

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ARTS INTEGRATION:  
AN ACTIVITY THEORY ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPATING  
TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the tensions and changes experienced by teachers participating in two professional development programs in arts integration through the lens of cultural historical activity theory. Between 2007 and 2012 the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts (SCEA) at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga facilitated long-term programs aimed to build teachers' capacity to develop and implement arts integrated instruction. Varied evaluation data were collected from each program, but the available information was inconsistent between programs, and the data gathered at the two sites did not effectively address the complexity of participants' experiences. In order to better understand how these efforts grew and operated, this study was developed to build richer descriptions of programs as experienced by participants.

The research question that drove the study was "How were professional development programs in arts integration experienced by participating teachers in two school contexts?" In order to build richer descriptions of the complex responses of varied participants in a complex system, these programs were examined qualitatively as a multiple site case study through the lens of cultural historical activity theory. The author analyzed artifacts from each program including e-mails, meeting minutes from leadership teams, and SCEA's semi-annual reports to each school. Interviews with arts and non-arts teachers were collected from among participants. Artifacts and interviews were analyzed through the lens of activity theory to find the tensions that existed at each site. Then, a cross-case analysis was performed to identify issues that emerged in both programs. Tensions at school sites included organizational changes, changes in

the tools that were used, and pressure from testing demands and other initiatives imposed by school administration. The issues that emerged across sites included teachers' struggle with self-efficacy regarding unfamiliar disciplinary content, participants' perceived level of stress, pressure on schools and teachers for higher scores on state mandated testing, teachers' flexibility with new approaches, and participating teachers' focus upon student outcomes. The author discussed recommendations for future professional development efforts targeting arts integration to more successfully navigate the tensions that will inevitably be a part of complex efforts like those described.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DBAE, Discipline Based Art Education

NSDC, National Staff Development Council

PCAH, President's Council on the Arts and Humanities

SCEA, Southeast Center for Education in the Arts

USDOE, United States Department of Education

CHAT, Cultural Historical Activity Theory

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Bresler (2006) described the interpretation of a work of art as a three dimensional space inhabited by the artist, the work, and the viewer. Making meaning of a learning environment, within which human beings act with multiple and/or conflicting agendas is a process similar to the scrutiny of a work of art (Eisner, 1998). Drawing meaning from a learning environment should be done with care and reflection over time.

The Southeast Center for Education in the Arts (SCEA) has designed and implemented long-term professional development programs aimed at changing teacher practice toward a specific understanding of arts integration as an instructional model. Such sustained efforts necessarily consider not only instructional experiences for participants, but also the development of cultures and contexts that allow such a model of curriculum and instruction to flourish (SCEA, 2012b). Consistent with a belief in sustained, job-embedded professional development, SCEA worked with the faculties at two k-12 public schools on a long-term basis from 2007 to 2012. Evaluation data from the work in arts integration at these two sites have been insufficient to fully understand the complexity of participants' experiences. Information gathered through participant surveys and tallies of growth in participation failed to provide a picture of the interaction between the goals and experiences of the arts integration program and the broader work and learning environment of participating teachers. This case study sought to provide a richer

understanding of the overlapping systems in SCEA's work at these two schools by looking at the lived experience of participants through the lens of activity theory (Engeström, 1987).

## **Background**

The Southeast Center for Education in the Arts (SCEA) is an outreach organization established to provide innovative professional development in arts education and arts integration (SCEA, 2015). The center was originally founded as one of the Getty Foundation's centers for the dissemination of its Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) curriculum model (Dobbs, 2000). Since that time SCEA has developed a focus on integrated instruction that places the arts at the core of the curriculum. The work has evolved from an industrial mass-training model toward an approach that aims at sustainability beyond SCEA's direct involvement with a given faculty.

At the time of the programs under investigation, the SCEA staff consisted of directors in each of four art forms (Dance, Drama, Music, and Visual Art), who worked with the Executive Director to design and implement professional development programming. While each director took charge of instruction related to his or her discipline, all worked together to develop and cultivate the model of arts integration that SCEA has adopted as its focus.

## **Arts Integration**

Notions of an integrated (fused, correlated, etc.) curriculum are not new (Beane, 1997; Burnaford, Brown, Doherty, & McLaughlin, 2007). Such ideas have appeared periodically as part of the constant pendulum swing of educational policy in American public education (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Reformers often look to the inclusion, infusion, or integration of the arts with

other content as a means for the achievement of gains in non-arts content. Such utilitarian aims have been lauded as a salvation measure for endangered arts programs (Deasy, 2002; Fiske, 1999; Ruppert, 2006) and criticized for making the arts mere handmaidens to the “real” academic content and ignoring the intrinsic values of instruction in the arts (Eisner, 2002; Hetland & Winner, 2001).

Objections and concerns about arts integration have been noted from arts and non-arts educators. Tyack and Cuban (1995) wrote that the grammar of schooling is resistant to significant change. The presence of the arts at all, and further, the development of integrated curricula do not always fit the ideas people have about “real school.” Non-arts educators and administrators find concerns in the amount of time that arts instruction and integrated instruction may take from explicit, isolated instruction in content areas targeted by high-stakes testing (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006; PCAH, 2011). Policies like the No Child Left Behind Act (USDOE, 2001) have included the arts among lists of core content, but in practice the arts have often been viewed as extra and unnecessary, and pressure to meet expectations on high stakes testing has driven some educators and administrators to push the arts further to the fringes of schooling (Chapman, 2005; Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006).

At the same time, arts educators and advocates can feel threatened by reforms aimed at integrating the arts for fear that such efforts will be used as an excuse to divert time and money away from substantive arts instruction (Hetland, Winner, Veeneema, & Sheridan, 2007; Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006). The willingness of arts educators to pursue integrated instruction depends in part on each educator’s approach to his or her art form. Lam and Kember (2004) described two orientations toward the arts among visual art teachers in k-12 schools that may impact this hesitancy to pursue integrated curricula. They identified one orientation as essentialist. Art

teachers adopting this orientation base art education on the essentials of the art form, apart from any instrumental values. The second orientation they named contextualist. Teachers holding this view see through a more postmodern lens (Marshall, 2005). While contextualists value formal properties of the art form like the elements and principles of design, such values are seen as means to a greater end: the development of students and their understanding of the world in which they live. Essentialist and contextualist orientations toward the arts should, in reality, be viewed as poles on a continuum rather than binary categories. An integrated curriculum must balance the desire for integrity in each content area with the transdisciplinary issues that the curriculum is intended to drive toward (Beane, 1997; Deasy, 2003; Erickson, 2002; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998).

The SCEA approach to arts integration has looked for such a balance of content and instructional integrity. For over a decade, SCEA has worked with teachers to build and implement integrated instruction that balances relevance within and across content areas. Even though SCEA's definition of arts integration was published primarily through its website and direct participant contact, that definition was included in a 2007 literature review on arts integration published by the Arts Education Partnership (Burnaford et al., 2007). While the term arts integration can be used to mean only the inclusion of arts instruction in school programs, the approach SCEA has taken has been aimed at arts integration as an instructional model.

Arts Integration is instruction combining two or more content areas, wherein the arts constitute one or more of the integrated areas. The integration is based on shared or related concepts, and instruction in each content area has depth and integrity reflected by embedded assessments, standards, and objectives. Integrated instruction is often designed, implemented, and evaluated in collaboration with other teachers, arts teachers, community artists, and institutions; and delivered, experienced and assessed through a variety of modalities: artistic processes, inquiry methods, and intelligences. (SCEA, 2012b)



## **Professional Development**

Thomas Guskey (2000) proposed the following definition of professional development: "...those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students"(p. 16). This definition identifies professional development not as a thing, but as a process. Guskey goes on to say that in "true" professional development, such a process is intentional, systemic, and ongoing. It is not accidental, scattered, or short-term. The broad nature of this definition suggests a wide range of programs that might be included under this umbrella. One could say that professional development is anything done to facilitate the professional learning of educators.

Professional development of educators, especially where whole school efforts are concerned, is a cultivation of change in professional practice. In the past, such changes have been considered through a factory or mechanical lens, with notions of installing new skills or adding new pieces to a toolkit (Eisner, 1998; Schön, 1983; Smith, 1998). The realities are messier. Even the simplest changes sought by professional development programs must be adopted within the cultures and contexts of the classrooms, departments, schools, and communities within which teachers operate. Schön (1983) writes:

In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing 'messes' incapable of technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical importance, are often relatively unimportant to clients or to the larger society, while in the swamp are the problems of greatest human concern. (p. 42)

Professional development is a process of taking ideas from the "high hard ground" into the swampy lowlands of practice. When put into practice, ideas are changed by those who adopt them (Rogers, 2003). Tyack and Cuban (1995) describe a wave-like process of school reform efforts over the past hundred years in which the ideas that drive reform efforts are diluted and

changed by contact with practitioners and other conflicting ideas in their contexts. Providers of professional development, then, fall into the hybrid role that Rogers (2003) calls change agents. Professional development providers bring a vision for change into the context of practitioners who will adopt, adapt, or reject the new ideas or approaches.

Professional development is a leadership process. Barker (2002) distinguished leadership from supervision or management. Leadership is “a process of transformative change where the ethics of individuals are integrated into the mores of a community as a means of evolutionary social development” (p. 106). It is useful to consider that while Brookfield (1986) discussed the development of self-directed learners, he recommended that a facilitator be part of that process.

The classroom teacher is a school’s most important asset (Amrein-Beardsley, 2012; Barnett, 2005; Cavalluzzo, 2004; USDOE, 2001). She or he acts as the direct designer, facilitator, and provocateur of each student’s learning environment. While Guskey’s definition, quoted above, identifies student learning as the ultimate outcome of successful professional development, the work is directed at and with teachers. Their change in practice is the direct object of professional development practice. The success or failure of a given program at achieving its professed objectives should rely upon student outcomes, but as a descriptive study of professional development processes, this study focused primarily on the types of changes occurring for and among participating teachers.

In 2009, NSDC published the first of a series of three reports on the state of professional development in the United States. In it, effective professional development is characterized as follows:

- It should be intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice.
- It should focus on student learning and address teaching of specific curriculum content.

- It should align with school improvement priorities and goals.
- It should build strong working relationships among teachers.

(Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009, p. 9)

In *Evaluating Professional Development*, Thomas Guskey (2000) also identified the focus on learning and learners, the ongoing nature of the work, and the direct connection of professional development experiences to professional context. Additionally, he recommends that program designs balance their efforts between changing the practices of individuals and influencing change in the organizations (schools, districts, etc.) of which they are a part. While goals should aim for small, manageable changes, those changes should fit within a larger vision for the school or system.

Effective professional development consists of a responsive, flexible approach that adapts and differentiates among learners while moving toward long-term goals (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey, 2000). Brookfield (1986) wrote that adult learners require self-direction. The Council of Chief State School Officers (Hill et al., 2010) described different needs for teachers in professional development based on their degrees of skill or experience. They described a cycle of professional learning needs that they call a career continuum. This continuum calls for more direct guidance of novice teachers, gradually more resource and support offerings for professionals, and encouragement for experts to take on more responsibility for the development of their less experienced colleagues. SCEA's approach to long-term professional development has been to build site-based programs with each school based on identified needs. SCEA employed a mentorship model that placed each art-form director with cohorts of teachers to focus on individual learning needs while maintaining contact with a leadership team assigned to the arts integration program. Model instruction, coaching, and peer feedback are employed based

on the needs of each teacher in a cohort (SCEA, 2012b). While the scope of a program may encompass an entire faculty, the focus of the work is the individual teacher and his or her work.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In 2008, SCEA developed a program for the faculty of an arts-focused charter school in a small town in the Southeast. In the interest of maintaining anonymity, the names of the schools and their locations in this study will be kept confidential. For the purposes of this study, the first school is referred to throughout as Atlantis Arts Academy. The program was piloted for a year on private funds and then funded for three years by a United States Department of Education (USDOE) model dissemination grant. This program targeted four strands of skill and understanding among the arts and non-arts faculty of this K-8 school: Arts Integrated Instructional Designer, Arts Integration Practitioner, Artist, and Collaborator (Appendix A). SCEA's art form directors mentored cohorts of teachers among the staff to cultivate targeted skills and establish a system for continued growth that could be sustained by the school's faculty beyond the terminal date of the funded program. Interactions between SCEA staff and participating teachers occurred in periodic onsite visits, summer workshops, and electronic communication to plan and reflect on experiences between visits. Constant contact was maintained with a program coordinator at the school site and a leadership team drawn from diverse faculty assignments to direct the growth of the program.

In 2010, a similar program was initiated with a middle school faculty in a rural community in another southeastern state. In this study, the second school will be referred to as Brickton Middle School. Brickton was well provided with arts facilities through a private foundation (referred to in this study as the Brickton Arts Foundation), but sought out SCEA's

work in arts integration as a way to unify the perceived divide between arts and non-arts instruction. While the goals of the program identified for Atlantis Arts Academy remained intact, the professional development model at Brickton Middle School was adapted to suit local needs.

At both school sites, changes were made to the original program in response to the needs of the participants and external demands upon the school. At Atlantis Arts Academy, for instance, methods of assessment were proving ineffective for many of the participants and a new system for documenting the growth of each participating teacher was developed after the first year of grant funding. At Brickton Middle School, the level of participation by some teachers was adjusted to address varied levels of skill and to allow for other initiatives that demanded teachers' time. At both schools, negotiations between administration, participating teachers, and SCEA staff significantly reshaped professional development efforts.

Evaluation data from these programs have been insufficient to understand the complexity of participants' experiences. Information gathered through participant surveys and tallies of growth in participation provided one sort of information, but failed to provide a picture of the interaction between the goals and experiences of the arts integration program and the broader work and learning environment of participating teachers. The shifting contexts within which professional development programs operate (Guskey, 2003; Johnson, 2006) require multiple means of description to more fully understand participants and the systems in which they operate.

### **Purpose**

In each of the cases studied, particularly Atlantis Arts Academy, functioning under the auspices of the USDOE, efforts were made to evaluate progress, but those efforts have focused on the kinds of questions that the funder most wanted to know. The growth of the work at the

grant-funded school, for instance, has focused on questions about the number of teachers participating and levels of satisfaction with the work. These questions have value, but they do not address the formative question of how the learning process of the participants proceeded or how SCEA should modify its approach to better meet the shifting needs of participants. Without further detail, such information may fall prey to what Bresler (2006) calls the “far enemy”: prompt, readymade judgment (p.61).

Brookfield (1986) wrote that each adult learner brings a different set of experiences to the learning process, and that each demands an experience that responds to that set of needs and biases. This study seeks to illuminate the experience of these programs from a ground-level view to provide a richer description of the learning experience to inform choices that SCEA staff and school personnel make in the ongoing growth of this and future professional development programs. Activity theory provides a useful tool (Beswick, Watson, & Geest, 2010; Murphy & Rodriguez Manzanares, 2008) for the analysis of the multiple meanings generated among participants, professional development providers, administrators, students, and the mediating artifacts that link them all. This structure will help provide protection against Bresler’s (2006) “near enemy”: sentimentality.

### **Research Question**

The question driving this study is:

How were professional development programs in arts integration experienced by participating teachers in two school contexts?

## Rationale: Activity Theory

Based on the focus of SCEA's work with individual teachers and the recognition of the complexity of the working and learning environments, cultural historical activity theory was applied as a tool for better understanding participating teachers' working worlds. Activity theory is a broad framework that grew from the work of the Russian cultural historical school of psychology—notably Vygotsky and Leontyev (Engeström, 1996). Sometimes referred to as cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), this structure provides a lens through which to view complex, object-oriented human activity.

Leontyev's original descriptions of human activity (Leontyev, 2009a) became increasingly complex as it was developed by a number of writers, notably Yrjö Engeström (1987). Engeström's model of an activity system (Figure 1) attempted to specify the aspects of context that should be taken into account in consideration of the system (Avis, 2009; Engeström, 1999).

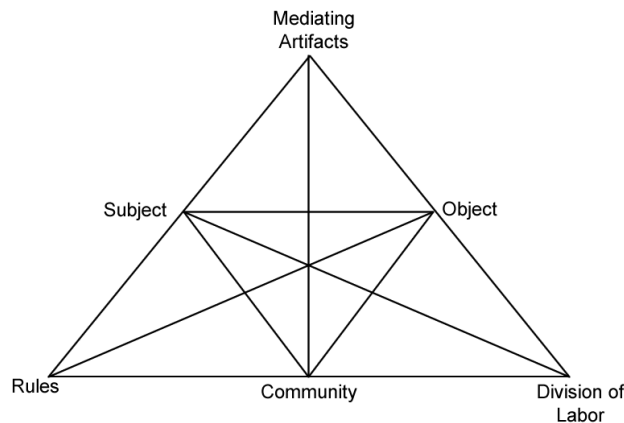


Figure 1 Activity System Matrix

Additionally, he further described the need to identify overlapping activity systems (Figure 2) within more complex human settings (Avis, 2009; Beswick et al., 2010; Murphy & Rodriguez Manzanares, 2008).

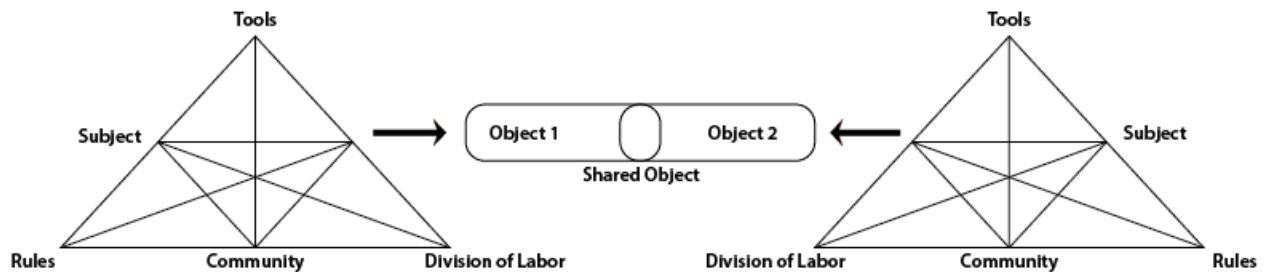


Figure 2 Overlapping activity systems – adapted from Yamagata-Lynch (2010)

Researchers guided by a technical rational approach (Schön, 1983) to the social sciences seek to isolate variables to better understand the parts of a system. To make variables clear, the context is removed. Researchers employing CHAT seek not to isolate variables from context, but to view the interaction of variables within that complexity. “For activity theory, contexts are neither containers nor situationally created experiential spaces” (Engeström, 1996, p. 67). In CHAT, the system of activity is the unit of analysis. Such units consist of the subject and object, but also take into account the community within which the activity occurs, the mediating artifacts through which it occurs, and the rules and division of labor, which impact it. All these elements exist in constant dialogue, changing and being changed by one another.

### **Delimitations**

This study will be limited to teachers who participated in SCEA’s arts integration professional development programming at two selected schools from 2007-2012. The scope of



the study will be limited to teachers' experiences related to that programming. No measures of student outcomes will be examined in this study. While teachers' work with students may be discussed as part of the narrative, the focus of the study is on the experience of the teacher. Other evaluative measures are better suited to assessing student progress.

### **Limitations**

This study aims to provide a thicker description (Geertz, 1973) of teachers' experiences in a sustained program of professional development in arts integration. This is not meant to serve as the only means of understanding professional development in arts integration. The study grew from a recognized gap in existing evaluation data. Statistical generalizability is not the goal of this analysis. The results may suggest directions for future research that will work for generalization, but the results here are intended to provide narratives that help to understand systems from within. Activity systems analysis is a descriptive tool for creating a better picture of the complexity in a system (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). The pictures presented here must be understood as images of activity systems that existed at the time of the work described, and since activity systems are constantly in flux, the image should be understood as a point along a trajectory of growth rather than a description of a permanent state of affairs in either of the school settings.

### **Assumptions**

It is assumed that all artifacts reviewed for this study were fairly and accurately developed to reflect the conditions at the time of their development, and that informants participating in interviews will provide honest responses that accurately represent the

informant's understanding of their experiences. Further, it is assumed that the purposive sample selected from among participants will be sufficient to build an insightful description of interacting systems.

### **Researcher's Position**

I have a predisposition toward a multi-voiced interpretation of objects under study that may be traceable to my background as a visual artist. A strength of artistic endeavor is the requirement that one negotiate between multiple possible solutions to find not the one and only solution, but the one that provides a best fit based on one's aesthetic judgment—what Eisner (2002) calls “rightness of fit.” I look for opportunities to find not only the simple solutions that provide a functional answer, but I desire playfulness and at least occasional attention to purposeful ambiguity.

My background in the study and practice of visual art has also contributed to my alignment with an Activity Theoretical approach to my study of professional development. Qualitative research is an act of observation and interpretation. Parallels may be found between this process and that of viewing and responding to a work of art. Bresler (2006) identifies the aesthetic space in which meaning is generated in what she calls a three-dimensional relationship between the work, the viewer, and the artist. According to Barrett (1994), meaning is always a product of subject matter, content, medium, and context.

I no longer work for a k-12 school, but I still think of myself as a teacher. Before entering my current role as a professional-development provider, I served as a teaching administrator for a facility for children in the state's custody, an art teacher for a k-12 school, and as a youth and family minister with a small church. Rogers (2003) wrote that a change agent should have an

affinity for the client system. While I work in academia, I do so to work with and for teachers. For me, the activities of the academy exist to facilitate the work of educators with students. I seek to answer the questions in this study because I want to know how better to help those who struggle in the difficult environment of the classroom.

In the context of this study, I am both an observer of and a participant in the activity system. The program employed four mentors, each representing expertise in one of four art forms: dance, theatre, music, and visual art. As the Visual Art Education Director for SCEA, I have participated with school leaders at each site and our staff in the design and delivery of workshop experiences and model lessons. I have worked with small groups of teachers at each site, focusing our efforts on instruction that integrates non-arts content with visual art. To help bracket my position with regard to the issues and questions addressed by participants, I had myself interviewed using the interview guide whose development is described below. A transcript was kept, and colleagues assisted with the identification of emergent themes for comparison against participant interviews.

### **Summary**

Based on an approach to professional development that is sustained and job-embedded, the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts implemented programs for teacher professional development in arts integration at two schools in the southeast between 2007 and 2012. In response to the limitations of existing evaluation data, this study applies cultural historical activity theory as a lens on participating teachers' experiences to yield a richer understanding of the impact of these programs on the work related activities of these teachers. The overarching question that drove the research is: How was the professional development program in arts

integration experienced by participating teachers in two school contexts? Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to arts integration, professional development, and activity theory in greater detail.

### **Terms Defined**

Activity Theory – Or Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT); an approach to understanding complex, object-oriented human systems that grew from the work of Vygotsky and Leontyev. Contemporary use of the term applies often to what has been called the third generation version of the theory, developed by Yrjo Engeström (Engeström, 1987). The elements of an activity system include the following:

- Subject – an individual or organization engaged in object-oriented activity
- Object – the intended goal of the subject's activity
- Mediating Artifacts – the means (physical tools or conceptual signs and symbols) through which the subject works toward or upon the object
- Community – the social context in which the activity occurs
- Rules – the regulations or laws that restrict the activity
- Division of Labor – the separation of tasks as part of the complex activity among members of the community
- Contradictions – structural tensions between elements of an activity system or between activity systems.
  - Primary contradictions – contradictions within one area of an activity system
  - Secondary contradictions – contradictions between elements of a single system

- Tertiary contradictions – contradictions created as a result of the implementation of a new way of operating such as a new tool
- Quaternary contradictions – contradictions between related activity systems

Arts Integration – Instruction combining two or more content areas in which one of the content areas is an art form. Instruction is based on shared or related concepts and has depth and integrity as evidenced by standards, objectives, and assessments for each content area. (SCEA, 2012)

Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) – a curricular model that sought to maintain rigor in arts instruction by aligning educational tasks to the domains of thought and action engaged in by professionals in the field. These domains were identified as Art Production, Art History, Art Criticism, and Aesthetics. (Dobbs, 2000)

Etic Issues – Issues brought to a case by the researcher from outside the case itself Arts Content – Subjects or disciplines that may be categorized as fine arts. This may include many subjects, but for the purposes of this study, it includes dance, music, theatre, and visual art, and any courses or instructional components that might fall under these headings.

Non-Arts Content – Used for disciplines that are not identified among the arts, which typically include dance, drama, music, and visual art. Some choose to refer to distinguish these from arts disciplines by referring to them as “academic” or “core” disciplines. This reinforces a marginalization of human creative endeavor that dates back to Plato (Efland, 2002).

Professional Development – Learning experiences aimed at facilitating change in teacher practice.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The design of the arts integration program, the questions asked by this study, and the methods employed to explore those questions rest upon a constructivist view of learning and a view of professional development as an attempt to facilitate change in a complex human system, and therefore a leadership process. The review that follows addresses these bases for the study with particular reference to learning in and through the arts.

#### **Learning and Leadership**

Kevin Lynch (1960) wrote of cities: “Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences” (p. 1). He asserted that our experiences of the city are necessarily always fragmentary and that our ability to control any part of such a complex system is as fragmentary and limited as our perceptions. Efland (2002) aligned his ideas about the development of curriculum with Lynch’s ideas about city design. That which is taught in school is complex and never perceived in its entirety. Despite our constant efforts to the contrary, we cannot maintain absolute central control over the learning process. We can identify problems and make predictions based on the information we have, but we must recognize the limitations of those efforts.

Schunk (2008) defines learning as “...an enduring change in behavior, or in the capacity to behave in a given fashion, which results from practice or other forms of experience” (p. 2). This definition emphasizes external behavior, reminiscent of behaviorism, but contains within it the admission that an understanding of learning must be more than the observation of outward action. Others (Brookfield, 1986; Mezirow, 1990) emphasize internal changes in the consciousness of the individual. Extremes of both emphases insist on a Cartesian separation of the mind from the world. At one extreme, the external world is all that is verifiable; therefore, it is all we should concern ourselves with. At the other extreme, the outer world is unreliable, assuming it exists at all, and all that we can truly rely upon are our internal responses to the experiences we generate. These are almost caricatured extremes, but they do indicate ends of a continuum on which various theories of learning fall.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed a social understanding of learning that insisted that learning occurred through interaction. Interaction may occur directly in the sense of physical interaction with the environment, but usually takes place with other people through the use of tools and signs. Lave and Wenger (1991) proposed further that learning is more than merely the transmission of information to a passive recipient. Granted that we build our understanding of the world through interaction; learning is that process of world-building, which occurs constantly for good or ill. The world is not merely whatever we choose to imagine it to be, as in an extreme subjectivist view, but rather the world is built through the give and take of our acting on and being acted upon by the world around us (Keller & Keller, 1996). Any understanding of human activity should take into account both the need for responding to the empirical (that is, what we have recorded from our interactions with the environment) and the presence of human agency in the learning process (Bandura, 2006).

Learning is an ongoing process of change in a human system that occurs through interaction with the environment and one another (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). Such changes may be only surface-level changes in behavior or thinking, such as the corrective, maintenance-oriented single-loop learning described by Argyris and Schon (1978) or it might push further into the transformative change described by Mezirow (1990) and characterized as double loop learning by Argyris and Schon (1978).

Brookfield (1986) wrote that learning worked best with good facilitation. Learners need guidance toward the changes they pursue. Facilitation, for Brookfield, is not the act of telling a learner where to go and what to do, but collaborating with the learner to help clarify and move her or him toward self-initiated goals. The facilitator is a provocateur, challenging the accepted and offering learning contexts and opportunities based on a learner's needs and goals. Facilitation of learning, then, is the act of helping others identify and work toward change in a human system through interaction with others and the environment in a given context.

Perkins (2003) describes organizations as being made of conversations. The entire architecture of a given group is dependent upon the ways in which its members interact. Without the interaction, common purpose or no, there is no organization. Human systems are constituted of multiple individuals rather than simply one human mind. "Learning" may then be applied to groups of people in interaction with one another. Organizations are groups of humans gathered around a common object. Facilitation of learning, when applied to a group rather than an individual sounds similar to Barker's (2002) definition of leadership as "a process of transformative change where the ethics of individuals are integrated into the mores of a community as a means of evolutionary social development" (p. 106). Leadership, then, is a process of facilitating change in an organization.



## **Professional Development**

In the school context, this definition of leadership can be applied to the diverse efforts referred to as professional development. Programs identified as professional development range from short workshops attended apart from school contexts such as lectures attended at district wide meetings, to more embedded programs that extend beyond a single event like peer mentoring programs and professional learning communities. The National Staff Development Council (which now refers to itself as Learning Forward) provided a lengthy definition of professional development that focuses on traits of quality professional development (Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010). It is important, however, to separate a definition of what something is from standards for its quality. Guskey (2000) described professional development as "...those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students" (p. 16). Put another way, professional development experiences are those experiences that facilitate change in teacher practice. But change is not necessarily improvement. The question of effectiveness still stands.

