusive of arts and multiple learning pathways • ongoing, integrated, experiential and collaborative • used both as a self-assessment tool by teachers and students and to help meet school system requirements • instrumental in creating a comprehensive picture of student understanding	**In A+ Schools collaboration is:** • valued and intentional • fostered by administration and faculty • prioritized through designated time for classroom and special area teachers to plan together • experienced throughout the day and in many ways • utilized to build relationships within and outside the school community	**In A+ Schools infrastructure:** • supports the A+ philosophy • fosters supportive and shared leadership • addresses daily logistics to allow for collaboration • provides time, space and resources to support implementation • continually maintains a shared vision and develops faculty commitment • provides relevant professional development and mentoring • is reflected at all levels	**In A+ Schools climate is enhanced through:** • building collaborative skills that create an environment of respect and support • developing a creative community that is fun and engaging for teachers and students • focusing on lifelong learning for the entire school community • working towards a common vision and shared decision making • sharing and celebration

Originated by the North Carolina A+ Schools Network, a network of teachers, coordinators, principals, and A+ Fellows. © 2001 A+ Schools Program. Use by permission only.

Appendix E: Subthemes and Codes Table

Table 3

Subthemes and Codes

Subthemes	Codes
1a. Role of administration	administration and teachers initiated the program
	administrators must generate buy-in
	the principal was excited about the program
	there was a positive experience with the superintendent's leadership council
1b. Challenge getting teacher buy-in	the challenge to get teachers to initiate the program in their classrooms
	some teachers took longer to see how A Plus would be a benefit
2a. A Plus is just a new term for an old method	old concepts rebundled
	basic teaching methods
	the arts were already integrated in the classroom
2b. A Plus led to clashes between teachers	a small group of teachers decided on A Plus
	A Plus was forced on them
	lack of follow through on implementation
	resistance and clashes between teachers
2c. Expressed pessimism toward A Plus	lack of initial excitement for A Plus
	those who didn't participate in summer PD were less enthusiastic
	teachers were "over it" in year three
3a. In-services provided are the best	the PD was great for the staff
	the PD was eye-opening
	the PD involved every staff member
4a. A Plus created a positive climate and culture	improved classroom climate because students were allowed to express themselves
	an overall improvement in the school culture
	students wanted to come to school

4b. Experienced greater cohesion	A Plus brought students and teachers together
	the teachers felt a deeper sense of cohesion
	the faculty saw more collaboration between contents
	teachers were sharing ideas with each other more
	the trust the staff had with administration solidified
5a. Implementing fine arts in the classroom	teachers being more creative
	the teachers benefitting from implementing A Plus
	taking the time to gather information and make informed decisions
5b. Incorporating other aspects of A Plus	it felt natural to implement the arts into the classroom
	finding new ways to introduce the arts into the classroom
5c. A Plus enhances classroom instruction	alternate assignments
	alternate assessments for students
	using new tools for learning
6a. Impact of A Plus on student performance	A Plus can help students academically
	students retain content
	all around growth in students
	no quantitative data by administration was recorded
6b. Students engage in and enjoy class more	Greater student connections
	student engagement in the content increased
	students enjoyed learning more
	students and teachers are happier
	students organically and authentically speak positively about A Plus
6c. Targeting multiple intelligences	teachers made conscious efforts to target learning cycles
	A Plus gave teachers an avenue to learn students' preferred learning styles
	being creative helped students with content retention

Appendix F: Codes Identified Within the Subthemes

The subthemes identified from gathering teacher buy-in were *the role of the administration* and the *challenge of getting teachers to buy-in*. Within the role of the administration the codes that developed were administration and teachers initiated the program, administrators must generate buy-in, the principal was excited about the program, and there was a positive experience with the superintendent's leadership council. Within the subtheme of the challenge of getting teachers to buy-in, two codes arose: the challenge to get teachers to initiate the program in their classrooms and some teachers took longer to see how A Plus would be a benefit.

While some teachers believed in this initiative, others had a lack of enthusiasm. The subthemes for lack of enthusiasm were *A Plus is just a new term for an old method, A Plus lead to clashes among teachers, and expressed pessimism toward A Plus*. A new term for an old method provoked the codes old concepts rebundled, basic teaching methods, and the arts were already integrated in the classroom. The clashes among the teachers developed the codes a small group of teachers decided on A Plus, A Plus was forced on them, lack of follow through on implementation, and resistance and clashes between teachers. The expressed pessimism toward A Plus coded lack of initial excitement for A Plus, those who didn't participate in summer PD were less enthusiastic, and teachers were "over it" in year three.

The impact of A Plus professional development (PD) produced a subtheme *indicating the inservice PD by A Plus was the best*. Out of this subtheme three codes emerged: the PD was great for the staff, the PD was eye-opening, and the PD involved every staff member.

Within enhanced school climate and culture, the subthemes naturally were *A Plus created a positive climate and culture and the staff experienced greater cohesion*. The positive climate

and culture produced three codes: improved classroom climate because students were allowed to express themselves, an overall improvement in the school culture, and students wanted to come to school. From the greater staff cohesion five codes developed: A Plus brought students and teachers together, the teachers felt a deeper sense of cohesion, the faculty saw more collaboration between contents; therefore, teachers were sharing ideas with each other more, and the trust the staff had with administration solidified.

Three subthemes emerged from the faculty demonstrating growth through the art initiative: *A Plus enhances classroom instruction, implementing the arts in the classroom, and incorporating other aspects of A Plus in the classrooms*. Enhancing the classroom instruction codes included the teachers being more creative, the teachers benefitting from implementing A Plus, and taking the time to gather information and make informed decisions. Implementing fine arts in the classroom produced two codes: it felt natural to implement the arts into the classroom, and finding new ways to introduce the arts into the classroom. Examining incorporating other aspects of A Plus in the classroom involved the codes alternate assignments, alternate assessments for students, and using new tools for learning.

Student Outcomes subthemes were *student performance, students engaging and enjoying class more, and targeting multiple intelligences*. Within student performance the codes that emerged were A Plus can help students academically, students retain content, all around growth in students, and no quantitative data by administration was recorded. Greater student connections;, student engagement in the content increased, students enjoyed learning more; students and teachers are happier, and students organically and authentically speak positively about A Plus were the codes for students engage and enjoy class more. The subtheme targeting multiple intelligences produced the codes teachers made conscious efforts to target learning

cycles, A Plus gave teachers an avenue to learn students' preferred learning styles, and being creative helped students with content retention.