

May 2016

## Theater Education: Thinking Outside of the Black Box

Raheve Gray

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations>



Part of the [Art Education Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Gray, Raheve, "Theater Education: Thinking Outside of the Black Box" (2016). *UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones*. 2675.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/9112073>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@unlv.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@unlv.edu).

THEATER EDUCATION: THINKING OUTSIDE  
OF THE BLACK  
BOX

By

Raheve W. Gray

Bachelor of Arts - Theater  
Portland State University  
2002

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the

Master of Arts – Theater

Department of Theater  
College of Fine Arts  
The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
May 2016



## **Thesis Approval**

The Graduate College  
The University of Nevada, Las Vegas

April 11, 2016

This thesis prepared by

Raheve W. Gray

entitled

Theater Education: Thinking Outside of the Black Box

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts – Theater  
Department of Theater

Lezlie Cross, Ph.D.  
*Examination Committee Chair*

Kathryn Hausbeck Korgan, Ph.D.  
*Graduate College Interim Dean*

Nate Bynum, M.F.A.  
*Examination Committee Member*

Chris Edwards, M.F.A.  
*Examination Committee Member*

Charles Whitney, Ph.D.  
*Graduate College Faculty Representative*

## **Abstract**

A 2005 report by the Rand Corporation concluded that "Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skill" (Smith). A 2012 report from the National Endowment for the Arts mirrored these findings, stating that "Students who have arts-rich experiences in school do better across-the-board academically, they also become more active and engaged citizens, voting, volunteering, and generally participating at higher rates than their peers" (Garelick 1). The above statements speak to the mounting evidence that arts in education provide extensive benefits for students fortunate enough to have them as part of their curriculum. Yet over the years, arts education continues to be cut from public school curriculums at an alarming rate. The objective of this thesis is to demonstrate how best to eradicate this issue, through the utilization of Hybrid classes. The solution outlined in this thesis requires the merging of state-mandated courses, such as English, math or science, with a specific aspect of arts education, such as art, music or theater arts; these "Hybrid" classes represent the future of education. Utilizing existing staff and faculty, this proposed plan is cost-effective, and could serve to cut the student-teacher ratio in half. This aforementioned concept will allow teachers of varying disciplines to unite, and offers students a well-rounded education that will fully prepare them for post-secondary education. The goal of this thesis is lofty and the concept extensive, therefore I have opted to limit the scope to that of a theater arts and English model, within the middle and junior high schools grades (6-8) within the Clark County public school system in Las Vegas, Nevada.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the members of my thesis committee. I greatly appreciate your time, energy, and insight throughout this extensive process.

A very special thank you to Dr. Lezlie Cross, who envisioned my reaching this point in my education long before I did, and who refused to quit motivating me until I was confident enough to visualize this moment as well.

## **Dedications**

I would like to dedicate this work to my mother Velma M. Green, and my late father, Warner Lawson Smith McGraw. Who, through home schooling, devoted the greater part of their lives to my education, and in so doing instilled in me a love and respect for both teaching and the field of education.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	v
List of Figures.....	viii
Chapter 1: The History of Arts Education.....	1
Nevada Deserts Arts Education.....	6
Chapter 2: The Presence of Arts Education.....	11
Case Study 1. NCAS (The National Core Arts Standards).....	15
Case Study 2. Arts Edge.....	17
Case Study 3. The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.....	19
Case Study 4. STEM to STEAM.....	27
Conclusion.....	31
Chapter 3: Hybrid Class Integration & Implementation.....	33
Pilot School: Helen C. Cannon Junior High school.....	33
Goals of the Unit and State Standards.....	38
Sample Outline for a Hybrid Lesson Plan.....	40
Sample Objectives, Learning Activities, and Assessment.....	44
Lesson One – Word & Term Identification.....	45
Lesson Two - Reading for Performance and Grammatical importance.....	46
Lesson Three – Viewing of Act II, Scene 1-5 and vocabulary review.....	47
Lesson Four – Viewing of Act III, Scene 1-5 and Final Grammatical Review.....	49
Lesson Five – Final Performance Review.....	51
Why Hybrid Education Will Work.....	52

Chapter 4: The Future of Arts Education: Back to the Drawing Board.....	55
The Great Divide.....	56
Educators: Head of the Class / Front of the Line.....	57
A Study of Students.....	59
Parents: a Great Untapped Resource.....	61
Conclusive Evidence.....	62
Chapter 5: Conclusion & Next Steps.....	65
Hybrid Education = Higher Education.....	65
Theoretical to Practical.....	67
A for Effort.....	68
A Journey of a Million Miles.....	69
Bibliography.....	71
Curriculum Vitae.....	75



## List of Figures

Figure 1. Math Proficiency at Turn Around Arts Schools.....	23
Figure 2. Reading Proficiency at Turn Around Arts Schools.....	24
Figure 3. Perceptions of Impact of Arts Programming on Discipline.....	25
Figure 4. Comparing Against SIG-Recipient Schools.....	26
Figure 5. Act Two Vocabulary.....	48
Figure 6. Act Three Vocabulary.....	50
Figure 7. Neuro-education Interdisciplinary Research Model.....	67

## **Chapter 1**

### **The History of Arts Education**

Arts education in the United States is a practice that is just a little over a century old. Beginning at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the “Picture Study Movement” was introduced as part of a national shift towards increasing the aesthetic beauty of communities, schools, and homes, as well as creating a burgeoning interest in art. This curriculum was also designed to serve the growing immigrant population. As immigrants made their way to the United States many brought with them a history of grueling factory work, harsh living conditions, and a guarded distrust of government. In addition to these elements, many new citizens did not speak the language. The United States therefore found it effective to utilize images, paintings, and art to educate immigrant children via the public school system. The goal being that students would be enriched and enlightened by the pleasing aesthetics, and then return home to share this enlightenment with their parents. According to art historian Peter Smith: “Many educators of the time believed that, picture study was an important part of the art education curriculum. Attention to the aesthetics in classrooms led to public interest in beautifying the school, home, and community - the idea was to bring culture to the child in order to change the parents” (Smith 48).

This movement represented the beginning of arts integration as we know it in United States schools. Over time, we would see the program expand from art work, to music, to sculpture, to theater, and beyond. Though consistently changing and adapting to suit the needs of teachers, students, and the ever evolving fields of visual and performing arts, arts education had established itself as a necessary cog in the educational machine. Educators believed arts education had the capacity to help create well-educated, polished, empathetic individuals who in turn would seek to make the world a more beautiful place. According to a 2015 research study

funded by the National Endowment for the Arts: “Art is humanity's most essential, most universal language. It is not a frill, but a necessary part of communication. The quality of civilization can be measured through its music, dance, drama, architecture, visual art and literature. We must give our children knowledge and understanding of civilizations most profound works” (NEA).

Through the next few decade, the forward progression of arts education led largely by the National Endowment for the Arts would gain momentum, the goal of which was to provide a balanced curriculum for students across the United States. However, the passing of the “National Defense Education Act” on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1958 would bring the first notable decline in arts education since its induction more than 40 years prior. This act, passed by Congress and strongly supported by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, called for schools to:

Emphasize science and math in the hope that children with natural ability in these subjects would pursue careers that would eventually aid the United States National Defense and thus outmatch the Soviet Union's military, technology and research. The arts were greatly de-emphasized during this time because they were considered frivolous, and artists were encouraged to analyze and censor their work closely to avoid being accused of communicating a message that could easily be misconstrued. The art community, realizing that the arts needed to be defended, argued that art was important because it fostered creative problem solving skills that would transfer to other spheres of human intellectual activity (Urban 247).

During the late nineteen-fifties the power and influence of education was put to a different use. The space race was the impetus for this shift, as the United States fought to

establish themselves as a super power. Instead of utilizing education to foster beauty and intellect, it was used to prepare for the possible defense of the nation. One of many science initiatives implemented by President Eisenhower, NDEA (National Defense Education Act) was created to increase the technological sophistication of the United States pertaining to the fields of science, math and space exploration. This issue is strongly highlighted in the book *“Brainpower for the Cold War: The Sputnik Crisis and National Defense Education Act of 1958”* by Barbara Barksdale: “The passing of the NDEA followed a growing national sense that U.S. scientists were falling behind scientists in the Soviet Union. The early Soviet success in the Space Race catalyzed a national sense of unease with Soviet technological advances, especially after the Soviet Union launched the first-ever satellite, Sputnik, the previous year” (Barksdale 225) The NDEA would go on to authorize incrementally increased funding for the next four years, totaling over a billion dollars solely directed towards improving American science and math curriculum. To this day the National Defense Education Act is credited with an increase in scientific innovation, culminating with Neil Armstrong’s moonwalk in 1969.

As successful as this act proved to be, when the space race came to an end in 1970 with the aforementioned success of Apollo 11’s mission, emphasis in education shifted back to beauty, art, and peace. The end of the Vietnam War on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1975 fueled this movement, and led arts education to peak. This time, arts education advocates would bring the movement home for many Americans, with the National Endowment for the Arts’ implementation of a plan to expose the nation to arts education through the use of public television:

Plays, dances, critiques, interviews with artists and other art-related programs were to be shown on public television. In the 1970's television had become a major part of most American's lives. The use of television to bring art into the

American home instead of people going out to see performances was a major advancement in art education. The National Endowment for the Arts often used the public broadcasting channels to present artistic series on television, giving Americans access to high quality performing arts ([www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)).

Through the creation and funding of the Public Broadcast Station (PBS) arts education had made its way from the public school system all the way into the homes and hearts of Americans. From whimsical ways to teach math and English on Sesame Street, to exposure to fine arts through plays, concerts, and documentaries, Americans were being exposed to arts education on a national level.

Sadly, the growing momentum of arts education in the 1970's would be short lived, as financial and economic struggles marked the beginning of the 1980's. The difficult economic downturn during Ronald Reagan's term as United States President brought tax cuts for public schools all over the nation. The 1980's would also see the beginning of legislative measures resorting to cuts in arts education as a means to slash the budget through the hard hitting recession of the Reagan era. National report cards reflected these drops, so much so that grant funded and short term initiatives for arts education became the norm throughout the late nineteen-eighties and early nineties. While these initiatives kept arts education in schools, according to a major federal report referenced in a *New York Times* article, American students have yet to show the type of educational progress exhibited in the 1970's, prompted largely by the NEA's initiative:

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 1991— American elementary and secondary school pupils have made some educational progress in recent years, but they are only

now reaching the achievement levels of students in the 1970's, according to a major Federal report issued today (DeWitt 1991).

This report titled "Trends in Academic Progress" released by the NCES (National Center for Educational Statistics) highlights the fact that progress made by students in the nineties only brought students back to the passing report card status they held in the nineteen-seventies. American students were progressing yes, but only towards numbers previously achieved decades before budget cuts in arts education became a norm that continues to this day. According to a 2013 article in the *Las Vegas Review Journal*: "44 percent of the nation's school administrators have cut significant amounts of time from physical education, arts and recess so that more time could be devoted to reading and mathematics since the passage of No Child Left Behind in 2001" (Patterson, 2013). What constitutes a significant amount of time cut from arts education? According to an in-depth report compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics: "Of the secondary schools that reported arts coursework requirement for graduation in the 2009–10 school year, 70 percent indicated that exactly one arts course credit was required for graduation" (Smith 2015).

Only one arts credit is required before secondary school graduation requirements are met. As disheartening as that statistic may be, it is one arts education credit higher than nearly half the states in our nation currently require for secondary graduation. Today, only 29 of the 50 states have an arts requirement for graduation, which was down from 40 states in 2002. Standards such as these stem from a precedence set in the 80's concerning arts education, and has only gotten worse over the years. Nevada, specifically Clark County school district, the largest school district in the nation, is making more cuts than ever.

## **Nevada Deserts Arts Education**

By the mid 1980's, cutting arts education became a best practice for trimming tight school budgets, and Nevada's school districts were no exception. Insight into these trying times can be gained from a 1982 published dissertation by Jocelyn Kaye Jensen. Jensen, a director at the Las Vegas Philharmonic and an advocate for arts education stated that:

Because of current prevailing educational and negative financial trends, a concern for the place of the fine arts in the curricula of the nation's public schools has been evidenced among various writers and curriculum experts. Music, visual arts, drama, and dance classes were being indiscriminately eliminated from educational instructional programs throughout the country. Remedial courses were taking the place of electives. Fine arts educators, among others, were also being assigned to teach in areas outside their major subject expertise. Many of these happenings came about because of newly mandated competency testing and back-to-basics instruction. Competency-based testing and instruction were mandated by the Nevada legislature in 1977. Subtle changes had been taking place within education. Fine arts courses, as well as other electives, were being affected negatively within the state. (Jensen)

Nevada is no stranger to tight education budgets, ranking 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation for lowest spending per pupil ([www.nevadareportcard.com](http://www.nevadareportcard.com)). Because arts education is often pooled with extra-curricular activities like physical education, band, or dance, it is often in the very first segment of budget cuts. In the face of looming teacher lay-offs, cutting "extra" or elective courses seemed a viable solution. But what may have started as a temporary fix more than 30 years ago, has become the near absence of arts education, and a school district that ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation in education. The statistics only get worse as Clark County School District continues to make devastating cuts to arts education. In a 2010 address Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stated:

For theater and dance in elementary schools, the percentages of schools making these art forms available went from 20 percent 10 years ago to only 4 and 3 percent, respectively, in the 2009-10 school year. In addition, at more than 40 percent of secondary schools, coursework in arts was not required for graduation in the 2009-10 school year (qtd in Brenchley).

