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Different Ways of Knowing and Growing: A Case Study of an Arts-Integrated Pedagogy at an Urban Elementary Charter School

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by

Amarpal Khanna

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ABSTRACT

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An arts equity gap exists in K–12 grade education. African American and Latinx students have fewer opportunities for access to arts education than do White students. In California, charter schools have an opportunity to address the equity gap for students in those demographic groups. The goal of this qualitative case study was to observe how Kahlo Charter Elementary School, an urban charter elementary school in Los Angeles County, implemented an arts integrated curriculum and to identify benefits and challenges for fourth and fifth grade students of color enrolled at the school. Aesthetic learning (Bose, 2008; Denaway, 2013; Greene, 2001; Holzer, 2009), arts integration (Silverstein & Layne, 2010), and Different Ways of Knowing (DwoK) (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) formed the conceptual framework for this study. Participants included fourth- and fifth-grade Latinx and African American students, one 12th-grade student, one parent each, grade level teachers, and arts specialist teachers, and administrators. Data sources included semi-structured interviews, a focus group, observation of classes and observations of school events. Inductive analysis was used to identify themes in the data. The approach at the school was primarily a constructivist, arts-integrated curriculum. Teachers created units from primary source materials and discipline specific visual and performing arts courses complimented the arts-integrated curriculum. Students evidenced increased self confidence, ease of self expression,

development of imagination, engagement with school, and empathy of others. However, challenges included uneven implementation across classrooms. The study serves as an example for charter school leaders interested in planning an arts integrated curriculum and provides school leaders with a model program to analyze.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Context of the Study

This case study investigated the arts-integrated pedagogy at the Kahlo Elementary Charter School. As an arts educator and administrator, my professional background is in the arts education field working with kindergarten to 12th-grade and postsecondary students. A significant amount of this work was within various charter school communities administering visual and performing arts programs. My education practice has also been informed by commercial arts industry experiences in the visual arts disciplines of illustration, animation, and sequential arts. As a son of immigrant parents who encouraged my immersion in the arts from a young age, I am deeply interested in how arts-based pedagogies can be utilized as strategies for powerful student-centered learning. My own kindergarten to 12th-grade schooling spanned the gamut from suburban to urban environments. A result of my immigrant parents' search for ideal economic climates, I attended nine different schools across the country in four different states over a period of 12 years. The schools were in the states of New York, Florida, Texas, and California. All were public schools with sequential visual and performing arts subjects as available courses. As a result, I learned from as many arts education classes as my schedule could accommodate. Courses included concert and marching band, theatre, and a plethora of visual arts classes. As an alumnus of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), I graduated with an Advanced Placement (AP) studio art portfolio. This represented the culminating achievement of a terminal level of high school arts courses. In retrospect, the wide range of schools and locales provided the opportunity to experience variations in the effects of

support and funding on the quality levels of the different programs. Additionally, this recounting of my kindergarten to 12th-grade schooling is pertinent. The years I attended elementary through high school, funding for the arts during the school day had not yet eroded to the drastically low levels seen after the 2008 recession. The fact that arts courses were available during my kindergarten to 12th-grade schooling experience prepared me to have a portfolio at the end of high school. The culmination of 13 years of arts education is roughly equivalent to the mandatory 13 years of English or math education to be proficient and literate in those subjects. The AP studio art portfolio and the acquired arts literacy enabled me to apply and get accepted into a four-year college of the visual arts, Otis College of Art and Design. The college experience in the arts was instrumental in advancing my development as an artist and a creative arts industry professional working in animation, sequential art, and illustration. The exposure to a creative curriculum in public school enabled me to empower myself and experience the world as an artist. I had an opportunity to participate as a professional in the creative economy.

It was while working at various companies, the disparity of overall representation of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds became apparent. There were very few people of color in the creative industries. The reflection of the disparity was also evident in my own college arts experience and my kindergarten to 12th-grade arts experience. This realization, coupled with the experience of the 1992 Los Angeles civil uprisings and the aftermath of damaged communities needing to be restored, led to my involvement at a Los Angeles Crenshaw district-based fledgling charter school. It was then I realized that a pathway of arts education designed to develop arts literacy was needed in public schools. Furthermore, the level of arts literacy needed to be equivalent to the expected development of math or English literacy skills in students. That

is, students needed to be as fluent, knowledgeable, and literate in the performing and visual arts just as much as they were expected to be in English and math course subjects. It is my belief and hope that a public school education that is inclusive of the arts ultimately can serve as a tool of empowerment for students who may not have a voice while providing a pathway for academic and life success.

School Context and Pedagogical Approach

Kahlo Elementary School was a charter school that had adopted several alternative constructivist-based educational strategies—including arts integration—as part of their foundational instructional model. Kahlo Elementary school was founded in 2006 by a group of dedicated parents wanting more school choice beyond the available public schools in the area. The school resided in a predominantly blue-collar working-class Latinx community of Los Angeles. At the time of the study, nearly 41.5% students enrolled at the school lived at or below the poverty line. The Kahlo Elementary Charter school was created with the intent of offering an alternative education model to the then testing-dominated schooling environment mandated by *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) (*No Child Left Behind* [NCLB], 2001) legislation within the local LAUSD campuses. The education model and overall curriculum were designed using several theoretical strands as a foundation, including Gardner's (2006, 2011) multiple intelligences theory, the Galef Institute's Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK) (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) arts-based school reform/professional development model, and arts-integration strategies in the classroom. Over a time of 10 years since the school's founding, the overall foundation of Different Ways of Knowing (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) methodology has evolved with traces and strands remaining, but with the constructivist ideas at its core.

It was through my work in Los Angeles as an arts administrator, educator, and advocate at Inner City Education Foundation (ICEF) Public Schools—a network of charter schools—that Kahlo Elementary Charter School came to my attention. At the ICEF Public Schools organization, I created and served as Director of the Visual and Performing Arts Program. From the beginning of the program to the peak growth of the schools (pre-2008 recession), the overall program grew to provide over 68% of 4,300 students at 15 schools the opportunity to take school day visual and performing arts classes. All the schools were classified as Title I, a designation indicating most students qualified for the federal free and reduced lunch program due to their family's reported earned income. All the schools were located in the Crenshaw District and South Los Angeles area. It was the largest school day arts program serving kindergarten to 12th-grade students in the area. Due in part to this aggregated work of 13 years in service to the South Los Angeles community, I was invited to contribute (along with dozens of other arts leaders) to the *Blueprint for Creative Schools* (CREATE CA, 2015; Joint Arts Education Task Force, 2015**)**, a report issued by California Superintendent Tom Torlakson's office. That cumulative work led to me being approached to join the Board of Kahlo Elementary Charter School. There I had the opportunity to become a part of a school where dynamic school leaders and instructors were applying arts learning theory (e.g., Different Ways of Knowing) into transformative teaching practice and where students were demonstrating high levels of successful learning outcomes. This transformative teaching practice and arts-based school environment has also yielded high quality student work in the various disciplines of the visual arts and the performing arts (theatre, dance, and music). Course content with themes including identity, civic engagement, environmental justice problem solving, and cultural celebrations all served to promote a

progressive curriculum. The curriculum also served to engage students in critical thinking through arts practice. Most importantly, it promoted arts literacy that was embedded into an arts-integrated strategic approach to grade-level content learning. The case study of the Kahlo Elementary curricular approach, which concerned arts and students of color, particularly students identified as low socio-economic status (SES) in school enrollment data, yielded important lessons regarding innovative arts-based curricular approaches that will help inform state policy, and will be of benefit to other charter schools and charter school leaders, while providing an introductory to constructivist arts-based approaches of instruction for grade-level elementary school teachers.

In the literature reviewed, very little was found concerning the intersection of charter schools, arts education during the school day, students from low-SES backgrounds, and the types of impacts exposure to the arts through an arts-integrated curriculum has on student learning.

Background

Students of color in urban schools and urban areas across the United States are disproportionately affected by a lack of arts access compared to students in other economic groups. These students have minimal or no access to visual/performing arts classes during the school day, and in areas where the dropout rates are high, students may benefit from the many significant positive benefits associated with arts and arts-integrated programs (Barry et al, 1990; Catterall, 1998, 2012; DuPont, 1992, Winner & Hetland, 2000). There is a critical need for public schools in urban communities to provide a full variety of academic courses that include the arts. Among the many benefits, arts-integrated courses and teaching strategies introduce arts literacy, assist in cognitive development, and boost student engagement. The lack of access to a

K–12 pathway of arts education leaves entire communities of students behind and unable to access creative skills indispensable for professional careers in creative industries such as film, animation, design, architecture, and many others.

In California alone, reflecting year 2015 data, the creative economy sector generated $406.5 billion annually (Mitra et al., 2017); but, without access to arts education, urban students from working-class neighborhoods are excluded from ever participating or benefiting from this creative economy. These student groups are affected by unequal quality of schooling, racial/ethnic isolation, diminishing course offerings, limited access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and unequal access to resources and school facilities (Anyon, 1997; Edelmen & Jones, 2004; Kozol, 1991, 2005). It is this group of urban students, mainly African American and Latinx students (Anyon, 1997), whose education is interrupted and violently truncated by unequal resources and unequal access. The version of education in schools serving predominantly low-SES communities of color is vastly different from schools in more affluent areas with fewer Title I students (Kozol, 1991). When comparing the two groups, the disparity around standardized scores in reading and math and, more widely, to other measures of student learning, is pervasive and well documented throughout the United States (Reardon, 2011).

Research has shown that the introduction of arts-integration methodologies and arts courses can help create positive associated benefits for students, including measurably lower dropout rates, higher graduation rates, and more student involvement in a greater number of AP courses and afterschool programs (Catterall, 1994, 2012; Strand, 2006). In addition, students observed in various studies demonstrated a depth and breadth of imagination along with greater

understanding of paired non-arts content in arts-integrated studies (Catterall, 1994, 2012; Deasy, 2002; Holzer, 2009; Winner & Hetland, 2000).