Prevailing ideas and cultural values have shaped notions of effectiveness in professional development. The metaphors through which we view the world impact our actions upon it (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Ideas from outside education continue to shape learning experiences for both students and teachers. Smith (1998) discusses a series of metaphors that have driven the western institutional approach to education, beginning with the uniformity of the Prussian army, the efficiency of the assembly line, and the precision of the laboratory. A grand narrative (Cox, 2004) about schooling has emerged that fits within the technical rational view described by

Edgar Schön (1983). The quality of professional behavior is decided upon by the Academy with particular emphasis on the methods of technical and scientific fields.

Mechanistic models of professional learning fail to account for human agency (Bandura, 2006). Terehoff (2002) argues that professional development programming should consider principles of adult learning when facilitating the learning of teachers. Brookfield (1986) identified principles for effective facilitation of adult learning that included:

- Facilitation is collaborative – participants direct their learning.
- Praxis (action and reflection) is at the center of the work.

(pp.12-19)

Between 2009 and 2010, the National Staff Development Council published three reports on the status of professional development for teachers in the United States. The first (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009) described the quality and availability of professional development experiences in the United States and other developed nations. Findings include:

- Sustained and intensive professional development experiences were linked to gains in student achievement.
- Collaborative approaches to professional development promote change that extends beyond individual classrooms.
- More than 9 out of 10 teachers have participated in professional learning consisting primarily of short-term conferences or workshops.
- While teachers typically need substantial professional development in a given area (close to 50 hours) to improve skills, most professional learning opportunities in the U.S. are much shorter.

- Significant variation in both support and opportunity for professional learning exists among schools and states.
- U.S. teachers report little collaboration in designing curriculum and sharing practices, and the collaboration that occurs is weak.
- American teachers say that much of the professional development available to them is not useful.
- Other nations that outperform the United States on international assessments invest heavily in professional learning and build time for ongoing, sustained teacher development and collaboration into teachers' work hours.

The second report (Wei et al., 2010) examined progress on key indicators of effective professional development, comparing state and district policies and contexts. The study examined the results of the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) over three administrations of the survey (2000, 2004, 2008). This report noted gains in the use of induction programs for new teachers (though more in suburban districts than urban or rural), increased focus on experiences targeting content of subject areas taught and decreases in focus on other areas like the use of technology, teaching students with special needs, and classroom management. They found that in general, the U.S. investment in teacher learning is focused on “the least effective models of professional development – the short-term workshops that research suggests are unlikely to influence practice and student achievement” (p.vi). Teachers do report opportunities to collaborate, but report that these opportunities are limited to less than three hours a week and are not part of a general climate of collaboration in the school.

The third report (Jaquith, Mindich, Wei, & Darling-Hammond, 2010) consisted of case studies of four states (Colorado, Missouri, New Jersey, and Vermont) that had made significant

gains according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress and showed high levels of teacher professional development according to the surveys that had been examined in the two previous studies. These case studies reviewed state laws and regulations, interviews with personnel, observation of professional development events, and analysis of documents to create a picture of the “professional development landscape” (p. vi) in these states. Effective strategies and policies in the findings include the implementation of collegial strategies like the use of professional learning communities (PLCs). “All four states sought to move professional development from the individual ‘sit and get’ model to a more collective model embedded in the work teachers do with their students and with one another” (p. vi). Findings also show the use of intermediary organizations (p. 4) that bridge the gap between research and policy and practitioners.

Writers discussing effective professional development often begin with complaints against what isn’t effective and bemoan the fact that the ineffective is still dominant. In this literature authors say that professional development should not:

- Be short-term.
- Operate without feedback from learners.
- Work without follow-up.
- Treat diverse learners as identical components.

(Guskey, 2000; Johnson, 2006; Wei et al., 2010)

In the first phase of the NSDC reports, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) wrote that effective professional development is characterized with the following:

- It should be intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice.

- It should focus on student learning and address teaching of specific curriculum content.
- It should align with school improvement priorities and goals.
- It should build strong working relationships among teachers. (p. 9)

In *Evaluating Professional Development*, Thomas Guskey (2000) also identified the focus on learning and learners, the ongoing nature of the work, and the direct connection of professional development experiences to professional context. Additionally, he recommended that the work should balance the attention between changing the practices of individuals and the organizations (schools, districts, etc.) of which they are a part. In that same vein, he noted that while efforts should work toward small changes, those changes should fit within a larger vision for the school or system.

It has been noted by multiple writers that the organizers of professional development programs often fail to listen to those whose work they seek to improve. They advocate for teachers to have more agency in professional development efforts (Cranton, 1996; Hickey & Harris, 2005; Whitesitt, 2011). This is consistent with the goal of self-directedness asserted by Brookfield (1986), but it should be noted that Brookfield said that the level of responsibility required for self-directed learning is not easily taken up. It is easier to let someone else tell you what to do, even if what they're telling you is not a very good idea. Teachers' levels of self-efficacy and experience also impact the likelihood that they will lead themselves. Guskey (2003) warned that while several descriptions of effective professional development have included teachers' identified needs as guiding factors, teachers have difficulty articulating those needs.

Teachers' needs vary based on their level of experience – not just in terms of total years of practice, but with regard to their level of experience in a given discipline or practice. James

Paul Gee (2003) refers to each realm of thought and practice as a semiotic domain. Each domain humans act in (writing essays, repairing plumbing, performing experiments, etc.) has its own internal grammar for appropriate communication within, without, and about it, and an affinity group of individuals who engage in it. Each time a learner begins to pursue a new practice, he or she becomes a novice in that domain. A recent report by the Council of Chief State School Officers (Hill et al., 2010) clarifies the different needs of teachers with varying degrees of experience. The authors describe a “Career Continuum” that calls for more direct guidance of novice teachers, gradually more resource and support offerings for professionals, and encouragement for experts to take on more responsibility for the development of their less experienced colleagues.

Characteristics of effective professional development drawn from the sources described above may be grouped as follows:

- **Purpose** – Effective professional development focuses on:
  - Student learning
  - Specific content or skills
  - Individual educators and the systems they work within
  - Small changes in teacher practice that fall within a larger vision of school change
- **Methods** – Effective professional development should employ:
  - Sufficient time for learning, implementation, and reflection
  - Ongoing guidance for implementation of new ideas or skills
  - Diverse experiences that address learning styles and levels of experience
  - Participant feedback to constantly revise and re-design the work

- **Shaping Considerations** – effective professional development must adjust for:
  - Site specific teacher needs
  - School culture
  - The nature of the content/skill to be taught
  - Levels of experience/comfort among participants
  - School or district initiatives

If professional development programming is aimed at facilitating change in an educational system (at the classroom, school, or district level) the programming will necessarily have to navigate the complexity of the system within which it is to operate.

### **Arts Integration**

Arts integration is an ill-defined term in education. It has been used by advocates to refer to the inclusion of arts content in the general school curriculum – that is, putting the arts back in where they have been absent; teaching arts-based activities as part of instruction in non-arts content; partnership between non-arts teachers and arts teachers or teaching artists; and the development of project-based learning in which the arts play one disciplinary role (Burnaford et al., 2007). SCEA (2012b) defined arts integration as instruction combining two or more content areas in which at least one content area is an art form. They further wrote that such integrated instruction is based on shared or related concepts (a reference to Lynn Erikson’s 2002 work, *Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction*). The kinds of instruction described by this definition, however, differ from other definitions of arts integration and presume certain foundational views of the arts as learning domains (Efland, 2002; Gee, 2003).

Advocates for the arts in education point to indicators that learning in the arts impacts other areas of student engagement (Deasy, 2002; Fiske, 1999). And while some question the claims made using these results (Hetland & Winner, 2001), the widely found correlational claims have had an impact on the awareness of political leaders in recent years. In the opening of the President's Council on the Arts and Humanities (PCAH) report of 2011, Secretary Arne Duncan wrote, "Education in the arts is more important than ever." (PCAH, 2011, p. 1)

This positive acknowledgement has its value, but others raise concerns about too strong an emphasis upon the impact of arts instruction on achievement in reading, math, or other subjects. Researchers from within the fields of arts education (Brewer, 2002; Eisner, 2002) warn that such advocacy has ignored the more important attention that should be paid to values intrinsic to learning in each art form. Brewer particularly warned that an instrumental approach to the arts in the curriculum – using arts instruction primarily for other purposes – has the potential to diminish the role of the arts rather than raise them up. As Eisner (2002) noted, if the place of the arts in schools is solely about the level of reading and math scores, what happens when those scores go down?

Partially as a response to a perceived push for extrinsically motivated curricula, Hetland et al. (2007) and Eisner (2002) have proposed intrinsic values for learning in the arts. Eisner identified imagination, sensibility, representation, and editing as processes that are at home in the arts domains. Further, he articulated a list of lessons the arts teach which have lately become summarized in arts advocacy literature. That list includes attention to relationships, flexible purposing, viewing from multiple perspectives, using materials as a medium, shaping form to create expressive content, the exercise of imagination, learning to frame the world from an aesthetic perspective, and the ability to transform qualities of experience into speech and text



(Eisner, 2002, pp. 70-92). In their analysis of the use of correlational findings by arts advocates who seek to support arts programs with extrinsic claims, Lois Hetland and Ellen Winner (2001) raised concerns over both the flaw in using these studies to argue causation and the danger in advocating for arts programs based primarily on their impact on other content areas. These authors followed up that publication with an attempt to identify intrinsic benefits of visual art education through case studies of effective programs at the high school level. The report resulting from this effort, *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of a Visual Arts Education* (Hetland et al., 2007) describes eight habits of mind that the authors identified as outcomes of learning experiences in art studios. In addition to items like expression and observation, their list also includes envisioning, reflection, persistence, and craftsmanship. They describe the learning environment in art studios that draw students toward these patterns of thinking and action.

The outcomes of an education in the arts, however, depend greatly on the approach taken by those designing and implementing the curriculum. Bresler (1994) identified three approaches to visual art curricula. She found a rote, teacher-centered approach that "...adopts an industrial, factory model for art where the act of creation is a mechanical one of reproduction" (p. 101). That approach hardly cultivates the lessons and habits of mind identified by Eisner (2002) and by Hetland et al. (2007). Second, she described a self-expression orientation that seems to place the arts as a kind of unstructured balance against an overly structured non-arts curriculum. This orientation orients arts experiences in school as a sort of non-cognitive release. The arts then become necessarily extra-curricular rather than part of the curriculum. Finally, Bresler (1994) described a higher order, cognitive orientation (p. 97) which views teaching as "...a complex procedure drawing on the communication of sophisticated adult knowledge while respecting the child's current experiences and interpretations" (p. 101). She noted that the higher order

cognitive approach, while drawing on more sophisticated goals for cognitive and affective development, is also more removed from the goals and values of schools.

Lam and Kember (2004) described a continuum between two poles in secondary art teachers' conceptions of teaching art based on an examination of six aspects of their thinking: the aim of teaching, the nature of art knowledge, art ability, skill and creativity, conception about process and product, and expected learning outcomes. They referred to one polar view as "essentialist" and the other as "contextualist".

An essentialist view "is defined as basing art education on the essentials of art that are excluded from other instrumental values" (p. 292). Such a view aligns, broadly, with a formalist, art for art's sake approach that emphasizes uses of media and the elements of art and principles of design. It is rooted in a modernist view of art that draws a dualist distinction between high and low art (Efland, 2002). Such a dualism narrows the pool of images available for study, and shies away from instruction that might have an instrumental agenda. The rote, teacher-centered art curriculum and the open-ended art curriculum identified by Bresler (1994) might both fit within the essentialist category because of the de-emphasis of context or purpose for works of art and the emphasis upon fine art as objects of study. Strictly essentialist approaches are not friendly to the development of integrated curricula. Integration may be seen as a threat to the integrity of the art form.

At the contextualist pole, "the focus of teaching [is] oriented toward personal development for living in society" (Lam & Kember, 2004, p. 294). While elements & principles of design are considered in such study, there is more of an emphasis on content than on form. Where essentialist views may be said to align with a modernist view of art, contextualist views are more aligned with the postmodern. As Marshall (2005) writes, "Postmodern theories endorse

an art education where art is contextualized, boundaries between domains are blurred, and emphasis is placed on content in relation to form”(p.227). The contextualist view aligns with a movement in visual art education that proponents call visual culture. Visual culture is critical of what is seen in essentialist or formalist approaches as elitist and unnecessarily restrictive. A visual art curriculum that insists on strict categories, particularly the accustomed emphasis on formal properties and production “misrepresents the realm of knowledge in and through the visual arts as being primarily technical” (Freedman, 2003, p. 19). The exclusive focus on fine art as objects for study is torn down, and study is open to include works from popular and material culture. Visual culture education requires teachers and students to wrestle with the ambiguous place of fine art within contemporary culture.

Extreme views that emphasize form over content or content over form are both flawed. Neither can be understood without the other. Terry Barrett has presented a balanced view. The title of his recent text, *Making Art: Form and Meaning* (2011) summarizes this balance nicely. He defines art as the creation of artifacts that carry meaning (p. 2). This opens the field to the study of works beyond an elitist canon of fine art. However, he also insists on focused attention to the formal properties that constitute the vocabulary and grammar of visual artists. In an earlier work, *Interpreting Art: Reflecting, Wondering, and Responding* (Barrett, 2003) Barrett listed 10 principles for interpreting art. In one of these, he states that artworks are always about something. That is, even the most non-objective, abstract work has some meaning, even if that meaning is not drawn from overt subject matter. This prohibits attention exclusively to formal properties of a given image. By extension, it suggests that works selected for discussion and response in the art classroom should not be chosen solely as exemplars of formal composition. In another of the ten principles, Barrett summarizes the multiple sources of information that must inform response

to a work of art with a formula: Subject Matter +Medium +Form +Content = Meaning (Barrett, 2003). A balanced view of arts curriculum and instruction based on a recognition for both the formal and contextual understandings in the discipline does not insist on integrated or isolated instruction, but rather allows for either that gets to the large outcome of understanding. This focus on understandings aligns with the goals identified in SCEA's (2012) definition of arts integration.

Integrated curriculum is far from a novel idea. Beane (1997) reviewed a pendulum swing of popularity and rejection for integrated curriculum and instruction throughout the history of American education. He traces the idea back as early as William Kilpatrick's 1918 "The Project Method." The 1930s saw "considerable discussion and experimentation" with regard to integrated curriculum (p. 23), culminating in the Eight Year Study by the Progressive Education Association in the early 40s. But this experimentation came to an abrupt end. Beane blamed the launch of Sputnik in 1957 and the rise of fear and competitiveness in its wake for the death of the core and experience-centered programs. He wrote that separate-subject instruction went relatively unchallenged until the 1990s. These trends echo the shifts in policy toward the arts in education noted by Arthur Efland (1990) and the general tendency for reform efforts to ebb and flow with slow, staggering successes noted by Tyack and Cuban (1995).

### **Activity Theory**

The theoretical basis noted above situates learning and leadership as processes of facilitating change in and by human systems working in interaction with one another through the use of tools and symbol systems. The model of arts integration described in this chapter is based on a complex view of the arts that is intended to strategically employ integrated curricula to

reach deeper understandings. Professional development is understood as a learning process that occurs within the multiple systems of collaborating teachers, administrators, and students. This study sought to examine programs in which participants engaged in a whole-school professional development model that called on teachers to work across disciplinary boundaries. Examining the complexity of participants' experiences in these programs is a daunting task that called for a conceptual lens through which to view the multiple narratives that would comprise the data. Cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) provided a means for understanding the various influences that might impact the learning experiences of teachers.

## **History and Structure**

Activity theory grew from the work of Vygotsky and his colleagues. It was more fully developed by A.N. Leontyev and later by Yrjö Engeström (Engeström, 1987; Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). With each iteration of activity theory, its proponents sought to account for greater levels of social complexity in human endeavor.

Vygotsky described views of human learning that emphasized only biological processes of growth in stages or only reactions to external stimuli as inadequate. In response, he articulated the notion of mediation (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky, this process is not a straight line between stimulus and response, but rather human interaction always occurs through some tool (his word applied to physical artifacts of mediation) or sign (applied to conceptual artifacts of mediation). This relationship is shown in Figure 3.

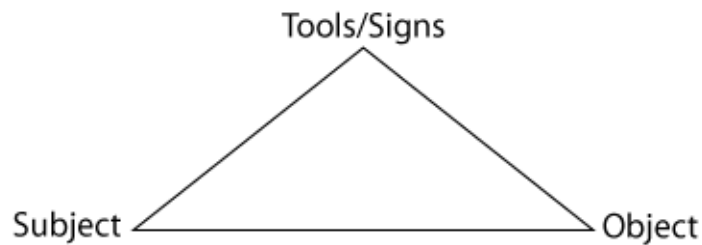


Figure 3 1<sup>st</sup> Generation CHAT

Vygotsky's work, however, emphasized the learning process of the individual. Luria and A.N. Leontyev applied Vygotsky's idea of mediation, not only as a single process engaged in by the individual, but rather as a complex of processes that might be engaged in by an individual or a group of individuals. Leontyev elaborated collective activity through a description of a primeval hunt in which each participant performs indirect actions that contribute to the collective achievement of an object (2009b). To the original triangular model of subject, object, and tools or signs, Leontyev added the consideration of the community, the division of labor, and the rules that govern the activity (Figure 4). In Figure 4, Vygotsky's tools and signs have been replaced with the term "mediating artifacts". Vygotsky used tools to describe physical means of mediation and signs to refer to mental constructs used for mediation (Vygotsky, 1978). More recently, authors applying activity theory have used mediating artifacts to include both physical and mental means of mediation (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). For activity theorists, this matrix is the unit of analysis for examining human activity (Engeström, 1987; Yamagata-Lynch, 2010).

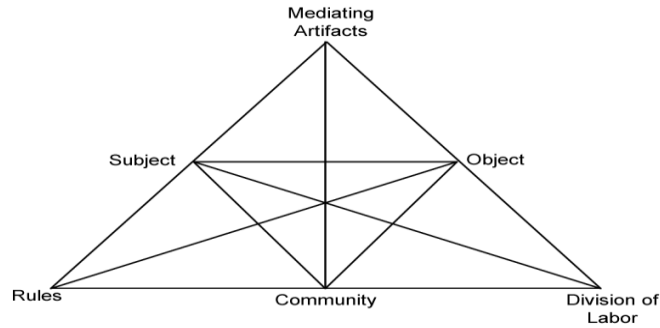


Figure 4 Second Generation CHAT

Engeström (2001) referred to the model based on Leontyev as second-generation activity theory. The model not only adds contextual influences, but accounts for processes that occur between all elements of the system. Engeström (1996) described the elements of the system as follows: The subject is the individual or subgroup whose agency is chosen as the point of view for analysis. The object is the “problem space” at which the activity is directed. The mediating artifacts are the means (physical, symbolic, internal, and external) through which the activity occurs. The community consists of the multiple individuals or groups who share the same object. Division of labor refers to the horizontal division of tasks among members of the community and the division of power and status vertically. Rules refer to explicit and implicit regulations, norms and conventions that constrain actions and interactions within the system (p. 67). Not depicted in the model above, but sometimes included to the right of the object are outcomes, the consequences that result from the object (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009).

In CHAT terms, activity should not be confused with short-term, goal-directed actions. Object-oriented activity is a complex process that is ongoing and changing. Specific behaviors of an individual aimed at a temporary goal are referred to as actions. These actions, in turn, are composed of operations, automatic processes in response to the concrete conditions in which

they occur (Arievitch, 2008; Roth & Lee, 2007). Roth and Lee (2007) provide an example of an activity system in a unit of study on environmentalism at a middle school. The activity is a group of students seeking to document the conditions of a nearby water system. An action and goal within that system is a single student taking photographs to depict pollution. Operations are the behaviors within that action that are immediate, even unconscious responses to the physical context such as the student turning her head to find a suitable angle or moving her finger on the shutter when an opportunity for a shot is found (p. 202).

In activity theory, an activity system *is* the unit of analysis. “For activity theory, contexts are neither containers nor situationally created experiential spaces. Contexts are activity systems. An activity system integrates the subject, the object, and the instruments (material tools as well as signs and symbols) into a unified whole” (Engeström, 1996, p. 67). Researchers understand a system not only by understanding its parts, but how those elements interact. Structural tensions among elements of an activity system are called contradictions (Cross, 2011). These “...create instability and drive the development of change in the system” (Amory, 2010, p. 70). They should not be understood as problems to be solved, however, as the changes they provoke may not be bad ones, but rather productive and helpful depending on how the system responds and adapts (Engeström, 1987; Toiviainen, 2007).

The work of Yrjo Engeström has been perhaps the most influential on the applications of activity theory in the last few decades. Vygotsky developed the idea of mediation, and Leontyev moved from the individual process to a collective one. Leontyev’s system, however, did not account for influences on the system from outside it. All human constructs have a history and are influenced by the societies around them. Human actions may have multiple motives, not all of which can be understood as part of a single system. “The same set of operations can be used to



accomplish different actions. Similarly, the same actions can be driven by different motives or objects” (Madyarov & Taef, 2012, p. 79). Engeström (1987) articulated a third-generation of activity theory that sought to account for that complexity and ambiguity by looking at the interaction between systems. He provided five principles for activity theory that others have used since. The first four point out that systems do not exist in isolation:

- Interactivity – “...a collective, artifact-mediated and object-oriented activity system, seen in its network relations to other activity systems, is taken as the prime unit of analysis.”
- Multi-voicedness – “An activity system is always a community of multiple points of view, traditions and interests.”
- Historicity – “Activity systems take shape and get transformed over lengthy periods of time. Their problems and potentials can only be understood against their own history.”
- The Central Role of Contradictions – Contradictions within and between systems are the source of change and development. (Engeström, 2001, pp. 137-138)

The fifth principle raises the issue of the potential for a collective form of transformational learning (Mezirow, 1990) that Engeström refers to as expansive learning: “An expansive transformation is accomplished when the object and motive of the activity are reconceptualized to embrace a radically wider horizon of possibilities than in the previous mode of activities” (Engeström, 2001, p. 137). An example of this kind of interaction between systems is evident in Figure 5 from Yamaga-Lynch’s (2010) study of a professional development program:

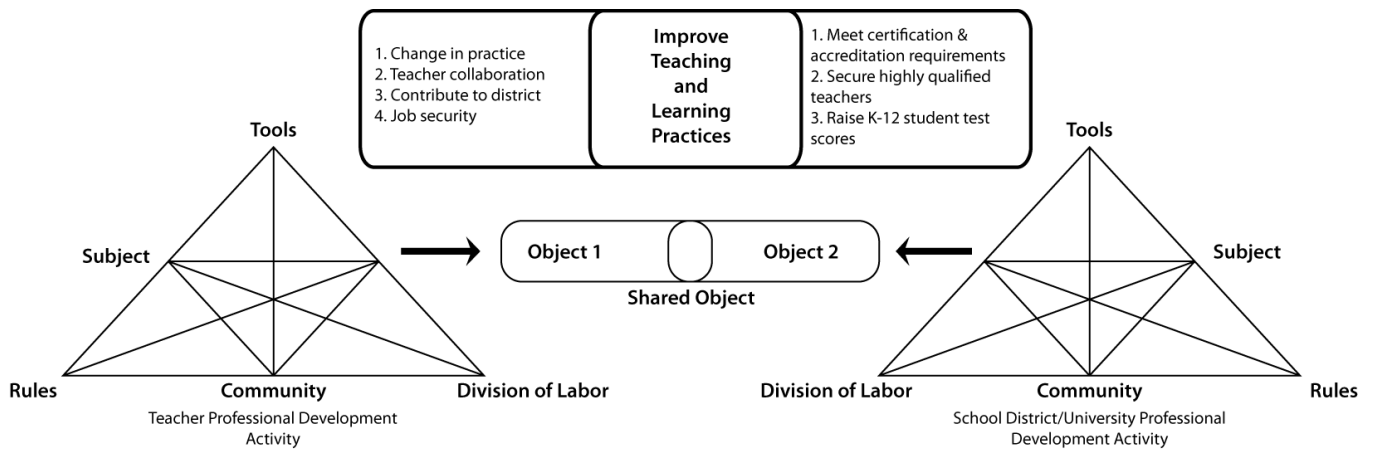


Figure 5 Interacting Activity Systems – from Yamagata-Lynch (2010)

This diagram, however, only points out one kind of interaction between systems, where they share an overlapping object. Other relationships between systems might be described as nested, where one system’s object becomes a component (subject, tool, community, etc.) of another larger system. Engeström (1987) describes these “neighbor activities” (p. 103) as object activities, instrument-producing activities, subject-producing activities, and rule-producing activities. In a sense, the entirety of human society could be described as layer upon layer of nested systems that contribute to and conflict with one another. For example, Roth and Lee (2007) describe schools as fitting exactly this way into the larger societies around them. Schooling produces graduates, some of whom enter industries, which in turn produce tools and artifacts in the form of curriculum materials or technology, etc. that are used for schooling. Other graduates enter agencies like the Department of Education, which create or change the rules under which schooling operates.

To understand how and why a system operates as it does is not only a matter of identifying the elements of the system, but how those elements interact to generate change.

Activity systems are not static structures. They change and develop based upon the interactions of the individuals performing actions that comprise the activity. Change in a system is driven by contradictions – pressures that elements of a system exert within the system or that systems exert upon each other. Contradictions generate tensions that “stimulate or interfere with the subject’s abilities to attain the object” (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). Engeström (1987) categorized contradictions based on the more elaborated third-generation version of activity theory. He identified four levels of contradiction that other authors have since applied to their own analyses (Cross, 2011; Karasavvidis, 2009; Madyarov & Taef, 2012; Roth & Lee, 2007; Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009). Primary contradictions arise within elements or nodes of an activity system. Secondary contradictions occur between nodes of a system. Tertiary contradictions occur between the current object of a system and the introduction of a more culturally advanced form of the central activity. Quaternary contradictions occur between a central activity and its neighbor activities.

The analysis of activity systems through the use of contradictions and the tensions they create yields a picture of what has happened in the system, how the system is operating, and the areas that should be addressed. Findings from such studies yield a greater understanding of human learning and leadership. For instance, as a result of their work, Madyarov and Taef (2012) proposed the use of a new concept: the activity shell. They coined this term to apply to ready-made, artificially constructed environments in which an explicitly stated object exists, but may or may not actually align with the objects of the people in the system. This idea seems similar to Eisner’s (2002) description of an explicit curriculum in schooling, which must exist alongside an implicit curriculum, which is necessarily more lasting.

## **Objections and Limitations**

### **Political ideology**

Some authors have leveled objections against the use of activity theory or suggested limitations that researchers should consider when activity theory is applied. It has been suggested that the connections between CHAT and its Marxist origins have delayed its spread to the west, particularly in the United States, which Roth and Lee (2007) identified along with their finding in a review of literature that there has been a sharp increase in the use of activity theory in the last twenty years. At the same time, Avis (2009) asserted that Engeström's version of activity theory has lost a connection to a Marxist philosophical underpinning and political position (p. 157) that he believes it should have. He refers to it as "domesticated" and says that it fails to transform itself into "revolutionary activity" (p. 161). Roth and Lee's (2007) view was that activity theory as an analytical tool has little to do with totalitarian political regimes that also claim Marxist affiliations. Politics has more to do with the use of the tool than with the tool itself.

### **Activity Theory doesn't account for influences outside the system**

Other limitations and objections do bear consideration, though, as they address the application of the theory rather than political motivations. Lim (2002) notes that activity theory may be criticized for failing to consider the influences on the system from outside itself. Activity theory, like any lens, both clarifies and limits the view of those who use it. Activity theory is not universally applicable. Not every question that may be asked of a given human endeavor may be answered through the application of activity theory, but no theory and no research method is capable of doing so. Flick (2009) pointed out the futility of attempts in science to remove social

and cultural background issues from research and its findings. Activity theory attempts to focus on precisely those issues. As Flick and others have argued about forms of qualitative research, activity systems analysis should not be employed alone. The application of activity theory has the ability to identify and describe issues that exist in a system and how those issues interact. Any such analysis would call for further research into those issues individually through qualitative and quantitative means (Eisner, 1998; Flick, 2009; Yamagata-Lynch, 2010).

This objection also fails to account for Engeström's third generation of activity theory and the notion of nested systems, which attempts to account for exactly the kinds of outside influence described. Beswick et al. (2010) noted a similar concern in their comparison of the applications of activity theory and complexity theory to mathematics departments. They wrote that activity theory "views external forces as potentially disruptive and conflicting" (p. 166) and failed to view them as natural features of an emergent system. If an activity system is assumed to be a fixed construct, then this is an accurate assessment. That is certainly a weakness of the second-generation version of the theory. Engeström's description of nested systems, and particularly his notion of expansive learning, describe activity systems as constantly changing due to contradictions from within the system and from without (Engeström, 1987; Roth & Lee, 2007). In his activity-theoretical work among organizations, Engeström (2008) developed the notion of knots rather than teams – clusters of individuals that emerge to work as a subsystem within a larger system. Avis (2009) describes this process as a dynamic one in which "groups form, break up, and re-form with different partners" (p. 154). The implications are that any description of an activity system must be viewed as a point along a trajectory (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010).