Many of Nevada's secondary schools sadly belong to that 40 percent. In fact, many of the secondary schools in the state's largest school district, Clark County, no longer require arts education credits to graduate. However, these drastic cuts do not come without drastic outcomes. Along with the aforementioned statistics, the cuts in arts education correlate with Clark County's seventh failing report card in seven years as recorded by [www.Nevadareportcard.com](http://www.Nevadareportcard.com). Newspapers across the nation, including the Seattle *Post Intelligencer*, report "Nevada consistently ranks among the lowest performing states when it comes to providing educational opportunities that prepare students for productive employment, post-secondary education, and active civic participation" (Seattlepi.com).

Yet the goals outlined in this quote speak directly to the goals of Nevada's Common Core State Standards; a mandate outlined by the state of Nevada that details the integral standards that school boards, superintendents, and teachers should be using to ensure career and college readiness for their students. The standards state that curriculum and instruction must be, "(1) research and evidence based, (2) aligned with college and work expectations, (3) rigorous, and (4) internationally benchmarked" (Corestandards.org). This vital document also lists its primary goal as preparing students for career readiness and post-secondary education. If this is, in fact, the goal of the state mandated standards, then the research provided in this thesis will demonstrate that achieving these standards would be best accomplished through the provision of arts education, not through its elimination. By continuing to cut arts education we are only



making the gap between primary school and post-secondary education too great for most students to bridge. We must review and heed the research on arts education and its positive effects on student outcomes, and at long last put it to use. As this data will show the strengths of arts education and make it clear why it is time that arts education be given the support and respect it deserves.

The notion that arts education is an elective, or that theater, ballet, and the arts are luxuries was formed from popular belief as opposed to proven study. Close analysis of recent findings in neurological science performed at Johns Hopkins University illustrate just the opposite. What may have once been seen as simply an extra-curricular activity for secondary school graduates, has now been directly linked to the actual act of graduating. Neuroscientists at John Hopkins have scientific documented proof that arts education leads to honed motor skills, increased focus, and mental acumen.

While proponents of arts education have long asserted that creative training can help develop skills translating into other areas of academics, little research had been done to investigate the scientific benefits of this form of training. Aspects of training in the arts, like motor control, attention and motivation, were studied by researchers at Johns Hopkins University and compiled into a report. In one four-year study conducted in 2009, students undertaking regular music training were found to have molecular changes in their brain structures which helped their brains to transfer motor and cognitive skills to other areas of learning. This study also found students who were motivated to practice a specific art form and spent time with focused attention on their artistic project, had increased efficiency of their attention network as a whole, even when working in other areas of study. They also showed

increases in their fluid IQ scores. Other studies reported similar scientific findings on the arts' impact on the brain, showing that sustained arts education can be an essential part of social and intellectual development (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009).

Thanks largely to these devoted neuroscientists, research now shows a direct link to arts education and positive outcomes within Common Core State Standard mandated classes such as English, science, and math. The Common Core states that their goal is “That all students are college and career ready in math and literacy no later than the end of high school” (Corestandards.org, 2015). Educators must ensure that the education they provide takes the student to post-secondary education as outlined in the state standards. Studies show that arts education can accomplish this task in a way that other disciplines cannot, and it is time we recognize this. The aforementioned research has established the relevance and necessity of arts education in schools. It is my goal to see arts education integrated into the Common Core state standards. The state of education in Nevada school districts speak to the failure of the current systems in place. If we can bring arts education back to public schools, if we can get behind the research and case studies, if we can stand up and take action, then we could reverse this trend before it is too late. With only a little over 50% of schools currently requiring arts education for graduation, now is the time we did something to positively affect the dire state of education right here in Nevada, and beyond.

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that we can put an end to cuts in arts education by infusing the arts into the core curriculum in a system I call Hybrid Education. I seek to eliminate – through the presentation of neurological research – the notion that theater, music, visual arts, and dance are simply electives or extracurricular activities, thereby

reinforcing the theory that arts education is a necessity not a luxury. In chapter two, I illustrate the corrosion of arts education and the numerous measures being taken to slow this process. I analyze four current initiatives that seek to heighten the study of the arts in schools, investigating the benefits and the drawbacks of these programs. While in chapter three, I provide a clear outline of exactly how to infuse the Common Core and the arts education disciplines into one classroom, through what I call Hybrid Education. In this chapter, I offer a sample lesson plan for a Hybrid English-Theatre classroom. Next, chapter four highlights the benefits of Hybrid Education for students, parents, teachers, and administrators. I support this with key research that demonstrates the neurological benefits of arts education, which include; better cognition in core curriculum, an increase in one's ability to retain and maintain understanding of concepts, as well as increased overall comprehension. Finally, in chapter five, I prove that the solution to the elimination of arts is my concept of Hybrid Education.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Presence of Arts Education**

For many years, conjecture, theories, concepts, and ideas, were all that scholars researching the importance of arts education have had at their disposal. Those who have spent years even decades reviewing journals, articles, and studies have come away with a strong sense of purpose, yet often not enough substantial evidence to halt or slow cuts in arts education. Those that support slashing arts education as a cost cutting strategy tout that one would need to show scientific proof that arts education is a vital and necessary part of the education process before action could be taken to halt cuts. Now, thanks to the scientific advances of cognitive neuroscience – the study of how the brain learns, stores, and then uses the information it acquires – today we have that proof (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009). In this chapter, I will highlight this aforementioned proof with data, quotes, and figures compiled most significantly from a neuro-scientific summit. These results demonstrate that arts education is not only an engaging way to have students take an active role in their education. But that the effect of arts education on the brain’s cognitive receptors can assist student’s comprehension and retaining of Common Core curricula.

On May 6, 2009, the Neuro-Education Initiative of The Johns Hopkins University School of Education, hosted its inaugural national “Learning Arts, and the Brain Summit” to explore the connection between cognitive neuroscience, the arts, and learning (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009). The summit included over 300 educators, scientists, school administrators, and policy makers, all researching the effects of arts education on overall student learning in core subjects such as math, science, and English. Michael Gazzaniga,

director of the Sage Center for the Study of Mind at the University of California, Santa Barbara, led a consortium on the effects of arts education on overall student learning. Below, I highlight just a few of the consortium's key findings:

1. An interest in performing arts leads to a high state of motivation that produces the sustained attention necessary to improve performance and the training of attention that leads to improvement in other domains of cognition.
  2. Specific links exist between high levels of music training and the ability to manipulate information in both working and long term memory; these links extend beyond the domain of music training.
  3. Correlations exist between music training and both reading acquisition and sequence learning. One of the central predictors of early literacy, phonological awareness, is correlated with both music training and the development of a specific brain pathway.
  4. Training in acting leads to memory improvement through the learning of general skills in manipulating the differences between meanings of words or symbols.
  5. Adult self-reported interest in aesthetics is related to a temperamental factor of openness, which in turn is influenced by dopamine-related genes.
- (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009).

The evidence from the study demonstrates that the arts, which were once considered a frivolity is now a necessity. Arts education can no longer be considered extra-curricular, rather it is now the foundation for curriculum. Educators, researchers, and scholars have all theorized

about the benefits of arts education, and now what was once only a theory is now scientific fact. Researchers in the field of neuro-science can now show that involvement in performing arts triggers a similar reaction in the brain as involvement in competitive sports. As this study shows, training in acting and music increases the long-term memory of students as well as training their attention span, which leads to improvement in overall cognition. The study goes on to show that phonological awareness is correlated with arts education as well, and has been found to be a central predictor of early literacy. In addition to the academic benefits highlighted above, neurological brain scans from this study showed that arts education has a direct effect on the mood elevating hormone dopamine. This influences our artistic and creative abilities, as well as our interest in beautifying our surroundings, not unlike the way “Picture Study” was used in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. These are only the compiled results of the first 15 months of a four-year study, yet early results show that arts education has been proven to positively affect cognitive skills in core disciplines such as math, science and English. According to compiled reports from the study conducted at Johns Hopkins University: “School children exposed to drama, music and dance may do a better job at mastering reading, writing and math than those who focus solely on academics, says a report by the Arts Education Partnership” (Henry). This statement coincides with previous analysis of students with arts education. James Catterall, a professor of education at the University of California-Los Angeles, who coordinated the research, stated that: “The report is based on an analysis of 62 studies of various categories of art — ranging from dance, drama, music and visual arts — by nearly 100 researchers. It's the first to combine all the arts and make comparisons with academic achievement, performance on standardized tests, improvements in social skills and student motivation.” (Henry) As highlighted by Professor Catterall, this is the very first study designed to demonstrate the effects of arts education on the

brain and its cognitive abilities. The results of which provide substantial proof supporting the need for arts education.

The research supports not only the importance of arts education, but the necessity of arts education. The question now becomes what should be done with this information? How would the research be best used so as to allow it to inform our work as educators? Today's educators and researchers are not content with allowing this information to be cataloged in a library, or filed away in an academic journal. They feel action must be taken to put an end to cuts in arts education. Neuro-scientist Janet Eilber stated that: "Arts education advocates have always believed intuitively that the arts are a highly effective vehicle for improved learning; scientists now support this intuition through a growing body of serious research" (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009, 9)

For many years arts education has been funded using a best practices model of utilizing grant funding to provide arts education to specific schools, for a specific amount of time. This, in my opinion, fails to demonstrate the importance of this discipline in our curriculums. Because, it leads many schools to see arts education as an optional add-on, when in truth it is more vital to the education process than many know. Still arts programs were included only in the budgets of the elite schools which could afford them. Lower income schools had no choice but to search and plead for grants that would bring arts education to their students for a limited duration. While these practices have worked to keep arts education from being completely eliminated in the public school system, the fault with this methodology is that it feeds into the idea that arts education is a luxury. In this next section I highlight and pay respect to four examples of how efforts are being utilized to sustain arts education. I will then analyze each

model to determine how it could be improved to provide maximum benefit for students, regardless of their economic status.

### **Case Study 1. The National Core Arts Standards**

The National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) is a non-profit organization that is responsible for creating core guidelines to inform arts education. Educators can utilize NCAS via the organization's website to learn how to create an effective arts education curriculum for their respective classrooms. The first step is to select the desired discipline: theater, visual arts, dance, media arts, or music. Next, one would select the desired process, which is the skillset the educator wishes to develop within the student: creating, performing, responding, and connecting. After that, a grade level is chosen, followed by the type of materials to include, such as quizzes, components/outlines, and resources. Once all criteria have been selected, the site generates what it refers to as a "customized handbook" outlining the "Art Core Standards" for educators to use to develop their arts education curriculum.

The information on the NCAS site is based on successful efforts in arts education curriculum development, and states that:

The central purposes of education standards are to identify the learning that we want for all of our students and to drive improvement in the system that delivers that learning. Standards, therefore, should embody the key concepts, processes and traditions of study in each subject area, and articulate the aspirations of those invested in our schools—students, teachers, administrators, and the community at large. To realize that end goal, these new, voluntary National Core Arts Standards are framed by a definition of artistic literacy that includes philosophical foundations and lifelong goals, artistic processes and creative practices, anchor and performance standards that students should attain, and model cornerstone



assessments by which they can be measured. The connective threads of this conceptual framework are designed to be understood by all stakeholders and, ultimately, to ensure success for both educators and students in the real world of the school (NCAS).

I applaud the NCAS' efforts to make arts education easy and accessible to educators. However, the greatest setback to the program is that it is completely voluntary and difficult to assess. That is, there is no requirement for educators to utilize the site, and the fact these standards have yet to be adopted by the Department of Education, make it unlikely overworked educators are going to add this to their ever-growing to-do list. In fact, during my research I had the opportunity to interview Joshua Edie, a revered math teacher at Becker Middle School in Las Vegas, Nevada. Mr. Edie has been a teacher in the Clark County School District for over 12 years, and stated that: "The web has made so many resources available to teachers, but you'd need to spend weeks, possibly months researching and assessing them yourself. I know I speak for many of my colleagues when I say with grading, IEP's, parent/teachers conferences, high stakes testing, the Common Core, and personal development/continued education, as passionate as we are about our students education, most teachers will never find the time" (J. Edie, personal communication, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015). While many teachers are aware of the need for arts education and the positive effects this curriculum can have on their students, adding one more project to their extensive list of priorities can seem an overwhelming feat. NCAS has made the materials available, however the support it takes to integrate an arts education curriculum is needed as well, and that simply is not there.

There is also no tracking or assessment information available on the NCAS site making it nearly impossible for the organization to ascertain which educators are using which materials.