Examining Arts Education in California

Focusing specifically on California, the data findings in the 2007 Stanford Research Institute report, *An Unfinished Canvas*, presented a stark picture (Woodworth et al., 2007). In their statewide survey of 1,123 respondents and reviews of various case studies done by other researchers in the field across a range of 31 schools, Stanford's data captured the state of visual and performing arts programs in the years 2005 to 2006. The study found that more than three quarters of the schools in California did not offer all four disciplines (visual art, music, dance, and theatre), and over half of the schools did not have a full-time arts specialist (Woodworth et al., 2007). The impacts at the elementary school level showed that comparatively, when available, arts education courses taken by elementary school students were "limited [and] less substantial" (Woodworth et al., 2007, p. vii) than comparative experiences in other states. Additionally, 90% of elementary schools had no standards-based arts courses. (Woodworth et al., 2007). Recommendations included increasing funding at the state level for districts and providing technical assistance for districts to have more resources and infrastructure for arts education programs. As recently as 2013, California public schools and arts education still faced the same challenges. The CREATE CA (2015) coalition wrote:

> National trends over the last decade have emphasized skill mastery in English/Language Arts and Mathematics but marginalized other subject areas, the

> arts and humanities content in particular. California's current public education funding crisis has further exacerbated our state's capacity to adequately support a creative education. (p. 1)

Despite the huge gaps between policy, practice, funding, beliefs, and reality around arts education as part of the school day curriculum, arts-integrated programs have started to be implemented across the country. A growing body of research has helped to develop a clear picture of the effects of arts-integrated programs and the effectiveness of positively impacting students who attend them.

Woodworth et al. (2007) reported that in California, 90% of elementary schools failed to provide a standards-aligned course of study across all four arts disciplines. They argued that students who receive arts education in California typically have a limited and less substantial experience than their peers across the country, and inadequate elementary arts education provides a weak foundation for more advanced arts courses in the upper grades. They also contended that 89% of California K–12 schools fail to offer a standards-based course of study in visual and performing arts disciplines—music, visual arts, theatre, and dance—and thus fall short of state goals for arts education.

These authors also discovered that methods of delivering arts instruction vary by school level, often resulting in a limited experience at the elementary level and limited participation at the secondary level. They found that 61% of schools did not have even one full-time-equivalent arts specialist, although secondary schools were much more likely than elementary schools to employ specialists. At the elementary level, arts instruction was often left to regular grade-level

classroom teachers who rarely have adequate training; lack of instructional time, arts expertise, and materials were also significant barriers to arts education (Woodworth et al., 2007).

Despite the fact that California arts education is required by law for California K–12 students, is needed to provide college and career pathways, is beneficial for cognitive development and academic success (Strand, 2006), is fundamental for the formation of democratic citizens (Greene, 1995), and has many other positive outcomes, many California school districts do not have high quality arts education offerings available for students during the school day.

Although there are many types of studies around arts education, there is not a significant amount of research on how traditional public schools or charter schools are implementing arts-integrated programs or arts-focused programs. As charter schools enroll large numbers of predominantly working-class students of color, it becomes crucial to consider whether implementing arts-integrated teaching programs would help maximize the development and learning of students. For students in charter schools to receive the full benefits of an equal schooling experience, the arts and arts-integrated pedagogies must be implemented as part of the curriculum. Beyond the classroom, what happens at the federal level is crucial as well in supporting the implementation of the arts in the classroom.

The Charter School Promise and California

The California *Charter Schools Act* (1992) was designed to provide the following: an alternative school choice for parents and students beyond the local public school, an environment where innovation and change could flourish within the education space, and implementation of greater school performance accountability measures for students and teachers (e.g., standardized

test scores). One of the results has been that charter schools have proliferated in areas of seemingly least resistance, low competition, and greatest need—the country's urban low-income neighborhoods. Considered as markets in neoliberal terminology, these areas contain district run public schools that often see dropout rates of up to 60% (Georgiou, 2005). Charter schools have become for many parents the school of choice, especially in urban, low-income areas, both nationally and in California. As such, they enroll a large percentage of students from low-income families. The effect has resulted in a dimming of the promise that charter schools would offer something different from the local public school. However, part of the urban charter school reality is the clustering of ethnically homogenous students from low-SES communities, often African American and Latinx population demographics. This leads to an environment constrained from potential benefits of sharing school experiences with a broader, more diverse group of fellow students. The overall result is charter schools serving to reify the "persistent patterns of racial, economic, and linguistic segregation in our nation's public schools" (Frankenberg et al., 2012). One of the most pressing, even if often unacknowledged, challenges that urban charter schools face today is how the socioeconomic context of students and the communities within which they are rooted either prepare students for academic success or contributes to below proficiency skills acquisition required for English and math skills and lowered overall performance at grade level. Another challenge limiting true innovation from occurring in California charter schools is due to pressure from the contractual relationship of the authorizing district to the charter school. Charter schools' student academic performance indicators have to show significant growth and progress, leaving very little room for alternative or non-mainstream teaching and school reform strategies, such as arts integration. However,

inherent within the idea of the charter school structure—that is, innovation and change—is also the freedom of designing and using innovative pedagogical and curricular approaches. Education reformers among other proponents and supporters of charter schools have touted them as laboratories of innovation for alternative education delivery methodologies. Although there do exist few innovative models, far too few charter schools are delivering on the innovation they potentially signify. Arts education represents one of a myriad of innovative learning pathways for alternative education models to be implemented in charter schools. The arts and arts-integrated approaches have been utilized to provide a basis for operational models of comprehensive school reform (CSR) aimed at increasing overall student academic outcomes and to counteract the narrowing of the curriculum. Some of the more prominent, documented, and researched models include the A+ Schools (Corbett et al., 2009), the Leonard Bernstein Foundation's artful learning approach (Griffin & Miyoshi, 2009), the Kennedy Center's Arts Integration Program (Duma & Silverstein, 2014), the Chicago Arts Partnership in Education (CAPE) (Catterall, 1999, as cited in Fiske et al., 1999), the Lincoln Center's aesthetic arts model (Bose, 2008; Denaway, 2013; Greene, 1978, 1995; 2001; Holzer, 2009). Others include the more recently implemented national/regional level programs including the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround Arts Initiative (Stoelinga et al., 2015), Harvard University's Project Zero-backed ongoing research study Artful Thinking (Tishman & Palmer, 2005), the Los Angeles County Office of Education's Technology Enhanced Arts Learning Project (TEAL) (Technology Enhanced Arts Learning Project [TEAL], 2017), and the Alameda County Office of Education's (ACOE) (Alameda County Office of Education [ACOE], 2017) Alliance for All Arts Learning Program. Additionally, there are a handful of university-level arts-integration

programs across California and the United States, either working with pre-service teachers or doing outreach to in-service teachers. Lastly, there is the program and framework utilized and examined for this research, the Galef Institute's Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK) model. (Johannesen, 1997, 2004)

Statement of the Problem

In the United States, less than 30% of Latinx and African American students have access to arts curriculum during the school day (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). Currently, there is an arts equity gap between students in urban schools and students in affluent schools. Public charter school students in low-SES urban areas have minimal or no access to visual performing arts classes or arts-integrated curriculum during the school day. While charter schools in California serve predominantly low-SES urban and rural African American and Latinx students, there exists a great need for urban charter schools to include arts and arts-integrated programs in their curriculum.

According to Elpus (2013), "Race and ethnicity were found to be associated with arts enrollment in school, with [W]hite students overrepresented and Black/African American and Hispanic students underrepresented" (p. 4). The implications of this are clear and multifaceted. Data Quest (2015) the California Department of Education (CDE) enrollment dashboard, reported for the 2014–2015 school year, that California public schools serve 6,235,520 K–12 students, of which 498,841.6 students attend public charter schools (Data Quest, 2021) Of that number, 60% of the students attending public charter schools qualified for free and reduced lunch and come from low-SES households. These students were predominately African American and Latinx. This affected group of students often attended resource-challenged public

schools, are taught by less experienced teachers, and have lower academic outcomes (Kozol, 1991, 2005). Funding cuts to school districts' budgets from 2008–2012 led to a general national reduction in arts courses offered in public schools. The resulting rounds of teacher layoffs disproportionately affected already resource-poor schools and their students. Additionally, under the years of NCLB (2001-2014) a significant narrowing of the curriculum occurred that pushed the arts and humanities out of the school curriculum (Chapman, 2005).

On the economic front, when looking at outcomes, the lack of a robust K–12 pathway of arts courses created gaps in college preparation and ultimately workplace engagement with the creative economy. The National Arts Index (2013) detailed the economic force that the arts represent in the United States, including "2.21 million artists in the U.S. workforce, 766,000 self-employed artists, 95,000 nonprofit arts organizations and 656,000 additional arts businesses, as well as hundreds of millions of consumers who spent $151 billion on the arts" (Kushner & Cohen, 2013, p. iii). Ultimately there is a disenfranchisement of opportunity occurring around lack of access and participation in the creative economy.

As most California public schools are not in compliance with Education Code 51220(g), (Plummer, 2013, 2015) which requires California schools to offer courses in the visual and performing arts, and California charter schools are not specifically required to offer arts courses or programs, the arts equity gap is further exacerbated. Most importantly, the arts are essential to education, with the ideal that education is meant for the development of a fully engaged democratic citizenry (Dewey, 1934, as cited in Greene, 2001). The role of arts education, used with the intent of developing democratic aptitude and connected individual identity of self, is one

where challenging and invigorating the spirit, imagination, and critical thinking capacities of students are the primary goals (Greene, 1995; Nussbaum, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative case study explored school stakeholders' perceptions of an arts-integrated curriculum and pedagogy implemented at an urban elementary charter school. The study sought to understand through student, parents, teacher, and administrator voices, the pedagogical model of arts integration was being designed and implemented and how a group of African American and Latinx experience that curriculum. This study sought to describe the implementation of the Different Ways of Knowing based, arts curricular approach to teaching and learning in an elementary charter school in the greater Los Angeles.

Research Questions

This study answered the following research questions:

1. How does an arts-based charter school implement the Different Ways of Knowing and arts-integrated curriculum?
2. What perceived challenges, benefits, and opportunities do parents, administrators, and teachers identify for African American and Latinx students experiencing the arts-integrated curriculum at Kahlo Elementary Charter School?