### **Activity Theory is too complex**

Yamagata-Lynch (2010) noted an objection that activity theory was too complex and therefore too difficult for researchers to learn and adequately employ. She responded that the complexity that activity theory introduces brings “opportunities for researchers and practitioners to address rich real-world experiences” (p. 30). This aligns with Geerst’s (1973) thick description, in which the researcher’s role is not to reduce the system observed to simplistic terms, but rather to problematize understanding. Yamagata-Lynch (2010) responded that researchers using activity systems analysis must make sure to clearly define the elements within the mediated action framework (subjects, tools, rules, etc.).

### **Activity Theory is not generalizable**

Yamagata-Lynch (2010) identified this objection, but asserted that detractors who make this claim misunderstand the appropriate use of activity theory. Activity systems analysis aligns best with a qualitative case-study method (discussed in more detail in chapter 3). If applied within the context of qualitative research, the question of generalizability becomes the same criticism that has been leveled at qualitative methods in general (Eisner, 1998; Flick, 2009). The results of qualitative studies are not generalizable in the sense that quantitative methods are. As Stake (1995) wrote, “The real business of case study is particularization, not generalization” (p. 8). Of case studies in particular, Yin (2009) writes that the generalizability that occurs is not the same as the statistical generalization sought in survey studies. Case studies rely on what he calls analytical generalization, in which “the investigator is striving to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory” (p.43).

## **Strengths of Activity Theory**

Cultural historical activity theory grew from a recognition that learning, individual or organizational, must be understood in the contexts of time, place, and people within which they occur (Engeström, 1987). The model provides a way for the researcher to describe the mutually influential interactions between the elements of a dynamic system and such interactions between systems. Activity theory provides a lens through which the researcher can make sense of very complex human endeavors, like those engaged in by teachers and students (Madyarov & Taef, 2012; Van Oers, 2008; Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009).

Leadership is a process of navigating change. Learning is change, and therefore leadership is a process of navigating and facilitating learning in human systems. Activity theory, then, allows researchers the opportunity to describe learning in a given context and may provide a trajectory for future learning in and between systems. By identifying and describing activity systems and their relationships to one another, and by elaborating the contradictions within and between systems, the researcher may illuminate likely change processes in the system. In doing so, she or he may highlight the times and places that leaders may implement measures to help cultivate changes that will benefit the collective goals of the system (Beswick et al., 2010; Choi & Kang, 2010; Edwards & Mutton, 2007; Yamagata-Lynch, 2010).

## **Summary**

This study is founded on a conception of learning and leadership as processes of navigating change within human systems (Barker, 2002) and professional development as one particular kind of organizational learning that targets professional educators. Effective professional development is job-embedded, responding to the needs of participating teachers,

and sustained beyond the short-term workshop models that continue to dominate the field (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey, 2000).

SCEA's arts integration model (Burnaford et al., 2007) strives to balance instructional integrity in arts and non-arts content areas by basing integration on shared or related concepts (Erickson, 2002) and demanding clear learning targets for any content area included. Rather than basing the success of arts integration only on the extrinsic impacts of the arts on reading or math scores, SCEA seeks to place the arts at the core of a fully integrated curriculum that also values the intrinsic values of learning in each art form.

Cultural historical activity theory offers a lens through which to understand the complexities in a professional development program where the goals of teachers, students, administrators, and consultants may or may not align. It is believed that finding and analyzing the contradictions that exist within, between, and among the various activity systems at each site in this study brings about a clearer understanding of how each program was experienced and how future work in arts integration at these sites and others may better respond to the ongoing and complex activity of teaching.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to provide a richer understanding of the overlapping systems in SCEA's work at two schools by looking at the lived experiences of participants through the lens of activity theory (Engeström, 1987). The overarching question driving the research was: How was the professional development program in arts integration experienced by participating teachers in two school contexts? To develop a response to this question, this study was developed with a qualitative multiple case study design. This chapter describes the design of the study, the collection of data, the analysis of data, and the means employed to safeguard human subjects and maximize the validity and reliability of findings.

#### **Design**

In the 4th edition of his text on case-study design and methods, Robert Yin (2009) defined case study as a research method in two parts. First, a case study is “an empirical method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009). Second, he noted that case-study inquiry relies on multiple sources of evidence to cope with the number of variables in the bounded system, and that case-study methods rely on the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

This study sought to build a deeper understanding of the complexities of teachers' experiences in professional development programs in arts integration. While Yin (2009) allows for case studies to include both qualitative and quantitative methods, this study employed qualitative means alone due to the nature of the inquiry and the fact that other questions have been addressed in evaluations of part of the professional development programming at the two school sites.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) wrote that the purpose of research is to “reduce complex realities to simple explanations” (p.10). As Eisner (1998) noted, if an organism had to approach every experience as something brand new and completely strange, survival would be impossible. The reductive process is important, but reduction is not the only goal of research and not the only means to understanding. If the world is in fact complex, then reducing it to simple terms creates a potentially useful reality, but at least in part a fictional one. Qualitative research, rather than seeking a simplified reality, can aim to highlight its complexity (Bresler, 2006). Creswell (2007) noted that qualitative research is appropriate when the researcher is looking for “a complex, detailed understanding” of the issue under scrutiny (p.40). The contrast offered by Bresler (2006) is that “the story of Anne Frank reaches us in a way that the number ‘six million’ does not” (p. 57). Her statement is not a rejection of the power of the quantitative account of the impact of the holocaust, but rather an assertion of the differing and complementary value of each. Researchers must find a balance between what Bresler (2006) calls the “far enemy” of literal, prompt, readymade judgment and the “near enemy” of sentimentality (p. 61). Activity theory was applied here as a tool for finding balance in this tension. Activity theory brings “manageable units of analysis for investigating real-world human interactions” (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010, p. 31).

This study focused on the experiences of participating teachers in two different settings and examined those experiences for their positions and relations within and across activity systems. Yamagata-Lynch (2010) argued that case-study research was particularly compatible with activity theory analyses because

Activity systems analysis involves the examination of self-sustained systems that are difficult to remove from the context and when investigators engage in data collection and analysis they need to be able to treat goal-directed actions, object-oriented activities, and activity settings as separate yet highly interrelated bounded systems (p. 79).

Yin (2009) described a three-part case study process: Define & Design; Prepare, Collect, & Analyze; and Analyze & Conclude. The components of each of those stages are shown in the chart adapted from his text in Figure 6. Yin's first stage in this process calls for the development of a theory that will guide the practice of the case study. He acknowledges that researchers may choose to employ a theoretical framework drawn from existing works. In this study, that framework was drawn from third-generation activity theory (Engeström, 1987).

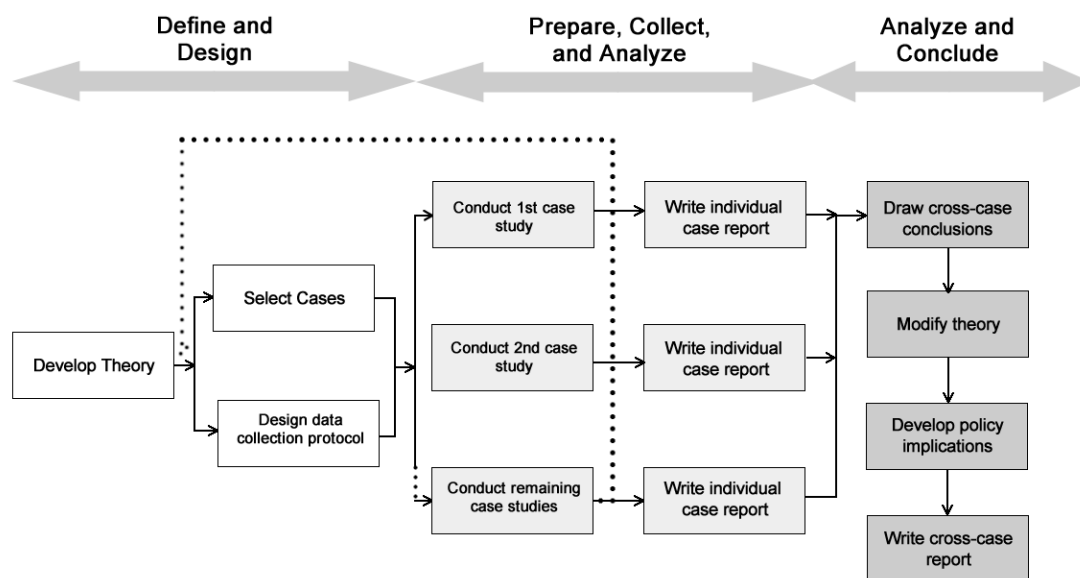


Figure 6 Yin's (2009) Case Study Process

This study used an embedded multiple-case design (Yin, 2009, p. 46). Multiple cases in different contexts each have embedded units of analysis. The cases under consideration are the professional development programs in arts integration. The contexts were the school sites and the working environments there. The embedded units of analysis were participating teachers' individual experiences of the professional development programs at each site. An adaptation of Yin's model for embedded case study is shown in Figure 7.

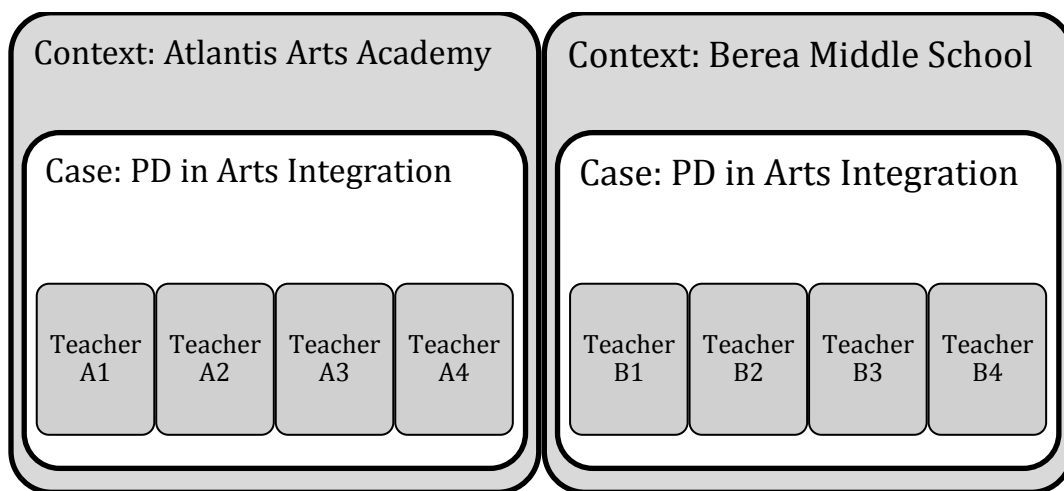


Figure 7 Embedded Case Study Design

### **Context: Atlantis Arts Academy**

Atlantis Arts Academy is a charter school in a rural community in the southeast. The school serves a student population of approximately 725 students from kindergarten through eighth grade in a low income, largely rural community. Atlantis has excelled at producing performances and products in the visual and performing arts, but prior to the time of the arts integration work academic performance was inconsistent. In 2005, a school-based needs

assessment concluded that the school should consider the integration of arts resources across the curriculum. This recommendation led the school to its initial contact with the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts. Administrators and faculty collaborated with SCEA to develop the Professional Development in Arts Integration program. Implementation of that program began with a five-day summer intensive in July of 2008. After that workshop introduced arts integration as an instructional model to the faculty, the administration identified an initial group of participants who constituted about one third of the teaching staff. These participants each chose an art-form cohort to participate in over the three years of the proposed program.

In the first year, participating teachers worked with SCEA mentors to build knowledge and skill in one art form, develop an understanding of a concept-based approach to arts integration, and form collaborative ties with other members of the faculty. An Arts Leadership Team that consisted of administrators, teachers from different grade levels, and arts teachers oversaw the program. This team was presided over by an Arts Integration coordinator who acted as the direct liaison between SCEA and the school. Teachers worked to meet quarterly expectations for lesson design, collaborating with a SCEA mentor and the other members of their art-form cohort. SCEA mentors spent time in face-to-face mentoring providing model instruction, feedback on the implementation of lessons, and small group classes on pertinent topics for the group. Between visits, SCEA mentors staff met with Atlantis faculty to design and/or revise integrated instruction to accomplish the next set of expectations (SCEA, 2011).

### **Context: Brickton Middle School**

Brickton Middle School is a public school in a small southeastern city (not located in the same state as Atlantis Arts Academy). During the time of SCEA's work with the school, there

were approximately 475 students. According to state department of education reports, 73% of these students were identified as economically disadvantaged (*School Report Cards*, 2015). The faculty at the time of the program consisted of 25 teachers including arts teachers in visual art, dance, vocal and instrumental music, and drama. The school housed a well-supported arts facility funded by a local organization that grew from a local philanthropist's interest in seeing the benefits of arts education for his home community. The planning process for the arts integration program began in 2009 with the administration of the school and representatives of the local arts organization. The work at Brickton began in earnest in 2010 and continued through 2012. SCEA held summer intensives with participating members of the faculty and followed up with mentoring during the year, following a quarterly pattern similar to the model at Atlantis. Participating teachers observed model lessons taught by SCEA personnel and collaborated with SCEA mentors and their colleagues to design and implement integrated lessons with their students. SCEA provided feedback and assistance in the design process and instruction in topics based on the identified needs of participants during the year.

### **Data Collection**

Data were drawn from two sources: artifact analyses and semi-structured interviews. First, early analysis of artifacts generated an initial picture of each professional development program as an activity system overlapping and interacting with others in the constellation of such systems in the school context. This initial identification of activity systems followed a process such as the one described by Yamagata-Lynch (2010). The resulting picture of the activity systems was used to develop and revise questions for the second phase, interviews with a sample of participants

from each school. Interviews and further mining of the artifacts provided a richer understanding of each system, including the contradictions within and between systems in each school context.

### **Artifact Analysis**

In activity theory, the relationship between subject, object, and context is dialogic (Keller & Keller, 1996). The unit of analysis in this case study is the activity system (Engeström, 1996). In order to develop a richer understanding of the activity systems at Atlantis and Brickton, it was necessary first to develop a rough sketch of each system. Yamagata-Lynch (2010) places the identification of activity systems early in the process of activity systems analysis. Artifact analysis provides a way to build an understanding of a cultural context (Creswell, 2007; Eisner, 1998). The use of artifact analyses is consistent with the Vygotskian notion of mediation that lies at the heart of an activity-systems approach. As Daniels (2008) noted, “a theory of mediation through artefacts[sic] infers that in the course of human activity meaning is sedimented, accumulated, or deposited in things” (p.63). Participating teachers, SCEA personnel, and administrators at both schools in the study have generated an abundance of verbal and nonverbal artifacts in the five years since the work began at Atlantis Arts Academy in 2008. Artifacts include teacher reflections, observation notes by SCEA mentors, minutes of Arts Leadership Team meetings, email communication between SCEA mentors and participants as part of the lesson design process, surveys, program evaluators’ reports, focus groups, videos of participating teachers’ instruction, portfolio documents, artwork, and integrated lesson plans.

After approval for the study was granted by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee Chattanooga (Appendix B), written permission was obtained from the current administrators of each school and SCEA’s Executive Director to use existing documents

for this portion of the study (Appendix C). Documents in SCEA's files covering the extent of the work at each school were gathered and organized. Publicly-available information on each school was also gathered from school and state sources online. In the first pass through the data, the available artifacts were examined to identify issues, questions, and concerns that recur throughout the materials and align these concerns with the elements of the activity theory matrix: Subject, Object, Community, Rules, Division of Labor, and Mediating Artifacts. This review of the data informed the development and revision of an interview guide (Flick, 2009) for in-depth interviews with participating teachers. The artifacts were also reviewed during and after the analysis of interview data to build a stronger understanding of the contradictions that appear in teachers' responses.

## **Interviews**

In this study, the aim was to view the complexity of these professional development programs through the experiences of participants. Eisner (1998) identified interviews as "The interview is a powerful resource for learning how people perceive the situations in which they work" (Eisner, 1998, p. 81). Interview guides were developed for a succession of in-depth interviews based on the three-interview structure described by Seidman (2006): The first interview establishes the context of the participant's experience, the second concentrates on "details of the participants' present lived experience" (p.18), and the third encourages reflection on the meaning of the experience. In Appendix D a copy of the guide that was used in the interviews has been included. Questions varied somewhat with each participant as follow-up questions arose from the informant's responses in keeping with the nature of in-depth interviews,



which may be adapted based on the direction of an informant's responses as they occur (Seidman, 2006).

Written requests for participation were sent to participants from both schools (Appendix E). These requests disclosed the intended use of the information and asked for voluntary participation. Seventeen teachers from Atlantis Academy agreed to participate in interviews (approximately 28% of participants). These included arts teachers, non-arts teachers, and all three individuals who had acted as program coordinators. Participants from Atlantis also represented those who participated in each of the four art-form cohorts in the program. Only four teachers from Brickton agreed to be interviewed (about 16% of participants). While more may have been preferred, the number is less important for the case study than the richness of the information provided. Creswell (2007) warns against too many sources of data diluting the investigation. As with the informants from Atlantis, these four represented arts teachers, non-arts teachers, and multiple art-form cohorts. The lower level of willing participation from Brickton contributes to the narrative about that program and will be discussed further in my findings. Once permissions were obtained, arrangements were made with each participant for the most expedient form of interview. All were conducted by phone or videoconference. Each interviewee was asked to confirm permission for audio recording at the time of the interview. Recordings were transcribed, and after transcription each audio recording was destroyed.

After the completion of each interview, transcripts were submitted to the informants to ask for any revisions additions or omissions to their responses. In the few cases where requests were made, changes to the transcripts were made before analysis of the interview data began.

## **Data Analysis**

The analysis of the data in this study occurred in three stages: First, artifact data and interview transcripts were categorized according to the activity system elements, which led to a description of each activity system; second, a deeper analysis of artifacts and interviews identified the contradictions in each activity system; third, a cross-case analysis identified issues or themes that emerged across contexts.

In the initial artifact analysis, the collected artifacts were examined using a constant comparative method following a structure for activity-systems analysis similar to the one described by Yamagata-Lynch (2010). A colleague and I independently reviewed artifacts from each school context and coded them using activity system elements (subject, object, mediating artifacts, rules, community, and division of labor) as etic issues (Stake, 1995). Her review was compared with mine to find areas of agreement. The categorized data, organized by year, were used to build an initial description of each activity system.

Transcripts of interviews were then categorized according to the activity system elements as had been done with the artifact data. In this review, a colleague also provided an independent review and the two initial categorizations were examined for agreement. This examination resulted in a revision to activity system descriptions. Printed copies of coded artifacts, interview transcripts, and reviewers' notes were kept in binders and stored in locked cabinets at the SCEA offices on the campus of the University of Tennessee Chattanooga.

The categorized artifact data and interview transcripts were imported into QDA Miner (Provalis, 2004) for further analysis. In several more reviews of the data, codes were identified within and across activity system categories. Coded texts were printed for review by myself and the same colleague who had provided a second review of the data in the categorization process.

Codes were refined further and texts were identified that had been coded in multiple categories. Finally, emergent issues and relationships among elements of each system were identified that pointed to contradictions. It was then possible to craft within-case analyses of the programs at Atlantis and at Brickton including Activity System structures and discussions of contradictions. Coded notes from this portion of the analysis were printed and stored with the other artifacts, notes, and transcripts at the SCEA offices.

Each within-case analysis described contradictions that impacted change in the activity system. For the cross-case analysis, further reviews of the data were performed to examine the issues described by interviewees and found in the artifact analysis. Patterns were sought between the tensions at both sites and issues were experienced by participants were identified that impacted both professional development programs. This analysis was also reviewed by a colleague for corroboration of findings and revision.

### **Summary**

This chapter detailed the methods used to build descriptions of two professional development programs in arts integration as activity systems, identify the contradictions in each system, and find emergent issues across both contexts. The study was designed as a qualitative multiple-site embedded case study (Yin, 2009). The contexts for each case were described in program narratives about the work at Atlantis Arts Academy, a K-8 charter school, and Brickton Middle School, a 6-8 school with support for an arts focus from a local foundation. The data collection process was detailed including the methods employed for obtaining artifact and interview data. Then three stages were described for the analysis of artifact and interview data: artifact data and interview transcripts were categorized according to the activity system elements,

yielding descriptions of each activity system; a deeper analysis of artifacts and interviews which identified the contradictions in each activity system; and a cross-case analysis which identified issues or themes that emerged across contexts.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

In this chapter, a summary is provided of the analysis of the data found in artifacts and participant interviews from the programs at each school. It begins with a summary narrative of each program constructed by the researcher from reviews of artifacts and interview data. This is followed by a description of each program as an activity system. Then the contradictions evident in each system are described. After these within-case analyses, the activity systems from each program are compared and issues that appear across contexts are discussed.

#### **Program Narrative: Professional Development in Arts Integration at Atlantis Arts Academy**

##### **2007-08 – Initial Contact and Planning**

In 2007, administrators from Atlantis Academy contacted the executive director of the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts (SCEA) providing a workshop that would introduce their faculty to SCEA's approach to arts integration. In a follow-up conference call with Atlantis administrators, SCEA's Director of Dance Education and I, in my capacity as SCEA's Director of Visual Art Education, agreed to develop a two-day experience that would provide an overview of SCEA's approach and showcase model lessons integrating dance and visual art with non-arts content. We implemented this experience in July 2007 with the entire Atlantis staff, including

teachers, teaching assistants, and administrators. At that time, the school administration consisted of the charter school's executive director, an assistant principal, a curriculum coordinator, and a reading intervention teacher. The experiences were well received. During a closing talk with the staff, Atlantis' Director announced that SCEA would be working with Atlantis on a long-term basis for the next few years.

During the next school year, the SCEA staff, consisting of the Executive Director and directors representing each of four art forms: Dance, Music, Theatre, and Visual Art, planned a more clearly defined long-term professional development model in arts integration for this school. During this process, SCEA worked directly with Atlantis' Curriculum Coordinator to arrive at a proposal that addressed the needs of their educators. The model described in the resulting proposal is outlined in the instructional framework found in Appendix A. Its goals were that participating teachers should:

1. Gain understanding of and build instructional practices in arts integration.
2. Expand awareness, skills, and knowledge in the arts.
3. Establish a sustainable system for continued professional development in arts integration.

These goals would be addressed through annual summer intensives, quarterly on-site mentoring by SCEA personnel, and ongoing communication between SCEA mentors and cohorts of participating teachers who chose to focus their efforts on learning about and integrating with each art form (dance, drama, music, and visual art). The summer intensives were workshops for the entire faculty, which consisted of model instruction and sessions facilitating teachers' implementation of new methods. Each art form director from SCEA (in dance, drama, music, and visual art) would visit the school site quarterly to model instruction and provide face-to-face

feedback for the work of teachers in each art form cohort. Through ongoing electronic communications, SCEA mentors would guide the development, revision, and implementation of integrated lessons. To provide local oversight of the program, Atlantis Academy would form an Arts Leadership Team (ALT) that would be comprised of representative teachers and administrators. This body would monitor progress and make decisions about revisions to the program moving forward. A Program Coordinator (initially Ms. X, the school's curriculum coordinator) would act as a liaison between the ALT, SCEA, and participating faculty.

### **Pilot Year 2008-09**

Once the proposed program was approved by the school administration and a contract was approved by the University of Tennessee Chattanooga, SCEA planned and implemented the initial experience for the program: a five day summer intensive for the entire Atlantis faculty. This first experience took all teachers through model-integrated instruction in each of the four art forms and instructional experiences in integrated lesson design. The summer intensive served to introduce teachers to arts integration and make everyone aware of SCEA's presence and the program's intentions. It also served to allow a select group of teachers to begin considering which art form they would like to explore for the next few years.

At the end of the week, Atlantis administration identified a select group of teachers known to have a strong work ethic and an interest in arts-based instruction. These individuals were invited to choose an art form that they would explore as part of the first cohort of participants in the arts integration program. Each teacher was asked to identify a first, second, third, and fourth preference among art forms. Then, the school leadership, led by the curriculum coordinator, and with feedback from SCEA staff, assigned teachers to art-form cohorts. Each

teacher was given their first or second choices as often as possible while providing a relatively even distribution among the four art forms. At the close of the summer intensive, SCEA's art-form directors met with the newly identified cohorts and discussed expectations for their work in arts integration during the 2008-2009 school year.

After the summer intensive, SCEA met with the ALT to discuss plans for the coming year. Ms. X facilitated the scheduling of four quarterly visits from each art-form director. At each visit, the SCEA directors served as mentors, providing instruction to her or his cohort, observing lesson implementation, deconstructing observed experiences with each teacher, and meeting with the art-form cohort to discuss needs that should be addressed either electronically or in upcoming face-to-face work. Additionally, SCEA mentors met during each visit with the program coordinator. They also met with the ALT to keep informed of decisions, questions, or concerns that came up in their monthly meetings between visits.

In this first year, participating teachers were tasked with fulfilling quarterly expectations. In the first quarter, each participant was to observe a model lesson taught by the SCEA director assigned to his or her cohort as a mentor. The teacher was then expected to write a reflection on the experience and identify – with the SCEA mentor's feedback – strategies within the lesson that could be replicated in his or her own classroom context. The SCEA mentor assisted in preparing for that replication and teachers wrote reflections on their experiences.

In the second quarter, each participating teacher worked with a SCEA mentor to design an integrated lesson following the lesson template that had been used in the summer lessons and in the models seen in the first quarter visit (Appendix F). SCEA mentors communicated with participants by phone and email providing ideas, suggestions, and revisions. Then, during the second quarter site visit, each teacher co-taught the lesson with his or her SCEA mentor in the



teacher's classroom. Teachers completed reflection documents before and after the implementation of the lesson.

In the third quarter, teachers were called on to collaborate with one of their colleagues within their art-form cohort to develop a new integrated lesson that would be implemented, at least in part, during the SCEA mentor's third quarter site visit. Once partnerships were established, each pair communicated about the progress of the lesson planning with their mentor who then assisted in the revision of the lesson. Each teacher completed a pre-teaching prompt before implementation. During the site visit, SCEA mentors observed each lesson. After implementation, the participating teacher and SCEA mentor met for what the program called a lesson deconstruction: an informal conversation in which the teacher and mentor reflected on the lesson and its implementation.

In the fourth quarter, each participating teacher was expected to develop a lesson independently and implement it during the final site visit for the school year. Teachers communicated with their SCEA mentors, exchanging revisions of the lesson and feedback via phone and email. In the fourth quarter site visit, SCEA mentors observed each lesson and provided feedback in deconstruction sessions. Teachers completed pre- and post-teaching prompts regarding their fourth-quarter integrated lesson.

Throughout the year, SCEA mentors exchanged information with art-form cohorts via phone and email as part of lesson revisions. Early on there was a desire for distance communication to become more collaborative. After some conversation with the ALT and among SCEA staff, it was determined that we would use Google Groups to provide a free means of group communication so that issues that arose in reflections and deconstructions among multiple teachers could be addressed more efficiently. This tool would also provide a more

effective means of sharing resources and information about education in each art form and integrated instruction. In the winter of 2008, each SCEA director established a group for each art-form cohort. We invited members of art-form cohorts to join and also provided Ms. X access to all groups in her role as program coordinator. At that time, Google Groups included discussion threads, file sharing, and simple web pages. Participants who made use of this tool found the groups very effective. The Google Groups tools allowed teachers to respond to one another about revisions and suggestions for lessons in addition to direct feedback from the SCEA mentor. However, some teachers had difficulty with the technology and never made effective use of the groups. Some simply resisted the use of technology and others had difficulty signing up for an account with Google. Members of each art form cohort worked with their SCEA mentor to find the best means of communication for that group. Some made more use of their Google Group, some used it less and relied more on email, phone calls, or in a few cases, videoconferences.

At the close of the year, SCEA staff referenced compiled pre and post teaching reflection documents, lesson plans, observation notes, and other artifacts to submit end of year reports to Atlantis administration about the progress of participants in the program. These reports summarized the year's activities including the summer workshop and dates for each SCEA mentor's site visits. They also discussed successes and challenges faced by each art form cohort and made recommendations for further development of the program.

### **Year One: 2009-10**

In the 2009-10 school year, the arts integration program grew in number of participants and in the quality of work produced by teachers. There were some changes to the organizational structure of the school, which were beneficial to the program, and some changes to the process of

documenting teachers' work that proved difficult for participants to adjust to. Ms. X, who had been the curriculum coordinator and the program coordinator for the arts integration program, was promoted to the position of principal, giving her more administrative authority, while the charter school's executive director focused her efforts on community relations and development for the school. Given Ms. X's new administrative responsibilities, she gave the role of Arts-Integration Coordinator to one of the school's dance teachers, who will hereafter be referred to as Ms. Y. Ms. Y's job was made a half-time instructional position to focus half of her effort on working with the ALT, the teachers, and SCEA to implement and promote the arts integration program.