This makes it impossible for them to track how well their program is working. While the NCAS does list the universal adoption of these standards by the by K-12 public schools nationwide as a goal, simply setting a requirement on how arts education should be utilized, without offering support or mandates from the decision makers such as the department of education, school boards, and superintendents will do little to foster arts education. The impact of the NCAS might be proven with statistical analysis based on the programs assessment tools, however, they are at this stage non-existent. This is yet another way the NCAS' initiative fails to provide a complete and comprehensive program for arts education integration. Resources such as these are “nice” but impractical as they place the “option” of arts education curriculum development in the hands of overwhelmed educators who may or may not have the time to research them. In addition, the lack of accessibility and accountability are clear drawbacks of the NCAS program.

The NCAS is making an attempt to integrate some aspects of arts education into standard school curriculum, and thus their efforts should be noted and applauded. However, this program and others like it are voluntary resources rather than long-term solutions. Below I highlight a program doing a little more to provide arts education resources.

## **Case Study 2. ArtsEdge**

ArtsEdge is a web based arts education resource funded by the National Education Association (NEA). The website provides free cross-curricular materials for K-12 classrooms, as well as online, pre-designed lesson plans available in subjects such as dance, music, theater, and the visual arts. There are also audio and video clips, and interactive online modules as well as guides, articles and tips for putting together a thoroughly engaging arts education curriculum.

This integral satellite program designed to bring arts back to public schools all over the United States, touts its goals in the following statement featured on the site:

Since the Kennedy Center's opening in 1971, school children, parents and educators have turned to us as the nation's premiere cultural resource. Embracing this responsibility, the Kennedy Center instituted ARTSEdge in 1996 as its educational media arm, reaching out to schools, communities, individuals and families with printed materials, classroom support and internet technologies. The full impact of ARTSEdge might be measured by considering that of the eleven million people who participate in Kennedy Center Education Department programming each year, four million do it through ARTSEdge resources (Artsedge).

While speaking to the technological needs of modern teachers and students, ARTSEdge's fully online platform has, unfortunately, gotten lost in the chaotic World Wide Web. According to long time Clark County School District educator, Joshua Edie; "With so many irrefutable websites out there it is hard to know which ones to trust for real results" (J. Edie, personal communication, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015). True, the website offers a plethora of theater arts resources, however the fact that it lives predominantly in a virtual world can leave participants feeling left without tangible resources, guides for best practices, or assessment tools. Nonetheless, the extensive amount of resources could prove helpful to the ambitious educator with time to research their options. Again, not unlike the program funded by NCAS, there are no best practices or assessment tools to highlight for educators the pros and cons of utilizing these online resources. The initial assessment will come after the educator has worked to integrate ArtsEdge into their curriculum. That is the educator will not be able to gauge the effectiveness of the

program until after its success or its failure, a major concern for educators as the latter could mean a loss of their jobs. Due to the fact that this is a voluntary, educator-led program, a link to the national standards for Common Core and arts education are featured on the website for reference. These references to the Common Core are essential as it is vital that an educator, in choosing to go outside of the standard curriculum to build their own arts education curriculum, is sure to meet all state requirements. However, the link to the Common Core standards serves as an ominous reminder as to just how optional and unnecessary arts education is deemed to be by national administrators. This is the mindset that has left many educators hesitant to utilize these resources.

The idea that time invested in the development of an independent arts curriculum could detract from class time sanctioned for Common Core is unnerving. This is particularly true if the high-stakes testing scores are negatively affected by the incorporation of the arts. In this way, school districts have forced educators to choose arts education or Common Core as the two disciplines are competing for the most limited resource of all: an educator's time. This is not how it should be, arts education should have a place in K-12 education. Arts education should not be behind, in place of, or in front of the Common Core, but integrated into the core of education. New initiatives and programs are starting to see the necessity for merging of the disciplines. The next two case studies highlight the effectiveness of such programs, and solidify the need to take this concept to the next level.

### **Case Study 3. President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities**

In October 2008, President Obama created a platform in support of arts education. Driven by concerns over curriculum and funding discrepancies amongst the richest and the poorest

schools, the Obama administration sought to address these growing issues. The result was the formation of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, or the PCAH. The goals of the PCAH are to explore issues in arts education in the U.S. public school system and find the causes and seek solutions. Many of these goals are highlighted in the following excerpt from the PCAH's formal report:

President Obama argued for a reinvesting in American arts education, and reinvigorating the creativity and innovation that has made this country great. Taking up this charge, over the past eighteen months the President's Committee on Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) has conducted an in-depth review of the current condition of arts education, surveying recent research about its documented benefits and identifying potential opportunities for advancing arts education. While we found a growing body of research to support positive educational outcomes associated with arts-rich schools, and many schools and programs engaged in such work, we also found enormous variety in the delivery of arts education, resulting in a complex patchwork with pockets of visionary activity flourishing in some locations and inequities in access to arts education increasing in others. (PCAH).

The committee wasted no time in getting to work, thus, they compiled extensive data, and performed in-depth research, and arrived at five key recommendations for saving arts education in public schools. Their recommendations are as follows:

1. **Build collaborations among different approaches.** The PCAH urges leaders of professional associations to work with federal and state agencies to build and demonstrate connections among different educators in the arts.
2. **Develop the field of arts integration.** The second recommendation focuses on an expansion of arts integration. The PCAH encourages further development of the field of arts integration through strengthening teacher preparation and professional development, targeting available arts funding, and setting up

mechanisms for sharing ideas about arts integration through communities of practice.

3. **Expand in-school opportunities for teaching artists.** We strongly believe that working artists in this country represent an underutilized and underdeveloped resource in increasing the quality and vitality of arts education in our public schools. The PCAH recommends expanding the role of teaching artists, in partnership with arts specialists and classrooms.
4. **Utilize federal and state policies to reinforce the place of arts in K-12 education.** This recommendation focuses on the need for federal and state education leaders to provide policy guidance for employing the arts to increase the rigor of curriculum, strengthen teacher quality, and improve low-performing schools.
5. **Widen the focus of evidence gathering about arts education.** Finally, while the evidence base for the benefits of the arts is compelling, there is room to expand systematic data gathering about the arts, specifically in developing creativity and enhancing engagement in school. Educators need practical tools to measure the progress of student learning in the arts — an investment that dovetails with the federal education agency’s investments in more authentic assessments of complex learning” (PCAH).

These five points led the PCAH to develop the Turn Around Arts program in 2011. This initiative seeks to address educational discrepancies in high-risk, inner-city schools. The PCAH (in their final evaluation report) defined schools as: “Characterized by high teacher and principal turnover, low levels of trust among adults, significant student disciplinary issues, and low attendance” (Stoelinga 21). The purpose of this initiative was to create a call to action to the schools performing in the bottom five percent nationwide, often referred to as Turn Around Arts schools, which refers to each school’s desperate need for a new direction. These institutions have long ranked lower than ninety-five percent of schools in the nation when it comes to attendance and discipline, reading and math scores, and annual high-stakes testing.

Extensive research performed by the PCAH showed that the biggest difference between the top five percent of schools with passing report cards, and the bottom five percent with failing report cards was budget allocation. These low-performing schools often had substantial portions of their funds spent on features of inner-city schools, such as daycare for teen moms in attendance, metal detectors, security officers, anti-bullying initiatives, gun violence prevention, and other safety measures. These issues took priority in budget spending and led to inevitable cuts in academics, particularly the arts. This demonstrates a method of prioritization that exemplifies the notion that arts education is a luxury for the wealthy and not a necessity for students of all socio-economic backgrounds. However, the growing body of research now shows us just the opposite is true. As we now know, the schools suffering the most are the ones in the most need of arts education. Particularly now that research has shown that arts education increases cognitive abilities in other disciplines. Theories and research around this subject are the impetus for the Turn Around Arts program.

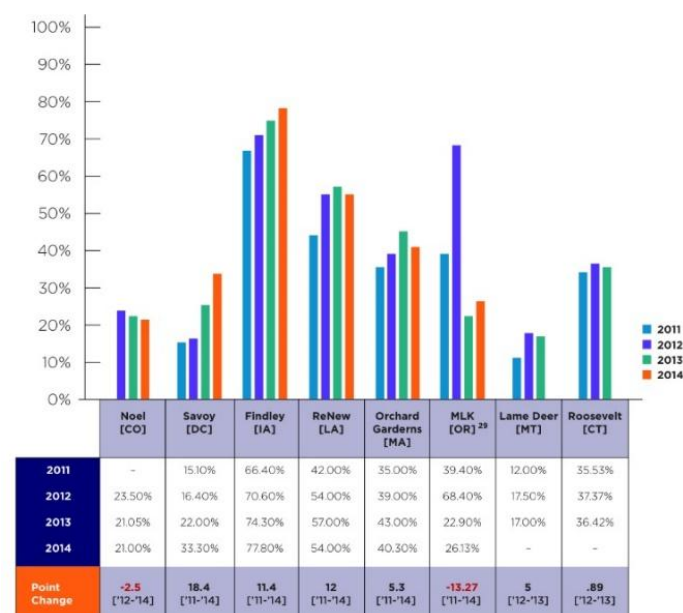
Turn Around Arts was federally funded by the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, which provided 3-year federal grants that target the bottom five percent of schools in each state. This new initiative sought to test the idea that strategically implemented arts education in high poverty communities and under performing schools would add significant value to overall school improvement in testing, national report cards, and behavioral issues. Eight Turn Around Arts schools were selected: ReNEW Cultural Arts Academy (New Orleans, LA), Findley Elementary (Des Moines, IA), Lane Deer Middle School (Lane Deer, MT), Martin Luther King Elementary (Portland, OR), Noel Community Arts School (Denver, CO), Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School (Boston, MA), Roosevelt Elementary (Bridgeport, CT), and Savoy Elementary (Washington, DC). Utilizing arts education to engage students, parents, and

the community, teachers were able to build student engagement, increase attendance, promote parental involvement, and build student cognitive skills and comprehension.

At the end of the program when the results were compiled, all eight schools showed a positive impact in attendance, discipline, and student achievement, as highlighted by Stoelinga: “Analysis of data on program impacts reveals positive progress in Turnaround Arts schools. In the majority of Turnaround Arts schools, achievement gains were evident in math and reading proficiency” (Stoelinga 16).

This data aligns itself well with neurological research being conducted today, particularly the studies being performed by Johns Hopkins University, which I address in the next chapter. Early results of this study indicate that arts education can assist students cognitive and comprehension capabilities in other areas of study. The areas of study with the greatest increases in comprehension amongst the Turn-Around schools that of math and English (see figure 1. below).

**Figure 1:** Math Proficiency of Turnaround Arts Schools

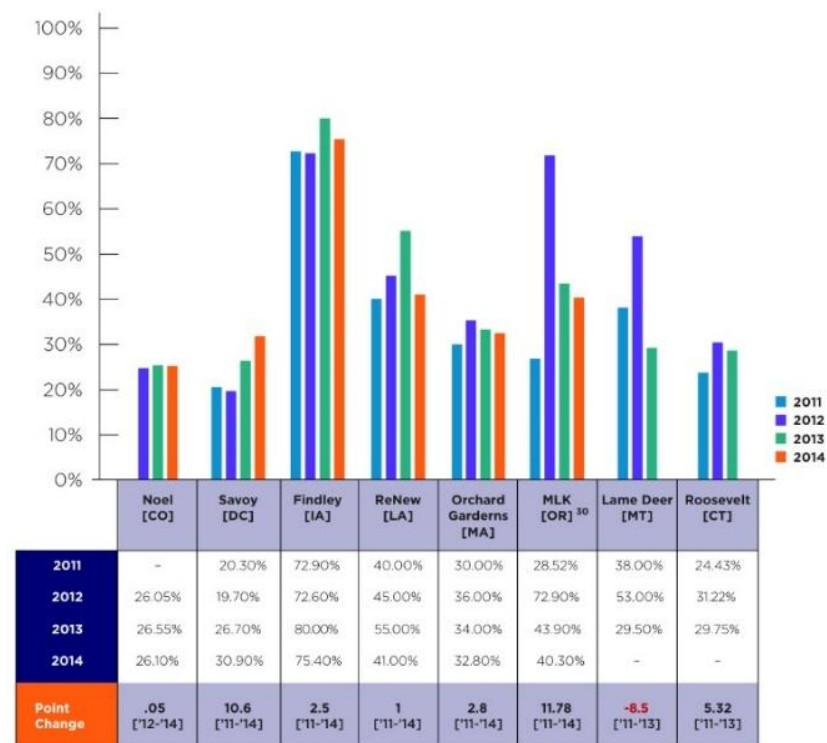




These two disciplines are the focus of both the Common Core curriculum, and high stakes testing. Of the eight Turnaround Arts schools, three had double-digit point-gains for math proficiency rates, and two had similar gains in reading proficiency rates. On average, the eight Turnaround Arts schools demonstrated a 22.55% improvement in math proficiency between 2011 and 2014.