Research Design and Method

This study was conducted at Kahlo Elementary School, an independent public charter school in Los Angeles, using a qualitative case study model to document the unique teaching and learning experience occurring at Kahlo Elementary.

A case study design was the most appropriate procedure to capture the complexity of the pedagogical approach at Kahlo Elementary Charter school and document the perceived effects of the school's arts-based approach on a specific group of students. A case study approach provided the most suitable method to examine the pedagogical phenomenon with fidelity (Flick, 2014). The bounded system (Smith, 1978, as cited in Stake, 1995) that characterized the case study was essential for conducting this school inquiry (Merriam, 2002). Qualitative case study research contains the hallmarks of finding and constructing meaning, data collection and analysis through the lens of the researcher, a strategy of investigation that is inductive, and a highly descriptive writing about the case (Merriam, 2002).

The curricular model for teaching and learning at Kahlo was structured through a constructivist, art-based, project-integration model grounded in the Different Ways of Knowing theoretical approach. As part of the curriculum Kahlo provided students arts discipline-specific courses in the visual and performing arts. In the fall of 2016 Kahlo Elementary Charter School had an enrollment of 496 kindergarten to fifth-grade students. The 2015 California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) data reported that 41.5% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch based reported on family income and SES classification with 8.7% classified as English language learners. As a well-resourced and arts-rich environment, Kahlo Elementary School was uniquely situated to offer a lens on the impacts that a true arts integration-based curriculum can have on a group of students of color.

As an independent public charter school, Kahlo had a greater degree of independence over curriculum design and implementation than a traditional public school has. The latitude to focus on arts-based learning at Kahlo was both a result of how charter school law in California is

written under the *Charter Schools Act* of 1992, CA Stats, 1992, 781 § 1 (1992), and based on the desires of the founding parents group of the school. The 1992 *Charter Schools Act* included what was termed a mega-waiver, exempting charter schools from following many of the processes and procedures of traditional public schools must follow.

The methods of this research were a qualitative case study, and the methods of data collection were semi structured interviews, one focus group, and classroom observations. The participants included five fourth and fifth-grade students, five elementary parents, three grade level teachers, three arts specialist teachers, one arts administrator, one principal/executive director, one high school student and two high school parents. Stake (1995) counted four main factors and terms these the "More or Less Special Characteristics of Qualitative Study" (p. 47). These factors include: (a) research that is holistic and case oriented, (b) studies that are field oriented with observables, (c) interpretive with researcher as onsite observer looking for problem-relevant events, and (d) "empathic on the participants intentionality, a design that is predominantly emergent, and aligned with progressively focused emic issues" (p. 47), as determined by the participants' constructivist experiences.

Additional methods of data collection included non-participant observations in the classroom and utilized field notes to capture my observations. This allowed for descriptions of teaching practice and students creating work in class to be developed. These observations of teaching practice yielded data as to how teachers incorporated the DWoK arts integration pedagogical theories into practice. Observations of students in class, going through the process of creating artifacts, yielded insight as to how students responded to the DWoK-infused curriculum.

Another aspect of the data collection process consisted of semi-structured interviews with broad, open-ended questions intended to allow patterns, themes, and issues to emerge (Patten, 2009). Transcripts from these interviews were analyzed and coded for recurring patterns and triangulated with the interview responses and analyses of student work. Using the three lenses the Galef Institute's DWoK (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) approach to whole school reform framework—based on Gardner's (2011) theory of multiple intelligences, Greene's (Bose, 2008; Denaway, 2013; Greene, 1978, 1995, 2001; Holzer, 2009) theory of aesthetic education, and the Kennedy Center (Duma & Silverstein, 2014) approach of arts integration—patterns from the data were coded and analyzed for correlation.

Theoretical Framework

The relevant conceptual frameworks that guided this research inquiry were based on the following three frames: (a) Greene's (2001) theory of aesthetic education; (b) the Galef Institute's DWoK approach (Johannesen, 1997, 2004); and (c) the Kennedy Center's (Duma & Silverstein, 2014) defined approach to arts-integrated instructional methods.

Greene (1995) wrote, "Of all our cognitive capacities, imagination is the one that permits us to give credence to alternative realities. It allows us to break with the taken for granted, to set aside familiar distinctions and definitions" (p. 3). Greene's theory of aesthetic education outlines eight areas of thought from her writings and speeches that encompass a holistic, emancipatory, participatory, democratic framework of student-centered empowerment. The eight areas include: (a) value, (b) knowledge, (c) human nature, (d) learning, (e) transmission, (f) society, (g) opportunity, and (h) consensus (Greene, 1995, 2001).

At the Kahlo Elementary school, the instructional delivery model has been developed using the Galef Institute's DWoK school-wide reform initiative as a foundational starting point. The DWoK curriculum was created by the Galef Institute (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) and it is grounded in Gardner's (2011) theory of multiple intelligences. The DWoK curriculum seeks to engage students' multiple intelligences through an interdisciplinary framework of teaching and learning. The pedagogy utilized by the school was an arts-integrated approach designed around the DWoK theory of whole school reform. DWoK is "a philosophy of education based on research in child development, cognitive theory, and multiple intelligences" (Johannesen, 1997, p. 4), recognizing that students demonstrate mastery of content and engagement in school a variety of ways including through the arts (Catterall, 1994). The Different Ways of Knowing pedagogical approach also gives teachers and all school stakeholders the opportunity to integrate all subject matters with the arts, math and science. In many ways, the DWoK approach was the precursor to what the Common Core standards (National Coalition for the Core, 2016) are asking schools to teach, with different methodologies of lesson delivery including arts integration instructional methods.

In the visual arts, the process of creating, analyzing, and evaluating in collaboration with others stimulates the construction of related meaning. For example, in the practice of giving a critique, students engage in dynamic analysis and evaluation of each other's artwork, both the process and product. The effects of collaboration include the rise of general awareness, focus, and synthesis efforts in utilizing vocabulary and analysis of meaning and technique. Collaborative art involvement can also strengthen socialization skills, and, depending upon student grouping, may foster cross-cultural awareness and appreciation. Just as the arts and

humanities are critical to a well-rounded curriculum, so too should education involve teaching the whole child.

The third frame in the conceptual framework used to analyze the data was arts integration. Although historically there are many varied definitions and types of arts integration, from Dewey (2005) to Eisner (1970), this study used the following definition of arts integration: "Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both" (Silverstein & Layne, 2010, p. 1).

Significance of the Study

This study explored the phenomenon of an arts-integrated curriculum and the effects that it had on a group of students of color at Kahlo Elementary Charter School in the greater Los Angeles area. Kahlo Elementary Charter School was a unique environment that had a complete arts-based framework in place to provide all the necessary elements for a curriculum like this to succeed. Indeed, the existence of the school for 10 years was testimony to parental demand for alternative teaching methodologies. As a type of laboratory of learning, Kahlo was situated to be a model school that other charters can learn from. As there are charter school networks, charter school conferences, and charter school organizations, the findings can be utilized on a larger scale far beyond this one program in Los Angeles. As there are a high percentage of urban students in areas of need attending California charter schools, there is an opportunity for using alternate teaching approaches, such as arts-integrated strategies, for greater student engagement and learning benefit.

The findings of this study are instructive for charter school leaders to be informed and understand the relevancy of investing in arts education programs and curriculum. In addition, the study adds to the body of knowledge of the experience of urban students of color in arts-integrated programs. In the literature review, few studies were found around the intersection of arts integration curriculum and charter schools, especially around the inclusion of school day arts programs in charter schools that serve low-SES classified populations. Fewer studies addressed student immersion in arts-integrated programs during the school day in charter schools.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study focused on a specific arts-based pedagogical approach as implemented by a group of stakeholders in an independent charter school. The student sample size was small and had very specific characteristics. The student participants were fourth- and fifth-grade African American and Latinx students. As an independent charter school that designed its own curriculum based on the DWoK approach with arts-integrated methods among other constructivist based teaching methods, Kahlo was an ideal setting to conduct this inquiry. As such applying findings from such an ideal setting to another type of school may not produce the same results. The parameters of this research were as follows:

1. The participants were stakeholders at the school involved in implementing and evaluating the student artifacts and learning progress: teachers, administrators, and parents. Additional participants are students at the school and the work they create.
2. The organization at Kahlo was elementary, with students leaving after a defined time at the school. Additionally, students may not have been with the organization prior to their fourth- and fifth-grade years.

3. The organization at Kahlo followed a very specific pedagogical approach to teacher instructional delivery, curricular design, and student learning.

Organization of the Study

In Chapter 2, I cover the theoretical frames utilized for this case study, Maxine Greene (2001) and aesthetic education, the Galef Institute's initiative, DWoK (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) and arts integration. Since arts integration has had many various definitions, I review the various permutations through the 20th century. Also in Chapter 2, I cover arts integration as a type of constructivist education and give a review of current nationally recognized arts-integrated programs. Following that, I review four studies, including one each on the Lincoln Center Institute programs and the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE), prominent school reform minded arts-integrated programs. In that section of the literature review also covered are the effects of arts on English language learners, students' cognitive development, and teachers and their instruction. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology, including the research questions, the research design, site description, description of the participants and criteria, methods of data collection, analysis of data, trustworthiness, positionality, and limitations. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the case study, organized using the two research questions to group emergent themes identified in the data. Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the findings and presents recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Through my work in Los Angeles charter schools and traditional public school as an arts educator, administrator, artist, and arts education advocate, I have experienced and recognized how students can have a richer, transformative kindergarten to 12th-grade learning experience when the arts are present in the curriculum. I have seen students discover their voice, develop viewpoints, engage in meaning making, explore other cultures, and create a space in their school and larger communities through the power of arts education. Greene (2001) wrote of aesthetic education in the arts being an emancipatory force for students. It is emancipatory as students often face a world that is predefined, with boundaries demarcated, meaning and understanding ossified, leaving no room for exploration, no room for students to discover their own agency, or a space for them to go beyond what is taught. The arts allow students to engage in their own learning and teach themselves through critical discourse (Greene, 2001). By using the arts for both conservatory style discreet instruction *and* as a vehicle of content delivery, schools should not only provide arts literacy but follow a practice recommended by Eisner (2002): the practice of fostering the growth of intelligence. Eisner (2002) termed this Principle Two of what arts education should do, in as much that "ability in art is assigned to talent, [while] ability in 'intellectual' subjects like mathematics and science [is ascribed] to intelligence" (p. 43). Intelligence is shown and understanding in learning is demonstrated in many different ways including the arts according to Gardner (1982, 2006, 2011).