The original intent of the proposed program had been that about a third of the staff would participate in the pilot group. Then, each successive year, another third would join the work. The school had applied for USDOE funding for the program during the 2008-09 year. In 2009, their application for the Professional Development in Arts Education (PDAE) grant was turned down. The board of the school was concerned about being able to continue funding for two more years and made the decision to go ahead and add the remaining faculty to each cohort right away. Each art-form cohort grew from the small number of teachers who had engaged in the work during the first year—designated as Cohort 1 or C1—to include an additional larger group just entering the work for the first time—Cohort 2 or C2.

In the summer of 2009, SCEA directors engaged Atlantis faculty in a five day summer intensive during which participants experienced a variety of sessions targeting the strands of the program. Arts Immersion sessions built on knowledge and skill in an art form. Curriculum Design sessions targeted elements of the design template. These sessions were segregated by year of experience: C2 teachers, those just entering the work, experienced more introductory

presentations of the lesson design process with the goal of identifying potential connections to the non-arts curriculum that could be explored in their first year of work during the school year. Experienced C1 teachers dealt with issues of reflection and broader curriculum design, looking to place integrated instruction more purposefully in the year. Monday through Wednesday afternoon, SCEA directors facilitated the presentation of model-integrated lessons created by C1 teachers in the pilot year of the program to exhibit the progress of participants and to discuss issues related to classroom practice. On Thursday, the entire faculty was taken on a series of expeditionary learning experiences in a nearby city. Participants observed rehearsals and classes at the American Dance Festival and, in the afternoon, toured the collection at an art museum. At the close of the week, art-form cohorts gathered to reflect on their experiences and make plans for the coming year.

For the first half of the year, C2 teachers followed the same pattern of time-based expectations that C1 teachers had experienced the previous year. The work progressed well, with some manageable challenges in communication, scheduling, and varying levels of skill and confidence with each art form. C2 teachers replicated strategies from the experiences in the summer, then co-designed and taught integrated lessons with their art-form mentor. SCEA directors provided resources and feedback through email, phone conversations, and the Google Group pages. C1 teachers revised work from the previous year, designed and implemented new instruction, and led deconstruction conversations with C2 teachers after observing their lessons alongside the SCEA mentors. C1 teachers were also tasked with taking the lead on art-form cohort meetings.

Schedules for SCEA site visits were arranged through Ms. Y, the new Arts Integration Coordinator. At each visit, we implemented planned instruction, held reflection meetings led by

C1 teachers, and implemented immersion sessions targeting the development of arts skills among each cohort. Additional immersion sessions were devised and implemented by Atlantis' arts teachers between SCEA visits.

Teachers progressed at varying rates. Some struggled to complete expected work by the quarterly deadlines set for the program while others who had more fully engaged with the work were ready to move on to new work ahead of schedule. In response to teacher needs, the ALT and SCEA convened a meeting in January of 2010 to revise the way expectations were communicated and documented. The meeting brought together non-arts teachers and arts teachers across grade levels, representatives from the administration, all four SCEA art-form directors, and representatives from the team of evaluators contracted from the University of North Carolina. This gathering of teachers and administrators developed a proposal to shift toward a portfolio model of documenting progress that would allow more flexibility for teachers who were ready to move ahead to new experiences or to remain with a task longer until the mentor and the teacher felt the participant was ready to move on. SCEA collected the recommendations of this group and crafted a set of leveled competencies that teachers could navigate with the assistance of their art-form mentor to provide documentation of their skills as Instructional Designers, Practitioners, Artists, and Collaborators (Appendix G). We also created a series of prompts that could be used as means of documentation. Ms. Y introduced this new approach to arts-integration competencies to the staff in the spring of 2010. While the new methods for documentation addressed a need that teachers had identified, the additional tools and the push for more self-direction on the part of the participants became a source of frustration for many. The emphasis of the work for the remainder of the year was on guiding teachers through the new process of choosing competencies to address and methods of documentation. In the

plans for the 2010 summer intensive, we dedicated time to working through each cohort's portfolios together.

## **Year Two: 2010-11**

In the summer of 2010, significant changes to the school's organizational structure and the addition of new initiatives to the expectations placed on teachers had significant impact on the work going forward. The Executive Director moved back into a more direct administrative role. A new principal was hired for the elementary program, and Mrs. X, the principal who had been our first program coordinator, was given responsibility over the middle grades. As the middle school principal, she remained committed to the efforts in arts integration and collaborated with the AI coordinator, SCEA, and the ALT to facilitate her teachers' part in site visits and immersions sessions. However, the new elementary principal had little background or interest in arts education or integration.

The week prior to SCEA's summer intensive, Atlantis administration mandated a week of training with consultants from Calgary Academy and a classroom-management initiative called Nurtured Heart. Nurtured Heart provided training in less confrontational means of dealing with disciplinary matters. The Calgary consultants came with experience working with underprivileged and learning-disabled populations and promised to bring up the school's reading and math scores on state tests. Atlantis' scores on state tests (see Appendix H), while showing steady and significant improvement for the past few years, were still below state averages. The Calgary consultants introduced scripted lesson strategies for reading and math instruction and rigid new lesson templates that did not align with the model used for arts integrated instruction.

Teachers expressed heightened frustration with the increased expectations and what they described as mixed messages. The school administration gave priority to the Calgary program in schedules and—at least at first—enforced their approach to lesson planning. The work produced by teachers in the arts integration program slowed for most participants and came to a halt for others. Teachers identified the increased workload and the new administrative priority on the Calgary model as the primary reasons for their drop in effort (O'Sullivan & Randolph, 2011).

In the midst of these added pressures, participating teachers continued to struggle with the new documentation process that had been introduced in the spring of 2010. In response to the increased stress among the faculty in general and to specific concerns and misunderstandings over the portfolio documentation and the prompts SCEA had provided, the ALT revised the wording and organization of expectations. They decided to add what they called an “orientation” level. New teachers were to be given a year of observing peers’ work in arts integration before they were required to produce integrated work of their own. The new description of competencies also eliminated collaboration as a separate strand. Those expectations were scattered among the other goals based on the notion that collaboration was a necessary part of all the others. New teachers, who would be designated as Cohort 3 or C3, were told that they were only expected to follow the orientation set of expectations as a way of mitigating the increased level of stress from organizational changes and the additional initiatives.

By the spring of 2011, work in arts integration was still moving slowly, at best, and face to face visits by SCEA directors often shifted from implementation to planning and direction for teachers struggling to navigate conflicting lesson templates, new classroom management policies, and changes in administration. Teacher turnover, which was always an issue at Atlantis, increased. By the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, approximately 40% of the faculty had

been replaced. Many of the teachers who left were among those more experienced with arts integration. Losses also included the elementary school principal (hired the previous summer), both music teachers, and the visual art teacher.

### **Year Three: 2011-12**

In 2011-12, the final year of SCEA's work at Atlantis, the faculty and staff adapted to the changes and revised programs to make the work in arts integration and toward other school goals more manageable. No new programs were added, but the impact of the added initiatives from the previous year were evident. The loss of experienced teachers in the turnover of the previous year impacted the sustainability of the program. Teachers still described some anxiety over knowing which goals took priority and how the expectations each program espoused fit together. SCEA's work with the faculty focused more heavily on training the school-based mentors who would take over the mentoring duties of the program after the conclusion of our work there. This became problematic with the loss of many teachers we had planned on cultivating as mentors in the high attrition of the previous year. C1 & C2 teachers continued to revise work. Some C3 teachers began to design and implement integrated instruction with their classes. New personnel were designated Cohort 4 or C4 and began their participation at the orientation level, observing the work of their colleagues, participating in reflections, cohort meetings, and immersion sessions.

During the summer, adjustments were made to the school organizational structure again, but the changes were not as comprehensive as those of the previous year. The new structure maintained administrators over the elementary and middle school programs, now called Deans,



and added a Dean of Fine Arts, who would be responsible for overseeing the work of the K-8 arts teachers. The ALT was reconstituted due to the impact of teacher attrition on that group.

The summer intensive was adapted to spread training through the year, allowing teachers to spend just a few days each with the Calgary consultants and SCEA personnel. Two days were dedicated to arts integration for the whole staff in the summer of 2011. Three other days were assigned during the school year on scheduled professional development days. On these dates, SCEA staff worked primarily with teachers identified as school-based arts integration mentors.

In August, a group of teachers was identified as potential mentors based on their willingness to act in that role and their proficiency with arts integration. The school struggled to find the best people for the job. The attrition of 2010-11 left the school without most of the experienced teachers from C1. The AI coordinator worked with SCEA and the newly formed ALT to identify a group who could take on added training in this year to prepare for that role. Twenty-three potential mentors were identified by the ALT. Of those identified, some were unwilling to take on the added responsibility due to changes in their own teaching assignments, and others who offered to participate did not have the necessary experience to act in that capacity. After getting feedback from SCEA, school administration, and the Arts Integration Coordinator about each potential mentor, the ALT finally selected three to five mentors for each art form. The ALT and SCEA worked together to clarify the needs of and expectations for this group during the year.

While the entire faculty participated in designing and implementing arts integrated lessons or observing and reflecting on the work of their colleagues, the new mentors shadowed SCEA during sessions, facilitated reflection meetings with staff after lessons, and helped provide feedback to the work of their colleagues in emails and face to face conversations. Professional

development days during this year were divided. Training sessions for the large number of new staff echoed material that had been presented before. Sessions for mentors clarified their purposes and facilitated their efforts with their colleagues.

In the spring, efforts with mentors focused on developing content for the summer of 2012. In that final summer intensive, the school mentors rather than SCEA lead the work with the whole faculty. SCEA spent a week with the new mentors in June preparing them. Then SCEA stayed on for a day as observers during the week led by Atlantis' new mentors to provide support and complete the handoff of the arts integration program.

In the years since the close of SCEA's work at Atlantis, the school has maintained an organizational structure much like what it implemented in 2011. The arts integration program has continued at Atlantis Academy under the leadership of the Dean of Fine Arts, who now acts as the Arts Integration Coordinator. The arts teachers at the school, under the direction of the Dean and the school mentors, handle arts immersion sessions. The school's arts integration mentors work with new and continuing staff to provide resources and facilitate planning.

### **Activity Systems Analysis: Atlantis Arts Academy**

#### **Description of the Activity System**

The program narrative in the previous section and the activity systems described below emerged from the analysis of artifact data and interview responses. That process is summarized in Figure 8. After the initial artifact review, which informed the revision of the interview guide, all artifacts and participant interviews were categorized based on the elements of the activity system. The elements of an activity system include a subject and object, mediating artifacts

(tools), rules, community, and division of labor. Subjects are the participants in an activity. The object is the intended goal of the activity. Mediating Artifacts (or tools) are “socially shared cognitive and/or material resources that subjects can use to attain the object” (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009, p. 509). Rules are the informal and formal requirements that constrain the subject’s participation. The community consists of others who make up the social context of the activity. Division of labor consists of the separation of complex tasks among members of the community. The outcome of the system is the consequences, intended or otherwise, that occur as a result of the subject’s activity (Engeström, 1996). Bits of meaning from the data were identified with at least one and sometimes two or more of these categories. For instance, the following statement was categorized both under subject and mediating artifacts: “It’s so overwhelming getting this stuff together.” The statement was an indication of the emotional state of the participating teacher (the subject), but was spoken in relation to the documentation process, one of the mediating artifacts in the program.

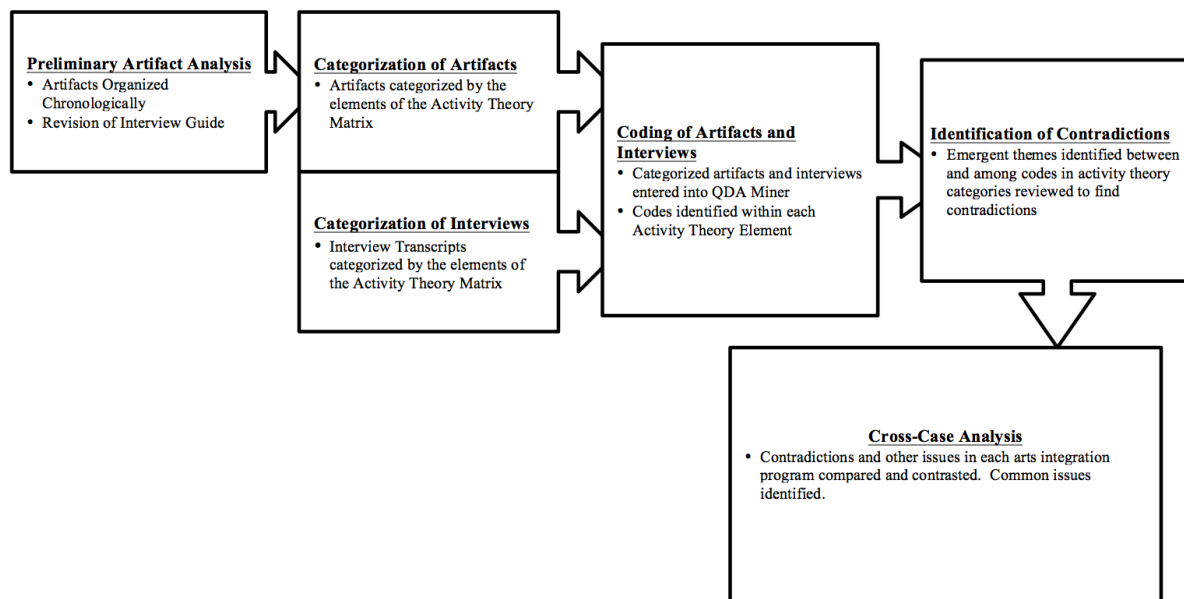


Figure 8 Data Analysis Process

Categorized artifact and interview data were examined further to find patterns (Miles & Huberman, 1994). First, codes were developed and revised within categories. The categorized data were imported into QDA Miner for further analysis. The tools provided by the software allowed the researcher to collapse, combine, and reorganize the codes easily and print reports that grouped coded data in multiple ways. Coded chunks of text from program artifacts and participant interviews were reviewed for repetition, relevance, and triangulation. Texts were grouped that repeated the same or similar ideas. Note was made of meanings that appeared frequently, but counting the coded texts was not the only or even the most important consideration. Some repeated statements had no bearing on the program under study and were set aside (after repeated reviews) as of little relevance to this inquiry. Note was made of repeated or similar statements that occurred across data sources, particularly where similar meanings emerged from disparate sources, such as informants with different roles (arts or non-arts teachers, school administrators, SCEA staff) or informants with varying levels of support for the arts integration program.

A colleague reviewed the groupings and corroborated some and suggested revisions for others. The patterns that resulted from this process of comparing, grouping and regrouping the data pointed to issues of importance to the subjects of the professional development program in arts integration: the participating teachers. These included complaints, concerns, positive experiences and negative ones that were clearly related to the arts integration program. For example, under the category of mediating artifacts, the coding process identified texts from artifacts and interview responses that revealed issues including documentation of teacher progress, e-mentoring, expeditionary learning experiences, and face to face mentoring, Google

Groups, immersion sessions, model integrated lessons, instructional materials, scope and sequence documents, and summer intensives. The full list of codes that resulted from this pattern-finding process is listed in Appendix I.

The coding of artifacts and interviews allowed the researcher to craft a description of the arts integration program as an activity system. The codes are listed in detail in Appendix I, but figure 9 maps these on the activity system matrix. In addition to the initial categories applied from the activity system matrix, codes describing the school context within which the arts integration program operated, including the school's cultural diversity and general mission, are shown on this map as a larger activity system within which this one is nested. The activities of the arts integration program provided one resource for the school to achieve its ends of increased student achievement.

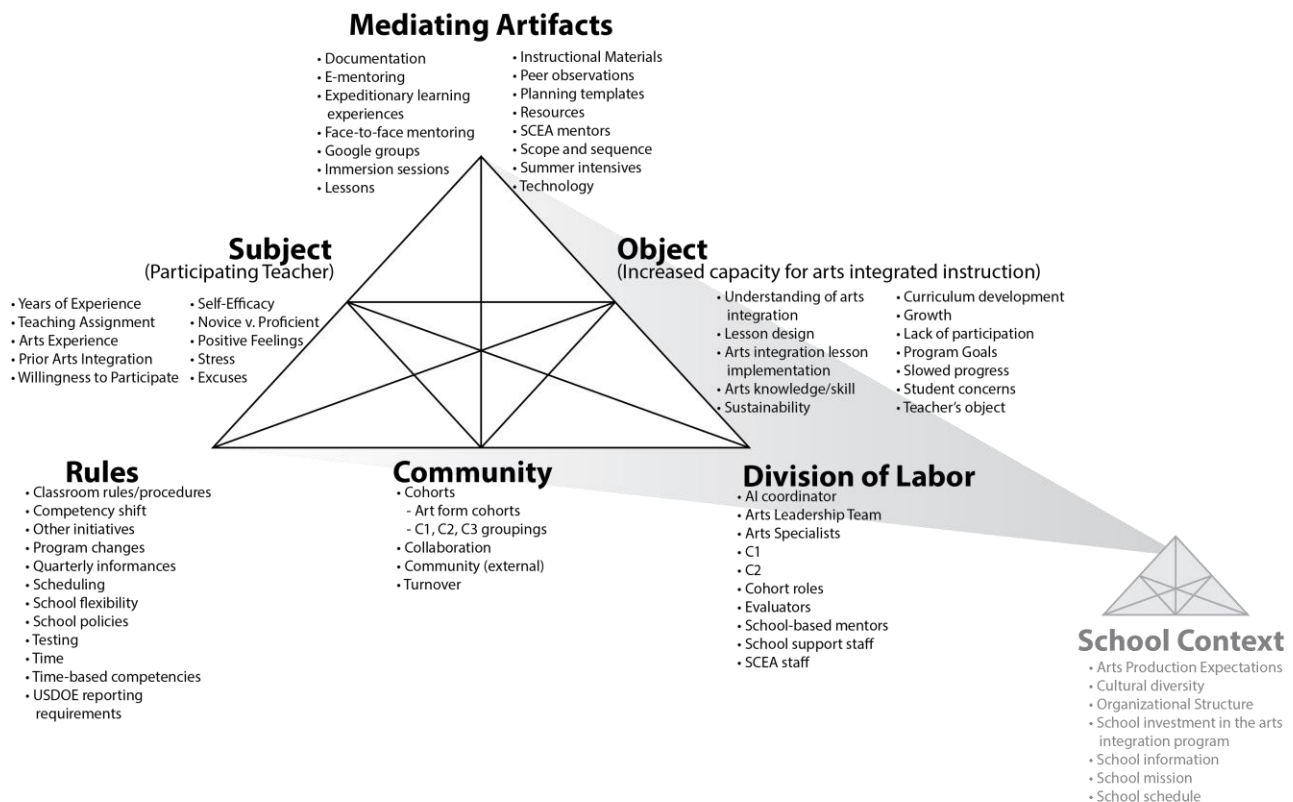


Figure 9 Activity System Map of the arts integration program at Atlantis Arts Academy

## **Subject**

The subject in this activity system is the participating teacher. In addition to teachers' years of experience and their teaching assignments, the codes that emerged from the analysis of data within the subject category (Appendix I) included teachers' level of experience with a given art form, their prior experience with arts integration, their willingness to participate in the program, the level of self-efficacy they felt about the work, the extent to which participants were self-directed (coded as novice vs. proficient), expressions of positive feelings about the work, statements about emotional stress or confusion, and excuses offered by teachers for delayed or absent efforts. Three issues emerged in further readings of the data as more impactful to the efforts in the arts integration program based on the appearance of the issue in multiple sources of information and the intensity and relevance of the coded texts: teachers' levels of knowledge and skill in the art form, the strength of their willingness to participate in the arts integration program, and their sense of self-efficacy in the work.

From the beginning, artifact analysis indicated that many participants – at least those in non-arts teaching roles – had or felt a lack of knowledge or experience with the art form. Some expressed anxiety over this.

I think I'm not doing justice to my students as I myself am not well-versed in this area (non-arts teacher, personal communication, March 18, 2009)

I am so far from being an expert in this area, but it makes it difficult to teach.

What if I teach something wrong? (non-arts teacher, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

This sense of personal ignorance or lack of confidence continued to be an issue for each group of teachers throughout the program. Every year, a need for continued immersion sessions building skill and understanding in the art form was noted in reports. Teachers continued to request more of these sessions and expressed appreciation for them.

As they progressed, some participants who continued to actively engage in the work described growth in their understanding of the art form and their comfort level in its classroom applications. More experienced teachers began to make more reflective, specific requests for assistance such as finding the right pieces of music to address a particular skill or the best way to enter into a given process with students.

Interviews confirmed that many of the teachers entered the work with little or no background in the arts. In some cases, they had background in one art form, but had chosen to be part of another one.

Not much, not really. Not much at all. Other than going in and watching a few shows now and then. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

I don't play any instruments or anything like that. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

Most teacher comments indicated a willingness to participate. In the documents, teacher comments in reflection prompts and emails and SCEA reports support a relatively strong support for the work. There were always some, however, who showed less enthusiasm, and others who were opposed to what they saw as an imposition on their working context. These latter two groups grew in number during the stresses of 2010-11, particularly in the face of school changes and additional initiatives.

Why did some teachers not get it? I think they were overwhelmed with the other initiatives. (administrator, personal communication, December 18, 2015)

You had a group of educators who were really experienced, who were really into the arts integration program. Then you had the other half who were "I'll just do what I need to do." (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 18, 2015)

It was hard. I was totally against it. It felt like an extra task to do as a teacher. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 29, 2015)

In terms of self-efficacy, as participants' grew in knowledge of the art form and experience at implementing lessons, they expressed a greater sense of confidence and independence about their work in arts integration. In retrospect, interviewees recognized the value of the struggles that they experienced to get to their current level of understanding.

I was able to be more confident about what arts integration is in my class. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 16, 2014)

As the years passed by, I personally feel better. I don't know everything, but from the way you taught, I have something to pass on to the teachers with me. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 19, 2015)

I feel like I use arts integration in a much more fluent sort of way. It just comes a lot more naturally now. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 7, 2015)

### **Object**

The object of this system can be summarized as an increased capacity for designing and implementing arts integrated instruction in the teacher's classroom. This object contains four goals:

1. Developing skill as a designer of arts integrated lessons
2. Expanding skills as a classroom practitioner
3. Building skill and knowledge in one art form
4. Growing as a collaborator among similarly engaged colleagues.

Some of the codes identified among the data grouped under this category (Appendix I) were related to these goals: understanding of arts integration, arts knowledge and skill, aspects of lesson design including assessment, Bloom's taxonomy as a guide for lesson procedures, concepts, and the lesson planning process, and sustainability. Other codes included statements



related to lesson implementation, curriculum development, growth, lack of participation, slowed progress, program goals, and the teacher's own view of their primary responsibilities.

The coded data indicated that participating teachers generally understood the four goals described above and saw the connection between the program's object and the larger outcome of impact on students' intellectual and emotional growth. Informants also indicated that the program's goals aligned with the original intended mission of the school as an arts-based charter.

Being an arts school, before SCEA came they were not really doing it up to standard. So the purpose of SCEA was to actually show them how you could bring the arts and the elements of the arts with the other learning areas and integrate them. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 18, 2015)

### **Mediating Artifacts**

The work of teachers was carried out through the use of several tools. Summer intensives provided new information and opportunities to work collaboratively. Immersion sessions provided by SCEA and school arts teachers built skill and knowledge in each art form. Lesson templates provided a structure for the design process and a means to document work in progress. Mentoring with SCEA personnel took place face-to-face, and also through email, phone calls, and Skype conversations. Additionally, each art-form cohort made at least some use of a Google Group to share resources. Teachers documented their work with a variety of written prompts and guides that SCEA mentors made available. Teachers also used simple video cameras to record instruction and student work, and occasionally received assistance from a school videographer to edit videos and upload them to the school website. At the request of the ALT, the school instituted quarterly informances – events at which participating teachers would, at least once each year, showcase the arts integrated lessons experienced by their students.

## **Rules**

The rules that constrained teachers' efforts in this program consisted of policies and expectations regarding time, school administration, and expectations for documenting progress toward program goals. Rules regarding time included daily schedules, the school calendar, dates for SCEA mentor visits, and testing dates. Rules regarding administration included school policies, the administrative structure of the school (which changed significantly on more than one occasion during the course of the program), and other initiatives that demanded teachers' attention. At the beginning of the program, teachers were expected to document their progress by fulfilling quarterly expectations and responding to written reflection prompts about the experiences. In the spring of 2010, those expectations shifted to a portfolio-based model that called for more participant self-direction.

## **Community**

The community for this program – the participants' social context – consisted of cohorts of colleagues studying the same art-form, teachers' grade level and content area teams, the SCEA mentor for each art-form, school administration, the Arts Integration Coordinator, arts teachers, and, of course, the students.

## **Division of Labor**

The efforts in the system were complex and divided among several groups and individuals. The Arts Leadership Team (ALT) provided direction for the program and oversaw revisions to the work. The Arts Integration Coordinator acted as a liaison among SCEA directors, teachers, and the ALT. She scheduled SCEA visits, arranged for substitute coverage, and kept

records for reporting to the United States Department of Education about this grant-funded program. SCEA mentors designed and led summer intensives, coached art-form cohort teachers through the lesson design process, taught model lessons with students, co-taught with teachers, and provided feedback on the implementation of integrated lessons. Efforts in the program were differentiated by the level of experience a teacher had in the program. C1, C2, C3, and C4 teachers had different expectations to accomplish. Finally, school-based mentors took over the mentoring duties from SCEA in the final year of the program.

### **Contradictions in the system**

The final part of the within-case analysis was to examine relationships among the patterns in the system to identify contradictions. Engeström (1987) describes four kinds of contradictions that can exist within a system: Primary contradictions are contradictions within one area of an activity system. Yamagata-Lynch and Haudenschild (2009) write that these occur when “participants encounter more than one value system attached to an element within an activity that brings about conflict” (p. 509). Secondary contradictions – contradictions between elements of a single system – occur when participants encounter a new aspect of an activity. The process of trying to assimilate the new aspect brings about conflict. Tertiary contradictions are created as a result of the implementation of a new way of operating such as a new tool or new method that is believed to be more effective. Quaternary contradictions occur when the subject’s activity comes into conflict with adjacent activity systems.

In the analysis process, coded texts were examined repeatedly to identify indicators of tensions within and between categories. Coded texts that pointed to contradictions within each category were marked. Coded data that appeared in multiple categories were also identified and examined to find indications of secondary or quaternary contradictions. Many tensions were evident in the activity system at Atlantis Academy, but not all were directly related to the arts integration program, and most did not present significant challenges to participants' progress. Three contradictions, however, were the cause of significant stress for participants and brought about changes in the program: organizational changes to the school and subsequent teacher attrition, the change in competency documentation in 2010, and conflict between multiple initiatives with incompatible approaches to instruction (Figure 10).

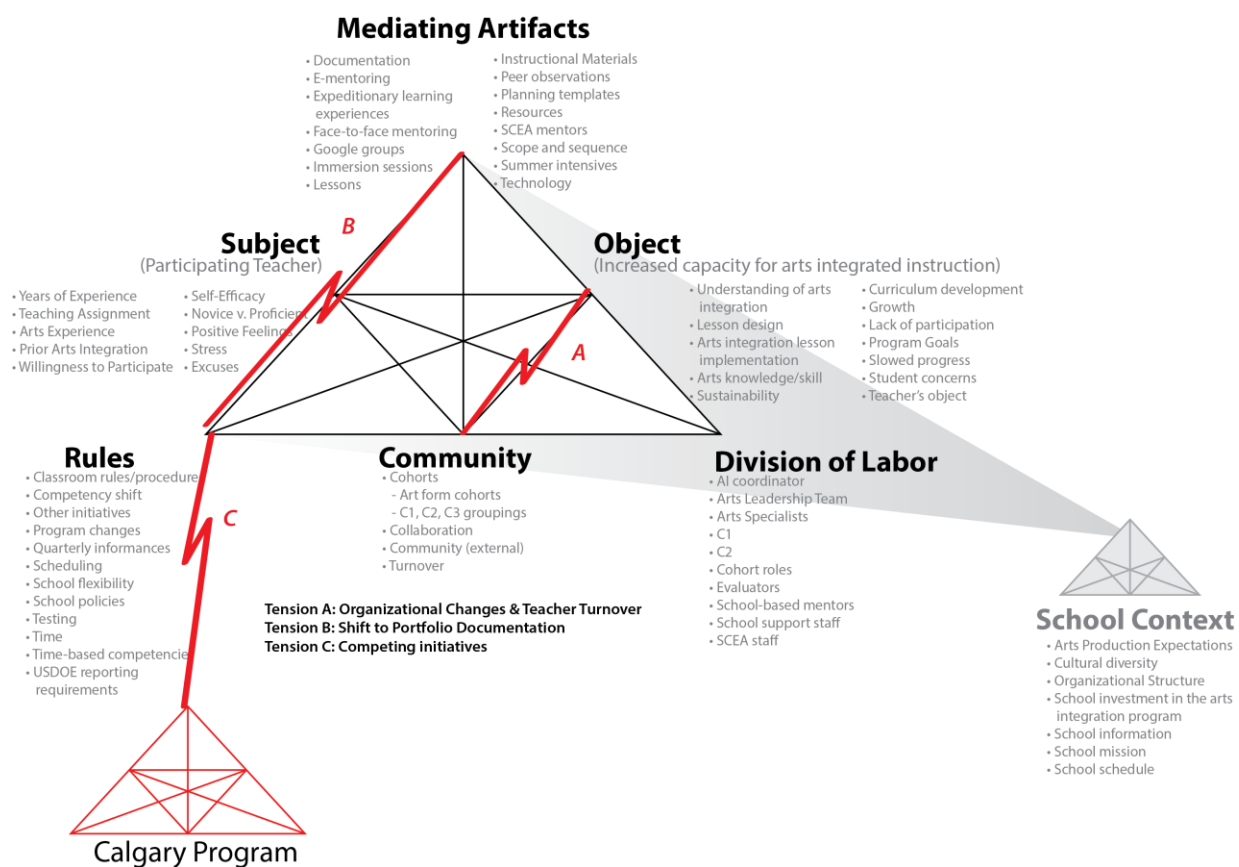


Figure 10 Contradictions in the system at Atlantis Arts Academy

## **A. Organizational Change and Staff Turnover**

Frequent changes to the administrative structure of the school were a secondary contradiction. The administrative structure of the school changed at least three times during the four-year period described in the program narrative. The Executive Director's role was at times more and less direct. She began in a direct administrative role. Then, she stepped back to allow others administrative control while she focused on development. Finally, she stepped back in to take a more direct hand in the operations of the school. The Curriculum Coordinator was made K-8 principal, then just 6-8 principal and a new K-5 principal was added. Then that K-5 principal left the school and the administrators were to be called deans, with additional deans over student services and the arts. Interviewees expressed frustration with the changes.

