

# ***LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT***

## ***SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE CREATIVE NETWORK SCHOOLS PILOT PROGRAM: 2014-2015***

**Prepared by:**

**The LAUSD Arts Education Branch**

Under the Direction of:

The Office of Curriculum and Instructional Support Services

Dr. Ruth Perez, Deputy Superintendent of Instruction

Mr. Gerardo Loera, Chief Academic Officer

Mr. Rory Pullens, Executive Director of the Arts

Dr. Steven J. McCarthy, K-12 Arts Coordinator

Ms. Judi Garratt, K-12 Arts Specialist

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### ***The Context for the Pilot***

On October 9, 2012, the Los Angeles Unified Board of Education acted on a resolution, “*Supporting Educational Equity, Student Achievement and Mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills through Arts at the Core.*” This bold resolution called for a plan to assure equitable access to quality arts instruction across the District, and to address District goals for achievement and equity by establishing arts education as a core subject.

The 2012-2013 academic year would be a period of planning and capacity building to implement arts as a core subject. The Superintendent was charged with the responsibility of developing a plan by July 1, 2013, with detailed strategies for:

1. Funding arts education and integrated arts instruction
2. Supporting high quality professional development in pedagogy and curriculum
3. Establishing systemic data collection to measure the progress of student learning in and through the arts
4. Providing oversight for implementation across the District and annual benchmarks for success

The response to this mandate was the creation of a forward-thinking, practical arts education plan and creative cultural network that has proved to be collaborative, sustainable and accountable. Arts education is proven to develop critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity in students and is directly aligned with the objectives of the District’s Common Core transition across all grade levels.

Dismayed by the total lack of consistency and equity in arts education delivery across the District, the Curriculum Committee of the Board of Education challenged the Arts Education Branch (AEB) to develop a pilot program that would provide *all art forms for all students* at the elementary level. Four concept models were submitted, and the Creative Network was ultimately selected by the Committee for implementation beginning in August 2014.

The Creative Network pilot is both ambitious yet practical in that it has uniquely marshalled the limited arts financial resources, instructional time, and teacher talents to effectively implement an arts education model that can positively affect future equity and access to the arts for all LAUSD students.

### *Equity and Delivery*

In order to appreciate the significance of the Creative Network model, one has to understand the contrast between the traditional system and the pilot design. The current District-wide delivery of arts education uses a blend of certificated elementary generalist and secondary non-arts teachers, certificated arts teachers, and non-certificated teaching artists who are usually connected to community arts partners. This is commonly referred to as the three-legged stool model and has prevailed across the nation for many years.



**Status Quo:** A typical LAUSD elementary school receives formal arts instruction based **solely** on the budget allocation related to their student enrollment (only through 2014-15.) The school determines how they will utilize these funds and submits requests for services to the Arts Education Branch. Regardless of students' needs, demographics, community arts availability, etc., the average elementary school receives two days of arts education teacher services per week. In some cases only one grade level might receive arts services, or several classes might benefit from exposure to only one of the selected arts disciplines. It is conceivable then that, under this erratic, locally designed elective system, a student could go through their entire elementary career without experiencing any formal arts education.

The *California Education Code* states that all students in grades K-12 will have access to instruction in every art form each year. Clearly our present system is out of compliance with the Code because we do not have enough teachers or funds to place every discipline in every school. The results of the recent LAUSD Arts Equity Index inventory revealed that this enrollment-based system has created disparity in opportunity, is void of equity and access, with the situation being so intense it has been dubbed the District's "arts poverty."