Given these many ways that arts can benefit students, the increasing arts equity

gap (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012), especially among schools in low-income areas is a serious concern. Public schools and public charter schools theoretically represent one of the last publicly accessible spaces where low-SES students can potentially experience the transformative power of the arts without cost. Currently there are very few urban charter schools in California with high quality arts education and arts integration programs and courses (Woodworth et al., 2007).

This study sought to examine an arts-integrated pedagogical approach and curriculum at an urban charter school and investigate the ways that benefits students. Arts education is one of the approaches recently approved by the Common Core standards to help foster the four Cs: creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication (National Education Association, 2011).

This qualitative case study proposed to explore school stakeholders' perceptions of an arts-integrated curriculum and pedagogy implemented at an urban elementary charter school. In particular, this study was seeking to understand students, parents, teacher, and administrator perceptions of the benefits of the arts-based curriculum of the school. This study documented the connections of curricular theory to practice concerning the charter school's implementation of the DWoK arts curricular approach to teaching and learning.

Arts education and the arts as used here refer collectively to the visual arts (drawing, painting, sculpture, graphic design, and photography), the performing arts (dance, theatre, music vocal and instrumental performance (band), and media arts (filmmaking, digital media). A later review of various reports about arts education in California provides a clear picture describing the steady erosion of funding, offerings, and opportunities in arts content in public schools.

This review of the literature will be prefaced by the overlapping theoretical frameworks of Greene's (2001) theory of aesthetic education, the Galef Institute's DWoK (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) methodology for whole school reform, and the academic content delivery approach of utilizing arts integration as defined by the Kennedy Center. Because the Kahlo school uses DWoK as part of their pedagogy and arts integration as part of their teaching model, the inclusion of these two in the case study is pertinent. An overview of the delivery model of arts integration, and the definition of different types of arts integration frameworks, employed historically in education is also covered.

Theoretical Framework

Greene (1995, 2001) theorizes that a primary element of schooling is a fully democratic aesthetic education inclusive of the liberal arts and humanities that is equally available and participatory to and of all students. Greene's theory of aesthetic education accepts learning in and through the arts as a type of knowing and learning. The Galef Institute's DWoK (Johannesen, 1997, 2004) theory is couched in standards aligned arts instruction, paired with non-arts course content as whole school reform model. The model includes teachers, administrators, and students embracing the idea of learning through nontraditional teaching methodologies such as arts integration with the objective of increasing student achievement (Johannesen, 1997, 2004). The common strand that weaves through both theories is the content delivery model of arts integration as defined by the Kennedy Center (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). All three theories—aesthetic education, DWoK, and arts integration—form the basis of the framework for the proposed case study and shall be covered in more detail in this chapter.

Greene and Aesthetic Education

Greene's (2001) framework of aesthetic education is intertwined with education, the arts, and social change. Greene's framework is heavily informed by Dewey's own writings on aesthetics, education, art, and the role they should play in a progressive system (as cited in Greene, 2001). The need for a democratic inclusive education was also supported by Nussbaum (2010). A lifelong proponent of aesthetic education, Greene (2001) wrote, "We participate in some dimensions that we could not know if imagination were not aroused" (p. 186). However, Greene was ultimately interested in far more than just a curriculum inclusive of the arts. Ultimately, Greene's philosophy and work celebrated the *possibilities* regarding the full power of an aesthetic education to be fully transformative for students. The major themes of Greene's theory of education were three-fold:

1. Freedom and the individual's responsibility to become situated in the quest for freedom. Greene's belief is that freedom can only be attained in the social context of community, and how social justice pertains to freedom.
2. Imagination and the arts, and how they can provide experiential opportunities to see the world from multiple perspectives, helping individuals *wake up* by experiencing empathy with others.
3. The role of education and the responsibility of the teacher in helping students question what is going on around them to start their own journey toward freedom. (Greene 1995, 2001)

Influenced by the early 20th-century progressive thinker John Dewey, who "opposed dualities and fragmentation thoroughly [and had] a deep impulse toward bringing ideas into

relationships and seeing them as wholes, rather than as disparate or distinct parts" (as cited in Bose, 2008, p. 68), Greene's level of concern with the symbiotic nature of teacher/student as representing teaching and learning and the development of all aspects of a student's consciousness is captured by Bose (2008), who wrote, "She, like Dewey, rejects any suggestion of passivity. For Greene, perhaps even more so than for Dewey, it is the very active, participatory nature of the aesthetic (education) experience that makes it transactional" (p. 70). With the intent that educators move her theory into practice, Greene's theory of aesthetic education, encompasses the arts, social justice, learner self-identity, learner self-awareness and incorporates elements of critical pedagogy. In Greene's published works were several component ideas that are expressed when aggregated and categorized make up Greene's comprehensive theory of aesthetic education. Rozycki and Shaw (2000) analyzed Greene's work and developed a set of themes through which her writing can be understood. A summation of their analysis/interpretation is presented below:

1. Value: Students understand that the motivation of learning is to develop their intellectual talents for the construction of our society into a more democratic, just, and caring place to live. The purpose is the awakening of students to their deep connection to and responsibility to each other.
2. Knowledge: Knowledge is anything that helps us know ourselves (and our ideas). We have the power to create and act upon ideas.
3. Human Nature: To develop the attitude of being awake, make choices and actions that lead to self-formation through an intentional vision, this includes social action and purposeful intervention. Self-actualization is not politically or personally neutral.

4. Learning: Education is to help students create meaning in their lives and explore ideas about themselves and the world in which they live.
5. Transmission: Provides guidance for teachers to transmit to students the responsibility of society's collective well-being. It involves raising the teacher's level of consciousness and critical thinking around conscious concern.
6. Society: Democratic community is inclusive of all individuals. Principles of equal freedoms are a choice to follow.
7. Opportunity: Everyone is to be educated.
8. Consensus: Each individual has his or her own perception, consciousness, and multiple interpretations. Democracy and freedom take precedence for the good of all. (Greene, 1978, 1995, 2001)

Within this broad inclusive framework of education, aesthetic education plays a critical role. The role of aesthetic education is to help students develop into critical citizens that who have an imaginative capacity to envision a greater world for themselves and others. Closely aligned with Greene (2001), and Eisner (1970), and developed out of Gardner's (2006, 2011) theoretical proposal of multiple ways and the arts as a type of knowing and learning, the DWoK pedagogy utilizes the arts to achieve whole school reform inclusive of teachers, administrators, and students.

Galef Institute's Different Ways of Knowing

The concept of students learning via a variety of methods is at the heart of the second element of this dissertation conceptual framework, Different Ways of Knowing or DWoK. DWoK was also one of the pedagogical teaching approaches used at Kahlo Elementary Charter

School, the site of the case study. At Kahlo Elementary Charter School, the curriculum evolved from the DWoK model which was a foundational starting point. The DWoK model was created by the now defunct Los Angeles based nonprofit organization, the Galef Institute (Johannesen, 2004). In the contextual time period of late 1980s and early 1990s the efforts and thoughts of politicians and education leaders revolved around reforming education (Klein, 2014).

It was in that crucible of late 20th century American school reform activity that the Different Ways of Knowing program (DwoK) was developed and launched in 1989 (Johannesen, 2004) Later in the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, under President George H.W. Bush's initiative, America 2000 (Department of Education, 1991), national federal school reform efforts turned to finding and implementing scalable models that promised to increase student achievement and school performance. These efforts were formalized in an initiative dubbed comprehensive school reform or CSR (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). DWoK by then had evolved to become one of those exemplar CSR models that could be incorporated into reform efforts undertaken by districts (Northwest Regional Educational Lab; Education Commission of the States, 1998). Initial funding for the Galef Institute to develop and administer the model came from co-founders, philanthropists, Andrew and Bronya Galef (Johannessen, 2004, p. 296). Prominently known in Los Angeles for their involvement and support of Otis College of Art and Design (Otis College of Art and Design, 2021), the Galefs became interested in kindergarten to 12th-grade school reform using arts integration. (Johannesen, 2004). Corporate executive and investor Andrew Galef, very much a product of his times, in the mid to late nineteen eighties, along with many other successful corporate leveraged buyout investors, was flush with capital from corporate restructuring deals (Moyers, 1992) that were changing the economic conditions in the

United States (Anders, 2002; Bruck, 1989; Stein, 1992; Stewart, 1991). The deals often created great wealth for a few, but were economically devastating for the United States economy, towns across the nation, and countless workers across the country as factories closed or were moved out of the country (Bartlett & Steele, 1992; Moyers, 1992). In the late 1980s-early 1990s as national attention was being given to education reform, the opportunity arose for the corporate sector to use their influence, reserves of capital and vast resources in conjunction with reform minded politicians, think tanks, and foundations across the country (Ravitch, 1990) Just as charter schools and charter school legislation had developed as a national school reform effort, reformers were also looking for curricular and whole school models that could be scaled, funded, and implemented in public school districts. Against that backdrop, with arts education aligning with their interest of school reform, the Galefs created The Galef Institute. The Galef Institute was formed as a non-profit organization and research vehicle in 1988 with the Different Ways of Knowing (DwoK) initiative for comprehensive school reform as the primary focus. The DWoK initiative quickly attracted a national array of arts education researchers, educators, advocates and other arts-based reform-minded individuals. Due to Andrew Galef's business and political connections in the state of Kentucky, the DWoK pilot program was rolled out in Kentucky schools (Johannesen, 2004) in the wake of the *Kentucky Education Reform Act* (1990). Proving successful at improving student outcomes in Kentucky (Johannesen, 2004) DWoK was also implemented at various Los Angeles county area schools including those in the Rosemead and Lawndale Unified School districts. The program gained even more traction in Los Angeles County schools, when the Kentucky based, Jefferson County School District superintendent, Donald W. Ingwerson, accepted a position as President of the Galef Institute, followed a year

later, by a move into the position of the Superintendent of the Los Angeles County of Education. (Gerth, 2018)

As a model reform program, the DWoK program proved to be measurably effective in improving student achievement and scalable with over 500 national school partners operating for more than 10 years (Catterall, 1994; Education Week, 2000). During the Galef Institute's decade plus years of operation, additional funding came from a combination of federal grants, such as $13 million from the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (Education Week, 2000), state, and local sources. Private foundation funding sources included the Stuart, Knight, Ahmanson, and Annenberg Foundations, among others (Cohen et al., 2001; Diegmueller, 1996; Johannesen, 2004).