It was always difficult to know who to talk to. I would always follow protocol on what was on paper. I would go to my principal first before going to the executive director. Coming from the public schools, I thought it would be the same as going to your principal first before going to a superintendent. That's what I always tried to do, but it didn't always work that way.

(arts teacher, personal communication, January 19, 2015)

It changed so much!

(non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 18, 2014)

This lack of stability in the way the administration operated left teachers and SCEA personnel struggling to keep up. It was difficulty to know who to approach with questions and concerns and how best to do so.

Related to this secondary contradiction is another: teacher turnover. Teacher attrition at charter schools tends to be higher than at regular public schools (Ndoye, Imig, & Parker, 2010), and in the first two years of the arts integration program, the rates of teacher attrition did not have a notable impact on work in arts integration. However, in 2010-11 Atlantis lost several of its faculty. Some left of their own choice, others did not. By the fall of 2011, faculty turnover

reached more than 40%. New teachers had to be trained from the beginning, and many of those who left were the best trained of the group. During the final year of the program, training school-based mentors became more challenging than had been anticipated.

### **B. Change in documentation**

The shift to a portfolio-based rather than a time-based set of expectations in the spring of 2010 created a tertiary contradiction. The move was taken out of a fairly unified belief that it would be a more effective way to allow participants to work at their own paces. However, teachers found the cafeteria list of tasks to perform intimidating and expressed frustration with the suggested prompts as required worksheets.

It's so overwhelming getting this stuff together.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, April 26, 2010)

The moment I open the attachments, the prompts scare me.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, April 26, 2010)

Many teachers have asked me "Where do I start?" (SCEA, 2010)

For teachers affected in this way by the new documentation model, their work, according to the available documents, slowed and became less collaborative. Teachers became more insular as they struggled to work through the tasks required of them.

### **C. Multiple initiatives**

Finally, the single most powerful quaternary contradiction in the system was the conflict between the efforts toward arts integration and the requirements of two new initiatives in 2010-2012. In particular, the model implemented by consultants from Calgary Academy did not align well with SCEA's. Their goal was clearly to raise reading and math scores. According to one

teacher, claims were made that they would bring Atlantis' scores in reading and math tests up to 90% (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 19, 2015). They instituted a rigid, almost scripted lesson model that was enforced on all teachers at first, then just on elementary teachers. For participating teachers, who had been working with SCEA's lesson template for arts integrated lessons, this was confusing. The two lesson design templates did not align. Teachers perceived mixed messages from the different consultants. Despite attempts to communicate with Calgary consultants, SCEA personnel were never given an opportunity to look at any possible overlap between the two programs. The perception of many of the interviewees in this study was that the administration gave priority to the Calgary program and even that the arts integration program, and possibly the arts themselves, were being marginalized.

These people from Canada came in and the focus really shifted. It really shifted into test scores. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 10, 2015)

I felt a little bit cast aside. I think the arts are important to the school, but I don't think that they were seen as important in the same way. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 11, 2015)

The perception of participating teachers was that these competing initiatives added too much work to their already full workloads. Almost all comments related to their multiple initiatives in the last two years of the program communicate a sense of stress or overload. Teachers' work in arts integration slowed or halted altogether.

When you have so much to do, it is not that it gets pushed aside, it tends to get diffused in the big pot of things we have to do. (O'Sullivan & Randolph, 2011)

It was putting too many irons in the fire at once. Everyone was in sensory and mental overload. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 19, 2015)

Contradictions are not necessarily bad things. They are merely conflicts that cause tensions in the system. These tensions can lead to change that is beneficial to everyone involved. In this case, while the damage from the competing initiatives was profound, the ALT worked together with

administration and the Arts Integration Coordinator to adapt the lesson plan template in use to hybridize the two templates in use for the teachers' sake.

## **Program Narrative: Professional Development in Arts Integration at Brickton Middle School**

### **2010 – Planning and Initial Contact**

In January of 2010, the principal at Brickton Middle School contacted SCEA's Executive Director about building a long-term professional development program in arts integration. He wanted to move the school toward its vision as a school of the visual and performing arts and believed that his staff was ready for more extended efforts in arts integration to assist with that effort. SCEA presented a proposal for the work to the school administration that followed a pattern similar to the program at Atlantis Arts Academy. The proposal for Brickton described goals in three strands:

- Arts Integration – enabling teachers to design and implement integrated instruction
- Arts Knowledge and Skill – expanding teachers' knowledge and understanding of arts processes
- Sustainability – developing the dispositions and opportunities for teachers to continue collaborative work

As with Atlantis, the proposed program for Brickton Middle School program consisted of a summer intensive each year for the whole faculty that would address issues of practice, arts knowledge and skill, and arts integrated instructional design. The staff was to be divided into cohorts of



participants that would choose an art form focus for their work. Teachers in each cohort would work with a SCEA art-form director and their cohort colleagues to develop and implement integrated instruction during the school year. SCEA directors would come to Brickton four times during the year to model instruction, co-teach with cohort members, observe independent instruction by the cohort, and provide supplemental immersion sessions focused on skills and knowledge in the art form as needed. In February, school administrators and representatives of the Brickton Arts Foundation approved the proposal, and plans began in earnest for the summer of 2010.

In late March, the school hosted an event for parents that he advertised as a “kickoff” to a new beginning for the school. The principal invited SCEA directors to come and provide an introduction to the upcoming work for teachers and the community at this event. On a Thursday evening, each SCEA director presented a model integrated lesson to groups of parents, students, and teachers. The following day, SCEA directors worked in teachers’ classrooms to model integrated instruction with students and meet and talk with members of the staff about the upcoming work. The principal collected thoughts and responses from teachers about their experiences at the March events. Responses were mixed. Some teachers looked enthusiastically forward to trying new practices. Others were hesitantly willing to participate, and a few of those surveyed spoke harshly and negatively about arts integration as a threat to their existing practice. The principal, the foundation liaison, and SCEA staff used this feedback as part of the ongoing design of the program.

## **2010-11**

Brickton's first summer intensive was held in June of 2010. In the months following the March parent night and the day with teachers, SCEA staff and school administration worked to plan the content and logistics of the five-day workshop. In an attempt to take teachers away from their usual work environment, school administration decided to hold the summer intensive on the campus of a local community college. The principal was not allowed by the district's contract with its teachers' union to make the summer intensive a requirement. Therefore, he and the foundation liaison advocated among the faculty for commitment to the work in the remaining days of the 2009-10 school year. Most agreed to participate, but some would not commit.

Each day of the summer intensive consisted of topical sessions, immersion sessions in each art form, model integrated lessons, strategy sessions, and integrated instructional design. As the summer intensive began, the faculty had not yet decided which art forms they would like to focus on, so teachers rotated through sessions in groups based on grade level or content area. Topical sessions developed collaborative dispositions, communication for distance mentoring, and methods for engaging with works of art to choose repertoire for instruction. Arts immersion sessions offered more detailed discussion of arts content and skills that would be applied in each of the workshop's model integrated lessons. Teachers rotated through arts immersion sessions through the first four days of the workshop in grade level groups. In model integrated lessons, teachers attended lessons with content area teams based on the non-arts subject each lesson addressed. Instructional design sessions drew everyone together each day to reflect on their experiences and begin to plan what they might be able to do with their own students during the first quarter of the school year.

On the last day of the workshop, school administrators met with teachers to discuss their choices for art form foci. The teachers agreed with administration to participate as grade level teams with all teachers at each grade level working in the same art form. Ultimately, 5<sup>th</sup> grade chose to work with dance, 6<sup>th</sup> grade with drama, 7<sup>th</sup> grade with visual art, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade with music. Each team, along with arts teachers in the art form they had identified, spent time together at the end of the week discussing plans for the first quarter with SCEA's art form directors. In the final hours of the last day, teachers were released and the SCEA team met with school administration to discuss the formation of an Arts Leadership Team that would be charged with overseeing efforts related to this program. Expectations for the first quarter were clarified and tentative dates set for each SCEA director's first visit.

Between the summer workshop and the first quarter visit, participating teachers were given small beginning tasks to perform and SCEA mentors planned with participants for first quarter site visits. Following the summer intensive, participants were challenged to choose an arts strategy from what they experienced in their chosen art form and plan how they might implement it with their students. Some of the faculty did not complete this step prior to the first visit, however, for two reasons: Approximately a third of the staff did not attend some or any of the summer intensive. Others, including some of the arts staff, were hired after the date of the summer intensive and were unavailable to begin until the beginning of the school year. For these teachers, individual meetings were scheduled with the SCEA mentors during the first quarter visit and opportunities were provided for these teachers to observe model instruction in their colleagues' classes.

Site visits were generally scheduled for two to three days at a time and consisted of observations, model instruction, group meetings and planning time. In the first quarter,

participating teachers were to implement the arts strategy they chose to develop after the summer intensive. SCEA mentors observed these efforts, assisted as needed, and provided feedback. After implementation, each teacher spent time with the mentor to reflect on the experience and begin planning for an integrated lesson that would be developed further through email, online groups, and/or phone conversations, and then co-taught with the SCEA mentor in the second quarter visit. New model lessons were presented by the SCEA mentor in one classroom and participants were given the opportunity to observe. This was particularly important for those participants who had been unable to attend the summer intensive.

Between visits, SCEA mentors communicated with each participant in his or her cohort. Some teachers participated more actively than others in these exchanges. A few of those who had not been part of the summer work and had not participated in the first quarter visit beyond observations and conversations did not respond to encouragement from SCEA directors or school personnel about participation. Those who actively engaged exchanged ideas, developing and revising the lesson plan for the second quarter.

In the second quarter visits, most of the time was spent implementing integrated lessons, co-teaching in participating teachers' classrooms. Less active participants were given another opportunity to observe instruction in these rooms. SCEA mentors met with participating teachers and observers to deconstruct the lesson, discussing successes and challenges and how the lessons learned from this experience could apply to future work. Some of the SCEA mentors participated again in a meeting of the Arts Leadership Team to review progress and discuss the activities planned for the third and fourth quarters.

The expectation for the third quarter had originally been that each participating teacher would co-plan a lesson with a colleague in his or her art form cohort. This proved problematic

for the participants at Brickton given their decision to base art form choice on grade level.

Teachers were responsible for different content areas and found it difficult to plan together. As a result, the expectation was adjusted to asking each teacher to design and implement a second integrated lesson, taking more responsibility for the implementation.

In the third quarter (January 2011) a supplemental lesson planning session was added to address the needs of those who were still behind or had not yet begun to fully participate. During this visit, teachers who had prepared integrated lessons implemented them. SCEA mentors provided feedback and assistance, allowing the teacher to take as much ownership of the instruction as he or she felt comfortable with. Each participating teacher met with her or his mentor to begin plans for a fourth quarter lesson that would be independently taught by the participating teacher. During this time, SCEA mentors also worked with arts teachers to develop scope and sequence documents to more effectively communicate the learning expectations for each grade level to non-arts teachers and to the parent community. This was a difficult task for some of the mentors to address. The visual art teacher was new to the school and still developing her curriculum. The drama teacher was a former band director who needed further training in developing drama curriculum.

The final site visits for the 2010-11 school year took place in March of 2011. At this time, participants had been charged to teach new integrated lessons while SCEA mentors observed and provided feedback. In practice, some teachers faced unexpected scheduling problems and were given permission to do the lessons at a different time and charged to spend time with their mentor during the site visit making plans for implementation. During these visits SCEA mentors and arts teachers provided arts immersion sessions to continue building skill in each art form among the cohorts.

In May, the Arts Leadership Team met with SCEA to review the year and make plans for adapting, revising, or improving the plans for the next year's work. We discussed lessons learned from the first year's work, the vision for the work and its role at Brickton, and came up with a list of action steps to work toward that vision. Notes from that meeting record that when integrated instruction was employed, a "different instructional atmosphere" (*May 2011 Arts Leadership Team Meeting Notes*, 2011) was evident. It was recorded that students responded comfortably to SCEA participation in classes. For teachers, it was noted that change happened slowly and that for some of the participants, flexibility was hard. Teachers who became busy tended to let tasks related to arts integration slide. "...as plates got full, members let tasks go." (para. 2) The notes also record concerns over inconsistent communication from participating teachers. Action steps included differentiating the work between stronger participants and teachers who found the work more challenging or whose participation was weak. The stronger group—designated cohort 1 or C1—who would pursue concept-based arts integration further and become models for the rest of the faculty. The others, designated in two groups as C2 and C3 might focus on reflective practice, participate in arts experiences, and observe and replicate strategies and lessons introduced by C1 teachers. This meeting also served to develop and refine plans for the 2011 summer intensive, including the involvement of an external evaluator.

## **2011-12**

In the second year of the program at Brickton, school administrators made changes to the program in response to pressures from the district and struggles with investment from participating teachers. These changes had an impact on the success of the program that

contributed to the eventual decision to close the efforts at Brickton at the end of the 2011-12 school year.

The summer intensive in July of 2011 targeted needs noted by SCEA mentors and the Arts Leadership Team in the first year of the program. Sessions occurred each day that focused on collaborative planning, curricular alignment, model instruction, arts integrated pedagogy, and “Arts in Context” sessions that explored works of art as starting points for developing instruction. All teachers were called on to participate. Varied levels of voluntary attendance at the workshop may indicate varied levels of investment from participants. Attendance levels were also impacted by a district-mandated training for math teachers on Tuesday and Wednesday. According to the report from an external evaluator contracted for the summer intensive, approximately 82% of the total faculty attended at least one day of the five-day workshop. About 42% attended all five days (Whitesitt & Wolcott, 2011). At the close of the week, SCEA mentors met with the Arts Integration Coordinator and members of the ALT to make arrangements for quarterly visits in the second school year.

Between the close of the summer workshop and the beginning of the work in the fall of 2011, school administration made further changes to the expectations for participating teachers, particularly in the C2 and C3 groups. The principal and assistant principal chose to focus professional development efforts for each of these groups on issues such as classroom management or math instruction. The involvement of C2 and C3 teachers with arts integration, then, was to be limited to observations of C1 teachers’ work and voluntary participation in arts immersion sessions. Additionally, C1 teachers were allowed to change their art form focus based on the needs, interests, or comfort levels of themselves and their students. These adjustments, in addition to those imposed in May, reduced the numbers of active participants in each cohort.

Only two teachers continued as C1 participants in visual art and two in music. Three teachers worked in dance, and five in drama. In dance and drama, new arts teachers were part of each group. The new dance and drama teachers focused their efforts in the 2011-12 year on developing and revising the curriculum in their art form and had to catch up on the model of arts integration that the other teachers had spent a year learning.

During the first two quarters of the school year, C1 teachers planned integrated lessons with SCEA mentors, which were implemented during the fall site visits by SCEA mentors. The mentors observed implementation and provided feedback. C2 and C3 teachers were invited to observe instruction. The mentor was to hold a reflective conversation with the C1 teacher after the lesson and that additionally, each C2 and C3 teacher would respond to their observations with a written reflection. The reflections with C1 teachers were held, but reflections in writing from C2 and C3 teachers were rarely forthcoming given the demands placed on them by the other demands from district and school level administration.

Communication with C1 teachers became a significant problem between visits for some of the participants. The work during the year, as designed, relied on ongoing planning and reflection conversations with teachers. Even for those who expressed an interest in the work, the planning process suffered from the distractions of participants' busy working environments. The most significant dissipation of progress occurred for the music cohort. Health issues among the few participants in the music C1 group made it necessary to cancel the November site visit.

In the third quarter, C1 teachers continued to plan with SCEA mentors and implement integrated lessons with their classes. Arts teachers continued (with varying levels of success) to work on the development of scope and sequence documents to make their curricula visible to



colleagues and parents. SCEA directors and arts teachers held immersion sessions for non-arts teachers to develop their understanding of each art form.

There was an ongoing conversation between SCEA, the AI Coordinator, and the ALT about the struggles experienced in the fall. In February, they discussed the impact of the dissipated focus of the faculty, the lack of communication from participating teachers, the effectiveness of the site visits and observations, and prospects for continued work in the 2012-13 school year.

In March of 2012, the Brickton Arts Foundation chose to close further whole-school work in arts integration. In a letter to SCEA's executive director, they said they would like to "provide more individualized professional development" to meet teachers' "changing needs" (*Correspondence*, 2012). A meeting was arranged for early April with the Arts Integration Coordinator. The agenda for that conversation was to address the school's goals for the upcoming year and exchange feedback on the struggling progress of the program. It was eventually revealed that the district had decided to change administrators at the school, and the arts integration program as a whole-school effort would no longer receive administrative support. The program was terminated in June of 2012.

### **Activity Systems Analysis: Brickton Middle School**

#### **Description of the Activity System**

Artifacts and participant interviews from Brickton Middle School's arts integration program were also categorized based on the elements of the activity system (figure 8). Texts within each category were coded using QDA Miner to facilitate the organization of coded text

and identification of patterns. The resulting codes are listed in Appendix J. The coded data were used to craft a description of the arts integration program as an activity system and further to identify contradictions in that system that drove change. The activity system described from this data is mapped in Figure 11, and each element of that program is described in the sections that follow. As with the analysis of Atlantis, the system discussed here is the Professional Development in Arts Integration program at Brickton Middle School. Some issues that were identified as part of the school in general (its mission, the school principal, and foundation support) are listed as school context – the larger system within which the arts integration program operated.

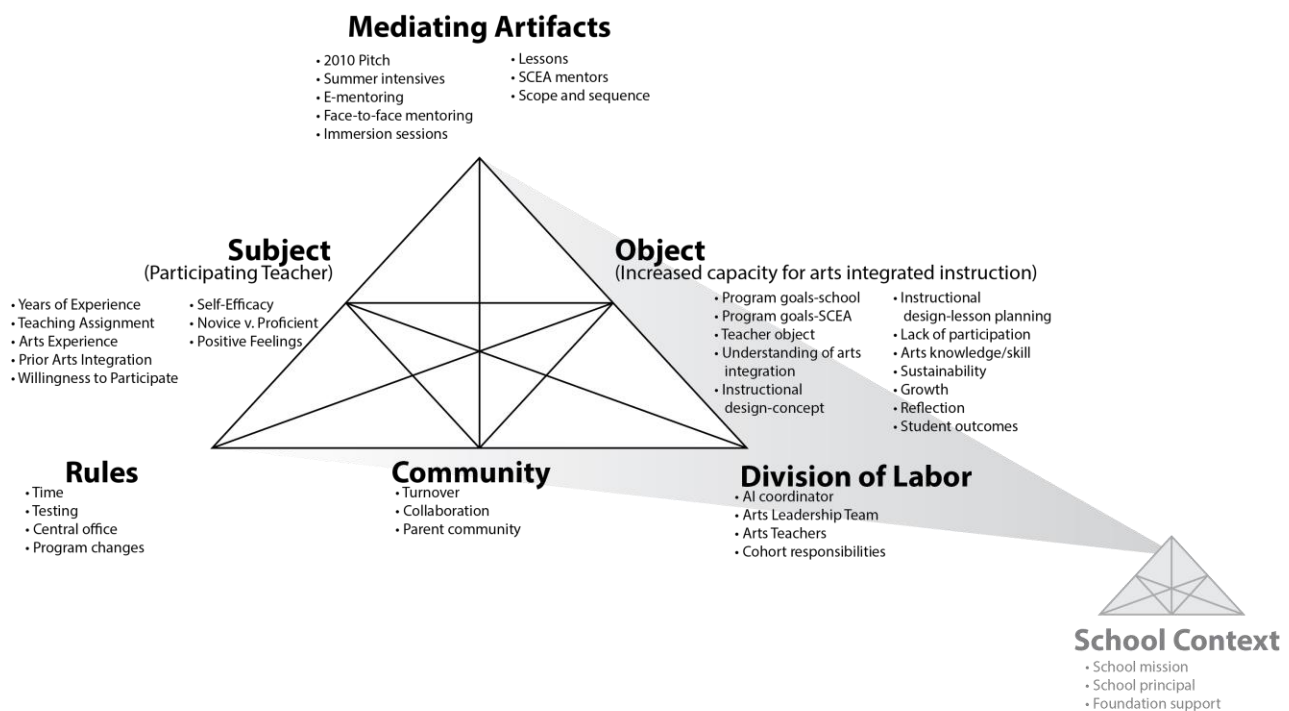


Figure 11 Activity System Map of the arts integration program at Brickton Middle School

## **Subject**

The subject in this activity system was, as with the one at Atlantis, the participating teacher. The coding process of data within this category revealed a similar set of issues (Appendix J). Coded texts revealed teachers' varied levels of experience in the arts, teachers' prior experience integrating arts and non-arts content, their level of willingness to participate in the program, self-efficacy with regard to the work in arts integration, and expressions of positive feelings about how the work was going.

Teachers' level of experience with the arts as they entered the work varied. Prior to the initiation of the program, there had been a perception of the arts as something that happened at the school, but occurred separate from the work of non-arts classroom teachers. Prior to the program, documents and interviewees describe collaborative efforts between arts and non-arts teachers as haphazard or non-existent. One interviewee, an arts teacher, said that some non-arts teachers had been collaborating with arts teachers in small ways prior to the arts integration program's initiation. However, many non-arts teachers viewed their learning in the art form as a stressor, as more work to do. In her recollection, arts teachers took the heavier part of the work at finding connections to non-arts content.

If they're not familiar with music genres or specific dance things or art works, that's more work they [non-arts teachers] have to do. More research. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

We were making connections for them. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

From the beginning, feelings about this work among the faculty were mixed. While some enthusiastically supported arts integration as an instructional model, others were indifferent, and some expressed outright hostility to the program as unnecessary or as a threat to traditional methods for teaching "academic" subjects.

I would like to try some of the methods that I saw. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

It is impossible to totally eliminate pencil and paper work, repetition and practice (especially in math), and direct instruction. Are they now going to expect that everything will be “fun”, “entertaining”, and “easy”? (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

It is not acceptable for them to never have to do work again. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

Even those hopeful for arts integration at Brickton were anxious over the impact of this work on their classroom routines and test scores.

I am hoping for lessons that will help us improve our performance on [STATE STANDARDIZED TEST] since, unfortunately, that is ultimately how teachers and students will be evaluated each year. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

Some teacher comments in early surveys and emails indicated a lack of confidence or willingness to step into unfamiliar territory.

I tend to be rigid and inside the box. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

I need to take small steps in this process. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

Many participants held a low sense of self-efficacy about integrated work. Teachers described hesitation to pursue the work from a lack of confidence, despite interest in the work and belief in its value. They also identified anxiety over test scores as an inhibiting factor.

I have a tremendous amount to learn. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

I personally never felt confident enough to work my way to a lesson in that. And the [STATE STANDARDIZED TEST] standards and the tests always took precedence over everything else. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

The work in the summer intensive of 2010 and through the 2010-11 school year saw improvement in the attitudes of many teachers toward the program, though lack of investment remained a considerable issue throughout the efforts at Brickton. All interviewees discussed a lack of investment among some of their colleagues.

...we got faculty members who were not—I wouldn't say not supportive, but not artsy. They didn't get what we were doing – the importance of what we were doing. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

I know that a lot of teachers were just – they weren't really pleased. They were looking at integration as one more thing to do. Taking more time. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

I certainly don't think that the entire faculty was on board. That was a big detriment to the success of the program. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

I think part of it was personality conflicts between certain people and elements in the school. No matter what program was implemented there, they weren't going to do it because it was requested or mandated by certain folks. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 6, 2015)

## **Object**

As it was at Atlantis, the object of the program at Brickton Middle School was an increase in the capacity of the participating teacher to design and implement arts integrated instruction with his or her students. The program identified three goals as part of this: 1) Arts Integration – to develop the skill of the teacher at designing concept-based integrated instruction, 2) Arts Knowledge and Skill – to develop the teacher's knowledge and understanding of elements, processes, and vocabulary in one art form, 3) Sustainability – to develop the skills and dispositions necessary for the teacher to engage in meaningful collaboration with her or his colleagues. In addition to these three goals, the issues that emerged in the coding process within this category included texts related to school expectations for the program, SCEA's expectations for the program, teachers' own understandings of the goals of the program, teacher growth toward program goals, reflection, and student outcomes.

The understanding and acceptance of these goals was mixed among participants. Further, there was a dissonance between the goals of the program as accepted and promoted by the school

principal and the understood pressure from teachers to work for the purpose of increasing standardized test scores. After the close of the program, interviewees recognized a growth in their own awareness of connections to other curricula and opportunities for collaboration, but the depth of work pursued during the two years at Brickton did not continue.

It just opened my eyes more to the idea that in our wing we were all about us.  
(arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

I remember noticing things, my eyes being opened to things I had never thought about before.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 6, 2015)

I was more mindful.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 6, 2015)

### **Mediating Artifacts**

The mediating artifacts identified in the coding process included the 2010 “kick off” event, summer intensives, face-to-face mentoring, e-mentoring, immersion sessions, model lessons, SCEA mentors, and scope and sequence documents. Face-to-face interaction occurred through the parent night program in 2010, summer intensives each year, and SCEA’s quarterly mentoring visits. The 2010 parent night program provided information and experiences to students, the parent community, and teachers about the planned work in arts integration and the SCEA personnel who would assist with it. At summer intensives, teachers experienced model instruction, arts immersion sessions that targeted art form skills and knowledge, instructional design sessions, and other instruction targeting professional reflection and collaboration. In the quarterly visits, teachers and/or SCEA mentors implemented planned instruction, held planning meetings with individual teachers and cohort groups, and facilitated immersion sessions to build art form skill.

Between face-to-face conversations with mentors and cohorts, participating teachers interacted with SCEA mentors through email, phone conversations, and occasionally videoconference. Each teacher worked with mentors to find the means of communication that was easiest to work through. Early on, SCEA introduced Google Groups as a possible means of sharing information among cohorts, but at the urging of the ALT, that role was shifted to a SharePoint system that the school was already using. The school created a page on this secure system and provided SCEA access to it in order to exchange documents and resources. Despite the provision of multiple means of communication between site visits, mentors noted that communication from some participating teachers was often lacking.

Communication has been limited. (*Teacher Survey Responses October 2010*, 2010)

Communication has been an issue for the group in general. (SCEA, 2011)

Planning has worked well in face to face exchanges, but for most of the community, it has stalled out almost completely at a distance. (SCEA, 2011)

Teachers found it challenging to find the time to focus on planning and revision with SCEA mentors between visits. Those who did, had to find the time around and between their day's required activities.

Each has found a way around the problem, making phone calls during planning periods or sending sporadic emails written very late at night or very early in the morning. (SCEA, 2012a)

Documents consisted of lesson templates, planning and reflection prompts, schedules, and scope and sequence documents for each art form. Lesson templates were generally well received. Some teachers balked at writing out lessons in the level of detail expected from the program, but did not have difficulty with the structure of the template itself. Planning and reflection prompts served to document teachers' growth and understanding toward program

goals, particularly with regard to lesson planning and implementation. The AI coordinator developed and shared schedule documents to facilitate each visit from SCEA during active school days. Arts teachers worked with SCEA mentors toward developing scope and sequence documents. These would provide information to non-arts teachers and the parent community and facilitate collaboration with non-arts teachers at each grade level.