As referenced above math proficiency was not the only area in which positive gains were made. Reading proficiency showed vast improvement, in fact the eight Turn Around Arts schools showed a 12.62% improvement in reading proficiency, as highlighted in figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Reading Proficiency at Turnaround Arts Schools**

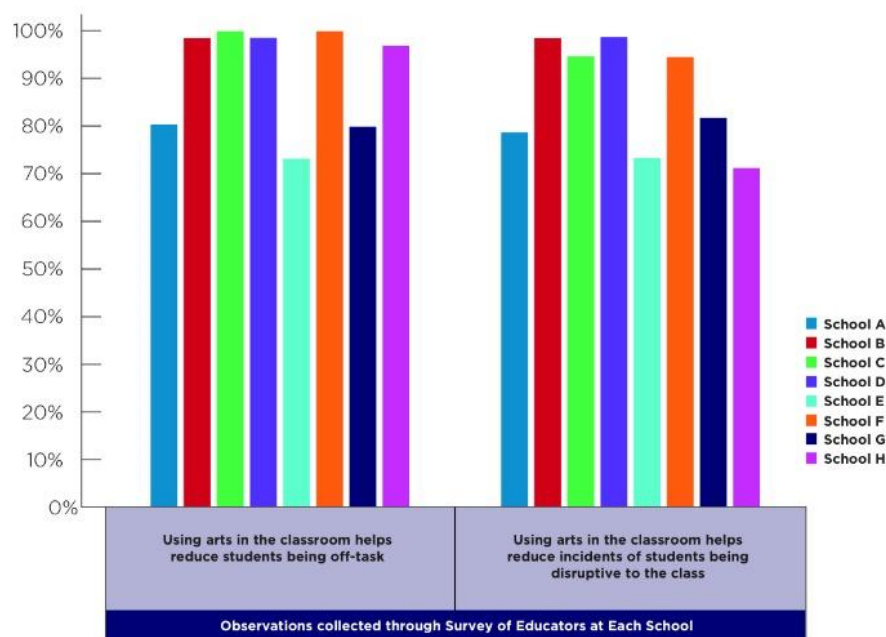


The results of the Turn Around Arts program are hard to ignore, the schools in question are schools that continuously failed to meet state standards year after year. Despite common inner-city school initiatives that focused on violence reduction, increased sex education, it would be

arts education that would make all the difference in the lives of these students. For example, MLK (OR) reduced both in- and out of- school suspensions by 70% between 2011 and 2014. ReNEW (LA) reduced suspensions overall by 51.32%, with in-school suspensions being reduced by 81.13%, between 2011 and 2014. Seven out of the eight observed schools improved their reading proficiency rates between 2011 and 2014. six out of the eight schools improved their math proficiency rates between 2011 and 2014.

In addition to positive academic based results, half of Turn Around Arts schools improved their attendance rates while the majority experienced reductions in disciplinary actions, see figure 3.

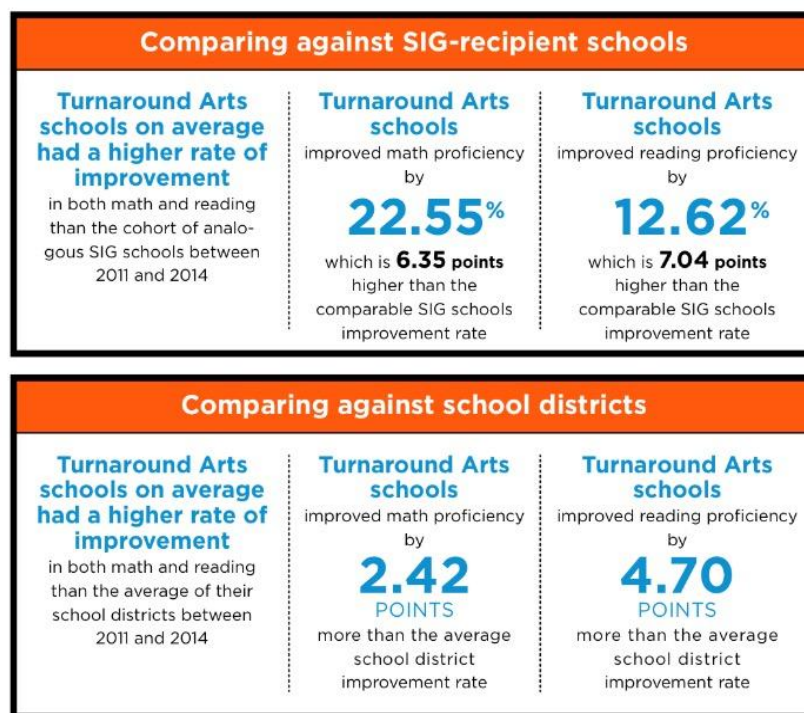
**Figure 3:** Perceptions of Impact of Arts Programming on Discipline



Arts education not only assisted students with their comprehension and cognitive skills but it changed student's attitudes about school. Increases in attendance which suggests an increased interest in attendance. Lower incidence of expulsions, detentions, and disciplinary actions on the

part of the school. Results such as these were also a part of the Johns Hopkins University Research which found that arts education had an effect on the production of serotonin and dopamine, the brains natural mood elevators. All of these results stemming from the integrating of arts education into the curriculum, done largely in the form of assemblies that feature guest speakers involved in the arts, art projects, and field trips to museums, as well as the creation of performances, exhibits, and presentations for and by the students. All of which worked to not only engage the student but get them involved in their own education. Unfortunately due to the nature of the grant, only a select few schools could benefit from this program. The remaining schools that make up the bottom 5% were not so lucky, as Turn Around Arts schools progressed, the remaining schools lagged farther behind. In fact, according to the Turn Around Arts program summary: “When these gains were contextualized through average comparisons these schools collectively outperformed their district counterparts” (Stoelinga 17). The survey results have been summarized in figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Comparing Against SIG-Recipient Schools



The evidence of the PCAH program is nearly impossible to deny: arts education had a tremendous impact on these eight schools in just three short years. However, 2014 would bring the end of the grant funding period, and so the Turn Around Arts program disappeared. What happened to these students following the loss of the program? What happened to the educators who implemented it? What happened to the momentum and the positive direction they were heading in? This is the undeniable flaw in grant-funded initiatives and programs, such as the PCAH initiative. Yet, these types of programs continue to be the most popular options for arts education inclusion. While they do an amazing job of demonstrating the need for arts education, the time for demonstration is over, it is now time for action, it is time for a change in how we integrate arts education into our schools.

Two years after the amazing results stemming from the Turn Around Arts program, and only a mere three to four percent of U.S. schools have fully integrated arts education programs, many of which are not found in inner cities. This statistic reflects a drop from twenty percent just 10 years prior to the 2011 report (Dwyer). Clearly, we need more long term solutions, not grant-based stop-gap measures. Fortunately there are a few programs doing just that, one of which I highlight below. However, they do come at a price.

#### **Case Study 4. Stem to Steam**

Developed by the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) Alumni Association President Meghan Reilly Michaud, the STEAM program is an innovative way to combine core curriculum with arts education. Originally a program design to build interest in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), its success led to the programs director adding arts education to the program, taking the name and the purpose of this organization from STEM to STEAM.

A large percentage of arts education initiatives are web-based, which required teachers to receive resources via mail or email. This can make practical solutions far more difficult to manage, support non-existent, and offers virtually no assessment results to base theories upon. The STEAM initiative makes the best attempt to break this mold. Utilizing a preset curriculum developed at RISD, educators are provided with a full curriculum designed to help to incorporate arts into core curriculum. The arts education curriculum outlines and plans have been researched extensively by professors and academics at the RISD, all with great success. The preset curriculum is a great benefit of the STEAM program as it does not require that the educator spend valuable time drafting and developing arts integration curriculum themselves. In addition to online assessment tools, STEAM has satellite groups across the country, as well as a solid successful track record. STEAM is a movement championed and widely adopted by institutions, corporations and individuals. The belief system that drive the STEAM movement are that:

- Adding Art + Design to STEM research will enhance U.S. economic competitiveness.
- Artists and scientists both ask big questions; designers and engineers both provide inspired solutions. Together they are more powerful than apart.
- Integrating Art + Design into STEM education promotes critical thinking, a key 21st century skill.
- STEAM education promises to increase student engagement and unlock creative thinking and innovation.

RISD Alumni President Meghan Michaud who has long been applying cross-disciplinary practices in her art classes said that, “This new approach will allow students to better grasp concepts across curriculum. At Andover High School, we want to give our students a full and complete education. We want them to be future ready” (Stemtosteam) Michaud believes that the

integration of Art + Design into science, technology, engineering and math is the way to achieve those goals.

This program recognizes the powerful effect abstract thought can have on the sciences and are providing well developed curriculums based largely on the post-secondary education model, examples of which include group assignments and student engagement through active learning. The results have been amazing, such as STEAM's recent utilization within 2012's Georgia Charter School of the Year, Drew Charter School in Atlanta. STEAM program tools were used to develop a strong literacy campaign. The result was that the "Drew Charter School yielded continued improvement in test scores and student success: Drew students exceed the Georgia and Atlanta public school averages in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science" (StemtoSteam). Not only seeking to address core disciplines, STEAM also seeks to introduce new ones, such as with their revered, "Design Like a Girl" program. This goal of this innovative initiative being to generate interest in architecture among young, female students with the hope of eventually balancing out the male-dominated field (StemtoSteam)

While undoubtedly successful and strongly innovative, the greatest disadvantage to the STEAM program is that its primary focus is on elite schools. This choice reinforces the notion that arts education is for the well-to-do and not for every student. The school districts around the U.S. currently incorporating STEAM programs include those with a heavy science and technology focus, as well as budgets to support these innovative courses, in wealthy cities such as; Manhattan, New York; Andover and Travers City, Michigan and private high schools and colleges in California. Schools in Clark County, Nevada, like most struggling school districts, lack the prestige and budget for STEAM initiatives and programs. The programs long standing

record as being designed specifically for prestigious schools and its overhead cost for program integration which can rank in the tens of thousands make the program one that is not suited for all schools. Particularly those struggling with tight budgets.

However, in 2015 the STEAM initiative, based out of its hub at the Rhode Island School of Design, worked to address this issue by developing three new initiatives. The first being STEAM's collaboration with PBS LearningMedia, to develop a collection of free, classroom-ready digital resources for educators. Written by a team of RISD educators, including Dean of Faculty Tracie Costantino, the upper elementary and middle school lesson plans aim to bring the STEAM movement to schools with smaller budgets. Passionate about the prospect of extending the project, Constantino stated that: "Working with PBS LearningMedia, we are now able to begin to satisfy their hunger for connecting the arts and sciences in ways that resonate with students of all ages" (StemtoSteam). The second initiative was the development of podcasts that can be accessed and streamed to schools all over the United States, thus providing a free option to deliver STEAM curriculum to educators. For the schools fortunate enough to not be in the bottom five percent or not fortunate enough to be in the top five percent, STEAM now offers custom-designed curriculum for one or two full semesters.

Of the case studies in this chapter, STEAM is making the most noteworthy effort for arts education integration. They also have a solid focus on partnerships with schools and monitor the use of their curriculums thus allowing for useful feedback, assessment, and a way for educators who have used the program to share in the innovative process. However, the disadvantages are just as broad as the program's scope. STEAM is an elaborate program, not unlike ivy league schools, the primary focus of the program is on top students in top schools. Large scale

campaigns with large scale budgets, focus largely on an elite demographic thus removing the programs from the radars of most U.S. schools, as they simply do not have the budget.

## **Conclusion**

All of the programs discussed in this chapter the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) ArtsEdge, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAHA), and STEM to STEAM deserve reverence for their attempts to sustain arts education in American classrooms. However, one cannot overlook the fact that despite the presence of these programs, the outlook of arts education in all schools is rather bleak. While much can be gleaned from the ideas put forward in these innovative programs, the facts are the facts, current best practices for arts education are simply not working. A change is needed. Fueled by the support of the scientific community, researchers at Johns Hopkins University drafted an outline for next steps in integrating arts education into the Common Core. The Neuro-education collaborative generated new ideas about learning and supports them with hard facts, here I list four steps to arts education integration. The first being schools of education design curriculum modules to test and refine the new ideas, with a view towards pedagogy as well as content. Second, model curricula are created and applied in lab schools and other "authentic settings" (controlled environments). Third, local, state, and national education authorities review the revised curricula and adopt or reject (or adopt some components and reject others). And finally, state and local education authorities align accountability standards with the new curricula (Hardimann, Magsamen,, McKhann, and Eilber, 1. 2014).

It is the belief of the aforementioned collaborative group that if the above steps are taken the following outcomes will result, firstly, new learning is adapted to methodologies for



pragmatic implementation. Second, revised curricula begin to change the nature of preservice preparation and inspire in-service rethinking. Third, authorities come to a fork in the road; maintain the status quo or choose a new direction that's in sync with what students need in the country demands. And finally standards of accountability and success evolve to keep students in school and promote 21st-century skills (Hardimann, Magsamen,, McKhann, and Eilber, 1. 2014).