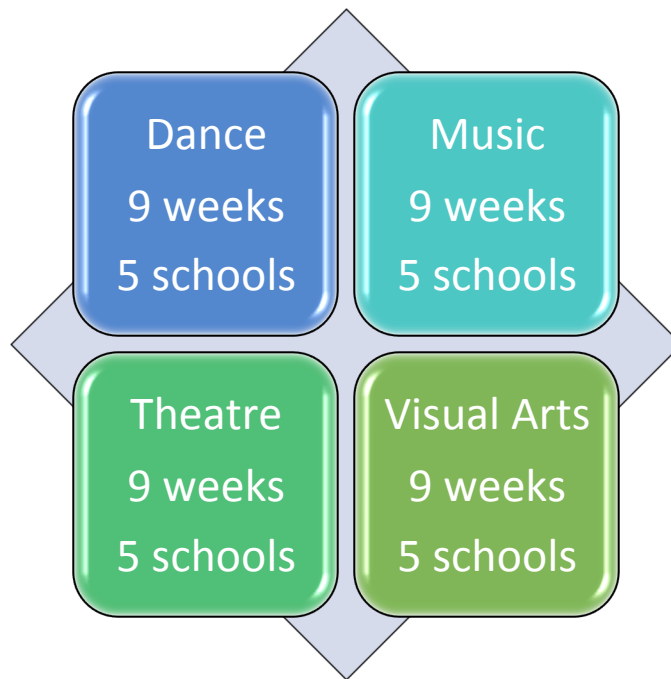
In spite of research that supports the arts improving learning for at risk students, the LAUSD sites with the most at-risk students are, in fact, the same ones with the least amount of arts educational services. More arts education funding, of course, could help remedy this imbalance, but in the face of limited resources, the arts branch has conceived the Creative Network delivery model as one alternative delivery solution to the problem.

### ***Rotational Delivery Model***

#### ***What does it look like in a school?***

The Creative Network pilot program shatters the traditional arts education model by using innovation to empower arts resources that create consistent, full scale, equitable arts education opportunities for every student in a new Network school program. The schools receive either one or two days of arts per week depending on their student enrollment. All grade 3-6 classes receive nine-weeks of discrete arts instruction in dance, music, theatre and visual arts. All K-2 classes receive six-weeks of arts integration, connecting and blending instruction in all arts disciplines to various other core curricular areas.

**Creative Networks equitably serve all students grades 3-5/6 rotating every 9 weeks – by the end of the year, all students will have had 9 weeks of discrete instruction in all four art forms.**