Turnover among the arts staff each year delayed – and in some cases prevented altogether – the development of scope and sequence documents. Little progress was made toward completion of these documents during the first year of the program. Music and dance teachers were slow to engage in the process of developing the documents. The visual art teacher was new to the school and still working out her curriculum after a quick beginning to the school year. The teacher assigned to drama was a former band instructor reassigned to the role by the administration. Despite this early reluctance, however, by the end of the first year, arts teachers identified scope and sequence as a priority going forward. In the second year, a more confident visual art teacher, a new drama instructor, and a new dance instructor all showed progress in the development of these documents to build collaboration.

The process for developing scope and sequence varied among the arts teachers. For some, it was only a process of reducing and clarifying a long established curriculum into a form that would communicate the most important information to non-arts faculty and parents. Some of the newer faculty needed assistance developing curricula and organizing it in ways appropriate to the students' needs. In interviews, the dance teacher described the impact of that work on her curriculum as a new teacher:

Everyone was doing the same thing, because that was all I'd had the time to think of. I remember planning out and thinking. [SCEA's dance director] had me write down a list of the major skills that the students need and how we can plan to get to those skills. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)



## **Rules**

The constraints that impacted teachers' work as part of the arts integration program at Brickton included school schedules, school policies, district mandates, the school's administrative structure, and the documentation required by the program. Codes identified within this category included time, testing, central office mandates, and program changes. In program artifacts and interviews, teachers consistently identified their busy schedule and lack of time as having a detrimental impact on their work in arts integration.

Time is probably the biggest frustration.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

Program adjustments were required on multiple occasions to work around demands from school and district administration. Summer intensives, cohort structures, and levels of participation were modified as a result of district rules regarding teacher professional development, district mandated training, and staff reorganization by school principals. Changes were often driven by an external demand for higher test scores.

Standards and tests always took precedence over everything else. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

I felt like my primary responsibility was to prepare the students as best I could for the standards and expectations set forth by the state and by the county. And to increase, of course, their [state test] scores ... (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

## **Community**

The community surrounding and supporting the efforts of teachers in the program included grade level teams, which acted as art form cohorts in the first year, arts teachers, SCEA mentors, school administrators, the Arts Integration Coordinator, students, and the Brickton Arts Foundation which provided funding and support for the program. Issues related to these things

that emerged in the coding process within this category were turnover, collaboration, and the parent community.

### **Division of Labor**

The efforts toward the program's object were shared by participating teachers, the Arts Leadership Team (ALT), the Arts Integration Coordinator, SCEA mentors, grade level teams, arts teachers, and school administrators. In the second year of the program, when demands from the administration changed the expectation for participation, efforts were divided among groups designated as C1, C2, and C3. The ALT provided guidance for the development and revision of the program in response to changing needs of the teachers and demands from external sources. The AI Coordinator facilitated scheduling and acted as a liaison among school administrators, participating teachers, the ALT, and SCEA. SCEA mentors designed and led summer intensives; coached art-form teachers through the lesson design process; taught model lessons for students, teachers, and parents; and provided participants and administration with feedback on progress toward program goals. In year one of the program, grade level teams each focused on one art form together. In the second year, as a result of feedback from the ALT and demands from school administration, participation was not encouraged for the entire faculty at the same level. Rather, two thirds of staff members were to focus their attention on other requirements, participating primarily as observers. The remaining third, designated C1, were given choice of art form focus and tasked to focus efforts toward the design and implementation of integrated lessons.

## Contradictions in the system

Coded texts were examined repeatedly to identify indicators of tensions within and between categories. Coded texts that pointed to contradictions within each category were marked. Coded data that appeared in multiple categories were also identified and examined to find indications of secondary or quaternary contradictions. Several tensions could be found within the system at Brickton Middle, but three contradictions had significant impact on the level of success in the program: a) a lack of shared vision for the work, b) low levels of direct communication between participants and mentors, and c) turnover among the arts faculty. These contradictions are mapped in Figure 12.

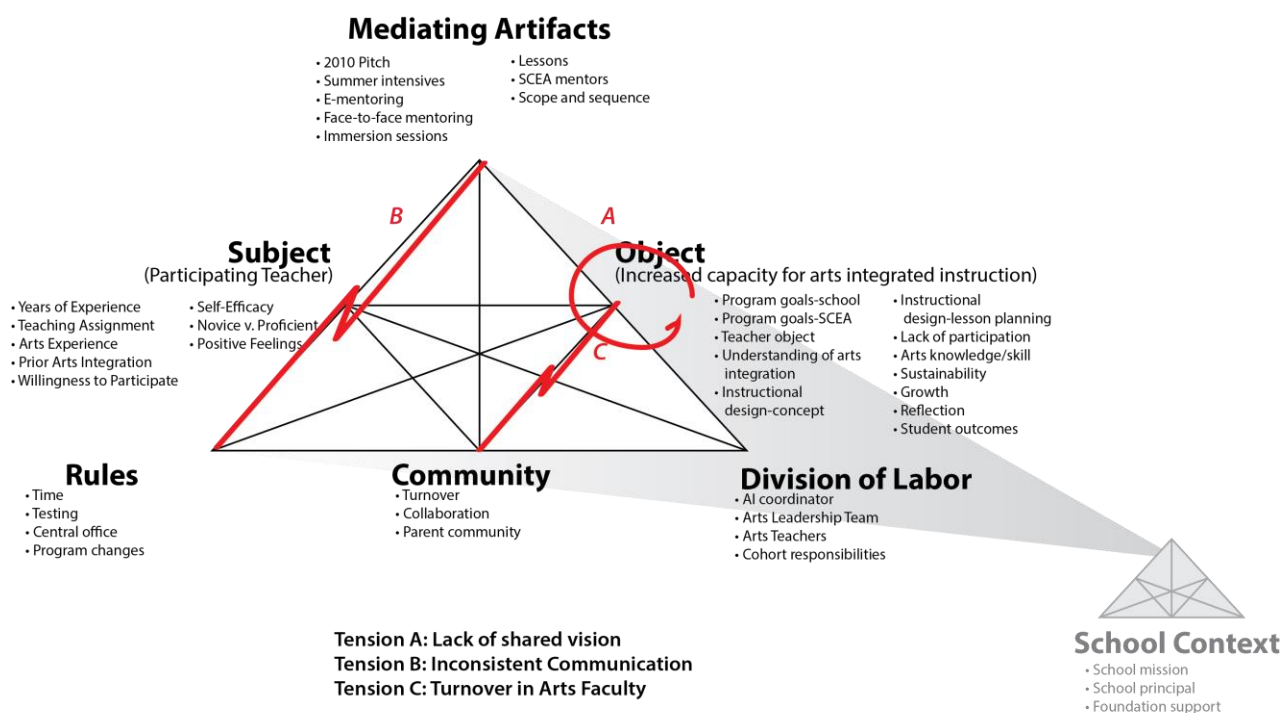


Figure 12 Contradictions in the system at Brickton Middle School

### **A. Lack of shared vision**

A primary contradiction (Engeström, 1987), in which conflict results from multiple value systems associated with an element in an activity (Engeström, 1987; Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009), that impacted Professional Development in Arts Integration at Brickton Middle School can be found in conflicting notions of the mission of the school and the purpose of the program in achieving that mission. Teachers each built personal understandings of their professional purposes in the school context, which did not always align with the stated purposes of the program, the principal's vision for the program, or multiple versions of the school's stated mission.

The principal initiated the arts integration program. He was strongly supportive of the work, but held underlying expectations that this program would solve other challenges faced by the school. He was unable to cultivate investment from a significant portion of the staff. Many non-arts teachers did not share the principal's enthusiasm for the work, and feared its impact on test scores, which some explicitly viewed as the primary purpose of their work with students. Arts teachers likewise came to the work with hesitation, despite hopes that it would build collaboration among a divided faculty.

...this was always a vision of his.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

...it was a goal of his, a passion of his.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

It is notable that the final decision not to continue the program came as the district decided to change administrators at Brickton for the upcoming 2012-13 school year.

The school's mission statement reflects a cultural emphasis on non-arts subjects that contributed to the divide between arts and non-arts subjects. Understanding of the mission and

purpose of the school was mixed among faculty. This confusion is understandable given the multiple versions of the mission that appeared in documents published by the school and on the school's website during the time of the program:

To provide an environment that empowers students to be successful in academics through the integration of the arts. –Brickton Website 2011

To integrate the arts into every classroom by training and development of great educators and leaders through collaboration. –ALT documents 2012

To achieve excellence in measurable results through the integration of the arts, for students, parents, team members, and the community. –Brickton Website 2012

In some descriptions of the school mission, the arts are understood as something different than academics and possibly in service to those other subjects. Interviewees described a sense of the arts as a secondary focus in practice.

Interviewees also identified a tension between the vision of the school as an arts-based institution understood by the school principal and the local foundation and the attitudes and desires of the community at large.

I say this with all due respect. The ...area and the community didn't lend itself to being open-minded enough to really embrace what it all meant and what it was going to take to really integrate. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

They described the arts focus of the school as a function of the push from a local philanthropist and the foundation he established to support the school.

...when [the district] decided a middle school was needed because of numbers, population, and they started to build the school, this gentleman came along and said I will help and put money into an arts wing and developed this program. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

It was a vision of ...one of the leaders in the community. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

They sat down and talked about it and he said basically you build the school and I'll build the wing and fund it. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

As evidence of this disconnect, interviewees pointed to limited options for further study in the arts when they move on to the local high school.

A choir director offered a choir class. So there is a choir class there at the high school right now. There's an art class that's always been there, and it goes through all the stages of it and takes it seriously. ... They used to have a drama class, but evidently they did away with that.  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

There was a perception expressed in documents and in interviews that many teachers did not share the principal's enthusiasm for the arts as a vital part of the educational culture. After the kickoff event in March 2010, teachers spoke about their fears, hopes, and criticisms of the work in arts integration in terms of improving scores on state standardized tests.

It was a great lesson on culture, which is a [state standardized test] assessed item.  
(*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

If my kids were being tested over dancing/choreography standards, they would score proficient. However, since they are tested on social studies, they would probably score below proficient. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

I am hoping for lessons that will help us improve our performance on [the state standardized test] since, unfortunately, that is how teachers and students will be evaluated every year. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

The focus on test items as learning outcomes made it difficult for some teachers to understand an approach to integration based on depth of understanding and big ideas. Reluctant teachers did not feel they could afford anything that might pose a risk to test scores. Interviewees discussed test scores as a specter that hung over efforts in the program.

I think our goal is to educate kids, but I also think, if I'm honest, it's to raise scores at this stage of the game. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

I also think [the principal] was grasping at straws in that hope that arts integration would somehow raise test scores. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

...standards and tests always took precedence over everything else. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

I felt like my primary responsibility was to prepare the students as best I could for the standards and expectations set forth by the state and by the county. And to increase, of course, their [state test] scores...  
(non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

It is important to note that not all teachers held the view that their primary professional purpose was raising test scores. Interviewees identified goals beyond or in addition to the demand for improvement on test scores in math and reading.

...my job there is to give kids an understanding of music. To expand their horizons in music. So that when they leave me, they will become lifelong consumers and users of music. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

I am there to facilitate their learning. To make sure that they walk out with more than they came in with. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

Despite the anxieties and frustrations expressed by a number of teachers in the available documents, several also described an impact of the work in arts integration on student engagement and understanding.

The students are showing a better understanding of the terms and are remembering. They can relate now. (*Teacher Survey Responses October 2010*, 2010)

The students were engaged and interested. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

The students show an interest in what they are doing. (*Teacher Survey Responses October 2010*, 2010)

I have seen more students participate in class when we had the arts lesson. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

## **B. Inconsistent communication**

In the artifacts and in interviews, participating teachers spoke positively about SCEA mentors and what they offered in summer intensives and in work held during the school year, but maintaining communication between site visits was an ongoing problem. This tension fits what Engeström (1987) described as a secondary contradiction. Teacher perceptions and priorities regarding the constraints on their time impacted their use of electronic communication as a means to plan, revise, and reflect with SCEA mentors.

Face-to-face planning and reflection between SCEA mentors and teachers were understood as helpful and successful efforts in SCEA's reports. Interviewees said of their SCEA mentors that they were "...always available," "always supportive," "willing to help and always trying to understand." Despite this apparent rapport, though, documents including ALT minutes, email exchanges, and SCEA's semi-annual reports describe frustration with teachers' lack of communication between site visits. The program was designed to contain a significant planning and revision component in which the communication with mentors was to be done electronically. Mentors in each art form expressed frustration over the difficulty at getting teachers to engage in dialogue about their work through email or phone calls.

Teachers have struggled ... to take the time needed not only to design instruction, but to communicate with the SCEA mentor about its development. (SCEA, 2012a)

Teachers tended to identify the cause of this communication gap as a lack of time or a conflict with other pressing demands on their attention. This is consistent with interviewees' assertions that teachers who did not buy in to the vision for arts integration at Brickton saw the work as an unnecessary addition to their work rather than a way to accomplish their goals for student learning.



There were so many teachers who felt it was taking time out of their classroom. They were not integrating. They were doing separate activities, and didn't see how to build the connection so it could be integrated. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

In general, they viewed it as one more thing on their plate that they had to do. (arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

This is not to say, though, that limited time was merely an excuse to avoid required efforts.

Teachers who did participate in ongoing communication with mentors had to do so at odd times, working around full teaching days, after school activities, and family obligations. One SCEA report said of dedicated teachers:

Each has found a way around the problem, making phone calls during planning periods or sending sporadic emails written very late at night or very early in the morning. (SCEA, 2012a)

Interviewees had little directly to say about the impact of limited communication on their work.

Those who chose to be interviewed were among those who did buy in to the application of arts integration as an instructional model. Those who chose not to communicate about their lessons in the absence of face-to-face meetings were all among teachers who chose not to participate in interviews about the program.

### **C. Turnover among the arts faculty**

While turnover at Brickton was not so significant proportionally as it was at Atlantis, turnover among the arts faculty did have an impact on the program—particularly on the development of scope and sequence documents and the collaboration with non-arts faculty. This issue can be described as another secondary contradiction between the community supporting teachers' efforts and the mediating artifacts at the disposal of the system.

One of the expectations built into the program was that arts teachers would each produce scope and sequence documents that described their curricula in brief terms to facilitate collaboration with non-arts staff and communicate arts learning expectations for students and parents. Efforts were never fully completed toward that objective. During the three years of SCEA's involvement with Brickton, there were changes in visual art, drama, dance, and music faculty. In the first year of the program, the visual art teacher was brought in only shortly before the work during the school year began. Much of that year was spent developing curriculum for the first time as she taught it. The principal filled the drama teacher position with the school's former band director. He required significant assistance in coming to understand the curriculum he was responsible for.

In the second year, the drama teacher position was filled with a teacher whose background and qualifications were in theatre. This new teacher was happy to participate in the development of curricula and the scope and sequence work, but did not complete the work by the end of that school year. The dance position was also replaced in the second year. The new instructor was enthusiastic and willing to work through the scope and sequence, but like the drama instructor did not complete the work by the end of that year.

The divide between arts and non-arts faculty was not resolved. An awareness of opportunities for connection and collaboration was identified as an outcome of the program by interviewees, but they described collaboration among arts and non-arts faculty since the close of the program as diminished and usually initiated by the arts teacher.

I've always been open. I've told the faculty and gone to certain faculty members and asked, 'What novels are you doing this year? What themes are you doing this year that I could work with?'  
(arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

[collaboration with arts teachers] hasn't worked into our schedule this year. Not so much. (non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

### **Cross-Case Analysis**

Despite the common goals of the programs at Atlantis and Brickton, each took shape in response to the tensions that developed from the interactions of participants and their communities toward (or in some cases against) the goals of the arts integration program. Even so, some issues emerged in both settings that played significant roles in participating teachers' experiences of professional development in arts integration. Five such issues were 1) participants' sense of self-efficacy related to the arts and arts integration 2) perceived stress, 3) pressure for higher standardized test scores, 4) participants' flexibility with regard to new approaches to teaching, and 5) perceived positive impact on student learning.

### **Self-Efficacy and the Arts**

At both schools, a struggle faced by arts and non-arts teachers alike was teaching with and through content areas with which they were less confident.

I am not what I consider to be musically or artistically talented. So my exposure would be that of talking to other people. Being in circles of people talking about the process.

(Brickton non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

Not a ton. I mean I was always an athlete growing up. I was never into the arts.

(Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 29, 2015)

I am so far from being an expert in this area, but it makes it difficult to teach. What if I teach them something wrong?

(non-arts teacher, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

Gardner and Boix-Mansilla (2003) argue that interdisciplinary understanding can only be cultivated where there is a strong foundational understanding in each of the disciplines to be

integrated. If this is the case for students, it is certainly the case for teachers charged to facilitate student learning in this way. The first year at both sites was a struggle for non-arts teachers and arts teachers who needed to develop a stronger understanding of their colleagues' disciplines before they could proficiently align the conceptual lenses of arts and non-arts content areas. For non-arts teachers, the struggle was to come to a better understanding of the art form. Thus, the program was designed to provide some understanding and experience to teachers who were entering a new field as novices.

James Paul Gee (2003) describes the learning process of an initiate in a new learning environment. Each discipline is its own “semiotic domain” (p. 18), a landscape that the learner has to probe and explore—tentatively at first. One’s early contact in such an environment is as an outsider. One has to learn not only the content of this place, but its ways of thinking. The learner has to cultivate an appreciative system like that shared by expert practitioners of the domain. That doesn't happen right away. Early interaction provides only an overview of the domain. Novices develop a kind of rudimentary expertise with the internal grammar of the domain. Teachers are accustomed to playing the role of expert. Participants who had to learn to think and speak in a different domain than their own became uncomfortable. Some balked at the discomfort and resisted full engagement. Some teachers, particularly at Brickton, saw the arts as alien to their work world. Some even perceived what students did in the arts as not really work at all. They perceived efforts to integrate non-arts content with the arts as a threat to instructional time or a watering down of academic effort.

...it is impossible to totally eliminate pencil and paper work, repetition and practice (especially in math), and direct instruction. Are they now going to expect that everything will be ‘fun,’ ‘entertaining,’ and ‘easy’? (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

It is not acceptable for them to never have to do work again. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

In both contexts though, some who persevered through the discomfort came to realize that their understanding of an art form had grown, which increased their comfort level with integration and made them more willing to do more. As they reflected on experiences, even difficult ones, engaged participants began to understand the way teaching in the art form worked and how they might improve efforts in the next lesson.

When doing arts integration lessons I need to make sure that I work on my classroom management. I also need to make sure I take the time to explain the materials. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 9, 2009)

It just takes a lot of planning and knowing what you want the students to learn from your lesson. Also, don't try to complete a whole planned out lesson in one day. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 9, 2009)

That was one of the first moments I realized as a teacher that this didn't have to be chaos. Because they were doing something with their hands, that was tactile, they were kind of free to learn. It was one of those a-ha moments for me. (Atlantis arts teacher, personal communication, January 23, 2015)

I wanted to make sure that I was describing the art work correctly, so I talked with [the visual art specialist] briefly and also researched the pieces. (Brickton non-arts teacher, personal communication, August 10, 2010)

Gee (2003) talks about this novice learning experience through the lens of a video game's tutorial level, where players learn how the game works by tentatively probing the environment and reflecting on repeated mistakes. Participants who were able to work through their discomfort were those who had patience enough to see beyond immediate experiences and a willingness to reflect on what they had done.

You're going to fall on your butt, and that's ok. You're going to learn from that. (Atlantis arts teacher, personal communication, January 19, 2015)

By the third year, I really felt like I could—I still use some of the lessons we created. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

## **Perceived stress**

Teachers' participation was impacted by perceived limits on their time and administrative pressure toward other goals. As teachers felt their time already filled, the lesson writing, reflection, and communication with a mentor called for by the arts integration program seemed daunting and some responded with weaker or slower participation or none at all.

At Atlantis Arts Academy, participants' engagement waned as they became more stressed with organizational change and added initiatives.

I believe the teachers just had a hard time. They tried to find a balance and find where they fit. (Atlantis administrator, personal communication, December 18, 2014)

Unfortunately, many teachers are choosing not to do lessons. (Atlantis AI Coordinator, personal communication, September 3, 2010)

We did try to get it going, but other things just took over. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, March 11, 2011)

For me it was too much. ...the training we were getting was top-notch, but I didn't feel that I could do my best, like I wanted to do, because of all the other demands at that particular school. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 22, 2014)

The excuse is I'm overwhelmed. I've got too much to do. (Atlantis arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

At Brickton Middle School, participants who never engaged with the program or whose participation waned identified time constraints and testing pressure as causes for their inactivity.

In general, they viewed it as one more thing on their plate that they had to do. (Brickton arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

Time is probably the biggest frustration. (Brickton non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

Standards and tests always took precedence over everything else. (Brickton non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2014)

## **Testing Pressure**

Administrators at both schools reacted to pressure for fast, significant increase in test scores by making additions or changes to the system. These changes increased stress on participating teachers and reduced or eliminated the priority placed on the work expected as part of the arts integration program.

Atlantis Arts Academy serves a high need population. Its test scores had showed steady, significant improvement in the years since the arts integration program began, but the scores still ran behind state averages (Appendix H). In an attempt to boost those scores, the charter school's director applied significant organizational changes and brought in another professional development program whose methods did not align with those of the SCEA arts integration model. Participants felt obligated to choose one priority or another, and many chose to let the work in arts integration fall into the background.

Brickton also serves a high need population. The school's scores on mandated state tests in reading and math remained behind state averages and saw flat growth over the years just before and during the arts integration program (Appendix H). In 2011, due to a lack of growth in scores that ran behind state averages, the district required new methods in math instruction that pulled all math teachers at Brickton away from arts integration. In response to demands from the district, school administrators made changes to the professional development activities of all teachers for the 2011-12 school year. For two-thirds of the staff, arts integration was no longer a priority.

Both cases demonstrate a push by the administration to create or shift toward "structures of organizational convenience" which reinforce patterns of dependency in learners (Brookfield, 1986, p. 297). The mandates from administration to change the program or diminish participation

in the interests of test scores necessarily impacted teachers' ability and willingness to engage in this long-term endeavor that already pushed their levels of comfort with their practice.

### **Teacher Flexibility**

In both settings, teachers entered the work with varied levels of preparation. Teachers at both schools entered the work with little background knowledge in their art form or in designing integrated instruction. They faced time constraints and pressures from administration. At both schools, some teachers engaged in the work despite difficulties that arose, while others refused to fully participate even when stresses were low. Teachers who fully engaged in the arts integration work and pursued it fully even through increased tensions in the system showed flexibility in their approach to instruction and a willingness to take risks. These teachers tended to look to positive outcomes for students and themselves and were willing to take on the challenges that stood in the way of that goal.

Will it help them pass the [state test]? Maybe. Maybe not. But I feel it will open their minds. As Emerson said, "Once the mind is expanded by a new idea it never returns to its former dimensions." So this can't hurt.  
(Atlantis arts teacher, personal communication, August 12, 2009)

What struck me was analyzing musical pieces and how that would help the students. Hey, you used the same thought process to compose and to write essays in creative writing! (Brickton non-arts teacher, personal communication, December 29, 2015)

I have learned that arts integration helps students develop a better understanding of the non-art content area. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, August 13, 2009)

Teachers who failed to engage or backed off of their work in arts integration when stresses increased demonstrated less flexibility in their approach to teaching and felt less comfortable taking risks.



I tend to be rigid and inside the box. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

I thought that integrating dance or drama into the library would be disruptive. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

You cannot answer a teacher with a question when they ask a question. We need specific guidance. Not the Socratic method. (O'Sullivan & Randolph, 2011)

There is a tendency for teachers to 'await the expert' in this process. Often I have to provoke responses or prompt them to do the work or ask questions. (SCEA, 2011)

Right now, the work isn't for them, it's for whoever is looking at them. (*May 2011 Arts Leadership Team Meeting Notes*, 2011)

The dispositions toward integration displayed by resistant, inflexible teachers is consistent with problems Efland (2002) describes related to novice learners' interactions with art. They demonstrate what he calls a novice's conservative tendency "to approach learning by confirming preconceived ideas and personal biases, which sometimes reflect peer-group consensus" (Efland, 2002). They also demonstrate a "performance orientation" to learning, in which "a novice is inclined to get the job done as quickly as possible, with learning serving as a means to an end rather than an end in itself" (Efland, 2002).

## **Student learning**

On a more positive note, teachers in both contexts observed student growth as a result of their work in arts integration. They described students' retention of information, willing engagement in lessons, and deeper levels of interaction and understanding.

I enjoyed the session that I had. ...My students related a number of scientific concepts to the faculty. I was really proud to know that they had learned so much about gravity, motion, and action and reaction and could relate it to today's activity. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

The students are showing a better understanding of the terms and are remembering. They can relate now. (*Teacher Survey Responses October 2010*, 2010)

The students were engaged and interested. (*Teacher Survey Responses*, 2010)

I have seen more students participate in class when we had the arts lesson. (*Teacher Survey Responses October 2010*, 2010)

Deeper understanding of science concepts ...is evidenced by my student from sixth grade, now in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, who still remembers the theory of plate tectonics even after two years. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, April 9, 2011)

What is pleasing the most, so far, as we take this a step at a time, is the interaction between students, their willingness to speak and write their interpretations. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, April 30, 2009)

Teachers at both schools, even those who strongly resisted participating in arts integration, tended to view their work in terms of their students.

My job there is to give kids an understanding of music. To expand their horizons in music. So that when they leave me, they will become lifelong consumers and users of music. (Brickton arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

It was always about helping kids conceptualize math. It's very abstract. So what I always saw was obviously teaching new content, but not just teaching procedures—but more helping them understand the concept. What is this really about? How does it really work? (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 15, 2015)

I am there to facilitate their learning. To make sure that they walk out with more than they came in with. (Brickton non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 24, 2015)

Those who most clearly saw benefits for their students from trying this new way of approaching content were more likely to persevere through the stresses of the various tensions described in this study.

In the end, what really mattered to me were the children. And I eventually started thinking about how I could continue to give the children a high quality education. That kind of saved me. (Atlantis non-arts teacher, personal communication, January 23, 2015)

## **Summary**

In these findings, the professional development programs in arts integration have been examined through the lens of activity theory. The resulting analyses yielded pictures of the programs as complex systems shaped by tensions from within, including the background experiences of participants, their beliefs about the arts, and existing school policies and processes; and from without in the form of pressures to produce higher state test scores and additional initiatives and expectations on teachers' time and effort. Teachers' level of engagement and perseverance through changes over the years of each program were influenced by their flexibility, their sense of self-efficacy, and the impact they saw from the program on their students.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study is summarized in this chapter including a review of the purpose, methodology, and findings. This is followed by a brief discussion of implications for future professional development programming and research.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

From 2007-2012, arts and non-arts teachers at two schools in the southeast participated in long-term professional development programs facilitated by the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts (SCEA). Both programs aimed to build teachers' capacity to develop and implement arts integrated instruction with their students. The programs employed multiple means of interaction with and among participants. The teachers participated in week-long workshops and ongoing mentorship via site visits from SCEA personnel and electronic communications among SCEA mentors and cohorts of participants. Learning experiences targeted participants' skill and knowledge in a single art form, their design and implementation of integrated lessons, and their skill as collaborative practitioners.

While the programs targeted congruent goals and operated with very similar structures, the two school sites differed in their school format and population. The first, referred to by the pseudonym Atlantis Arts Academy for the purposes of this study, is a charter school that identifies itself as having a focus on the arts. At the time of the study, it served approximately

725 students from kindergarten through eighth grade. Atlantis Arts Academy serves a low income, largely rural community with a population of English Language Learners. The school began long-term work with SCEA in 2008, continued the work through 2012 and has sustained a school-based version of the arts integration efforts to the present day using school-based mentors trained through SCEA's program. The second school, referred to in this study as Brickton Middle School, is a public school that serves grades five through eight in a rural community located in a different southeastern state. Brickton Middle served approximately 475 students at the time of the arts integration program. Among these were a high percentage identified as economically disadvantaged. The school is not a charter school format, but identified an arts focus when a local foundation provided support to build extensive arts facilities including art and dance studios, band facilities, and performance spaces. The arts integration program at Brickton began in 2010 and continued through 2012, but did not continue beyond that date.

Each program faced tensions and changes over the years of implementation, and each changed in response to the school culture and influences from outside the school itself. There were successes and challenges for arts integration efforts in both school contexts. As whole school professional development efforts, the programs operated in the midst of other demands on teachers' time and attention. Varied evaluation data were collected from each program, but the available information was inconsistent between programs, and the data gathered at the two sites did not effectively address the complexity of participants' experiences.

In order to better understand how these efforts grew and operated, this study was developed to build richer descriptions of each program as experienced by participants. The research question that drove the study was "How were professional development programs in arts integration experienced by participating teachers in two school contexts?" In order to build

richer descriptions of the complex responses of varied participants in a complex system, these programs were examined qualitatively as a multiple site case study through the lens of cultural historical activity theory.