As part of the multi-year implementation model, the Galef Institute created medium term partnership programs with school districts and trained coaches, teachers, and administrators in over 600 Elementary schools. These schools resided in dozens of districts across the United States with the DWoK program involving tens of thousands of students in states including California, New York, and Kentucky (Education Week, 2000). The partnership schools primarily were with Title I urban schools with a large percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch (Dunn et al., 2007; Johannesen, 2004). As a school reform effort, the goal of improving students learning outcomes while supporting instructional capacity building was one of the main aims of the DWoK program (Viadero, 1994).

Professional development training was provided regularly for teachers, administration, and principals to implement the arts-integrated approach with fidelity.

The DWoK program itself was described as “a philosophy of education based on research in child development, cognitive theory, and multiple intelligences” (Johannesen, 2004, p. 4) fully recognizing that students demonstrate mastery of content and engagement in school through many various modalities including the arts (Catterall, 1995). Theoretical precursors for DWoK was Gardner’s (2006, 2011) theory of multiple intelligences and Eisner's (1970) theories of how the arts enhances cognitive development. However, DWoK is paired heavily with arts integration as the content delivery system. The DWoK pedagogical approach gives teachers and all school stakeholders the opportunity to integrate all subject matters predominantly through the arts. The overall DWoK pedagogical design consisted of the following six main components:

1. Teachers plan curriculum both independently and collaboratively around a big idea or main theme based on content standards. The delivery of the instruction is inquiry based, intended for students to start creating their own questions around the material.
2. Teacher expertise around utilizing DWoK strategies is built by and through facilitating student driven inquiry. The goal is for students to be reflective and knowledgeable about the content they are learning.
3. Teachers undergo rigorous professional development and training in DWoK pedagogy with the goal for students to “form schemas, question, draw inferences, visualize, synthesize, and determine importance.” (Mason, 2005, p. 27)
4. Instructors are provided with content relating to the various arts disciplines and arts integration to utilize with their lesson plans.

5. For the student's home and ethnic culture to be valued, teachers are encouraged to be inclusive and mindful of the student's family background, home language, and overall community context.
6. Beyond ultimately improving student performance and school culture, the DWoK program is designed to build capacity within the teaching corps to form a knowledge base of arts-integrated teaching strategies. To that end the last component in the design strives to develop school-based leadership focused on reform efforts to improve student learning in conjunction with DWoK pedagogy. This includes the utilization of data to monitor student progress. (Johannesen, 2004; Mason, 2005)

In the 2000s, the DWoK evolved into a model national Comprehensive School Reform program focused on not only improving academic outcomes for at risk, Title I students, but also changing the whole culture of the partnership schools (Catterall, 1994; Johannesen, 1997, 2004). Across several longitudinal studies (Catterall, 1994; Catterall et al., 1995), findings included the following; students in schools participating in the DWoK program showed modest gains in standardized test scores, higher scores on social studies assessments, more positive attitudes toward studies, and increased school engagement.

Despite the decade-long proven track record of success, in the mid-2000s, the Galef Institute ceased operations and the formal implementation of the DWoK program was discontinued. In many ways, DWoK was a precursor to current approaches being undertaken nationally, most notably by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround Arts Initiative (Stoelinga et al., 2015). The Turnaround Arts Initiative is seeking to prove and accomplish the same goals as the DWoK program via many of the same structured design

methods. In the capacity of "volunteer" Program Director for the state of California I undertook training in the Turnaround Arts methodology, and was very familiar to the ideas presented. DWoK as an approach and a system is also very closely connected to the theoretical ideas and approach developed at Harvard University's Project Zero studies in K–12 schools called Artful Thinking (Tishman & Palmer, 2005) and to the Getty Center's own even earlier research and arts education program called Discipline Based Arts Education developed in the 1980s (Greer, 1993). The two leading theoretical branches came from Gardner (1982, 2006, 2011) and Eisner (Greer, 1993).

Concurrently to the Galef Institute's deployment of DWoK, during the window of time of 1990-2000s, that charter schools, vouchers, and various other school reform strategies and models gained increasing traction as alternatives to traditional public school model. Under the presidential administrations of this era, successively adapted were the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* signed in 1994 (*Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, 1994; Hobbie, 2001) and then the subsequent *No Child Left Behind* (2002) legislation. Both were intended as federal-level responses to the challenge of national education reform. DWoK, as a standards-aligned instructional model and as a type of CSR model, was seen as particularly effective at schools implementing the DWoK reform model. Now almost 18 years later, the ideas of robust teacher training, interdisciplinary learning for students in the classroom, and an arts-integration approach can be found not only at Kahlo, but in other school districts in Los Angeles, such as the Wiseburn School District's own college preparatory DaVinci Schools, and written into the LAUSD's 2011-2014 Arts Education Plan (Johannesen, 2011).

Greene (2001) connects ideologically to Dewey and Dewey's original conception of aesthetic education interpreted as arts content and pedagogy treated equally along with other school subject matter. Greene (2001) said, "[Dewey] . . . was asking that the same attention be paid to the arts as to reading and writing and arithmetic" (p. 59). If aesthetic education is couched in theory, arts integration is couched in practice. Greene (2001) wrote again regarding Dewey: "He would support our notion of educating persons through initiation into the *processes* of art-making" (p. 59). As it relates to education, from the time of Dewey writing in *Art as Experience* in 1934 (2005) to current times, there are many forms that arts integration takes, each one evolving from, building upon, and extending, prior understandings.

Arts Integration Defined

The third paradigm of the conceptual framework of this dissertation is the Kennedy Center's defined arts-integration approach followed as part of their Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) program. However, in contemporary times, there are many uses and meanings in education pertaining to what is meant by *arts integration*. Table 1 shows key developments and theorists who contributed to the concept of arts integration as positioned in education from 1934 to 2014. As it pertains to education in the 20th century, Dewey (1934, as cited in Vakeva, 2007) formulated the foundational elements of what was later termed *aesthetic education* as part of his progressive education theory. His ideas were further expanded upon by Winslow (1949), who wrote that arts should be central to the school curriculum and have prominence in student learning. Mishook and Kornhaber's (2006) research provided a brief overview of the topic when discussing the impact of arts funding in education. In fact, there are a myriad of concepts of arts integration, including definitions that involve multiple intelligences and cognition (Gardner,

1982, 2006, 2011); using the arts to provide thematic instruction (Ackerman & Perkins, 1989); the way that the arts can be a facilitator of learning non-arts content (Darby & Catterall, 1994); and, how arts integration, referring to different arts disciplines, can facilitate learning across those disciplines. Bresler (1995) formulated a system of identification that categorized four distinct types of arts integration prevalent in the field. One of these categories he labeled, co-equal, cognition. For Bresler, this framing of arts integration as co-equal means that not only in approach, but also in aims, both the content of math, science, English, and the arts vehicle are focused on creating beneficial cognitive impacts. The integration portion ensures that the arts piece of the learning is not subservient or mere window dressing to the other content.

This definition is consistent with the approach used by Kahlo and as defined by the Kennedy Center's CETA program: "Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in the creative process to explore mutually-reinforcing connections between an art form and another curriculum area to meet evolving objectives in both" (Silverstein & Layne, 2010, as cited in Duma & Silverstein, 2014, p. 4). Although, this will be the primary definition in use for this case study, a brief overview of arts integration through history is instructive (see Table 1).

Table 1

Definitions of Arts Integration Over Time (1934-2014)

Author	Definition	Notes
Dewey (2005)	Defined arts integration in his philosophy that learning, life, everyday experience, perception of art and the act of creativity constitutes a wholly integrated phenomenon.	Basis for aesthetic education theory. Part of Dewey's progressive education theory. First published in 1934 Adapted from *Art as Experience,* 2005, by J. Dewey, Perigee Books, Copyright 2005 by Pedigree Books
Winslow (1949)	Defined arts integration as a holistic part of school curriculum and serves to enhance the subjects being taught.	Built on and extended Dewey's views. Adapted from *The Integrated School Art Program*, by L. Winslow, 1949, McGraw-Hill. Copyright 1949 by McGraw-Hill.
Eisner (1970)	Related arts integration as the methods through which teachers can best deliver arts content subject matter with other content and experientially how the arts influence cognitive development.	The Kettering Project. Adapted from "Stanford's Kettering Project." *Art Education, 23*(8), 4-7 by E. Eisner, 1970, National Art Education Association . Copyright 1970 by National Art Education Association. The foundation of Getty Center's discipline-based arts education. Examined in *The Role of Discipline-Based Art Education in America's Schools*, by. E. Eisner, 1987, Getty Center for Education in the Arts. Copyright 1987 by Getty Center for Education in the Arts.
Gardner (2011)	Defined arts integration as a part of knowing, cognitive development, and multiple ways of learning.	Highly influential not only arts, but learning theory. Importance of imagination. Adapted from *Multiple intelligences* by H. Gardner, 2011, Basic Books. Copyright 2011 by Basic Books.
Ackerman & Perkins (1989)	Defined arts integration as using the arts to provide thematic instruction as a strategy for learning transfer between skill and content.	Interdisciplinary. Adapted from "Integrating Thinking and Learning Skills Across the Curriculum" by D. B. Ackerman & D. N. Perkins, 1989, in H. H. Jacobs (Ed.), *Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Design and Implementation* (pp. 77–96), Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright 1989 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
Darby & Catterall (1994)	Defined arts integration as using the arts to facilitate the learning of non-arts content.	Adapted from "The Fourth R: The Arts and Learning," by J. T. Darby., & J.S. Catterall, 1994, *Teachers College Record*, *96*, pp. 299-328. Copyright 1984 by Teachers College Record.
Wolk (1994)	Defined arts integration as collaborative group work situated in the arts and across disciplines used to solve localized challenges in communities or organizations.	Adapted from "Project-Based Learning: Pursuits With a Purpose*"* by S. Wolk, 1994, *Educational Leadership, 52*(3), 42-45. Copyright 1994 by Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Table 1 (continued)

Definitions of Arts Integration Over Time (1934-2014)

Author	Definition	Notes
Bresler (1995)	Defined arts integration as subject matter in the arts and other content as providing co-equal cognitive integration in instruction and learning.	Adapted from "The Subservient, Co-equal, Affective, and Social Integration Styles and Their Implications for the Arts" by L. Bresler, 1995, *Arts Education Policy Review*, 96(5), 31-37. Copyright 1995 by Heldref Publications
Duma & Silverstein (2014)	As framed by the Kennedy Center whereby students construct meaning and demonstrate understanding through an art form while engaging in mutually reinforcing creative processes.	Kennedy Center Adapted from "A View Into A Decade of Arts Integration," 2014 by A. Duma, & A. L. Silverstein, 2014, *Journal for Learning Through the Arts, 10*(1). Copyright 2014 by UC Irvine

Note. Table 1 shows the supporting, connecting, and conflicting theories on what is meant by arts integration; however, they are connected by the learner-centered constructivist methodology at the core of each arts-integration strategy.