This outline drafted by professors, researchers, neurologists, and arts education advocates at Johns Hopkins University provides clear and concise steps to supporting and integrating arts education. It also corresponds directly to my concept of Hybrid Education. In the following chapter, I outline in great detail what a Hybrid Education pilot program would look like for a Clark County public school. From a sample lesson plan, sample units, unit goals, grading rubrics, associated state standards, and assessments, I seek to provide clear and practical solutions with clear and practical benefits.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Hybrid Education: Class Integration & Implementation**

With this chapter, I seek to take Hybrid Education out of the realm of theory and into the real world. I provide a step-by-step outline that includes design influences, state standards, unit goals, lesson plans, objectives, and assessment tools. I also provide insight into a Clark County school that would serve as a worthy pilot school. Through this work, I demonstrate, in detail, how best to integrate Hybrid Education in the classroom as well as to establish the ease with which this program will fit into the Clark County Public school system.

I begin with demographic information on the selected pilot school to show why it is an ideal choice for this program. Next, I offer a summary of specific influences on my Hybrid Education curriculum design. Here I highlight why Hybrid Education is important, how it can bring arts education back into the schools, as well as how it can help teachers create a more engaging curriculum for their students.

#### **Pilot School: Helen C. Cannon Junior High school**

Promoting academic excellence and meeting the needs of all learners is the focus of Cannon Junior High School, an up-and-coming three star junior high school as measured by the Nevada School Performance Framework ([www.nevadareportcard.com](http://www.nevadareportcard.com)). Academic growth in reading and science, providing instruction to students in English Language Acquisition (ELA), and an increased use of technology in classrooms are major school-wide initiatives for Cannon JHS (Data Interaction for Nevada Report Card, 2015).

With a student/teacher ratio of 25:1, and serving a culturally diverse student body of 873 students, Cannon JHS has a very specific set of objectives and obstacles that come with the

particular demographic that it serves. For example, 66.44% of the school's students are of Hispanic ethnicity (580 total), 16.61% Caucasians (145), 6.76% African-American (59), and 3.67% Asian American (31) (School accountability report 2015). In addition to studying the ethnic demographic, I also analyzed the subgroups within the main group. For example; 13.52% (118) of students at Cannon JHS qualify as having a documented learning disability. This is significantly higher than the state average of 11.50%. It is also notable that 21.53% of students at Cannon JHS are English Language Learners. Again, this is nearly 25% higher than the state average of 15.02%. Another statistic worth noting is that more than three-quarters of Cannon JHS students (76.75%) qualify for the free/reduced lunch program (Data Interaction for Nevada Report Card, 2015). This is a program only available to schools where more than half of the student body lives below the poverty level. Cannon JHS also has the difficult distinction of being a school ranked as a high poverty school. This means the school ranked in the bottom quartile throughout the state of percentages of students who qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch.

The diverse population of this school is directly related to the urban area in which it is located. Often, issues concerning the school are directly reflective of the community that it serves. The high level of poverty in the community is mirrored within the school. However, the resilient students of Cannon JHS have managed to avoid the pattern of crime also present in their neighborhoods. As of data collected at the end of the second quarter 2015, Cannon JHS has a lower incidence of violence against students than most would expect, making up less than .5% of the statewide total, as well as only 1% of the state-wide total of incidents of reported bullying. These numbers indicate that the students are not resorting to negative coping mechanisms simply due to their environment. However, students at Cannon JHS are falling below the average for the Common Core state standards. In fact, they are completely failing to meet the core standards in

all but one of the four Common Core subjects, science. These statistics have earned this school and its educators a failing report card.

Attendance at Cannon JHS is far above the state average, and incidents leading to suspensions/expulsions are relatively low. The student to teacher ratio is on target for the state and per-pupil expenditures are only slightly below the state average. Despite the alarmingly low graduation rate of 49.1%, Cannon students are not quitters. In fact, their drop-out rate is nearly half the state average. This means that the students are putting in four years at school, but not having the necessary skills to graduate. These students are not giving up on their education. Therefore, educators and decision makers need to make sure they are not giving up on them. To address these problems, I will analyze, assess, and address the issues the institution is facing.

High ELA population, a “high poverty school” (defined as being within the bottom quartile throughout the state), low graduation rate, each of these factors affect the year-end results for Cannon JHS in a very different way. For example, the large ELA population creates language barriers that affect how students learn. In fact, language barriers have, in the past, led to students being held back, or misdiagnosed as having a learning disability. A major issue is the high poverty status of the school. When young minds are distracted by hunger, family stress, after-school jobs, and embarrassment over visibly ragged clothing and appearance, school work can take a back seat. This issue is one that stems from life outside of the classroom, however the self-esteem gained from success in education can give students a stronger sense of themselves in spite of starting life below the poverty level.

The statistics on Cannon JHS students show that they want to learn, they are showing up, they are not dropping out, they are not acting out, and they are not giving up. These statistics shift the responsibility back to where it belongs, on to the teachers. It is my theory that my

concept of Hybrid Education could provide engaging education, and differentiated instruction that could work to address the issues this school and others like it are currently facing. By linking the abstract and the concrete, the extracurricular with the necessary, the written assignment with the activity, the experiential with the exams, we can engage and involve these students in a way that will allow them to access education as they never have before.

The Hybrid model I propose for the purpose of this example is “English Takes Center Stage” a dramatic combination of theater arts and English education. Specific Hybrid model training will be provided for teachers, as well as a review of new proposed curriculums, which will aid in the transition into the Hybrid teaching method. Ideally, in schools with demographics similar to Cannon JHS, one of the educators would be bilingual, which will assist with the ELA issue. “The use of group work and class activities foster a variety of skills that work together to increase understanding and retention. This type of instruction is ideal for ELA students as partnering with English learners with strong English speakers benefits both” ([www.csun.edu](http://www.csun.edu)).

This model will feature two educators in each classroom, one whom is a specialist in the core field, in this case English, and another of whom is a part-time arts specialist, here theater arts. Curriculum textbooks, handouts, and design will be created by the core teacher, the part-time arts teacher, and a Hybrid model training team. Having two educators would cut down on teacher-student ratio, which allows more time with each student. Studies show low student-teacher ratios greatly benefit students’ ability to learn and grasp new concepts. Classes would be more engaging due to the combination of English education with a theater education model. Educators would teach English and sentence structure through the word-byword analysis of performance scripts. Students would learn nouns, adjectives, and verbs through composition of original pieces, speech writing, public speaking, dialogue, dialect. Language and articulation

would be practiced through performance. Use of body, voice projection, blocking, and performance methods would be introduced through the attending of professional theatrical performances, as allowed by budget allocation. An onsite training team would be present for the first two weeks of the program, to assist in the transition into the Hybrid model, as well as answer any questions the educators might have. Assessment tools that will create a strong comparative of student achievement before and after the induction of the Hybrid model would be key, as proof of the Hybrid models effectiveness.

In addition to solid assessment tools designed to monitor student progress, the Hybrid training team will be there as a useful resource to the educators to make the transition an easier one. Studies support the use of in-class activities, extra-curricular activities and student involvement as a solid way to increase positive educational outcomes. This proposal aims to put these facts to the test.

Concepts such as mathematics, the English language, or history are relatively static. The required passing score for Common Core exams are set, as are SAT, and ACT tests. The level of comprehension necessary to be considered “educated” rests within endless editions of text books, and has changed little over time. It is the way in which we teach these concepts that needs to change. For decades we have taught core classes in one classroom and arts classes or electives in another. Students enjoy electives as they are often interactive, fun, and social classes. Hybrid Education will finally connect the two sides of education. The much needed core exercises combined with the engaging arts education classes, this will give students everything they need in one classroom.

## Goals of the Unit and State Standards

Immersive learning is a very effective tool, as often students learn best when allowed to utilize practical applications of material. This is particularly true of concrete concepts such as math and English grammar. For the sake of this thesis, English and grammar are the focus, as it has been taught in a rather static way for centuries. The classic “teacher lectures while student memorize” method is outdated and quickly becoming ineffective in today’s classrooms. This point has been reinforced by extensive research, including the 2014 article “The Wrong Way to Teach Grammar” by Michelle Navarre Cleary. Cleary, an Associate Professor and Associate Dean at DePaul University’s School for New Learning, highlights the need for a new direction in our approach to teaching. Cleary states:

“One well-regarded study followed three groups of students from 9th to 11th grade where one group had traditional rule-bound lessons, a second received an alternative approach to grammar instruction, and a third received no grammar lessons at all, just more literature and creative writing. The result: No significant differences among the three groups— all but the student that received alternative instruction which involved learning concepts, like free-writing, poetry reciting, and group word exercises, emerged with a strong antipathy to English. Happily, there are solutions. Just as we teach children how to ride bikes by putting them on a bicycle, we need to teach students how to write grammatically by letting them write, speak, and perform the English language. Once students get ideas and activities that they care about, they are ready for instruction—including grammar instruction—that will help communicate those ideas” (Cleary 2014).

Hybrid Education will allow students to interact with the English language in a way that engages students in a more individual way. By combining the electives to the core curriculum we offer students more choices: plays they would like to perform and roles they would like to play in production, such as playwriting, acting, and directing. In this way, students physically engage with the materials as they seek out genres that interest them and literature that captures their imagination. When fostering a love of reading in young children, educators have learned that if they opt to allow a kindergarten to select books from a small in-class library, students picked up the skill faster than when specific books were assigned to them. When students are given the opportunity to engage with the materials and the lesson, skills are acquired at a faster pace.

I am in complete agreement with these concepts, as I feel that more relevant ways to teach subjects such as English/grammar are needed. The absence of a practical way to reinforce English/grammar education is a major issue. It is leaving students bored, disinterested, and running from the study of their own language. Not to say textbooks, exams, and the like should be dismissed completely, however, there should be time allotted for exercises of a more practical nature. By merging the interactive qualities of arts education with the Common Core curriculum we get students to physically interact with language and concepts.

The outline for my Hybrid lesson plan is listed below. As you read through it, you will immediately notice assignments that require student interaction. A large part of arts education depends on tangible learning. What makes Hybrid Education a more effective teaching tool is that it changes the way we teach and therefore changes the way students learn. The reason why this is a far more effective method of teaching is documented by researchers at Johns Hopkins University and outlined in their summary. Here researchers point out a flaw in the way teachers teach: “Educators deal primarily with knowledge described with words, not with actions or



schemata. Adolescents who consult Google or Wikipedia typically obtain semantic knowledge, not procedural or schematic understandings” (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009). That is to say, words, terms and definitions offer a student a shallow education when compared to hands-on or tangible learning. For example, the summary went on to say that:

The heavy reliance on semantic networks is unfortunate because words, especially English words, do not specify phenomena with the detail that permits differentiation among distinct members of a concept. The problem is that very diverse events are given the same name. The word "bird" is an example. Robins, ducks, hawks, and penguins are very different members of the same semantic concept (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009).

A lecture on birds does not provide the type of education students could obtain at an aviary. A teacher telling students what a noun is, is not as in-depth as a teacher letting a student hold a noun, or a theatrical prop, in their hands. A teacher telling students what an adjective is, is not as in-depth as having a student perform a soliloquy first with and then without adjectives. For too long teachers have relied on lectures and class presentations to disseminate information. This offers students a semantic education, whereas Hybrid Education will provide a procedural and schematic education. The lesson plan below will illustrate how this will be accomplished.

### **Sample Outline for a Hybrid Lesson Plan**

The goals of this unit align with the Common Core State Standards adopted by the state of Nevada’s department of education in 2012. In this class students will study theater arts with an eye for mastering the core concepts of 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade English.

Lesson Title: English Takes Center Stage

Grades: High school - Grades 6th-8th

Primary Subject – Grammar, Theater Arts

Secondary Subjects – Reading comprehension, writing comprehension

English Course Standards Addressed: (English, Language, Reading, and Speaking)

**E1-1.4.** Analyze the relationship among character, plot, conflict, and theme in a given literary text.

**E1-1.6.** Create responses to literary texts through a variety of methods (for example, written works, oral and auditory presentations, discussions, media productions, and the visual and performing arts).

**E1-2.2.** Compare/contrast information within and across texts to draw conclusions and make inferences.

**E1-2.4.** Create responses to informational texts through a variety of methods (for example, drawings, written works, oral and auditory presentations, discussions, and media productions).

**L.5.1.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

-Explain the function of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections in general and their function in particular sentences.

-Form and use the perfect (e.g., I had walked; I have walked; I will have walked) verb tenses.

-Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions.

-Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.\*

-Use correlative conjunctions (e.g., either/or, neither/nor).

**L.5.2.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

-Use punctuation to separate items in a series.\*

-Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence.

-Use a comma to set off the words yes and no (e.g., Yes, thank you), to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g., It's true, isn't it?), and to indicate direct address (e.g., Is that you, Steve?).

-Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works.

-Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed

**RI.5.5.** Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

**RI.5.6.** Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

**SL.5.4.** Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**SL.5.5.** Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

**SL.5.6.** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

As arts education is not a common core subject, there are no preset standards for this discipline. Therefore we must utilize the eleven anchor standards provided by the National Arts Standards (NAS). The requirements of a select few are as follows:

- Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

This combination of the active and playful element of theater arts with English and grammar will create a far more engaging classroom experience. It will also help to add an artistic element to an otherwise concrete and static concept, which has been found to assist in comprehension and cognition, as well as provide the benefits of a schematic and procedural education, which is far more in-depth and more readily retained than semantic education. As long as rubrics are clearly communicated, and assessments are used to monitor knowledge acquired, educators can provide an alternative and more engaging teaching method to their students.