**One arts integration teacher works with all schools for a full year.**

## CREATIVE NETWORK SCHOOLS

2014-15

### ESC EAST

49<sup>th</sup> Street ES

Annandale ES

Bushnell Way ES

Dahlia Heights ES

El Sereno ES

Glen Alta ES

Latona ES

San Pascual ES

Utah ES

Ambassador School for Global Ed. at RFK

Bridge St ES

Cesar Chavez ES

Delevan ES

Esperanza ES

Huntington Drive ES

Lizzaraga ES

Sierra Vista

### ESC NORTH

Anatola ES

Blythe ES

Gault ES

Lemay ES

Newcastle ES

San Jose ES

Topeka ES

Bertrand ES

Calvert ES

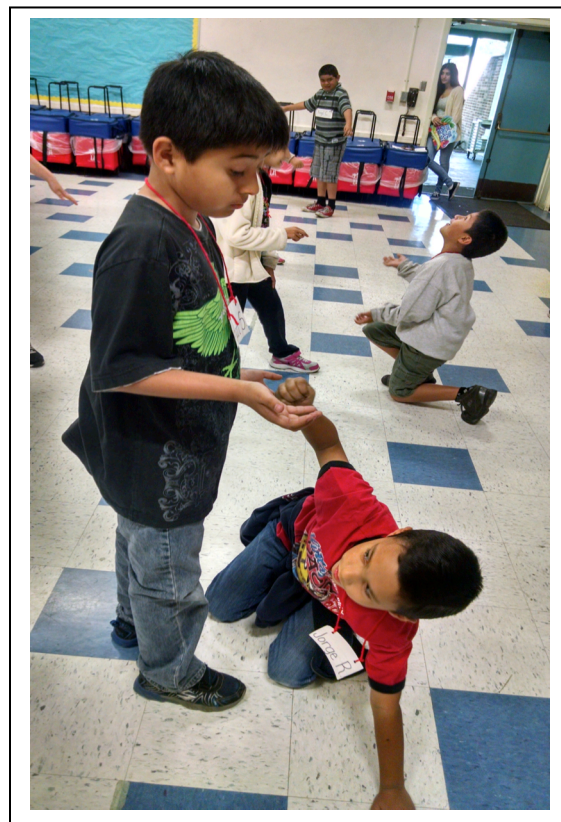
Kester ES

Lorne ES

Panorama City ES

Stagg ES

Vintage ES



***\*The participating schools all volunteered to be part of the pilot and all but one have decided to continue for next year.***

**Network Model Considerations**

During the 2014-2015 school year the Network involved **31 elementary schools**, served **12,409 students**, supported **461 elementary teachers**, and did this utilizing the talents and time of only **10 certificated arts teachers**. The efficacy of the model, posed against the scale of impact, is absolutely remarkable.

**COMPARISON OF ARTS PROGRAM**

**CURRENT**

Arts Allocation – 2 days

Population K-5 – 480

School selected 2 days of choral music for a full year

300 students are served with one art form

**CREATIVE NETWORK**

Arts Allocation – 2 days

Population K-5 – 480

All grade 3 through 5/6 students served with 9 weeks of each art form (dance, music, theatre & visual arts)

300 students are served with all 4 art forms

180 students in grades K-2 served with arts integration

All 480 students receive the arts

**Which plan provides access and equity to more students?**

***Is this method more cost effective than the traditional art education delivery model?***

The cost is the same as the traditional delivery program model. It is the creative organization of the instruction that is different.



***How does this model fit into the overall arts instructional infrastructure?***

The Arts Education Branch is devising several delivery systems that have the potential to augment and improve equitable distribution of high quality arts education throughout the District. A “one size fits all” approach is not feasible or desirable. The goal is to leverage existing structures, processes and resources, and simultaneously build new channels of “choice” for quality arts education. The Network is only one method that relies on certain assumptions of geographic proximity of the schools (some arts integration teachers travel to various sites on the same day), and training of the site teachers in the skills required for arts integrated instruction is essential to the success of this delivery model. Not to be considered “limitations,” these factors must be considered prior to any type of meaningful District-wide expansion.



### *Reactions from the Field*

The Arts Education Branch engaged the services of Andrea Kobliner, President of CalEd Associates, Inc. to conduct an independent assessment and prepare this preliminary report on the Network pilot implementation process. As part of the review, CalEd enlisted the Cleveland High School Media Academy to develop video documentation to depict the program in action. Additionally, surveys were taken of participating arts teachers, generalist teachers and school site principals to gather formative information to assess their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Network implementation.

Concurrently, the staff from the Arts Education Branch conducted field observations at the school sites and interviewed both teachers and students to determine their reactions to the new delivery model. At this point in time, without established arts education standardized achievement measurements available, no attempt was made to contrast the effectiveness of the Network delivery model against the traditional model, in terms of student achievement in art skill development or the effects on other subject areas. However, most teachers involved with the pilot achieved Highly Effective ratings in the TGDC teacher evaluation system for 2014-15.



**Surveys: Principals, Generalist classroom teachers and Certificated arts teachers**

***Principals*** completed a survey (Sample – Appendix A) that focused on measuring any difference in the school environment (student attitude, student behavior, staff morale, etc.) after all the art forms and arts integration had been received. In addition, the survey addressed improvement variables observed, challenges encountered in creating space and scheduling for the arts classes. Comments were also solicited regarding staff response, sufficiency of materials and equipment, and any other overall concerns. The principal survey responses were as follows:

“Students are engaged and well behaved during the art classes.” “Students look forward to the arts on Wednesday and being able to express themselves in creative ways.” “Our students are transferring their skills to other subject areas and feel much more confident in oral presentations.” Across the surveys, principals commented that the new approach was well received, increased staff morale, and students did not want to miss a single arts day. Teachers were very pleased with the products and activities completed throughout the four-discipline program. For grades K-2, students who are receiving arts integration instruction are making connections in their academic learning, the level of classroom discussion has increased, and student enthusiasm levels are very high.