Arts Integration Based in Constructivist Theory

Houser (1990) wrote about the constructivist framework that utilizes Vygotsky's (2004) learning theories as a collaborative model of art making, which can be used to increase student participation in the classroom. Vygotsky (2004) proposed that all learning is socially mediated and that cultural tools that people master the use of will signal social and intellectual proficiency

In Vygotsky's (2004) theory, learning, meaning making, and interaction with others are personal and internalized. According to Houser (1990), students experience the classroom this way, too. The model of learning proposed by Houser is cyclical and the proposal is focused on visual art. Students plan and create (brainstorm, sketch, list to identify topic, theme, media and overall approach of work), meet in small groups or with a partner, reflect and revise what has been created (learning artifact or artwork); students then share and present with their peer group, whole class display and critique, and redo the cycle again. Houser proposed that this

collaborative model of art education could be utilized in a transactional setting to increase student engagement and as an arts integration strategy for artifact making.

Eisner (2004) wrote about the ways in which the education field can shift from traditional outmoded practices to a constructivist based arts-rooted pedagogy, which could expand the thinking around and meaning of education. In his article, "What Can Education Learn from the Arts About the Practice of Education?" Eisner (2004) theorized that there are four distinct forms of thinking grounded in creativity and should be encouraged in the classroom, especially in art making practice. The four forms include:

1. Composing qualitative relationships either visually or aurally (song, sound composition). Eisner proposed that making judgments exercises a qualitative intelligence. Curriculum can include activities with elements requiring qualitative intelligence.
2. Arts can inform education by the nature of creating a work, the uncertainty and flexible shifting whereby students have to be comfortable with shifting aims, and responding to the work they are creating.
3. Form and content are closely related. In the same way, how a lesson is taught and presented and experienced by students is, in perception, inseparable.
4. The arts express meaning in a way that cannot be expressed in any other modality. Students may have cognitive abilities that are beyond their immediate capacity to express, except through the arts. (Eisner, 2004)

Winner and Hetland (2000), however, caution against making a direct correlation between increased gains in student learning and arts integration strategies. They found that most

increases were too slight to attribute to arts integration instructional strategies. Still, Eisner (2004) posited that by allowing different ways of teaching and knowing into the classroom, the benefits to students, including unleashing their imagination and creativity, will be apparent. The arts and humanities have a place in a well-rounded curriculum that gives rise to the type of education that involves the learning capacities of the entire child (Eisner, 2002; Gardner, 1982, 2006, 2011; Greene, 2001). Arts teach qualitative skills that only the arts can teach; academic development is but one element of student learning and development. Similarly, Greene (2001) wrote, "Of all our cognitive capacities, imagination is the one that permits us to give credence to alternative realities. It allows us to break with the taken for granted, to set aside familiar distinctions and definitions" (p. 3). As there are multiple ways of knowing, of seeing, of being in the world, the arts serve as a platform for the knowing and learning to become evident.

The implications of this are clear and multifaceted. For many students, a high-quality arts and arts-integrated education can provide alternate pathways to academic success, help supplement overall student achievement, increase student engagement, allow students to develop their imaginative capacities, and, as a reform tool, improve overall school culture (Deasy, 2002; Winner & Hetland, 2000).

Arts-integrated approaches. The arts and arts-integrated approaches have been utilized to provide a basis for operational models of CSR aimed at increasing overall student academic outcomes and to counteract the narrowing of the curriculum. Some of the more prominent, documented, and researched models include the A+ Schools (Corbett et al., 2009), the Leonard Bernstein Foundation's artful learning approach (Brothman, 2013; Griffin & Miyoshi, 2009), the Kennedy Center's CETA program (Duma & Silverstein, 2014), the CAPE program (Catterall &

Waldorf, 1999), and the Lincoln Center's aesthetic arts program based on the theories and writing of Greene (Bose, 2008; Denaway, 2013; Greene, 1978, 1995, 2001; Holzer, 2009). Other notable arts integration programs implemented at the national and regional level include the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround Arts Initiative (Stoelinga et al., 2015), Harvard University's Project Zero research program called Artful Thinking (Tishman & Palmer, 2005). Within California there are the Los Angeles County of Education's partnership with the LAUSD and the California County Superintendents Arts Initiative (California County Superintendents Educational Services Association [CCSESA], 2017), which produced the Visual and Performing Arts (integrated) Curriculum Guide (CCSESA, 2008) and the Los Angeles County Office of Education's Technology Enhanced Arts Learning Project (TEAL, 2017), and the ACOE's (2017) Alliance for All arts learning program. Additionally, there are a handful of public and private university level arts integration programs across California and the United States, either working with the pre-service teacher or providing arts-integrated professional development to in-service teachers. Lastly, the framework utilized and examined for this research, the Galef Institute's DWoK model (Johannesen, 2004).

Arts Integration Frameworks: Policy, Theory, and Practice

Arts integration has a long history that parallels the rise of modern American schooling. Currently, despite this era of heavy funding cuts in arts education, arts integration is seen by some as a way to increase student learning while building arts literacy in students that need it the most (Catterall, 2012). Although arts integration as a strategy for content delivery contains elements of discipline specific arts education, it is not a replacement of traditional discipline specific arts education. Despite funding cuts to arts education, much of it due to the effects from

the era of NCLB reforms (Chapman, 2005), many educators see arts integration as a way for arts education to regain a foothold in the curriculum of American schools. However, there are still policy issues contributing to students not receiving any arts or arts-integrated curriculum (Woodworth et al., 2007). Arts integration cannot be a truly effective strategy for improving students' learning until the concept is clearly defined and given a context (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006), including the establishment of best practice instructional and programmatic delivery models (Strand, 2006).

Investigating Arts Integration Effectiveness

Mishook and Kornhaber (2006) conducted a qualitative study in Virginia at 23 arts-focused schools that were implementing high stakes accountability measures. Interviews with principals and arts coordinators at arts-heavy schools were compared with data collected at schools without the arts. Through various coding methods, responses were sorted into categories: coequal arts integration, and subservient arts integration. Findings included that in schools with a low-SES demographic, if present, arts integration was more of a window dressing, subservient to test prep mandates. At high-SES schools, even though test prep mandates were in place, the arts integration curriculum was still robust, not compromised by either time or resources. Additional findings included that not all principals had a fully developed idea of how arts integration as a teaching tool could be used as an effective tool to spur cognitive development or transfer of knowledge across content (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006). The implication for school policy and arts infrastructure is that strong administrative support for the arts would serve as a buffer against testing or other mandates, while arts curriculum needs to exist on its own, along with arts

integration strategies implemented in grade-level classes for a school to be considered as having a robust, high quality arts program.

Review of Arts-integrated Programs and Studies

Arts and Technology Academy Public Charter School

Camilleri and Jackson (2005) provided an overview of an urban arts-integrated charter school. Analyzed were this school's challenges and successes, the core practices it followed, the role of arts and arts integration, and how the arts helped students build community with each other and their families. Located in Washington, DC, the Arts and Technology Academy Public Charter School (ATA) is owned and run by the Mosaica Education Corporation, a charter management organization. The ATA campus is only 20 minutes from the White House; however, it is situated in a high crime, high poverty neighborhood. The school utilized the arts through student performances and arts integration with academic content. Students were predominantly African American and 95% of the students qualified for free and reduced lunch. At the time of the analysis, the school was performing very poorly. The core practices on the administrative and operational side included recruitment and retention of high quality teachers, significant teacher professional development, small learning communities, community outreach, and partnership with community organizations. Regarding arts education, the school provided students with music, art, drama, and dance instruction weekly. Many facilities and resources were also provided, including a dance studio and keyboards for music instruction. Additional arts enhanced activities included students travelling to see theatre productions. Arts integration was utilized by grade-level teachers and arts teachers working together to plan lessons incorporating arts practices into content such as social studies. The goal of ATA is to utilize the arts to engage

students with academic content, develop socio/emotional skills, and boost academic development.

As part of the findings, the authors asserted that by developing arts skill sets, ATA students are developing confidence, self-discipline, and focus that carry over into academic performance. They observed that students were engaged and attended school more often than if arts activities were not present. Students showed up for early morning and after-school rehearsals, and persisted in academic activities. The authors observed the families attending many of the arts events. The authors concluded that the school has succeeded in its mission of creating an environment that was an "academically challenging, technologically rich, child-centered environment, where each student develops a strong intellectual, moral, environmentally conscious, and artistic foundation" (Camilleri & Jackson, 2005, p. 60). Because the article was an overview of the ATA school, there was little in-depth analysis of specific arts-integrated programs or practices that contributed to overall student success.