## **Sample Objectives, Learning Activities, and Assessment**

The main objective of this sample lesson plan is to engage students, disseminate information, and to foster a love of learning. As neurological research has shown, students gain and retain knowledge far better when their minds are active and they are allowed to participate in the learning process (Hardiman, Magsamen, McKhann, & Eilber 2009). Outside of this goal, the concepts my students will need to master are the basic units of grammar as required by 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade English/grammar standards (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.), that is as they pertain to theater, plays, and performance. Lessons consist of the ability to not only learn the definition of a noun, but a student will act out a scene from a play of their choosing and identify all of the props/nouns. Students will attempt to act out the scenes without nouns, to better understand how large of a role these units of grammar play in their everyday lives. A student will not only learn what an adjective is, but will be challenged to identify them in a monologue and attempt to perform the monologue in an emphatic way without utilizing them, so that they can understand just how useful these terms are. They will not simply define the subject of a sentence, they will have the opportunity to be the subject of a sentence. The written word will no longer be allowed to lie stagnate on the page, it will be brought to life by classroom activities. Students will see the practicality of the noun when each noun is placed on a props table. Students will get to choose three of five nouns to leave out of a scene to see the impact of their presence. Do they leave out the dagger that Juliet uses to end her life, the poison Romeo drinks, or the priest who formulates the tragic plan that leads to the end of the young lovers' lives? They will see how these simple terms take a scene from dormant to dynamic and understand that these concepts are not outdated or unnecessary but relevant and current. This

type of tangible interaction with the English language will assist the development of both critical and practical thinking, skills which will aid the student beyond the classroom.

My goal with this lesson plan is to combine practical use of grammar with the interactive performance of a drama class, creating a Hybrid between a text-heavy course and a course that provides playful interaction and practical usage of learned terms. Students will learn to play with grammar, see how it is actually a part of their everyday life, all while absorbing grammatical terms.

## **Lesson One: Word & Term Identification**

### **Objectives**

*Students will be able to:*

### **Common Core Requirements**

- Identify grammatical terms in a practical presentation.
- Generate responses to informational texts and videos.
- Perform a monologue of their choosing in 2 different ways, with adjectives and without.

### **Arts Anchor Standards**

- Anchor Standard #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.

### **Learning Activities:**

Three to five students will be selected to read scene one, act one from *Romeo & Juliet*. Students will be asked to take out a sheet of paper and write down 10 words they hear during the

scene. At the end of the viewing, the teacher will go over some of the words and categorize each word as a noun, verb, adjective, etc. For instance, most students never even think of the word “love” as a noun or a verb when in truth it can be both. After practicing with some in-class samples, instruct the students to take home their respective lists and categorize the remaining words.

### **Assessment**

Students will turn in the completed vocabulary list they took home, and receive 10 points for correctly identifying the words and terms. Class participation is key and will make up the remaining 10pts in this unit.

### **Lesson Two: Reading for Performance and Grammatical importance**

#### **Objectives**

*Students will be able to:*

- Identify grammatical terms in a human or conversational sense.
- Learn the importance of these grammatical terms within sentences.
- Distinguish between how a verb, a noun, and adjective function.

#### **Arts Anchor Standards**

- Anchor Standard #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.

#### **Learning Activities**

Students will be split into three groups. Each group will be given a short scene. The groups will then be asked to take ten minutes to write a short paragraph describing the scene and

the actions involved. These paragraphs will be shared with the class, to hone and develop interpretation and script analysis skills. Next, groups must take a pen and cross out all nouns, group two all verbs, and group three all of the adjectives. Then, each group will perform their scripts aloud to understand the importance and function of these words. For instance, students will discover that without nouns we have no characters or swords, without verbs we have no running, fighting, or action, and without adjectives we have no modifiers. This exercise will reiterate how we use grammar every day. Also as they perform the script students will learn how words fuel performance, as well as how to closely analyze scripts.

### **Assessment**

Each grouping of students will take the scripts home and memorize them for performance exercises in the classroom. When the pieces are performed, emphasis will be put on the respective grammatical term. Each performance will be worth 20 points, a combination of practical work and in class participation. Student paragraphs will be graded based on understanding of the scene and action analysis. Any errors during performance (forgotten lines, incorrectly identified terms, student not off book) will result in a point deducted.

### **Lesson Three: Viewing of Act II and Scene 1-5 and vocabulary review**

#### **Objectives**

*Students will be able to:*

- Identify grammatical terms within a text.
- Increase vocabulary.
- Distinguish between how a verb, a noun, and adjective.



- Demonstrate vocabulary knowledge.
- Demonstrate retaining of learned information.

### **Arts Anchor Standards**

- Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.

### **Learning Activities**

Students will read aloud from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (2.1-5). Students will then be asked to take ten minutes to summarize the scene and the actions involved in three sentences. These sentences will be shared with the class, to hone and develop interpretation and script analysis skills. Next, they will receive a vocabulary sheet (fig 6.) to study for a comprehensive test that will ask them to define each term and then decide to which grammatical class of words it belongs.

#### **Act Two Vocabulary (Figure 5.)**

1. Jest (verb) - to joke, prank
2. Impetuous (adj.) - capable of sudden action, emotion or violence, brash, impulsive
3. Judicious (adj.) - possessing sound judgment, cautious, shrewd
4. Garish (adj.) - marred by excessive ornamentation; gaudy
5. Chide (verb) - to scold, rebuke, reprimand
6. Kindred (adj.) - same kind
7. Idolatry (noun) - extreme devotion or worship of a person or thing

8. Invocation (noun) - a prayer like speech; also conjuring or calling up of spirits
9. Rancor (noun) - feelings of ill will, hatred, enmity, animosity
10. Repose (noun) - time when one can relax

### **Assessment**

Students will take a vocabulary exam based on both vocabulary sheets (the one created from the film clip in lesson 1 and the handout in lesson 3) which asks them to define the terms then decide to which class of words each belongs. The test consists of 10 questions, each worth 1 point, for a possible total of 10 points on the exam. Student sentences will be turned in and graded based on understanding of the scene and action analysis for a total of 5 points. The remaining 5 points for this lesson will stem from class performance and participation. Students will study the language of Shakespeare in order to foster a deeper understanding.

### **Lesson Four: Viewing of Act III and Scene 1-5 and Final Grammatical Review**

#### **Objectives**

*Students will be able to:*

- Identify grammatical terms within a text.
- Increase vocabulary.
- Distinguish between how a verb, a noun, and adjective.

#### **Learning Activities**

Students will read aloud from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (3.1-5) listening for grammatical terms. They will receive a vocabulary sheet to study for a comprehensive final that

will ask them to define the term than decide to which class of words it belongs. Students will be assigned roles for a production of *Romeo and Juliet* to be performed as a final class project. Scripts will be passed out and students encouraged to apply their own interpretations of the roles. Here students will develop the ability to utilize their own personal life experiences to create a performance. Students will also have the opportunity to craft artistic work for in-class presentations.

(Figure 6.)

#### Act Three Vocabulary

1. Dissembler (noun) - one who hides himself or puts on a false appearance
2. Jocund (adj.) - cheerful, merry
3. Puling (adj.) - whining, whimpering
4. Agile (adj.) - well-balanced and quick on one's feet, nimble
5. Discord (noun) - lack of harmony
6. Felon (noun) - criminal
7. Beguile (verb) - to deceive or cheat
8. Intercession (noun) - a plea on another's behalf, a mediation

#### Assessment

Students will review the Act three vocabulary list, along with the initial vocabulary lists with an eye for taking a comprehensive final. This test will allow the educator to gauge student comprehension. Student will develop public speaking and performance skills.

## **Lesson Five: Final Performance Review**

### **Objectives**

*Students will be able to:*

- Demonstrate proficiency in performing arts.
- Demonstrate a comfort and ease with language.
- Comprehend 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade English/grammar state requirements.
- Gain a schematic/procedural education utilizing arts education.
- Interpret and perform an artistic work for an audience

### **Arts Anchor Standards**

- Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

### **Learning Activities**

Students will learn the basic blocking and staging techniques necessary to perform a professional production of a scene from an academically approved edition of *Romeo and Juliet*. This production will have an audience of peers and parents and will be the cumulative final for the theatrical aspect of the course. Students will work together as a collective, to complete this culminating project. Assigned parts will include: performer, stage hands, choreographer, fight director, composer, costume designer, and director. The students will list their top three choices,

to assist in the selection process. Final choices of the roles will be made by the teacher, who will play the role of stage manager. This final project will allow students to use the vocabulary, demonstrate the proper usage of grammatical terms, as well as practice performance techniques.

### **Assessment**

Students will be graded based on memorization of scripts, performance, and participation. Students will start with 10 points for performance and participation and receive point deductions for forgotten lines. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Demonstrate through survey responses an understanding of the benefits and necessity of arts education.

### **Why Hybrid Education Will Work**

The goal of this proposal is to create an atmosphere at Cannon JHS that will increase student engagement with education, which will directly affect the year-end Common Core grades. Accomplishing these two goals with one proposal would be ideal for both the student, teacher, the school and the state of Nevada. The students of Cannon JHS are committed to their education, they simply need something worth committing too. The Hybrid Education model is also cost effective as the arts education specialist will serve in an assistant capacity, and will not require full-time new hires. Schools also have some choices. They can also select which programs to add at their own pace: theater arts, dance, music, and visual art, and can select up to four specialists and as few as one. I am confident that assessments and results will provide all of the motivation the school needs and all of the promotion the program requires.

The Hybrid model allows education to evolve along with our society, technology, and our students. The model of one teacher lecturing a class of 30 students who struggle to memorize the information, so that they may recite it back to the teacher for the sake of test scores is outdated. The idea that all students come from the same background, culture, and community and thereby will all learn in the same ways is outdated. The concept of chaining a student to their desks for eight hours a day is outdated. We need to breathe new life into our school system, it's time for a real change. The Hybrid Education model will assist with student teacher ratio, which will insure no child is left behind. The Hybrid Education model will provide a bilingual educator in class where the demographic is 40% or higher as it is at Cannon JHS. The Hybrid Education model will promote students interacting with one another, working as a collective on productions, learning as a group on team projects, strengthening relationships and creating school solidarity. The Hybrid model will revive the standard education model and get students moving, and actively engaged in their learning so that they take ownership in their education and become more motivated to do their best.

Researchers are now starting to understand that “Teaching is more exploratory than explanatory. The method is more important than the subject matter. The ideal teaching method is concerned not so much with teaching the learner what to think as with teaching the learner how to think” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2010). This is the core of my Hybrid Education model, to foster skills that will promote independent thinkers. No longer will teachers simply impart facts and ask students to recite them back, but educators can now give students tools and show them how to utilize them. Hybrid Education engages both students' minds and bodies. This teaching method has been proven to do even more than offer the benefits listed above. Arts education can actually change the molecular make-up of the brain, making it more susceptible to learning,

comprehension, and cognition. Robert Hutchins, a longtime arts education advocate noted that the “Aim of the educational system is the same in every age and in every society where such a system can exist. That aim is to improve people (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2010). Neuroscientists have now proven that infusing arts education into core education can do just that. In the next chapter I will closely examine the research that demonstrates how beneficial Hybrid Education is to students, teachers, and parents, and is thereby the future of education.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Future of Arts Education: Back to the Drawing Board**

The current state of arts education can be likened to the solving of an algebraic equation. Both the problem and the solution are right in front of you. However, you must first understand the true value of each individual variable before you know exactly what formula will lead you to the solution. Like a nervous eighth grader standing with a dry erase marker in hand, those involved in the great arts education debate, are nervously rooted to the spot. They stand frozen, staring at the problem hesitant to venture a response, since the issue began over 30 years ago. For far too long, school boards have been put in the unenviable position where due to limited budgets, they have had to choose between music or math, art or history, theater or English. Yet each of these respective paired subjects complement each other so well that the debate should not be which ones to eliminate, but rather how best to integrate.

This is why I advocate for the creation and instillation of a combination of core curriculum and arts education that I call Hybrid Education. Hybrid Education is an innovative curriculum style that combines a state mandated course, such as English, with a specific aspect of arts education, such as theatre arts. The Hybrid classes will give students a balanced and well-rounded curriculum. I envision Hybrid classes with titles like “Musical Math”, “The English Language Performed”, and “History through Art”. In this chapter, I illustrate the value that my proposed arts education initiative will have on administrators, educators, students, and parents. Because again like the above algebraic equation, once the values are known, the solution will become simple.



## **The Great Divide**

To understand the values of all the stakeholders, I felt it key to not only analyze the needs of educators but also the needs of the Clark County school district and the school boards. Too often educators are depicted as pitted against districts and school boards, as if the three groups are enemies who want different things, however, this is not the case. While we may go about achieving our goals in different ways, we all have a vested interest in insuring that our students are aptly prepared to contribute positively to society. Whether students accomplish this through the immediate joining of the growing workforce or via post-secondary education, the goal remains the same.