Scheduling and locating the classes was not an issue at most sites except for those higher enrollment schools that had to double up classes and use auditoriums, libraries, or multi-purpose rooms to accommodate the larger groups. Materials and equipment were adequate, but, of course, more arts supplies are always needed.

All of the surveyed principals welcomed the program as an improvement over the previous limited discipline model and wished to continue the program next year.

***Model Challenges:*** Some principals commented that dance and visual arts are effective as partial year programs. However, vocal music is difficult to instruct for only part of a year, the same for orchestral music. A possible solution would be to enhance the music portions of

the program with full year instruction, or to offer music appreciation in lieu of vocal music. “Logistically, the nine week model does not leave room for extenuating circumstances, such as field trips, inclement weather, heat waves, arts teacher illness or assemblies, etc. One week lost in this delivery model is much more detrimental than in a longer rotation.”

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***Generalist Classroom Teachers*** completed a survey (Sample – Appendix B) requiring them to describe any improvements in student behavior, literacy and numeracy skills, and the transfer of arts related information to other disciplines. They were also asked to comment on their overall satisfaction with the Network rotational approach and to express any concerns that might have impacted the success of the program with their students.

With few exceptions, the teachers approved of the model, felt it brought great value to their students, and despite some scheduling, doubling up of classes, and logistical problems; they believed the program was an enormous improvement over previous years’ arts education where few students had adequate arts exposure at their school.

Specific comments of note were: “Students are making more choices, seem more confident and have transferred their enthusiasm for theatre to literacy by focusing on developing their

characters in stories. They are thinking more creatively about their ideas and show a much greater willingness to share their work.” A majority of the respondents noticed improvement in students’ vocabulary and the ability to use the new arts terms in other classes. Improvement in listening and following directions was also observed. Several teachers commented that the music instruction helped students with patterning.

For English Learners, theatre and music experiences put the affective filter down, and students were excited to see they could really succeed in expressing themselves beyond language arts. Student engagement was very high for these students, and they acquired new vocabulary words which they retained and used outside of the arts classes. Reading comprehension has improved significantly for many of the English Learners.

Most teachers agreed that the school environment improved because students looked forward to the arts lessons, were extremely well behaved working with the arts teachers, and were amazed by all the different ways they could express themselves through different arts disciplines. Many teachers felt that the heavy dose of arts was of special benefit to students who don’t typically excel academically, and who now had an opportunity to do well in various artistic experiences. 100% of the respondents felt the arts teachers were well prepared for the classes and even managed to work with large numbers of students in classes that were doubled up.

**Model Challenges:** In every case where classes had to be doubled up the teachers felt there was insufficient time for the arts teachers to really go into depth and work closely with the students. Space and scheduling issues for the large classes was also an issue at some sites. A few teachers requested that they be able to collaborate with the arts teachers before the lesson delivery so that they could blend the lessons into the other curriculum, or to create a theme for the lessons that could carry over in daily instruction. Opening the rotation on the very first day of school was ill advised, and the teachers felt the beginning needed to be delayed until they could get their students settled in to daily routines and rules for behavior. As credentialed teachers, arts teachers are required to begin teaching at the beginning of the year like all other credentialed LAUSD teachers. A few teachers said if funding was

available, they would like to see opportunities added to the model for more in-depth study of certain disciplines.

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**Certificated Arts Teachers** completed a survey (Sample – Appendix C) requesting their feedback on the successes and challenges they encountered with the nine weeks of instruction at each school site. The major focus areas of this survey were: teacher, administrator and student buy-in during the program; elements of curriculum, access to space and materials, scheduling, student access (double class issue), and teacher load (up to six classes per day.)