### **Arts Integration**

While arts integration has been defined in multiple ways—sometimes only as the inclusion of arts subjects as part of the school day or as the occasional inclusion of an arts related activity—SCEA’s approach defines arts integration as an approach to curriculum and instruction:

Arts integration is instruction combining two or more content areas, wherein the arts constitute one or more of the integrated areas. The integration is based on shared or related concepts, and instruction in each content area has depth and integrity reflected by embedded assessments, standards, and objectives. Integrated instruction is often designed, implemented, and evaluated in collaboration with other teachers, arts teachers, community artists, and institutions; and delivered, experienced, and assessed through a variety of modalities: artistic processes, inquiry methods, and intelligences. (SCEA, 2012b)

Defined this way, arts integration is a subset of integrated or interdisciplinary instruction (Beane, 1997).

Finding the balance that is described in SCEA’s definition is challenging. Each discipline has its own character, its own way of thinking—what Gee (2003) calls an internal grammar. The nature of teachers’ and students’ efforts in an integrated lesson or unit is impacted by the presence of art forms as partnered subject matter. A blending of any two things requires an awareness of the characteristics of each. Developing arts integrated curricula requires that teachers develop strong disciplinary understanding in all engaged content (Gardner & Boix-Mansilla, 2003) so that teachers can discover where in the landscape of the curriculum (Efland, 2000; Lynch, 1960) the disciplines are near to one another. For SCEA, those adjacent places or crossing points are found through connecting concepts (Erickson, 2002), big timeless ideas that

instruction can target beyond specific objectives in each discipline. The ultimate goal of this exploration is that when students have learning experiences at these meeting places between the disciplines, they gain a deeper understanding of targeted concepts.

### **Professional Development**

Learning is an ongoing process of change in a human system that occurs through interaction with the environment and one another (Simonson et al., 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). Leadership can be understood as a process of navigating change, which Barker (2002) distinguishes from management, which is the maintenance of the status quo. Professional development is a process of facilitating change in practice among educators. Multiple sources (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey, 2000; Jaquith et al., 2010; Wei et al., 2010) describe effective professional development as sustained, connected to practice, focused on student learning, and aimed at cultivating strong working relationships among teachers. This process of learning requires facilitation (Brookfield, 1986) to induct teachers into domains of working and learning (Gee, 2003) that are outside their current experiences.

### **Activity Theory**

In addition to the already complex process of negotiating the integration of arts disciplines with non-arts content, participants at Atlantis Arts Academy and Brickton Middle School were influenced by their own backgrounds and dispositions toward the arts. Their experiences were also impacted by school cultures, political pressures, and personal interactions with facilitators and other participants. The act of interpreting the complicated interaction of these forces calls for the researcher to find a balance between oversimplification on the one hand

and sentimentality on the other (Bresler, 2006). Cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) was employed to assist in this balancing act.

Activity theory had its beginnings with Vygotsky, who developed the notion of mediation as a way of coping with the inadequacies of stimulus and response or biological development as explanations for human learning. In this first triangular explanation of human learning (Figure 3) Vygotsky (1978) described all human activity as occurring through interaction mediated by tools (physical mediators) and signs (conceptual mediators). Leontyev built upon Vygotsky's structure and created what first became called activity theory (Engeström, 1987; Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). His model, later called second generation activity theory (Engeström, 2001), considered not just the subject, the object of his, her, or their activity, and the tools or signs through which the activity occurred (Figure 4). The second generation model added considerations that acknowledged that all activity occurs in time, space, and social contexts: Rules that govern the activity, the Community that participates in the activity, and the Division of Labor among those involved (Engeström, 1996).

Engeström (1987) further developed activity theory by considering the interaction among overlapping activities (Figure 5). He described five principles for understanding activity systems: Interactivity – as the prime unit of analysis, the activity system is seen in relation to other activity systems; Multi-voicedness – activity systems are comprised of multiple views, traditions, and interests; Historicity – activity systems change over time and their problems can only be understood against that history; The Central Role of Contradictions – Contradictions between and within systems drive change in the system (Engeström, 2001).

Engeström described four categories of contradictions in and among activity systems that have since been employed in activity systems analysis: Primary contradictions that occur within



elements of a system, often due to conflicting values; Secondary contradictions, which occur between elements of a system; Tertiary contradictions, which occur when new forms or methods of activity are introduced; and Quaternary contradictions, which occur between neighboring or nested activity systems (Engeström, 1987).

For this study, activity theory provided a structure through which the interactions of multiple forces at play in a learning context could be understood. The elements of the system and the notion of contradictions as tensions driving change helped me to make sense of the diverse experiences among participants at each site and the abundance of artifact data. Activity theory illuminated the change processes in each system and opened the individual contexts up to cross-case analysis.

## **Methods**

The purpose of this study was not to answer questions about the impact of a single variable, but to describe the interaction among many variables in a complex system. Creswell (2007) maintained that qualitative methods are appropriate where the goal is to seek a “complex, detailed understanding” of an issue (p. 40). A qualitative multiple case study design was employed to address the question of how professional development programs in arts integration were experienced by participants.

Yamagata-Lynch (2010) identifies case study as particularly appropriate for activity theory analyses, which focus on contextualized systems. This study was structured according to what Yin (2009) described as an embedded multiple-case design (Figure 7). The cases for this study were the professional development programs in arts integration that were implemented

within different contexts. Within each case were multiple teachers' experiences, which served to contribute to an understanding of the case as a whole.

Multiple sources of data were gathered for this study: artifacts (documents, images, and video) collected through SCEA's interaction with each school and semi-structured interviews with participants from each program. After receiving permission from the University of Tennessee Chattanooga Internal Review Board (Appendix B), the Executive Director of the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts, and administrators at Atlantis Arts Academy and Brickton Middle School (Appendix C), a review of the available documents and other artifacts associated with each program was begun which applied a constant comparative method. My first review of the artifact data used the elements of the Activity System matrix (Figure 1) as etic issues (Stake, 1995) to categorize the data. A colleague performed an independent categorization, and the two reviews were examined for agreement, resulting in an initial description of the activity systems at each site.

Interviews were performed with participants from each site, including arts teachers, non-arts teachers, and administrators. The interviews were performed by phone or videoconference and audio recorded with the permission of each interviewee. Transcripts of the recordings were provided to interviewees for their review. Transcripts were adjusted to reflect their additions, deletions, or changes to what they had initially said. The interview transcripts were then categorized with the assistance of a colleague, as had been done with the artifact data. The results from interviews contributed to revisions in the description of each activity system.

Using QDA Miner (Provalis, 2004), artifact data and interview transcripts were further analyzed to find issues that emerged as contradictions within or among elements in each system.

After within-case analyses were complete, the data were reviewed again looking for similarities among the patterns of tension in the two activity systems.

### **Summary of Findings**

Findings for each site consisted of a description of the program in arts integration as an activity system and a discussion of the contradictions that emerged in the examination of the data. After the two systems were described, a discussion was provided of issues that emerged across the two programs that could inform future professional development in arts integration.

### **The Activity Systems**

The descriptions of each program identified particular differences between the two systems, but the way they broke down as activity systems was similar (Figure 8 and Figure 10). The object of each, while worded slightly differently in documents, was the increased capacity of the teacher to design and implement arts integrated instruction. For both, mediating artifacts included workshops, face-to-face mentoring with SCEA personnel, distance communication (including phone calls, e-mail, Google Groups, SharePoint, and videoconferences), the SCEA integrated lesson template, and a variety of prompts provided to teachers to facilitate documentation of their effort. The rules for each system included schedules, school and district policies, documentation requirements, and other initiatives implemented at each school. The community included colleagues who were part of the teacher's art form cohort, other faculty on grade level or subject teams, school administrators, the Arts Integration Coordinator, the school's arts teachers, students, and the SCEA mentors. The efforts of the program were divided among

the participant, the Arts Leadership Team, the Arts Integration Coordinator, SCEA mentors, and other participants.

### **Contradictions at Atlantis Arts Academy**

At Atlantis Arts Academy, three significant contradictions influenced the system: changes in the staff and organizational structure, change in the documentation process, and conflicting initiatives (Figure 10). Changes in the organizational structure of the school and heavy teacher turnover were identified as a secondary contradiction in which participants encountered a new aspect of an activity and the process of assimilation produces conflict (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009). Each alteration in the makeup of the community changed a participant's place in the school setting and the body of support available for the work. This instability also increased teachers' level of anxiety, which impacted their ability to adapt to changes in practice.

The 2010 shift in documentation from a common set of quarterly expectations to a participant-directed portfolio model was a tertiary contradiction in which a new tool or method was implemented that was believed to be more effective. Even though teachers had asked for the flexibility of such a system, in practice they felt overwhelmed with the work of adapting to its implementation. In the final year of the program, the process was adapted to make it less cumbersome. Incoming teachers were given a more time-based process and more experienced participants were tasked to provide documentation in a modified portfolio format.

The most significant tension at Atlantis was a quaternary contradiction – one between adjacent activity systems. In 2010, the school administration mandated two new initiatives in addition to the arts integration program. One in particular, a model brought by Calgary Academy,

did not align with SCEA's model. Teachers felt frustrated at what they perceived as mixed messages. For more than a year, teachers' efforts were slowed by the layers of expectation. Some participants halted efforts toward the goals of the arts integration program altogether.

### **Contradictions at Brickton Middle School**

At Brickton Middle School, three contradictions were identified: conflicting values regarding the object of the program, participants' failure to participate in distance communication with mentors, and turnover among the school's arts faculty (Figure 12).

The value conflict over the object of the program was a primary contradiction in which multiple value systems created conflict within a single element of the system (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009). In this case, a lack of shared vision among the principal, the community, the district, and participating teachers about the mission of the school and the role of the arts in that mission created significant tension regarding the program's efforts to cultivate arts integration as an instructional approach. Concerns over test scores in reading and math from some participants, and pressures to that end from the district made it difficult to achieve full engagement from the faculty.

There were two secondary contradictions. First, teachers engaged with mentors face-to-face, but often failed to participate regularly or meaningfully in distance communication with mentors. Participants identified lack of time for participation as the reason for their lack of communication, but interviewees said that the teachers who did not buy in saw this work as an unnecessary addition to the tasks required of them. Without consistent communication, it became very difficult for facilitators to guide the development of lessons. By the second year of the

program at Brickton some site visits by SCEA personnel were cancelled due to lack of preparation.

The other secondary contradiction was the turnover in arts faculty at Brickton. From the time of the planning of the program to its ending in 2012, Brickton Middle saw changes among its visual art, music, drama, and dance teachers. This impacted collaborative efforts in art form cohorts, but most significantly slowed progress toward scope and sequence documents. One goal of the program related to the development of arts knowledge and skill among the faculty as a whole was the development of documents summarizing the scope and sequence of instruction in each art form for each grade level. These documents were to assist with choices for arts immersion sessions that would facilitate teachers' learning in the art form and provide a resource for arts and non-arts teachers to collaborate. They would have also helped close the perceived divide between arts and non-arts faculty at Brickton, a divide that was not fully resolved at the close of the program.

### **Cross-Case Analysis**

In the review of the tensions in each program, five issues arose in both settings. Teachers' experiences were impacted by their sense of self-efficacy related to the arts and arts integration. Their success was influenced by their flexibility with regard to new approaches to teaching. Both sets of participants experienced pressure for higher scores on state standardized tests. Teachers' level of perceived stress impacted their participation. Lastly, more persistent participants identified student learning as a goal that allowed them to persevere.

### **Self-efficacy**

Teachers struggled with a sense of discomfort or anxiety about taking responsibility for new content. With time, and through reflection, some teachers worked through this lack of confidence to recognize growth in themselves and their students. Others never moved beyond that sense of anxiety and participated only so far as they were required.

### **Perceived stress**

Each context faced its own set of tensions, but participants at both sites identified lack of time and increased stress as factors that impacted their work in arts integration. As teachers felt pressure to complete more and more tasks, the demands of lesson design, reflection, and communication with SCEA mentors took on lower priority and some teachers' participation diminished or halted altogether.

### **Testing pressure**

At both schools, pressure for higher scores on state standardized tests, particularly in reading and math, led school administrators to make choices that imposed changes to aspects of the arts integration program. Pressures for test scores diminished the intended outcome of deeper student understanding that was proposed for each program. Participants described frustration with mixed messages and many chose to slow or abandon participation in the arts integration program over fears related to district or state accountability demands.

### **Teacher flexibility**

The teachers who engaged in the work and found it helpful faced the same struggles as teachers who withdrew or never participated. One difference between participation and non-participation was the ability of the teacher to think flexibly about her or his practice. Some teachers demonstrated a tendency to see new things only in terms of their current practices. Such inflexible teachers demonstrated a “performance orientation” (Efland, 2002) to learning. These participants viewed new learning opportunities only as tasks to be completed in addition to other required tasks in a limited amount of time. Inflexible teachers also tended to balk at approaches to teaching driven by goals that did not align with their current understanding of how teaching worked. Teachers who were willing to risk participation and open to reconsidering their work were able to use the experiences in the arts integration program to expand their repertoire of teaching skills.

### **Student learning**

One factor that allowed teachers to persevere through stresses of workload, changing environments, and external demands was their vision for the impact of arts integration on students. Engaged participants described growth in students’ retention, engagement, and interaction as a result of their work through the arts.

### **Limitations**

This study provides a richer understanding of two professional development programs. As a multiple site case study, the results of this research are not intended to be generalizable. The issues that emerged may be of use in future program-development and research. The narrative



and analyses describe the two school contexts and participants at a point in a trajectory. They reflect the place and time that they describe and should not be understood to apply to the two schools in the years since the close of the two programs.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study lead me to three conclusions that have implications for future professional learning programs targeting the arts or arts integration with a diverse population of teachers: a) the need to clarify the object of a program, b) the importance of gathering the right subjects, and c) the need to employ the most transparent mediating artifacts possible.

### **Clarify the Object**

In order for whole-school professional development in arts integration to thrive, it is recommended that the school community:

- Develop a clearer understanding of arts learning.
- Create a mapped view of the curricular landscape that identifies potential connections among content areas.
- Clarify teacher and student outcomes for an arts integration program.

SCEA recently led case-study research profiling successful k-12 arts programs in seven southeastern states (Baxley, Burgess, Melnik, & Nesbit, 2014). We found that in these elementary and secondary programs, the arts were part of a vision and mission shared by stakeholders in the school and the community. Leaders of these model programs (administrators, teachers, students, and parents) held tenaciously to a vision for student learning in the arts in the face of change and challenges. The need for such a shared and supported vision in professional

learning is upheld by this study of the programs at Atlantis Arts Academy and Brickton Middle School. The object of the system needs to be cultivated early, before the implementation of activities. Based on the experiences of participants in this study, it is recommended that those wishing to build a strong arts integration model first cultivate a clear understanding of learning in the arts among all stakeholders in the school. Then, develop a model for integration that situates the arts among other domains in the landscape of the curriculum (Efland, 2000). After that, work with teachers to develop clear outcomes for student learning in and through the arts that you hope to achieve by finding and exploiting nodes and intersections among domains. Finally, as the program moves forward, continually revisit the vision for arts integrated learning with participating teachers.

In keeping with Gardner and Boix-Mansilla's (2003) assertion that disciplinary understanding must precede interdisciplinary understanding, any school community interested in making arts integration a useful teaching model should work with arts teachers to build a basic understanding of what students learn in dance, drama, music, or visual art classes. The struggle faced by non-arts teachers in the programs at Atlantis and Brickton might have been mitigated if all teachers had a common understanding of the learning goals in each art form for their students. Such a common understanding would also have opened opportunities to break down the divide between arts and non-arts teachers seen at Brickton. Clear curriculum summaries (the scope and sequence documents attempted at Atlantis and Brickton) could build community support for the arts programs and provide the beginning of non-arts teachers' entry into the semiotic domains (Gee, 2003) of each art-form.

Once the school community has a common understanding of learning goals in the arts domains, teachers should be brought together to see how the arts domains fit within the larger

landscape of the curriculum. Each domain has its own thought processes, ways of approaching problems, and gathering knowledge. Each has strengths and weaknesses that need to be made known. Where are the clear intersections between these domains and the others in the curriculum (Efland, 2002)? Through this larger understanding of the curriculum, teachers can collaboratively map out intersections and choose when and how it might be appropriate to explore them. This is a complex process. It would be tempting for proponents of arts integrated instruction to compose a list of reasons for integration and distribute it to schools, but as Rogers (2003) wrote, issues of complexity, compatibility, and relative advantage are more likely to be overcome if end users are involved in the design process. A teacher who helped identify goals for the work is more likely to see beyond the immediate struggle he or she is facing in its implementation.

With a shared image of arts learning in place and a collaboratively developed map of the geography of learning domains at the school, the next step would be to cultivate a need for interdisciplinary work among arts and non-arts subjects. The school community would be much better positioned to believe that integrated instruction is compatible with values they already share (Rogers, 2003). Then, when the need is understood, teachers and other leaders in the school community can build a specific picture of the outcomes they want to see from integrated work. Such outcomes should be communicated in terms that describe teacher change and student outcomes (Guskey, 2000).

With such outcomes understood, a professional development model like the ones implemented at Atlantis and Brickton would be more capable of enduring the ebb and flow of change and challenge that inevitably affect any program in education. With foundational understandings in place, an Arts Leadership Team would be better able to identify participants'

needs and adjust learning experiences. This same body, with rotating participation and regular communication with teachers as a whole, should continually revisit the foundational values about arts learning, the map of the curriculum, and the goals of a professional development program in arts integration.

### **Gather the Right Subjects**

The experiences described in this study have led me to question the feasibility of whole-school efforts in arts integration. The process of cultivating shared beliefs about arts learning, mapping the curriculum, and building investment for arts integration would be most effective, but any school community would face challenges implementing that process in the face of the near constant barrage of urgencies facing public schools in the factory model system of American education (Eisner, 2002). The greatest success stories at both schools in the study were about individuals who had an intrinsic desire to pursue this work and held a vision of the impact the work could have on student understanding.

The difficulties faced in implementing programs like this as whole school efforts suggest that growth in arts integration as a rigorous instructional model may be considered in terms of lateral growth from below rather than planned programmatic growth from above. In the past few years, SCEA has been exploring the possibility of building a network of teachers not from a single faculty, but from several schools in an area that could serve as the community in a new system. Teachers would be invited to apply as teams of arts and non-arts teachers who would work together to develop integrated lessons and implement them in their own school contexts. The results of that work would be shared at face-to-face gatherings where successes could be

celebrated and challenges discussed. A model like this that draws on voluntary participants is also more in keeping with Brookfield's (1986) description of adult learning as self-directed.

With attention to tools and successful communication, there is potential for such a network to grow rhizomatically (Kang, 2007; Wiebe et al., 2007). Rather than attempting to cultivate the model as a controlled crop, the approach could spread as a thriving weed. SCEA's role in that effort would change slightly, though, from what it was in the programs described in this study. The emphasis of the work would shift from an emphasis on instruction to the facilitation of a living vision of arts integration. Special attention would also need to be paid to the facilitation of communication among the network to maintain a community around those who have adopted the approach to ensure that it sustains (Rogers, 2003). In this case, the organization really would be made of conversations (Perkins, 2003). One challenge such an effort would face would be reduced control over outcomes. Teachers in multiple schools or school systems would have a greater need to adapt or hybridize (Tyack & Cuban, 1995) templates and other forms of documentation.

### **Find or Build the Most Transparent Tools Possible**

The artifacts and communication tools used in these two programs both helped and hindered teachers in achieving the object of the activity. Even teachers fully engaged in the program, who shared the vision of concept-based arts integration as an instructional model, struggled with some documents and methods of communication. The mediating artifacts, a broader term for what Vygotsky (1978) referred to as "tools" are the means through which a subject accomplishes the object. The ideal tool is one that the subject is so proficient with that it

becomes an extension of the subject him- or herself. The more the subject has to pay attention to the operation of the tool, the less effective the tool is as part of the system (Paloff & Pratt, 2007).

The struggle with mediating artifacts was very clear in the introduction of the portfolio documentation at Atlantis. The documents themselves addressed what they were supposed to address, but the learning backlog faced by participants trying to use them for the first time was overwhelming. As new models are developed for professional development in arts integration, those involved in the leadership process should determine what communication needs to occur and what tools participants are already most comfortable with. Additionally, documents like lesson templates and reflection prompts should be crafted to use language and formats that teachers recognize in order to make the tools more compatible (Rogers, 2003) with participants' existing work worlds. If it is determined that an unfamiliar communication tool or artifact is needed, then leadership should plan explicitly for patient, repeated instruction in its use early in the program to avoid distracting from the goal of increased teacher capacity and deeper student understanding.

### **Recommendations for further research**

Human activity occurs in the midst of multiple intentions and actions of individuals and groups in and outside a given system. In this study, the application of activity theory shed light on tensions in two arts integration programs including one particularly important one at Atlantis between the arts integration program and other initiatives implemented by the school administration. Engeström's (2001) first principle of third generation activity theory states that an activity system is seen "in its network relations to other activity systems" (p. 137).

Overlapping systems of activity have an impact upon one another. That impact may aid in the pursuit of a given object, or as was noted at Atlantis Arts Academy, hamper those efforts.

In this study, activity theory was applied to examine programs after their completion. The results of the examination are helpful for future programming, but not for the programs that were under study. Proponents of activity theory have advocated for its application as a tool for intervention as well as inquiry (Daniels & Warmington, 2007; Engeström, 2001; Toivainen, 2007). There is potential for developers of programming to apply activity theory to clarify objects and highlight potential overlap between programs. Arts teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders could consider their intentions through this lens to identify potential overlap and difficulty moving forward. The resulting dialogue might help clarify goals and create better alignment between the multiple activities that will exist in the working context of a school.

This study also noted the impact of teachers' self-efficacy related to arts domains as a limiting factor in pursuing integrated instruction. In my discussion I recommended a curriculum mapping process based on a view of the curriculum as a city rather than a production line as proposed by Arthur Efland (2000) using Kevin Lynch's ideas about city planning (Lynch, 1960). I believe this approach to curriculum has a great deal of potential, but needs to be further articulated for application. In my review of the literature, I have not found a structure for curriculum mapping that views the multiple learning domains of students this way. For implementation, teachers might need a structure to build on and examples of completed or partially completed maps. It would be useful to design and test model curricula that seek to build students as explorers in an unfamiliar landscape rather than as products under development.

Finally, in the discussion above, I presented the possibility of pursuing professional development in arts integration not as a model to be imposed upon an entire faculty, but as a network that might grow laterally. Such a network would emerge through the connection of teachers who are interested in and ready for the complex task of finding meeting points between the disparate learning domains of arts and non-arts subjects. It would be beneficial to identify a base set of skills or dispositions that would make an educator ready to begin the work. What level of skill or comfort with a given art form should be considered a necessary foundation? The reverse is also true: what level of skill in non-arts learning domains (science, mathematics, history, language) should be considered a necessary foundation for an arts teacher to enter this work? It might be helpful to build case study examinations of teachers who have found success at developing and implementing arts integrated units of study with their students to begin to describe a profile that would help the facilitators grow an arts learning network.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study highlight the complexity of implementing a whole school professional development program in arts integration. The contradictions identified in the activity system analyses show influences from teachers' background with and dispositions toward the arts, their use of tools and means of communication, and changes in their school communities. Additionally, forces outside the school or the program can impact its effectiveness. In this study, those included pressures for higher state test scores from the district and the application of additional initiatives to what teachers were expected to accomplish. All of these things are beyond the simple examination of the introduction of instructional experiences in arts integrated instruction. Effective whole school efforts toward the goals identified by these



programs (arts knowledge and skill, integrated instructional design, and collaborative practice) would require a long process beginning with the cultivation of a shared vision for arts learning as part of a whole curriculum map and clear articulation of outcomes for integrated instruction.

The study also demonstrated, though, that while these efforts faced significant challenges and some participants' participation waned, other teachers who became fully engaged in the work persisted with designing and implementing lessons that integrated non-arts content with dance, music, drama, or visual art. These teachers described benefits for their students that, for them, made the struggle against other forces worthwhile. It is suggested that professional development in arts integration be designed with the goal of rhizomatic growth rather than imposed change by cultivating of a network of participants with interest in integration and a knowledge base with at least one art form. Rather than looking for these in only one school, these would be drawn from multiple schools. This would necessarily loosen control over outcomes, but might offer a greater likelihood of sustained impact on teacher practice and thus better achieve the ultimate object of increasing the depth of student understanding within and across learning domains.

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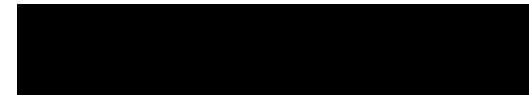
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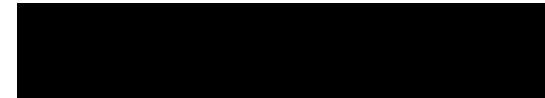
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## APPENDIX A

### INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ATLANTIS ARTS ACADEMY



Instructional Framework		
OBJECTIVE 1: ARTS INTEGRATION	OBJECTIVE 2: ART SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE	OBJECTIVE 3: SUSTAINABILITY
Level I (Year 1)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts are introduced to Arts Integration and become familiar with the SCEA criteria for its implementation embracing: inquiry-based instruction, backward design model, embedded standards and objectives, Bloom's Taxonomy, performance task assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts are introduced to the elements and processes associated with the designated art form; they engage in a variety of artistic endeavors targeting improved skills and knowledge in the art form alone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts are introduced to collaboration and explore several arrangements of collaborative practice through planning, teaching and reflection. Teacher-Mentor, Peer-to-Peer, Teacher-Specialist or Artist, and Teacher-Community are relationships to be explored through collaboration.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts experience AI lessons grounded in the conceptual framework, and begin identifying shared concepts between the designated art form and their own curriculum. SCEA mentors collaborate with teachers to design and deliver model instruction in teachers' classrooms and guide their deconstruction and analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts identify processes in the designated art form: observe them being modeled, engage in them and practice teaching them to children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts are guided in the deconstruction and analysis of the Annenberg workshop series videos <i>Connecting with the Arts</i> with a focus on varied models of collaborative practice.</li> </ul>
<p>Quarterly Competencies (to be completed consecutively, each 9 weeks):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select and replicate one of the introduced processes from the art form; report through written prompt</li> <li>2. Mentor-Teacher collaborative planning and instruction of a concept-based integrated lesson employing the art process explored (1)</li> <li>3. Peer-to-peer collaborative planning and instruction of a concept-based lesson</li> <li>4. Structured observation of a concept-based, arts-integrated lesson – Mentor &amp; Administrator</li> </ol> <p>Written reflection (April): How has your exploration of this instructional model influenced your philosophy and practice of teaching?</p>		
Level II (Year 2)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Second year focus shifts from lesson design to unit development: enduring ideas and summative assessments through performance tasks that are conceptually driven guide this work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts are guided in the "unpacking" of the National Standards in the Arts and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study in the Arts to develop a working knowledge of their content and achievement benchmarks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts identify the critical traits of mentors and the needs and expectations of the recipients. Strategies like listening, questioning and evaluating are explored as processes rather than outcomes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts explore "ways of knowing" as pathways into the integrated model exploring their construction through works of art, standards, significant events or problems that are scaffolded into the curriculum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts identify additional processes in the designated art form and the standards they support: observe them being modeled, engage in them and practice teaching them to children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohorts will engage in a guided, year-long book study: <i>Mentoring Matters</i>, by Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman</li> </ul>



Quarterly Competencies: <div><div>1. Observe a mentor-modeled lesson and deconstruct/analyze it based on provided criteria. (concept-based elements; standards; objectives ...)</div><div>2. Peer-to-peer observation and critique is guided by SCEA mentors</div><div>3. Collaboratively designed and delivered arts integrated unit – reviewed and observed by SCEA Mentor &amp; Administrator</div><div>4. Collaborate with team members to establish criteria for mentorship – guided by SCEA Mentor</div></div>		
Written reflection (April): How is the arts-integrated instructional model influencing your view and organization of curricula?		
OBJECTIVE 1: ARTS INTEGRATION	OBJECTIVE 2: ART SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE	OBJECTIVE 3: SUSTAINABILITY
Level III (Year 3)		
<div>• Cohorts revisit the framework; devise original instruction; create evaluative tools and embed arts-integrated units into the framework of the existing curriculum.</div>	<div>• Cohorts are introduced to outside resources, organizations, personnel and venues through which an arts-integrated curriculum can be facilitated.</div>	<div>• Cohort members will engage in the application of their own mentorship skills as they guide the work of newly admitted members of Cohort II.</div>
<div>• Cohort members take on the role of mentor as they are guided to facilitate and evaluate Art Integrated lessons, unit design and instruction designed and delivered by their cohort members.</div>	<div>• Cohorts identify additional processes in the designated art form and the standards they support: observe them being modeled, engage in them and practice teaching them to children.</div>	
<div>• SCEA mentors facilitate the development of mentoring skills in cohort members through the collaborative development of an observation protocol and rubrics for evaluating lesson and unit design, development and delivery.</div>		
Quarterly Competencies: <div><div>1. Cohorts continue to individually and collaboratively design and deliver original lesson and unit plans in Arts Integration; One structured observation by school administrator.</div><div>2. Team members partner with a community member or agency to plan and present a grade-level open house for school staff, parents, and business partners demonstrating the philosophy and practice of Arts Integration. Photo documentation and written reflection documents this work.</div><div>3. Cohorts collaborate to create the observation protocol and rubric(s) for peer evaluation.</div><div>4. Mentor Cohort Two members – Introduce the process through at least 3 meetings with a Cohort Two member<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Model instruction through teacher workshops</li><li>Guided curriculum development</li><li>Demonstrate arts integrated instruction in classrooms with children</li></ul></div></div>		

## APPENDIX B

### IRB APPROVAL

**Institutional Review Board**

Dept. 4915  
615 McCallie Avenue  
Chattanooga, TN 37403-2598  
Phone: (423) 425-5867  
Fax: (423) 425-4052  
instrb@utc.edu  
<http://www.utc.edu/irb>

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Joel Baxley  
Dr. James Tucker **IRB #14-040**

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity  
Dr. Bart Weathington, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: February 25, 2014

SUBJECT: IRB #14-040: Professional Development in Arts Integration: An Activity Theory Analysis  
of Participating Teachers' Experiences

The IRB Committee Chair has reviewed and approved your application and assigned you the IRB number listed above. You must include the following approval statement on research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

***The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project #14-040.***

Please remember that you must complete a Certification for Changes, Annual Review, or Project Termination/Completion Form when the project is completed or provide an annual report if the project takes over one year to complete. The IRB Committee will make every effort to remind you prior to your anniversary date; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that this additional step is satisfied.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email [instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu)

Best wishes for a successful research project.