Lincoln Center Institute Programs and Maxine Greene

In her review of the Lincoln Center Institute program that promotes centering the study of artwork as part of elementary school education, Holzer (2009) asserted that students should develop the capacity of imagination and understanding possibility. Beginning in elementary school, arts integration should be part of the curriculum, introducing concepts by studying artwork. Holzer also posited an economic incentive for teaching children the arts, stating that for American workers to remain competitive globally, creativity must be nurtured. Using Greene's (2001) philosophy of aesthetic education, the Lincoln Center Institute developed the Capacities for Imaginative Learning program. Integral to the Institute's approach is that "studying complex

works of art through experience with the art form and its context is the quintessential way to foster the imagination, [and] a cognitive capacity valued not only across the school curriculum" (Greene, 2001, p. 377).

The Lincoln Center Institute's version of aesthetic inquiry followed a method based on the work of artists and closely studying the process artists use as they create works of art. Along with cognition (including problem-solving skills and imagination), it included use of the senses, emotion, and other forms of embodiment. Holzer (2009) writes that the Lincoln Center Institute's theory holds that the creative process is a type of philosophical inquiry that spurs the growth of imagination. Studying the art making process of others allows students to retrace decisions building up to the making of the work itself. Furthermore, they believe that having this process embedded into education is even more important than the act of learning technical skills of art making or playing instruments. Embedding this development of foundational analytical and imaginative tools as a part of the cognitive development of students is the main focus of the Capacities for Imaginative Learning framework. Holzer detailed how the Lincoln Center Institute was given an opportunity to implement theory into practice with the opening of a high school centered on the philosophy of the Capacities (as they are called). Through the high school curriculum and arts-integrated pedagogy, the following nine ideas were distilled, outlining a sequence of cognitive acts leading to creation: (a) noticing deeply, (b) embodying, (c) questioning, (d) identifying patterns, (e) making connections, (f) exhibiting empathy, (g) creating meaning, (h) taking action, and (i) reflecting/assessing.

After adequate professional development and training, content and grade-level teachers were able to use the 9-step refined philosophy of the Capacities as part of the teaching practice

achieving a true arts-integrated classroom. Holzer (2009) reported anecdotal evidence from teachers suggesting outcomes of development and that, at any given time, students' progress in developing imagination can be classified in one of the nine areas. The research also spurred broader sets of questions, some specifically pertaining to elementary school, such as:

- How does imaginative learning develop over time in elementary school students?
- What form should aesthetic education for imaginative learning in the elementary grades have to serve as the foundation for work in the later grades?
- What kinds of professional development are necessary to make imaginative learning through aesthetic education essential to elementary education?

Holzer (2009) concluded that it is essential that schools actively develop creative thinking, collaboration, and communication, further pointing out that there are several organizations and researchers creating frameworks for creativity in schools. Programs referred to by Holzer are similar in nature, scope, and implementation, having both theoretical aspects and practical implementation aspects. These included two initiatives out of Harvard University's Project Zero, which looked at multiple intelligences, cognition, thinking and understanding, and the theory of artful thinking, based on Tishman and Palmer's (2005) visible thinking, and Hetland et al. (2007) second initiative, Studio Thinking, which analyzes artists' and other creatives' habits of mind. These programs were focused on the creative process and how it can influence the development of creativity as a capacity.

Performing Arts and English Language Learners

Greenfader et al. (2015) conducted research studying the effect of a performing arts program on the oral language skills of young English language learner (ELL) students. They

posited that little was known about ELLs' skill development in proficiency. An experimental design was utilized to study the effects of an arts-based elementary ELL intervention program that utilized drama and creative movement. The study followed a random experimental design of participants (n = 5,240) with a treatment group (n = 902) and a control group (n = 4,338). The results were studied by using the following research questions:

1. Did participating ELLs perform better on oral language assessments than those who did not receive the performing arts intervention?
2. Was the impact of the program moderated by students' baseline English language skills?

Findings included that the treatment group evidenced better performance scores, and that students who had the lowest baseline English scores showed the most improvement.

Kennedy Center and the Changing Education Through the Arts Program

The Kennedy Center's CETA program main objective is utilizing arts integration across content as a tool for school reform via educators' teaching practices. Partner schools are both local to Washington, DC and in other states. Program designers and researchers formulated the definition of arts integration to be used as the main foundation for the program. Explicating the Kennedy Center's approach, Silverstein and Layne (2010) wrote:

> Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate meaning through an art form. Students engage in the creative process to explore mutually-reinforcing connections between an art form and another curriculum area to meet evolving objectives in both. (p. 1)

Like most arts integration professional development and partnership programs, the CETA program had several components. The six areas included: (a) arts-integrated instruction, (b) multi-year partnership commitment, (c) robust professional development, (d) incorporation of teaching artists and classroom teachers, (e) continual program improvement and sustainability, and (f) assessing overall program impact through research and evaluation. The program's main focus was professional development for teachers to gain capacity for using arts integration in their classrooms. To evaluate and gain insight into the program's impact over the initial 10 years of operation with those schools, from 1999 to 2009, three studies were commissioned. Duma and Silverstein (2014) analyzed and wrote an overview of the three studies with the aim of looking at the effect of the Kennedy Center's CETA program on the host schools. The studies were independent of each other, but examined as a whole. The three studies were conducted at schools that participated in the CETA program. Each of the studies were quasi-experimental. The main hypothesis of all the studies were that robust arts integration professional development for the teachers would boost student's interest in the curriculum and subsequently raise the student's understanding of the material and evidence of student academic achievement. The three studies (Isenberg et al., 2009; Kruger, 2005; RealVisions, 2007) had questions and findings relevant in the areas of program design and the program's impact on students, teachers, and schools. One of the most consistent findings from all the studies were that the strength of the overall program design was essential to the success of the implementation at the school site level. Effective professional development followed strong program design. Regarding impact on students and engagement, the Isenberg et al. (2009) study found that arts integration learning processes allowed students to evidence multiple ways of learning and staying interested in the curricular

material. The RealVisions (2007) study in particular had findings supporting increased collaborative learning among students. Findings in the area of cognitive and social skills showed improvement through evidenced increased critical thinking and problem solving. Kruger (2005) found that students had increased standardized testing and benchmark scores in math and reading proficiency. Overall, the three studies (Isenberg et al., 2009; Kruger, 2005; RealVisions, 2007) corroborate the following regarding teachers: teachers found that arts integration helped many more students be successful by providing many ways for students to demonstrate understanding. More students were engaged, and more students collaborated. However, learning arts integration strategies do entail a commitment of time and iteration to use with fidelity. An area of need was administrative support, the schools that had stronger support had more robust arts integration happening. Overall findings from the three studies (Isenberg et al., 2009; Kruger, 2005; RealVisions, 2007) were that the CETA program did improve school culture by more collaboration between teachers and students. Arts integration has a transformative potential for schools, teachers, and students (especially low-income); however, this effectiveness is dependent on a strong development design. The findings from all the studies in this report aligned with similar findings from other researchers studying another arts-integrated program in public schools, the Chicago Arts Partnership in Education [CAPE] (Catterall & Waldorf, 1999).

Chicago Arts Partnership in Education

Catterall and Waldorf (1999) conducted a summary evaluation of the CAPE program. The study also captured the overall development of the CAPE program and its effects on the participating schools, teachers and artist network. Established in 1992, the CAPE is an arts partnership network working in conjunction with the 652 schools in the Chicago Public Schools

district. It is composed of teachers, artists, and arts institutions that engage in arts-based curriculum planning, professional development activities, and advocacy for the benefit of students enrolled in the Chicago Public Schools system. The fully implemented program was in an initial 37 schools. Catterall and Waldorf (1999) under the auspices of the University of California Los Angeles's Imagination Project, conducted evaluation of the CAPE programs that also compared data to an earlier and parallel evaluation undertaken by the North Central Regional Laboratory (NCREL). The CAPE board turned to Catterall and Waldorf's (1999) findings to answer the three questions:

1. What does effective CAPE arts integration implementation look like?
2. Why did the implementation work?
3. What were the overall effects of the implementation?

Other questions included what was the level of arts integration and which academic subjects were integrated. For the NCREL study, observations and survey data yielded findings of increased positive school climate, including increased principal support, more collaboration between teachers and students, and a belief in learning benefit for students. Comparatively Catterall and Waldorf's (1999) evaluation conducted in 1998-1999 focused on the areas of student outcomes, curriculum, growth, and partnerships. The evaluation was conducted by a comparison of 52 test score analyses of CAPE schools and other non-CAPE schools. Grades 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 tests were compared and examined, with half of the schools being high poverty. Findings included that none of the non-CAPE schools outperformed CAPE schools and overtime the students at CAPE schools increasingly performed better. CAPE school students performed above grade level on standardized tests in some cases up to 30-40% better in the grade levels

compared. The gains were concluded to be sizable, strong, and significant (Catterall & Waldorf, 1999). Regarding student outcomes, classroom observations and teacher surveys produced data leading to findings that CAPE students show a development in speaking skills, more motivation, and decision-making abilities. Students engaged in CAPE lessons showed more skills development including collaboration, self-management, and writing than non-CAPE students. To answer the CAPE Board's questions, Catterall and Waldorf (1999) concluded based on classroom observations and interviews that effective arts integration "exhibited explicit ties to both art and academic standards" (p. 57). Students make connections between disparate ideas and subjects, enabling them to think broader and more critically. The delivery of the lesson is co-equal. Co-equal can be described as where both content matter being taught and arts content is discipline specific, connected, and given equal instructional and content attention (Bresler, 1995). Some of the elements that were critical to making the program work included a supportive principal and administration, knowledgeable and skilled artists, clear objectives, assessment linked to the work and objectives, a consistent schedule for teaching artist visits. Conclusions for successful teachers and artists included characteristics of clear communication, knowledge of content areas, and lesson planning, in addition to unexpected intangibles including an understanding of student development, student learning growth, and a mutual learning symbiosis between teachers and artists when planning lessons and learning from each other. CAPE implementation has generated wider secondary effects where schools and students created clubs focused on theatre activities, mural painting projects, or other activities outside of class. However, for the larger school communities and the future of establishing school wide CAPE teaching methodologies Catterall and Waldorf (1999) found that some of the teacher surveys and

interviews indicated that wider implementation could be difficult due either to various levels parent support, administrative support or teacher reluctance to adopt arts-integrated strategies.