For the most part the arts teachers liked the concept that schools, particularly those with limited budgets, were able to offer all four arts disciplines. The new codified model alleviates the random decisions made at local sites for their arts education. They felt the teacher buy-in was high and the students were very eager, cooperative and excited about all of the arts lessons. Many teachers requested more performances to be embedded into the curriculum to take advantage of the arts teacher skills in directing these types of experiences. The arts teachers remarked that site teachers told them students were making many new connections, particularly in literacy development skills. Pairing of arts teachers was very beneficial and supported refinement of the curriculum in a shorter period of time.

**Model Challenges:** The most common criticism of the program was that the short duration did not allow for in-depth arts experiences, or allow the arts teachers to get to know the students. One teacher stated, “Nine weeks is not enough time to make a strong impact in the arts, standards cannot be met in an authentic way. A decision has to be made to dive deep into a particular concept for an authentic music making experience, or do we skim the surface jumping from standard to standard without really paying attention to where students are – rarely giving them the opportunity to develop a deep relationship with any of the art forms.”

In every case the arts teachers felt the double classes made it impossible to deliver quality arts instruction and they had to be eliminated for the program to be successful. They were unable to cover all of the lessons, at times due to alternate scheduling, both classes were not present for the entire lessons, and the disruption of groups coming in and out had a negative impact on the outcomes. Covering these classes was exhausting, distribution of materials difficult, so far less time was actually dedicated to instruction. In doubled classes students were unable to play instruments, transitions were difficult, performance tasks were impossible to meet which weakened the total learning experience for many students.

Space was not always available and classes took place in cramped, over-crowded conditions, not conducive to lesson delivery. Other concerns were that the rapid rate of lesson delivery, moving from site to site did not permit the teachers to collaborate with the site teachers on lesson design or debriefing of the experiences to improve the curriculum. Identification of gifted students and meeting their needs was not possible under this framework.

Another logistical issue was that schedules varied from one school to the other (lunch and break times, bell schedules, etc.) so moving from one site to another was problematic and often caused one or more classes to have shortened periods (less instructional time.) K-2 teachers expressed concerns that the art teachers were not giving adequate instruction in the 6 week modules and this needed to be addressed to provide more time for those grades.



### *Moving Forward – Findings and Recommendations*

Opportunities and challenges associated with new programs are often related to expectations that become tempered by available resources and system constraints. Year 1 of the Creative Network pilot was no exception. Curriculum design of the new rotational delivery model, scheduling logistics at each site, class space availability, staff preparation, large enrollments at some sites, etc. were all complex and, even in the best of circumstances, difficult factors. These combined to influence the implementation of this new arts education delivery model.

By listening to our Network school principals, teachers and arts experts, respecting their input, and recognizing the very real pressures of their work, we have identified several “take-a ways” that will guide our decisions and be incorporated as we expand the model into Year 2.

The Creative Network will continue in what is currently the north and east sections of the District. With new divisions and configurations, some of the schools will now be in different districts. This will require a reallocation of teachers so that classes will not be doubled (other than mainstreaming Special Education students). In order to accomplish this, we will

be adding a second team of five teachers to each Network – one in each discipline and one in arts integration. This will allow us to be able to add schools to each Network. These will be selected based on the lowest level of arts education availability (using the Arts Equity Index).

Arts integration instruction for grades K-2 will be doubled. Instead of each grade level getting six lessons, they will receive 12. However, we will loop them. At present the K students do not get arts until the end of the year. Under the new revised plan, grades 2, 1 and K – in that order – will each get six weeks of arts integration in the first semester, and then that pattern will repeat in the second semester.

***What is the realistic potential for scale up?***

The expanded arts education provided by the Network is certainly impressive. Does this mean that the Creative Network is the magic pill to cure the ill of “arts poverty” in the District? Certainly not. No single plan can meet the diverse needs of all the schools and respect their right of choice in developing their arts programs.