**Institutional Review Board**

Dept. 4915  
615 McCallie Avenue  
Chattanooga, TN 37403-2598  
Phone: (423) 425-5867  
Fax: (423) 425-4052  
instrb@utc.edu  
<http://www.utc.edu/irb>

**MEMORANDUM**

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TO: Joe Baxley **IRB # 14-040**

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity  
Dr. Bart Weathington, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: May 5, 2015

SUBJECT: IRB #14-040: 14-040

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved your application for Annual Renewal for the IRB project listed above.

You must include the following approval statement on research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

***The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project # 14-040.***

Please remember that you must complete a form for completion when the project is completed or provide an annual report if the project takes over one year to complete. The IRB Committee will make every effort to remind you prior to your anniversary date; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that this additional step is satisfied.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email [instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu)

Best wishes for a successful research project.

## APPENDIX C

### PERMISSIONS



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**Subject:** RE: research request

**Date:** Friday, May 2, 2014 at 12:49:29 PM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** [REDACTED]

**To:** Baxley, Joel

**CC:** [REDACTED]

Joel,

You have our permission to include the PD work in Arts Integration you did with [REDACTED] in your doctoral research project. Please coordinate the research activity you will be conducting with [REDACTED] Dean of Arts and Humanities. Best wishes to you and the SCEA team. AI is very much alive and well at [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

"A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty." — Albert Einstein

---

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

---

**Subject:** RE: research request

**Date:** Friday, May 2, 2014 at 1:02:37 PM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** [REDACTED]

**To:** Baxley, Joel

I give you permission to use the information you have.

Thank you

[REDACTED]  
Principal

---

**From:** Baxley, Joel [mailto:Joel-Baxley@utc.edu]

**Sent:** Friday, May 02, 2014 11:02 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** research request

[REDACTED]  
I am the visual art director for the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts. We provided professional development in arts integration for the MPMSVPA staff a few years back.

I am working on my dissertation for the EdD and wish to include that work at [REDACTED] as part of my study. I'd like your permission to use documents and artifacts of that work from SCEA's files as a data source and I'd like to ask some of the teachers who participated in that work, if they are willing, to be interviewed as part of that study. I've attached a formal request letter, which you will also be getting via snail mail. If you are willing, please send me—electronically or by mail—a written confirmation of your permission.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to call me.

Thank you,

**Joel Baxley**

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Part I:

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been at this school?
3. Describe your teaching experience prior to coming to this school.
4. Tell about your first year at this school.
5. What is your current teaching assignment?
6. Describe your responsibilities at the school.
7. Who do you work with most often?
8. Prior to the SCEA program, what contact had you had with the arts?
9. What role did the arts play in your classroom before you came into contact with this program?
10. What is your primary professional responsibility?
11. Describe your first contact with the arts integration program.
12. Describe some of your experiences with the program in the first year you were involved.

Part II:

1. How would you describe the school to someone who isn't familiar with it?
2. Tell me about the organizational structure of the school.
3. How has the structure of the school changed since you first came on staff?
4. Who did you work with most directly among the staff at this school?
5. What is the primary purpose of the school?
6. What would you say is the function of arts instruction?
7. In our earlier conversation you said that your primary professional purpose was \_\_\_\_\_ How does that align with the goals you see driving the school?
8. Tell about some of the initiatives and programs at this school that influence your work.
9. Tell me about your communication with the SCEA mentor.

Part III:

1. What do you perceive to be the purpose of the arts integration program at this school?
2. How does this purpose align with what you described as the goals of the school and your own professional goals?
3. How did the work in arts integration impact your day-to-day work in the classroom?
4. What would you describe as your greatest success in this program?
5. Describe something that frustrated you in this program.
6. How would you say your practice has changed as a result of this work?
7. How did your work in this program align with your responsibilities to the school as a whole?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW RELEASE

## INTERVIEW RELEASE

Name

DATE

As part of my doctoral research and to build a better understanding of SCEA's professional development programming in arts integration over the past several years, I'd like to request your participation in an interview. Your participation would be entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw your participation at any time. While there are no foreseeable risks involved in your participation, all discussion of your responses will be kept anonymous and your name and the name of the school where you worked during your participation in our work will not be used in any report or publication. With your permission, I will audio record the interview. These recordings will not be shared with any other person, and will be destroyed after transcription. When your interview has been transcribed, you will be given an opportunity to review the interview and you may strike any material that you do not wish used for this research.

If you have any questions concerning this study, please contact me at 423-425-4694 or by email at [Joel-Baxley@utc.edu](mailto:Joel-Baxley@utc.edu).

Thank you,



Joel Baxley

This research has been approved by the UTC Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions concerning the UTC IRB policies or procedures or your rights as a human subject, please contact the IRB Committee.

Dr. Bart Weatherington, IRB Committee Chair  
[instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu) (423) 425-5867

*Please acknowledge your willingness to participate in this study by signing in the box below. Should you wish to refuse recording of the interview, please note this with your signature.*

*Signature of Interviewee*



## APPENDIX F

### SCEA INTEGRATED LESSON TEMPLATE

<b>Author:</b> <b>Lesson Title:</b> _____ <b>Grade Level:</b> _____		
<b>Integrated Content Areas</b>		How do the standards in both content areas inform one another?
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Standards</b>	How does this concept meaningfully connect the two content areas?
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 0 10px;"> <b>Concept</b> </div> </div>		
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	How do your lesson objectives address standards in each content area? What will your students know and be able to do as a result of your instruction?
<b>Formative Assessment</b>		What strategies will be used to measure student understanding? Where have assessments been embedded in the lesson procedures? Are assessments present for both content areas? Do assessments clearly reflect objectives?
<b>Summative Assessment</b>		What are the criteria for success in the summative assessment task?
<b>Procedures</b>		<b>Introduction/Motivation</b> How will you engage the students? What is the "hook" that intrigues their interest?  <b>Knowledge/Comprehension</b> What facts and fundamental understandings will support student learning? How will students summarize their understanding of this new information?  <b>Application/Analysis</b> How will students connect this new information to what they already know? Can students distinguish the parts of the problem? How will they categorize and examine the pieces?  <b>Synthesis/Evaluation</b> Can students reassemble the parts to create something new? How will students make informed judgments regarding their work?
<b>Materials and Resources</b>		<b>Conclusion</b> How will you help students summarize their efforts in this lesson and pose questions that will lead to the next one?  What items are necessary to the teacher and the student to implement this lesson?

## APPENDIX G

### ATLANTIS 2010 REVISED COMPETENCIES

AI Instructional Designer	<b>Analyze, co-create and design arts integrated lessons</b> A key factor in the effective implementation of a comprehensive arts integration instructional model is the understanding of instructional design as it informs instructional practice.		
	Level I	Level II	Level III
<b>Structural Agreement</b> Structural agreement is the alignment among and between components of the lesson or unit.	Teachers become familiar with the SCEA instructional framework, and can apply the NCSCS to this model.	Teachers understand and articulate the difference between theme-based and conceptually driven lessons & units.	Teachers analyze instruction to identify and create embedded, <b>scaffolded</b> assessments.
<b>Conceptual Framework</b> The SCEA model places conceptual understanding at the center of the instructional design.	Teachers become familiar with Bloom's Taxonomy as a structural tool for analyzing and designing arts-integrated lessons.	Teachers make effective choices of materials and art works as a key factor in conceptually grounded instruction.	Teachers design and implement performance-based assessments as embedded factors of instruction.
<b>Lesson Documentation</b> Clearly articulated and explicit lesson plans contribute to the school-wide resource of arts-integrated lessons and help to maintain the sustainability of the instructional model.	Teachers write in an active voice to describe student and teacher behaviors.	Teachers analyze and create arts integrated lessons in which activities are supported through instruction.	Teachers expand their planning from lessons to units, exemplifying balanced instruction based on student needs.

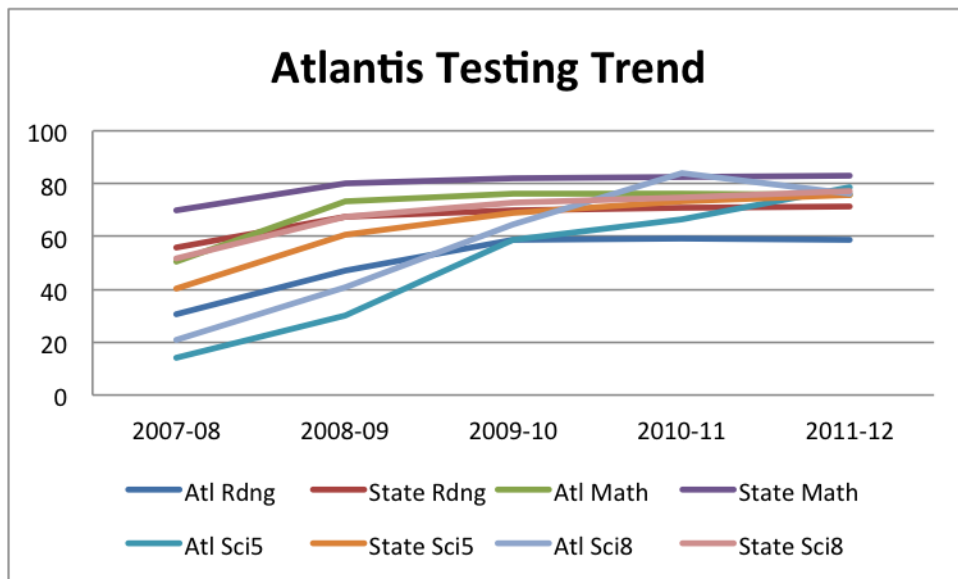
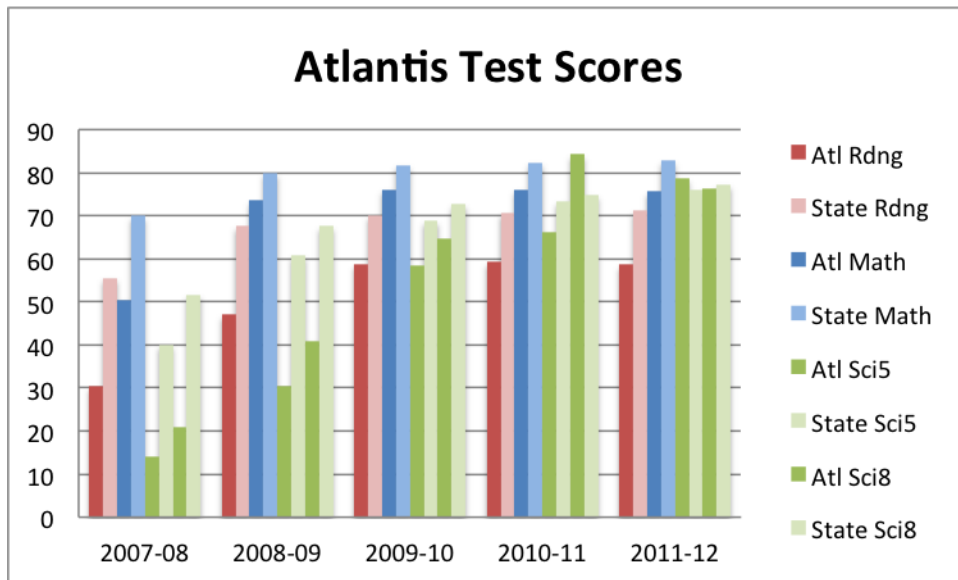
AI Practitioner	<b>Observe, co-facilitate, and deliver arts integrated instruction</b> Practitioners expand their own teaching repertoire and strategies to implement arts integration.		
	Level I	Level II	Level III
<b>Pedagogy</b> The method of teaching that incorporates strategies and philosophical beliefs that are impacted by the student's background knowledge, experiences and environment as well as the learning goals of both educator and student.	Teachers become familiar with their personal approach to teaching and can articulate differences in strategies.	Teachers employ inquiry based instruction to use effective questioning and discussion strategies to achieve understanding.	Teachers understand how to reach a learning goal through more than one approach.
<b>Management</b> Arts Integration requires a learning environment that is highly active and interactive.	Teachers create thinking classroom environments with their students.	Teachers use group motivation to support a learning environment that fosters positive interpersonal interactions, active learning and <b>self motivation</b> .	Teachers become effective communicators to engage in time efficient, productive and learning focused interactions.
<b>Reflection</b> The AI practitioner's role is multi-faceted and requires intentional reflection to evolve their instructional practice.	Teachers nurtures and expresses their own need for learning through relationship.	Teachers use reflective thinking to make changes to or check the curriculum, instruction or implementation of the lesson.	Teachers adjust their practice to know and guide students.

Artist-Arts Educator	<b>Understand how to employ key vocabulary, and the elements and processes in their chosen art form to communicate ideas and experiences.</b> Developing expertise in one art form is necessary in order to discover conceptual connections and effectively integrate the arts into instructional practice.		
	Level I	Level II	Level III
<b>Create</b> Understand self as artist and develop knowledge and skills in the chosen art form	Teachers become familiar with vocabulary, elements, and processes in their chosen art form.	Teachers develop a repertoire of knowledge and skills in their chosen art form and use arts vocabulary with understanding.	Teachers employ personal artistic skills in arts integrated instruction.
<b>Respond</b> Responding to works of art as a thoughtful consumer.	Teachers experience art exhibits or performances from their chosen art form.	Teachers analyze and evaluate works of art or performances from their chosen art form.	Teachers guide student responses about their chosen art form.
<b>Teacher</b> Acquiring teaching strategies and developmentally appropriate pedagogy in the chosen art form.	Teachers participate as learners in their chosen art form.	Teachers can apply knowledge and skills from their chosen art form to guide arts activities.	Teachers can apply knowledge and skills from their chosen art form to deliver effective arts instruction.

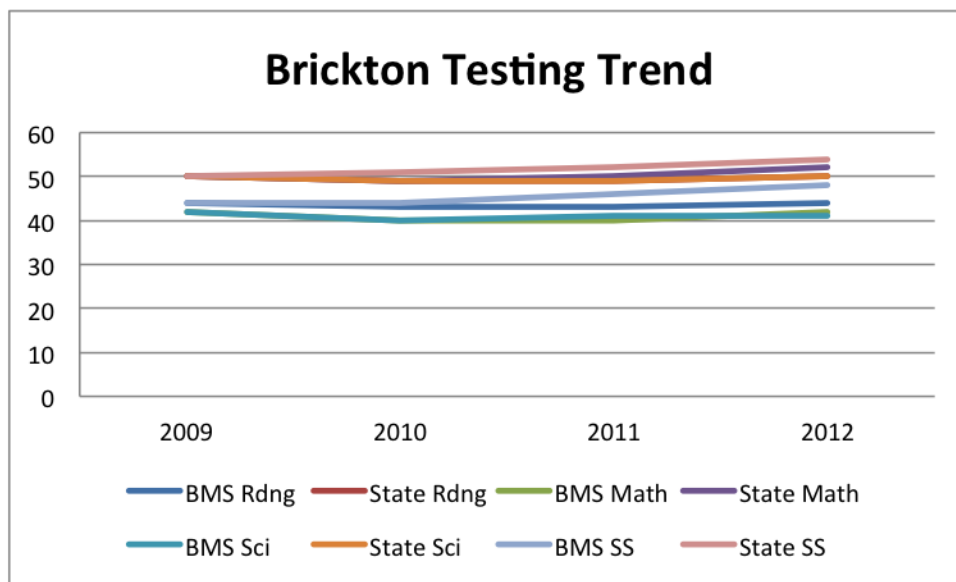
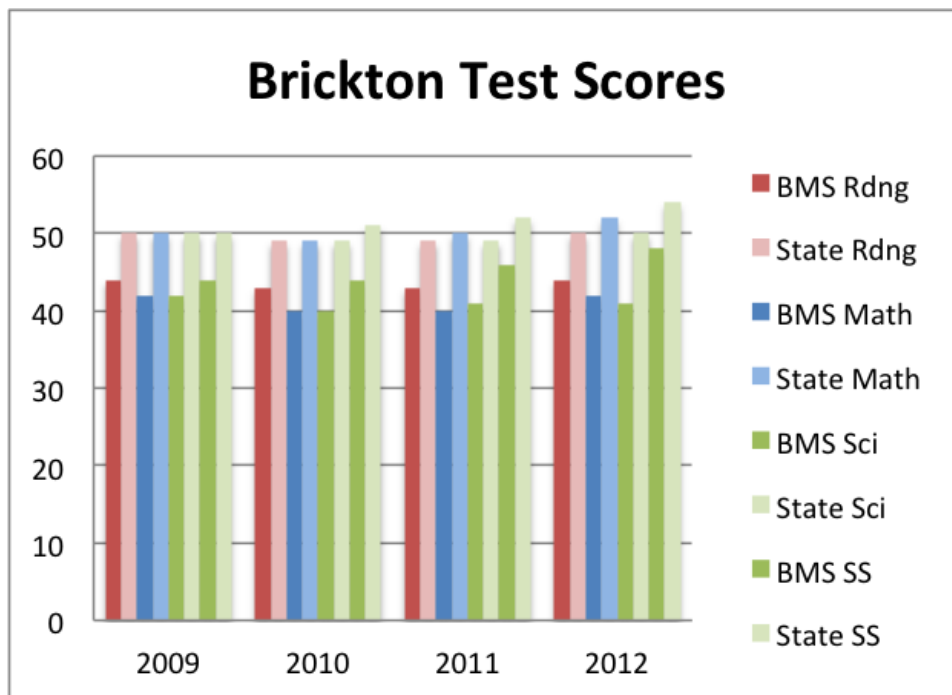
Collaborator	<b>Contribute to the sustainability of the arts integration instructional model at SBH</b> As expertise in arts instruction and arts integration increases, more experienced teachers take on leadership roles within the school community.		
	Level I	Level II	Level III
<b><u>Colleague</u></b> Arts integration requires teachers to draw on one another's skills and strengths.	Teachers create a personal profile as a collaborator.	Teachers collaborate with a colleague to create and implement effective arts integrated instruction.	Teachers pursue further collaborative opportunities.
<b><u>Mentor</u></b> More experienced designers and practitioners provide guidance to their colleagues.	Teachers engage in thoughtful reflection with a mentor.	Teachers identify the traits of an effective mentor through participation in a learning community.	Teachers engage in the role of mentor within the learning community.
<b><u>Community Partner</u></b> Practitioners draw upon resources outside the doors of the school to meet students' needs.	Teachers identify opportunities and resources in the school, local, and regional community.	Teachers include the contributions of at least one community resource in arts integrated instruction and set goals for integrated work based on available and potential resources.	Teachers pursue collaborations with members of the school, local, and regional communities based on the needs of their students.

## APPENDIX H

### TEST SCORES FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS



Test data from school reporting data publicly available at the state Department of Education



Test data from school reporting data publicly available at the state Department of Education



## APPENDIX I

### CODE LIST: ATLANTIS ARTS ACADEMY

## Atlantis Arts Academy

### Code List

#### Subject

- Years of Experience
  - *Answers to “how long were you at...?; Describe your experience prior to...”*
- Teaching Assignment
  - *Grade level and/or subject*
- Arts Experience
  - *Personal background/experience with a given art form*
- Prior Arts Integration Experience
  - *Classroom application of integration prior to the SCEA program*
- Willingness to Participate
  - *Teachers’ willingness to actively take part in the arts integration program*
- Self-Efficacy
  - *Teachers’ level of confidence with the work in arts integration*
- Novice vs. Proficient
  - *Varying levels of self-direction on the part of learners. Some teachers exhibited novice-like attitudes (i.e. desiring more structure and hands-on direction). Others exhibited more proficiency (seeking flexibility with the tasks set before them and accepting accountability for their efforts).*
- Positive feelings
  - *Expressions that indicate the teachers is pleased, happy, or comfortable with how the program is going*
- Stress
  - *Expressions that indicate feelings of overload or emotional stress, confusion or frustration with the work or the working context*
- Excuses
  - *Apologies or defensive statements made to explain late or absent work in the arts integration program*

#### Object

- Understanding of arts integration
  - *Indications of teachers’ understanding of concept-based arts integration as defined by SCEA*
- Lesson design
  - *Assessment*
  - *Bloom’s Taxonomy in lesson procedures*
  - *Concepts*
  - *Lesson planning*

- Arts integration lesson implementation
  - *Indications/descriptions of efforts to put integrated lessons into practice*
- Arts knowledge and skill
  - *Indications of efforts to build knowledge and skill in teachers' chosen art forms*
- Sustainability
  - *Indications of efforts to cultivate sustainability in the program or challenges related to such efforts*
- Curriculum development
  - *Teachers' efforts to evaluate and develop the wider school curriculum to include arts integration*
- Growth
  - *Indications of teachers' growth toward program goals*
- Lack of participation
  - *Indications that a teacher or teachers are not working toward the goals of the program*
- Program goals
  - *Identification or discussion of the goals of the arts integration program*
- Slowed progress
  - *Indications of slowed efforts on the part of participating teachers in the arts integration program*
- Student concerns
  - *Indications of concern over student growth or achievement*
- Teacher's object
  - *Teachers' descriptions of their own primary professional responsibilities*

### **Mediating Artifacts**

- Documentation
  - *The artifacts developed to monitor teachers' reflection and progress, including reflection prompts, reports, etc.*
- E-mentoring
  - *Lesson development and ongoing communication about the arts integration program between participating teachers and SCEA mentors via e-mail and other electronic means*
- Expeditionary learning experiences
  - *Teachers encouraged to find learning opportunities on their own for the growth of their learning in the art form and/or integration*
- Face-to-Face mentoring
  - *Communication and instruction between SCEA mentors and art form cohorts during summer workshops and quarterly site visits*
- Google Groups
- Immersion sessions

- *Instruction sessions during workshops and site visits in which SCEA mentors and school-based arts specialists offered instruction to teachers on art form content knowledge and skills*
- Lessons
- Instructional materials
- Peer observations
- Planning templates
- Resources
- SCEA mentors
- Scope and Sequence documents
- Summer intensives
- technology

## Rules

- Classroom rules and procedures
- Competency shift
  - *References to the change in documentation from time-based tasks to portfolio documentation*
- Other initiatives
  - *Calgary*
  - *Competing initiatives*
  - *Nurtured Heart*
  - *Reading First*
  - *Relational Learning*
- Program Changes
  - *References to changes in the arts integration program*
- Quarterly informances
  - *Quarterly performances, exhibits, and videos intended to exhibit student learning and engagement in arts integration*
- Scheduling
- School flexibility
- School policies
- Testing
- Time
  - *References to lack of or availability of time for arts integration efforts*
- Time-based competencies
- USDOE reporting requirements

## Community

- Cohorts
  - *Art form cohorts*
  - *C1, C2, C3 groupings*
- Collaboration
- Community-External
  - *References to the community outside of the school itself including parents and local community resources*
- Turnover

## Division of Labor

- AI coordinator
- Arts Leadership Team
- Arts Specialists
- C1
- C2
- Cohort roles
- Evaluators
- School-based mentors
- School support staff
- SCEA staff

## School Context

- Arts Production Expectations
  - *School expectations, despite any other stressors, that stage productions, music performances, and art displays would be of high quality*
- Cultural diversity
- Organizational structure
- School Investment in the arts integration program
- School information
- School mission
- School schedule

## APPENDIX J

### CODE LIST: BRICKTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Brickton Middle School

### Code List

#### Subject

- Years of Experience
  - *Answers to “how long were you at...?; Describe your experience prior to...”*
- Teaching Assignment
  - *Grade level and/or subject*
- Arts Experience
  - *Personal background/experience with a given art form*
- Prior Arts Integration Experience
  - *Classroom application of integration prior to the SCEA program*
- Willingness to Participate
  - *Teachers’ willingness to actively take part in the arts integration program*
- Self-Efficacy
  - *Teachers’ level of confidence with the work in arts integration*
- Novice vs. Proficient
  - *Varying levels of self-direction on the part of learners. Some teachers exhibited novice-like attitudes (i.e. desiring more structure and hands-on direction). Others exhibited more proficiency (seeking flexibility with the tasks set before them and accepting accountability for their efforts).*
- Positive feelings
  - *Expressions that indicate the teachers is pleased, happy, or comfortable with how the program is going*

#### Object

- Program goals-school
  - *Indications of the expectations for the program from school administration and personnel*
- Program goals-SCEA
  - *Indications of the expectations for the program as expressed by SCEA personnel and documents*
- Teacher object
  - *Indications of teachers’ perception of their primary professional purpose*
- Understanding of arts integration
  - *Indications of teachers’ understanding of concept-based arts integration as defined by SCEA*
- Instructional design-Concept
- Instructional design-Lesson planning
- Lack of participation

- *Indications that a teacher or teachers are not working toward the goals of the program*
- Arts knowledge and skill
  - *Indications of efforts to build knowledge and skill in teachers' chosen art forms*
- Sustainability
  - *Indications of efforts to cultivate sustainability in the program or challenges related to such efforts*
- Growth
  - *Indications of teachers' growth toward program goals*
- Reflection
  - *Teacher responses to and participation in prompts and other reflection tasks*
- Student outcomes
  - *Teachers concerns for program impact upon student achievement or growth*

### **Mediating Artifacts**

- 2010 Pitch
  - *"Kick-off" event including a parent night and work with teachers in the spring of 2010*
- Summer intensives
- E-mentoring
  - *Lesson development and ongoing communication about the arts integration program between participating teachers and SCEA mentors via e-mail and other electronic means*
- Face-to-Face mentoring
  - *Communication and instruction between SCEA mentors and art form cohorts during summer workshops and quarterly site visits*
- Immersion sessions
  - *Instruction sessions during workshops and site visits in which SCEA mentors and school-based arts specialists offered instruction to teachers on art form content knowledge and skills*
- Lessons
- SCEA mentors
- Scope and Sequence documents

### **Rules**

- Time
  - *References to lack of or availability of time for arts integration efforts*
- Testing



- *Indications of the impact of testing/accountability requirements on arts integration programming*
- Central office
  - References to mandates or requirements from the district office which impacted the arts integration program
- Program Changes
  - *References to changes in the arts integration program*

### **Community**

- Turnover
- Collaboration
- Parent Community

### **Division of Labor**

- AI coordinator
- Arts Leadership Team
- Arts Teachers
- Cohort responsibilities

### **School Context**

- School mission
- School principal
- Foundation support

## VITA

Joel Baxley is the Director of Visual Art Education for the Southeast Center for Education in the Arts at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Visual Art at Freed-Hardeman University in 1992. He continued shortly at Freed-Hardeman working as a set designer for their Theatre Department and assisting with the supervision of theatre lab students. From 1993-94, he worked with a missionary effort in Guyana, South America. Following his time overseas, Joel returned to Freed-Hardeman to complete his Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, which was awarded in December of 1996. During that time, Joel also completed the requirements to add an English major to his undergraduate work and received teaching certification in k-12 Art and 7-12 English for the state of Tennessee. From December of 1996 through the spring of 1998, Joel was Lead Teacher for the school at Hickory Bend, a resident treatment facility for boys in state's custody in Jackson, TN. In that capacity, he administered the educational needs of about 40 boys aged 12-18 and supervised the teaching staff for the facility. In 1998, Joel became the first art teacher at West Elementary in Mt. Juliet, TN where he established an art program for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. He remained in that capacity until 2002, when he took the position as SCEA's Director of Visual Art Education. Since 2002, Joel has developed and presented professional development offerings for educators in visual art and arts integration including nationally funded research projects, SCEA's annual Arts and Education Forum, and three television series for Annenberg Media.