The grassroots versus the ivory tower ideal often divides educators and administrators. That is the notion that teachers are out on the front lines, and are being given the most difficult jobs with the fewest resources available with which to accomplish them. From the perspective of the educator, it appears that these strenuous tasks are being delivered from the cushy offices of administrators. This creates a divide that has made it very difficult for both sides to work together and to seek solutions as a collective. The reality of the situation is that both have difficult jobs with a list of unenviable tasks to perform. One must not forget the responsibility the Clark County School District has on its hands:

Established in 1956, Clark County School District is the fifth largest school district in the country, educating almost 75 percent of all students in Nevada with more than 320,000 students enrolled in Kindergarten through 12th grade. The district encompasses 356 schools and approximately 8,000 square miles in southern Nevada and is a minority majority student district. With more than 40,000 employees, CCSD is also the largest employer in the state ([www.ccsd.net](http://www.ccsd.net)).

In a city built on tourism, the Clark County School District is an even larger employer than the entire hospitality industry. The immense amount of pressure this district is under to produce positive results is equal to if not greater than that of today's educators. A part of my Hybrid Education concept would be to open up communication between administrators and educators. I feel there is a need to bridge this growing gap, as each side represents an integral part of the equation. By creating a teacher representative whom is to be present during all administrative meetings, teachers can play an active role in the budget, and curriculum building process. This way, educators are not simply being ordered to adhere to new standards, but that they have some input into the development of those standards, as well as new curriculum, and budget decisions. This advocate system would benefit the administrators as well, as the practical on the job input that teachers could bring to the process would be invaluable. I believe that there needs to be more collaboration between administrators and teachers, and in that sense we will shed the stigma that the two groups that are on separate sides.

### **Educators, Head of the Class / Front of the Line**

Today's teachers are required to play more roles and take on greater responsibility than ever before. In addition to basic instruction, teachers take on the roles of a manager, a counselor, a referee, a life coach, a mental health specialist, and all at times a leader. Above all, teachers have a curriculum to impart. This vital information must be delivered to meet state mandates and pass high-stakes testing. Failure to accomplish this task could lead to an entire classroom falling behind, with the repercussion of possible termination for the teacher. Therefore, the teacher must use every tool at their disposal to overcome curriculum issues that could prevent students from making the grade. I argue Hybrid Education can serve this purpose.

The goal of a good teacher is to create minds that can function well beyond graduation day. The role of a teacher is to create great thinkers, leaders, and the teachers of the next generation. This is a particularly daunting task when teachers are being given new goals and standards, but are being expected to utilize the same old tools to accomplish them. Standards and expectations alone cannot be elevated, methods and best practices must also follow suit. Teachers need new and innovative ways to help their students reach new and increasingly higher standards. Hybrid Education is the way to accomplish that goal.

In Hybrid Education, each classroom will be staffed with two educators. One, a specialist in one of the core curriculum subjects, such as math, science, history, or English. The other a specialist in the fine arts such as; theater, dance, music, or art. The benefits of this concept are immediate, with two educators in the classroom we have cut the student/teacher ratio in half. Teachers would then have more individual time with students, allowing them the opportunity to truly invest in each student. An amazing benefit in itself, for as the saying goes: “Students do not care how much you know, until they know how much you care” (Schindler 2015). In addition to the aforementioned benefits, the ever-growing workload of today’s educator would be lightened immensely. The stress and pressure educators are under would be greatly diminished. As educators would have a colleague to collaborate with on the development and design of curriculum, as well as on classroom management strategies. This alone would increase the quality and satisfaction of a teacher’s job overall. Thus adding a key benefit that could encourage more strong minds to choose this career, and help to slow or possibly end teacher shortages, a sadly growing trend. This could be accomplished all without lofty budgets or having to make drastic changes to existing faculty. If existing arts educators are on staff, they work with the core teachers, and the Hybrid Education team to combine the curriculums. If there is not an arts

specialist on site, a part time teacher's assistant would work with the teacher to develop and deliver the Hybrid Education model. By providing an assistant to manage the class, develop the curriculum, administer assignments, present the curriculum, and assist the teacher as needed, a teachers growing load has instantly become lighter. Teachers can eliminate the need to divide their attention in so many ways and regain focus on being a solid teacher. Great teachers make great students, so let us take a closer look at how the students would benefit.

### **A Study of Students**

Any parent actively looking for the right school for their child have become familiar with the term student-to-teacher-ratio. Referring directly to class size, this ratio is a vital bit of information. A 2008 report published in the "Early Childhood Education Journal" sites that one on one, and small group instruction have extensive benefits for both the student and the educator including individualized instruction and interaction. ("When Fewer Is More: Small Groups in Early Childhood Classrooms" 515) The more one on one attention a student receives from their teacher, the better a student performs academically. This fact is illustrated by Professor Diane Whitmore of Northwestern University in a policy brief on class size and educational outcomes:

This policy brief summarizes the academic literature on the impact of class size and finds that class size is an important determinant of a variety of student outcomes, ranging from test scores to broader life outcomes. Smaller classes are particularly effective at raising achievement levels of low-income and minority children. Policymakers should carefully weigh the efficacy of class-size policy against other potential uses of funds. While lower class size has a demonstrable cost, it may prove the more cost-effective policy overall (2014).

As if the data and research were not great enough indicators of the value of keeping classroom sizes low, many parents may have also observed that the cost of the school greatly increases as this ratio decreases. According to data listed on the Clark County Public School website, “The average class size of Clark County Public schools is 27 students, compared to an average of 14 in area private schools” ([www.ccsd.net](http://www.ccsd.net)). Despite the fact lower classroom sizes positively affect academic outcomes, it is not a best practice for policy makers or school boards. In fact, we see classroom sizes increase in public schools consistently year after year. We cannot simply accept the fact that the majority of K-12 students in the United States are receiving half the attention as private school students. This discrepancy needs to be addressed as a quality education is a right owed to all Americans, not a privilege for the well-to-do.

My proposal addresses this issue. The student population will only continue to grow with time, and there is little that can be done about that. However, by adding an additional educator to classrooms, I aim to address this issue before it becomes an even bigger one. Giving the students the one on one attention that they deserve will in turn keep the students on task, limit class disruptions, and distractions. This will allow students the benefit of an environment that promotes their ability to focus, learn, and retain, the materials being taught to them. Once the attention of the student is captured, all that is needed is the solid delivery of an engaging curriculum. This is another benefit of Hybrid Education. By combining arts education with Common Core curriculums, students are encourage to participate, speak, perform, and take an active role in their education every day. Many core curriculum classes offer only semantic education. However, by meshing math to music, art to history, and theater to English, educators can provide schematic and procedural teaching method. This has been founded to be a more engaging and abiding education for students. More individualized instruction, more engaging

classrooms, and better overall experience for both students and educators, this is Hybrid Education.

### **Parents, a Great Untapped Resource**

According to the conclusion of a 2002 report from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory titled, *A New Wave of Evidence*: “When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more” (Henderson and Mapp, 2). The report, a synthesis of research on parent involvement over the past decade, also found that, regardless of family income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to: earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs; be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits; attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior; and graduate and go on to postsecondary education (Henderson and Mapp, p.12 2002).

When schools engage families, by supporting parent involvement both at home and at school, students make greater gains. When schools build partnerships with families, respond to directly to parent concerns, honor their contributions, and share decision-making responsibilities, they are able to foster connections that studies show improve student achievement. For many students, a parent’s only opportunity to see them perform at school is through extracurricular activities such as sports, school plays, and the occasional academic event such as a spelling bee or a science fair. But what about students who are not involved in these activities? Do their parents not deserve an opportunity to see their child shine? With my Hybrid Education model all students will have a chance to participate in theater, arts, music, and dance to some extent, increasing opportunities for parental involvement, and school and student pride.

It is vital that schools get parents more involved in their child's education and Hybrid Education will provide parents the opportunity to do just that.

Students are not the only beneficiaries from having two educators in each classroom. Parents will also benefit, by having more direct contact with an educator, having greater opportunities for more frequent parent teacher's conferencing, as well as more one-on-one time to develop education plans for the student. This will allow educators to establish a more personal relationship with the student and their parents, which will enrich the experience for the educator, the parent, and the student.

### **Conclusive Evidence**

The findings of a 2014 report by researchers at Johns Hopkins University titled: "Neuro-education: Learning, Arts and the Brain" clearly support my concept of Hybrid Education. These neuro-scientists have made major strides in the study of arts education and cognition, attention, and learning. These findings were compiled in a report titled: "Neuro-education: Learning, Arts and the Brain". Below is just a small sampling of the findings, all of which support my concept of Hybrid education with unrefuted science:

We developed a theory about how arts training might work in which we hypothesized that:

1) there are specific brain networks for different art forms; 2) there is a general factor of interest or openness to the arts; 3) children with high interest in the arts, and with training in those arts, develop high motivation; 4) motivation sustains attention; and 5) high sustained motivation, while engaging in conflict-related tasks, improves cognition. We found that high levels of motivation led to strong improvements in task performance,

particularly when motivation was sustained for longer periods of time. The findings support the idea that interest in the arts allows for sustained attention (Hardimann, Magsamen,, McKhann, and Eilber, 1. 2014).

The above research states that arts education works to increase the brain activity that encourages motivation and attention. It goes on to state that once arts education activates the aforementioned brain networks, it is possible to teach other topics and receive the benefits of those open networks. By studying image scans of the brain of their control group, scientist were able to determine that arts education triggered the motivation and attention necessary to increase cognition, comprehension, as well as the retaining of information. The goal of this research is to make a case for not only how arts education is beneficial in and of itself, but how it can actually help students learn Common Core subjects such as math, science, English, and history. This research fully supports my concept of arts education because the core of my program is the activating of specific brain networks utilizing arts education, and then integrating a non-arts related subject, thereby allowing students to learn faster and retain the information longer. A great, if simple, example of activating brain networks to incite memory for the purpose of learning is the alphabet song. You would be hard pressed to find an adult who could not recite this song quickly and easily. The part of the brain that triggers motivation, attention, and the retaining of information is used expertly here to teach the 26 letters of the alphabet. This is precisely what Hybrid Education seeks to do, combine the engaging and cognitive benefits of arts education with the necessity of Common Core education.

This is the data, this is the research, these are the facts that arts education advocates have been waiting for. For far too long the need for arts education has been called into question. For far too long the benefits of arts education have been based on presumptions and conjecture.



There is no need to doubt our theories, hearts, and instincts any more, we now have scientific proof and the support of the scientific community behind us. All that we need to do is put this science to use by utilizing it to create a new way to educate our students. My theory of Hybrid Education will do just that.

In this chapter I have worked to summarize how Hybrid Education can benefit the Common Core, educators, students, and parents. I have reiterated the positive research and introduce significant scientific proof that Hybrid Education is education for the future. It is now time that we put this research to use. It is now time that we utilize our findings to make a difference in the way we educate our students.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Hybrid Education = Higher Education**

The Common Core standards mandated by the Department of Education clearly outline the goals of K-12 schools, which is to prepare students for post-secondary education. The greatest difference between the K-12 experience and the post-secondary one, is that the former is primarily semantic learning, whereas the latter is schematic or procedural learning. That is, college is an overall interactive experience that prepares and educates the entire student, academically, culturally and socially. Hybrid Education, which is the merging of core required courses with arts education, can provide this type of educational experience on the elementary and secondary level.

Picture a more engaging and interactive classroom experience. Envision a balanced curriculum, one that has been shown to activate the mind and lead to a more beneficial learning experience. Imagine the potential for better attendance, better scores on high-stakes testing, as well as students who are more involved and invested in their education. By combining the core disciplines (math, science, history, and English) with the schematic and procedural learning of art, music and theater, we can create classes that satisfy the requirements of the Common Core, the teachers, and most importantly the students.

Common Core Standards are set in order to insure that students acquire certain basic knowledge during their K-12 schooling. However, the precise method by which educators impart this knowledge is not regulated. Therefore, if state standards require that a student “Analyze the relationship among character, plot, conflict, and theme in a given literary text” (CCSS 2015), then it is up to the educator to decide if this is done through the traditional form of reading or

watching a work, or the Hybrid classroom model of performing a work. If a student is required to “Create responses to literary texts through a variety of methods” (CCSS 2015) the educator can select the most engaging and appropriate method for their classroom, which well might be performance.

A large part of an educators’ choices stem from their personal teaching philosophies, two of the most popular being the essentialist and the perennialist. The essentialist tends to be vocational and fact-based. Adherents to essentialist teaching believe that students should learn the basic subjects thoroughly and rigorously. The aim is to instill students with the "essentials" of academic knowledge. Essentialism focuses largely on such disciplines as reading, writing, history, mathematics, and science. Moreover, this traditional approach is meant to train the mind, promoting reasoning and logic.