This first year of the Creative Network has allowed us to test and see what works with a small group of schools who shared a common interest in innovation that could provide more arts learning opportunities for their students. The comments from our principals, teachers and arts teachers point to the trade-offs of this rotational model. Our participating schools will continue to function as incubators, where, over time, the Arts Education Branch can determine if this delivery system can narrow the “arts poverty” gap. The on-going evaluation of the pilot will inform any future scale up decisions. We will continue to study the pilot using multiple assessment methods including observation, surveys, interviews, and video documentation.





Future challenges to scale up would include: cost ratios, personnel needed to sustain quality instruction, teacher training requirements, school preferences and resistance to the delivery model change, arts teachers' loads, travel time between sites, and other resource allocation considerations made by the schools themselves.

As we launch the Creative Network Year 2 in 2015, we will continue to explore, experiment and refine the newly imagined lessons learned in our quest to provide the highest quality arts education for every student in the Los Angeles Unified School District.



## CREATIVE NETWORK SCHOOLS

2015-16

### ESC EAST

2<sup>nd</sup> Street ES

Ambassador School for Global Ed. at RFK

Aragon ES

Bushnell Way ES

Clifford ES

El Sereno ES

Fletcher ES

Glen Alta ES

Huntington Drive ES

Lizzaraga ES

San Pascual ES

Utah ES

49<sup>th</sup> Street ES

Annandale ES

Bridge St ES

Cesar Chavez ES

Dahlia Heights ES

Esperanza ES

Ford ES

Hillside ES

Latona ES

Logan ES

Sierra Vista ES

### ESC NORTH

Anatola ES

Blythe ES

Calvert ES

Gault ES

Kester ES

Lorne ES

Newcastle ES

San Jose ES

Topeka ES

Bertrand ES

Burbank ES

Fullbright ES

Hubbard ES

Lemay ES

Mayall ES

Panorama City ES

Stagg ES

Vintage ES

***Acknowledgements:***

As we work diligently to improve arts education for every student, the staff of the Arts Education Branch acknowledges that change comes hard, especially to those who lead it. For this reason we would like to give special thanks to everyone who supported this pilot program.

- The Board of Education and Superintendent and Senior Management for their support of innovation and creativity in our District.
- The principals, generalist teachers and arts teachers, without their collaboration and cooperation, innovations like this would have no chance for survival.
- Andrea Kobliner of CalEd Associates, Inc. for her insights in appraising the program and documenting them so clearly in this initial report.
- The Cleveland High School Media Academy, under the direction of Mr. James Gleason, who helped capture the passion and enthusiasm the Network learning has brought to our students.
- The staff of the Arts Ed Branch, for their cooperation and support in overseeing the implementation of the Creative Network program.

## **APPENDIX**

A. Principal Survey

B. Teacher Survey

C. Arts Teacher Survey

## Appendix A

### Arts Education Branch – 2014-2015 Pilot Program

#### Principal Survey

1. Do you notice a difference in the school environment (student attitude, student behavior, staff moral, etc.) after all the art forms and arts integration have been received?
2. What improvements do you see in your 3-5<sup>th</sup> students after having every student receive every art form?
3. What improvements do you see in your K-2<sup>nd</sup> students after having every student receive arts integration?
4. If your school received special project, how did you choose which students would participate and did you see a difference in students who had access to these special project classes? If so, what differences did you see?
5. Where were discrete arts classes held and how often were they moved?
6. Where were arts integration classes held and how often were they moved?
7. If arts classes were moved from their intended space was the new space acceptable for completion of the lesson with all students involved?
8. What challenges have you encountered this year in setting up an appropriate instructional space for arts classes, both discrete and arts integration?
9. What challenges have you encountered in creating an arts schedule that allows access to students in all grade levels for 50 min. (discrete arts)/40 min. (arts integration) uninterrupted time slots? (recess/lunch, computer lab, library, etc.)
10. What concerns and successes have you encountered if your school has had to double classes to attain student access?
11. Have you noticed a difference in staff attendance on arts days versus non-arts day?