A perennialist believes students should be taught lessons and subjects of everlasting pertinence to all people everywhere. This philosophy means that the most vital topics develop a person completely, and that one should focus on teaching principles, and not simply facts. In this form, the educator teaches the “why” and not just the “what”. Perennialism focuses first on personal development, and secondly on core skills. Hybrid Education brings together the best of these two philosophies. The essentialist philosophy of studying the core subjects will be linked to the perennialist ideals of learning through personal development, group involvement, and social interaction, such as is found with group exercises, performance elements, and public speaking. Hybrid Education will allow students an ideal balance between exams and experiences. Current research strongly supports the need for this balance.

## Theoretical to Practical

Regardless of which philosophy an educator ascribes to, they cannot develop curriculum in a vacuum. There are various elements such as data, research, policy, assessment, etc., surrounding the field that must inform their work. During a round table meeting at the John's Hopkins neuro-educational summit, researchers, neuro-scientists, policy makers, and arts education advocates developed what they termed a “Neuro-education Interdisciplinary Research model” which demonstrates how curriculum, policy, and new research can work together to create the ideal learning environment for the student, see figure 7.

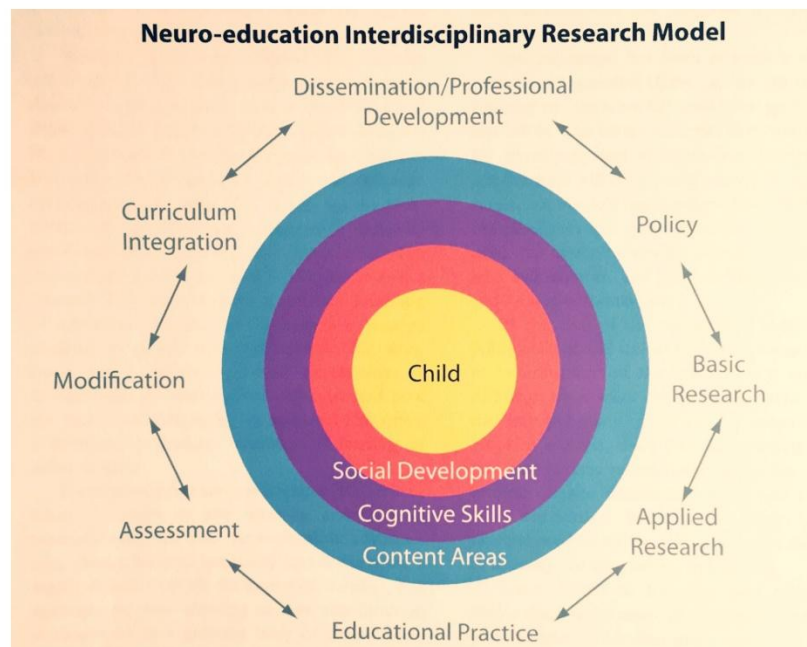


Figure 7: Neuro-education Interdisciplinary Research Model

Hybrid Education works with the above model perfectly, beginning at the very top with dissemination of professional development. My initiative would start with the development of a Hybrid Education team. These are the individuals who will be charged with working with teachers and the arts assistants to develop the curriculum. This team will work to change policy

by demonstrating a more effective way of attaining the goals mandated within common core standards. By merging common core with arts education we will have effectively changed policy and best practices. Educators build upon basic research, such as what they know concerning the benefits of students whom are taught in smaller groups, or whom receive individualized attention, and more engaging curriculum. Then, this is teamed with applied neurological studies of arts education's effects on the brain when it comes to cognition, comprehension, and the retaining of information. Based on all of this research teachers develop schemata and procedural curriculums and practice this new form of education in classrooms. They can then assess the success of the program by comparing the classic teaching method and the Hybrid teaching method. This will give the proof needed to justify modifying current teaching programs, as well adjust for any adjustments that need be made to the Hybrid curriculum. Thereby educators can have strengthened and combined content, cognition, skills, and social development for the betterment of the students.

### **A for Effort**

As shown in chapter two, programs like The National Core Arts Standards (NCAS), ArtsEdge, the President's Committee for Arts and Humanities (PCAH) and the STEM to STEAM program, have each offered solid results in the short term. However, they all range from those that target schools performing in the bottom five percent, to those performing in the top five percent. Each case study demonstrated the importance of arts education, yet each program had a respective flaw. Whether it was the short duration, the limited target, or the expense, a key flaw made the program less than ideal. We need to find a permanent, cost effective solution, a way to establish a best practice that can be utilized by all schools, all educators, and all students. Hybrid Education can do this.

Hybrid Education provides a balanced curriculum that will both engage and educate each student. It offers a melding of disciplines that will benefit both the student and the teacher through giving the students the engaging kinetic and social experience they desire, embedded within the core curriculum they need. As author Allan Ornstein said in *Curriculum: Foundations, Principles, and Issues*: "Formal education the optimal laboratory for human improvement within such an environment, the child, under an educator's guidance, had opportunities to receive and perfect psychological tools that assisted in organizing and reorganizing mental functions" (Ornstein and Hunkins, 107). Arts education can provide the link to organizing a student's brain in a way that is optimal for comprehension and understanding of all other subjects. This is the reason why we need Hybrid Education, and why it is so vital to today's educators and students.

### **A Journey of a Million Miles**

It is said that a journey of a million miles begins with one single step, and the journey to Hybrid Education is no different. First, a request for grant proposals would be to put together, one that supports the assembling of the Hybrid Education resource team. During this development phase the aforementioned team would, through studying and analyzing research, be trained on Hybrid Education and curriculum development. Next, a pilot school would be selected. If the school has an arts teacher on staff, training would begin immediately. If the school does not have a trained arts teacher on staff (and many do not as in Clark County, teachers of core subjects are often asked to take on teaching arts education with no formal training in the arts) a trained arts assistant would be provided (this position could be as involved as one core class or as many as four). The next step would be to hold meetings with each teacher, the teacher's arts assistant, and the Hybrid resource team to develop curriculum as well as

formulate classroom strategies for effective co-teaching. Finally, within the first quarter, assessment tools will be administered to establish the effectiveness of the program.

Positive results could change the way we educate our youth forever, here is a chance for them to inhabit a world without any more cuts to arts education. No more purely semantic learning, procedural learning will be the new best practice. Educators and administrators working together, teachers receiving the support they need to accomplish Common Core goals. Students will be engaging with educational concepts in a way that research shows is better for cognition and comprehension. By definition a Hybrid is an object, entity, or concept created by joining two different elements. Perennialists will join essentialists, researchers will join policy makers, educators will join administrators, students will join educators, art's education will join Common Core. It is time that we join together to make Hybrid Education the future of education everywhere.

## **Bibliography :**

Art, Merriam. Theater A Building Where Plays, Shows, Etc., Are Performed On A Stage.

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, 2015. Web. 27 Apr. 2015.

Artsedge: The Kennedy Center's Arts Education Network. Artsedge.kennedy-center, 2015. Web. 26 Apr. 2015.

Art Education Law & Legal Definition. Uslegal, 2015. Web. 25 Apr. 2015.

Barksdale Clowse, Barbara. *Brainpower For The Cold War: The Sputnik Crisis and National Defense Education Act of 1958*" (Greenwood Press; 1981) 225 pages

Brenchley, Cameron. "ED Releases New Report On Arts Education in United States Public Schools" *ED.Gov Blog*. N.p., 2012. Web. 25 Apr. 2015.

Characteristics of Middle Grade Students. *Caught in the Middle*. N.p., 1989. Web. 25 Apr. 2015.

DeWitt, Karen. "United States Study Shows Pupil Achievement at Level of 1970"  
[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) Published: October 1, 1991. Web. 10 Feb. 2016

Dwyer, Christine. "Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America's Future through Creative Schools". President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities,. May 2011. Web. 25 Apr. 2015

"Educate Nevada Now Launches To Ensure Adequate Resources for Public School Students In Nevada". *Seattlepi*, N.p., 2015. Web. 26 Apr. 2015.



Fang, Marina. 'Public Schools Slash Arts Education and Turn to Private Funding'.

*ThinkProgress*. 2013. N.p., Web. 26 Apr. 2015.

Garelick, J. "Arts in education." *Boston Globe* 11 April, 2014 p. 1-3. Web. 26 Apr. 2015

Hardimann, Mariale, Magsamen, Susan, McKhann, Guy, and Eilber, Janet, "Neuroeducation:

Learning, Arts and the Brain *Findings and Challenges for Educators and Researchers*

*from the 2009 Johns Hopkins University Summit*. Published May, 2009 Dana Press, New

York/Washingto D.C.

Home Common Core State Standards Initiative. Common Core Standards, 2015. Web. 24 Apr.

2015.

Henderson, Anne T., Mapp, Karen L. A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family,

and Community Connections on Student Achievement. *Annual Synthesis*, 2002.

Henry, Tamara. "Study: Arts Education Has Academic Effect". *UsaToday*, Usatoday 30., 2015.

Web. 27 Apr. 2015.

<https://web.calstatela.edu/faculty/jshindl/cm/Teacherpower.htm>

<http://www.csun.edu/science/ref/language/teaching-ell.html>

<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/documentlibrary/characteristicsMG.aspx>

<http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

"Improving Children's Lives through Arts Education" *Our Story*. P.S. ARTS,. 2015. Web. 25

Apr. 2015.

Jensen, J. K. "An Analysis of Attitudes towards Fine Arts Education among Nevada State

Legislators, Lobbyists, School Board Trustees, Superintendents, Curriculum

Coordinators, Principals, Fine Arts Educators, and Other Educators in Nevada Public

Schools." *Available from Dissertations & Theses @ University of Nevada Las Vegas*;

*ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text*. (303273929). 1982. N.p., Web. 27 Apr.

2015.

National Core Art Standards. National Arts Standards, 2014. Web 24 Apr. 2015.

National Endowment for the Arts [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org) Web. 10 Feb. 2016

"New NEA Research Report Shows Potential Benefits of Arts Education For At-Risk Youth".

*Arts.gov*, National Endowment for the Arts,. N.p., 2015. Web. 26 Apr. 2015.

Ornstein, A., & Hunkins, F. (2013). *Curriculum: Foundations, Principles, and Issues 6<sup>th</sup> ed.*

Boston, Pearson

Patterson, Joan. (2013, July 14). Many Schools Cutting Back on Physical Education. *Las Vegas*

*Review Journal*, pp. N.p.,. Retrieved from

<http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/education/many-schools-cutting-back-physical-education>

Quotes of Margaret Mead. Brainyquote, 1999. Web 26 April. 2015.

Schanzenbach, D. W. (2014) DOES CLASS SIZE MATTER? *National Education Policy Center*

*Policy Brief* Retrieved from

<http://www.classsizematters.org/research-and-links/#opportunity>

Silvestri. Charles Silvestri Junior High School , 2015. Web. 27 Apr. 2015.

Smith, F. “Why Arts Education Is Crucial, and Who's Doing It Best.” *Edutopia*. N.p., N.d., Web. 24 Apr. 2015.

Smith, Peter “The Ecology of Picture Study” *Art Education* pp.48-54. Sept., 1986 Web. 10 Feb. 2015.

Stoelinga, Sara, Ray. “Final Evaluation Report: *Turnaround Arts Initiative*. N.p., Jan., 2015.

President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. Web 1 Mar. 2016

“The Arts in Education” *Art Education* Vol. 12, No. 4. pp. 14-17. Apr., 1959. Web. 26 Apr. 2015.

“Toward Civilization: a Report on Arts” National Endowment for the Arts. *The Endowment*, N.p., 1988. Web. 24 Apr. 2015.

Urban, Wayne J. “More Than Science and Sputnik: The National Defense Education Act of 1958” *University of Alabama Press* pp. 247 2010 Web. 10 Feb. 2016

“When Fewer Is More: Small Groups in Early Childhood Classrooms” *Early Childhood Education Journal* Vol. 35, No. 6. pp. 515

## **Curriculum Vitae**

**Name:** Raheve W. Gray

**Address:** 2405 W Serene Bldg. 4 #532

Las Vegas, NV, 89123

[evewgray@gmail.com](mailto:evewgray@gmail.com)

### **Education:**

**College:** Portland State University

Portland, Oregon

Bachelor's Degree - Theater Arts – 2002

Minor in Public Health Education

Internship with Multnomah County Health Dept.

**Graduate School:** University Of Las Vegas Nevada

Las Vegas, Nevada

Master's Degree (Pending) – Theater Arts – 2016

Graduate Assistantship (Professors assistant in the theater arts dept.)

### **Employment Experience:**

Administrative Assistant, Bighorn Capital INC., Las Vegas, NV, 2014 – 2015

Graduate Teaching Assistant, UNLV Theater Arts Dept., Las Vegas, NV, 2014 – 2015

Marketing and Promoting Specialist, Heptagon Trading LLC, Las Vegas, NV, 2009 – 2010

Marketing & Business Development/Recruiting Assistant, Heery International, Inc., Portland, OR, 2007-2008

Recruiting Coordinator, Mass Mutual Financial Group, Portland, OR, 2006 – 2007

Community Health Program Coordinator II, Multnomah Co. Health Dept. (Not-for-Profit Organization), Portland, OR, 2001 – 2005