12. Does your school have enough materials and equipment to provide students access to the arts?
  
13. Overall, which aspects of the program would you like to see continue and which aspects need to be refined?



6. What concerns have you encountered in creating an arts schedule that allows access to students in all grade levels for 50 minute uninterrupted time slots? (recess/lunch, computer lab, library, etc.)
  
7. Do you notice a difference in the school environment (student attitude, student behavior, staff moral, etc.) after all the art forms have been received?
  
8. Overall, what aspects of the program would you like to see continue and which aspects need to be refined?





6. What challenges have you encountered in creating an arts schedule that allows access to students in k-2 for 40 minute uninterrupted time slots? (recess/lunch, computer lab, library, etc.)
  
7. Do you notice a difference in the school environment (student attitude, student behavior, staff moral, etc.) after all the art forms have been received?
  
8. Overall, which aspects of the program would you like to see continue and which aspects need to be refined?

## Appendix C

### **Arts Education Branch – 2014-2015 Pilot Program**

#### **Arts Teacher Survey**

1. What success and concerns have you encountered with 9 weeks of instruction at each school site?
2. Have you noticed improvements in teacher buy-in as the year has progressed and all teachers have received all art forms?
3. Have you noticed improvements in administrator buy-in as the year has progressed and all students and teachers have received all art forms?
4. Have you noticed improvements in student buy-in as the year has progressed and all students have received all art forms?
5. How much have you revised the curriculum as the year has progressed?
6. Was the curriculum easier to teach as the year progressed?
7. Was it easier for students to access the material as the year progressed?
8. Did you have appropriate access to materials and equipment at all of your school sites?
9. Did you have access to adequate space at all of your school sites?
10. Where were your classes held? How often were classes moved? If classes were moved was the new space acceptable for completion of the lesson with all students involved?

11. In regards to special project, how did you choose which students would participate and did you see a difference in students who had access to this class? If so, what differences did you see?
12. Did additional special project instruction make a difference in performance task results?
13. What concerns have you encountered in creating an arts schedule that allows access to students in 3-6 grade for 50 minute uninterrupted time slots? (recess/lunch, computer lab, library, etc.)
14. What concerns and successes have you encountered if your school has had to double classes to attain student access?
15. What differences were there in quality of instruction of single and double classes? (transition time, time on task, start time, performance task results, etc.)
16. Were you able to teach the entire lesson when working with double classes?
17. What success and concerns have you encountered in teaching 6 classes per day?
18. Overall, what aspects of the program would you like to see continue and which aspects need to be refined?

## **Arts Education Branch – 2014-2015 Pilot Program**

### **Arts Teacher Survey**

1. What success and concerns have you encountered with 6 weeks of instruction at each class?
2. Have you noticed improvements in teacher buy-in as the rotation has progressed?
3. Have you noticed improvements in administrator buy-in as the rotations have progressed and all k-2 students and teachers have received all art forms?
4. How much have you revised the curriculum as the year has progressed?
5. Were the rotations easier to teach as they have progressed?
6. Did you have appropriate access to materials and equipment at all of your school sites?
7. Did you have access to adequate space at all of your school sites?
8. Where were your classes held? How often were classes moved? If classes were moved was the new space acceptable for completion of the lesson with all students involved?
9. What challenges have you encountered in creating an arts schedule that allows access to students in k-2 grade for 40 minute uninterrupted time slots? (recess/lunch, computer lab, library, etc.)
10. What concerns and successes have you encountered if your school has had to double classes to attain student access?
11. What differences were there in quality of instruction of single and double classes? (transition time, time on task, start time, performance task results, etc.)
12. Were you able to teach the entire lesson when working with double classes?
13. What success and concerns have you encountered in teaching 4-7 classes per day?

14. What successes and concerns do you have about working split days?
  
15. Overall, which aspects of the program would you like to see continue and which aspects need to be refined?