In addition to being established in the same reform minded environment, the CAPE design contained many similar elements to DWoK. Similar elements included a student focused, constructivist based approach to teaching and learning, building a culture of collaboration, and implementing research driven best practice strategies for learning through the arts. Also, similar to DWoK was a continual professional development for kindergarten to 12th-grade teachers engaged in the partnership programs. The main similarity in program design between both the DWoK and the CAPE approaches is the curricular design approach. Both are grounded in teachers designing interdisciplinary curriculum around a foundation of a big idea or ideas, common overarching themes, with a big question to answer, or a challenge to solve. The CAPE program is another model of an arts integration program and implementation.

Impact on Cognitive Development

Baker (2013) conducted a qualitative study to find out the following, how the arts integration could affect cognitive development, and was there a behavioral equivalent to cognitive functioning and do they help students learn. The site of the research was Art Space Charter School in North Carolina. This school utilized arts integration strategies as their main pedagogical model. Fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade classrooms were observed. Peterson (2005) "developed a list of (16) Elements of Behavior associated with cognitive development. Elements include behaviors like making comparisons, viewing things from different perspectives, looking for ways to remember information, and recalling information that considers essential components" (as cited in Baker, 2013, p. 5). Baker (2013) used Peterson's (2005) framework for

describing observed cognitive activity. In Baker's (2013) study, primary data collection was ethnographic and observation based while classes were in session; secondary data were artifacts of students' work. After coding and assigning categories for observations, notes, and artifacts, Baker utilized taxonomic analysis to create categories and sort activity into various cognitive categories. Baker concluded that it is possible to link students' activities and artifacts in an arts-integrated classroom to markers of cognitive development. The weakness is that more quantitative research is required to determine the level of how much cognitive development is linked to students' understanding and processing abilities. However, keeping in mind Gardner's (1982, 2006, 2011) multiple intelligences theory of learning, arts and cognitive development, Baker (2013) found that a variety of cognitive behaviors should be observable in an arts-integrated classroom. Baker also found that the quality of the student artifacts as behavioral markers of cognitive development is directly affected by quality and level of teacher instruction and the teachers level of understanding of arts integration as a content delivery strategy. If thematic units are taught with connectedness to overall content in conjunction with arts integration strategies, student cognitive development is promoted and deeper understanding of the material is achieved.

Teachers and Instruction

A more recent study looked at the classroom instructors' own abilities to deliver arts-integrated curriculum and the professional development process that supports those teachers (Doyle et al., 2014). The context of the study is framed by the era of the federal policy of the Obama administration, transitioning out of NCLB (2002) mandates and into national Common Core standards being aligned to curriculum. Utilizing arts integration techniques in the

classroom, teachers sought to identify students' needs, align assignments to arts standards, and positively affected students' classroom learning (Doyle et al., 2014). These researchers from the University of San Diego utilized a quasi-experimental study, mixed-methods design to examine a group of San Diego Unified School District teachers working with the program Collaborations: Teachers and Artists (CoTA) and various artists to learn about arts integration strategies and develop arts-integrated units of instruction. It was a three-year study and this report covered the methods and findings from the first year (2014). The study sought to answer the following questions:

- How are the goals of arts integration and the Common Core State Standards aligned?
- How might professional development be approached to enable general education teachers to adopt arts integration as a central feature of their instructional methodology?
- How is impact measured?

Qualitative portions of the study took place during professional development sessions, where observations occurred, and in the classroom where teachers were observed teaching and students working on their classroom assignments. Teachers were trained through the CoTA grant program and worked with their artist facilitators in the classroom; teachers were also tested on arts integration knowledge. Of the 1,873 students who went through the arts integration classrooms, early initial data point toward an increase in students' evidencing "critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, and a rise in overall academic skills" (Doyle et al., 2014, p. 10). Also, teachers were engaged in collaborative learning, demonstrating an understanding of the various disciplines in both visual and performing arts and utilizing it effectively to deliver

classroom instruction. Recommendations were that the results coming out of the next two years of this study can inform public education practices in the Common Core era. According to the researchers, "Practitioners [can] become more comfortable with a pedagogical context that values creativity, innovation, collaboration, critical thinking, and effective communication" (Doyle et al., 2014, p. 10). In short, Common Core and arts integration did seem to be in alignment, but more time was needed for this particular study to draw final conclusions regarding direct alignment. However, for the findings in the category of professional development and arts integration for teachers, it was found that teachers benefited, while students evidenced benefit via observed increased skills related to classroom practices and content understanding shown in created work artifacts. Additional findings concluded that teachers can learn arts integration strategies effectively that will positively effect students' critical thinking, promote working together, and engagement. As a result, students' academic performance showed some positive increases. As an overall framework, CoTA provides a replicable model framework for other schools and districts to implement (Doyle et al., 2014)

Various factors affect the widespread adoption of arts integration in schools, including policy toward arts education, numerous theories of what constitutes arts integration, and programs in arts integration. Despite the need and the documented arts equity gap between schools in low-SES areas and high-SES areas, there are still many obstacles for implementation, including policy, funding, site level support, instructional time allocation, availability of resources, and teachers well trained in arts pedagogy. Additionally, whether in definition or policy, there is no one-size-fits-all approach for arts and arts integration. What is common is that arts integration is a learner centered approach; however, historical methodologies differ. The

National Common Core Standards for the Arts' model of arts integration is based on the Kennedy Center's framework. What has not been found in abundance is research specifically focused on arts integration as it relates specifically to charter schools and low-SES students. Next steps in the research could be to look at how arts-integrated charter schools are implementing their programs, the background of their programs, how they are being funded, their policies, and the effects arts integration curriculum is having. As relatively newer models of public schooling, charter schools stand poised to be as innovative in their curriculum as the initial potential of offering a truly different alternative to traditional public schools has promised. However, in California, that potential, despite the large numbers of charter schools in the state, is still a unique proposition rather than a matter of course. The findings from Kahlo and research findings from similar types of cases may be beneficial in highlighting alternative practices that work.

Impact of Federal Policies on Arts Education

The arts were first introduced into the ecosystem of American public schools 150 years ago with the advent of the common school. An early type of arts education included picture study, the analysis of prints of pictures, conducted by what could be considered itinerant arts educators. Technical visual art and drawing manuals were available and advocated for in schools as early as the 1860s. In 1870 the state of Massachusetts passed a state law authorizing the teaching of drawing in public schools. During the era of the Great Depression, the Work Projects Administration (WPA) put thousands of artists, photographers, musicians, and theatre companies to work. However, it was in August 1961, when President Kennedy intervened in a pay dispute between the Metropolitan Opera and the American Federation of Musicians, that the federal

government asserted public policy action in the realm of the arts. It was under President Clinton's, administration, in 1994, passing the *Goals 2000 Act* (H.R. 1804, 1994), that federal policy recognizing the arts in public education was formally adopted into legislation. Now as then, there are many obstacles to full inclusion of the arts in the school day curriculum. However, today, the quality, funding levels and presence of in-school K–12 arts education is closely tied to trends in the federal policies of respective presidential administrations.

Looking back to the 1980's, the report, *A Nation at Risk*, (U.S. National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). was instrumental in forcing educators and policy makers to start thinking about the status and overall quality of American education. Released only five years later in 1988, with a focus on arts education, the National Endowment for the Arts (National Endowment for the Arts, 1988) issued the report, "Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education," bringing attention to the significant declines in school arts education. Due to these reports and other efforts, preliminary efforts for modern school reform were being enacted by 1988, including school vouchers, initial state charter laws, and the passing national/state content standards. At the time, there were fewer school reform efforts inclusive of arts education, with the National Endowment for the Arts report (1988) pointing the direction for reformers. The push for inclusion of arts courses as a core subject began shortly after the reveal of the proposed 1989 National Education Goals announced by the National Governors Association (Department of Education, 1991). Comprising of six goals, Goal #3 defined core subjects as English, math, science, history, and geography. The arts (performing and visual) were not included in the defined core subjects. In response, a coalition of partner organizations mobilized vigorous advocacy efforts for inclusion of the arts into the definition of core subjects (Morrison, 2012,

2015). The partner organizations—the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), and the National Association for Music Education (NAfME, formerly Music Educators National Conference, or MENC)—were ultimately successful in their efforts to add the arts as a defined core subject in the 1994 education policy platform *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Goals 2000: Educate America Act, 1994) passed by the Clinton Administration.

In succession, the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (1994) published the arts education assessment framework, which provided a benchmark of standards to define and assess students learning in the four disciplines of visual arts, dance, theater, and music. With the arts defined in federal law as a core subject and national standards in place, state standards were soon passed as well (Morrison, 2012, 2015). These events marked the beginning of federal recognition of arts education and national organization policy efforts in the era of modern school reform.

However, the advances of arts education during the Clinton Administration of 1993-2001 were dealt a setback during the Bush administration's adopted education policy of testing and assessments under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB, 2002). Chapman (2005) reviewed survey data from a variety of reports, including the National Center for Education Statistics, which captured a snapshot of the state of arts education nationally from 1997 to 2004. During this period, the effects of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB, 2002) were becoming evident. The federal legislation of the time did not include a mechanism nor provide motivation for schools to assess student learning in arts content courses or have any measure of funding tied to the level or quality of arts content present within a given school or district. Federal funding became tied to a

measure of annual student and school progress via use of benchmarked math and English standardized test scores. Consequently, there was no extrinsic motivation for states, districts and schools to support arts subject content. At many schools across the country arts content courses were marginalized under the pressure to achieve federal reform goals. Funds and resources siphoned away from arts education as whole were utilized to prepare students and faculty for testing (Sabol, 2010).

Chapman's (2005) report aggregated and analyzed data in three main areas: (a) state policies, including standards, teacher preparation, and student assessment; (b) elementary visual arts education, detailing survey results from elementary school principals (at 33,000 schools) and arts teachers (37,800) about resource allocations, written school policy, evaluation of teachers, participation of arts teachers in the school decisions, professional development, assignments, teaching schedules, and other benchmarks of program quality; (c) public opinion and emerging trends related to NCLB (2001), such as support for arts programs and the marginalization of arts education programs during those years due to the increased time spent by teachers on preparing for mandated NCLB tests. The data that Chapman (2005) collected bracketed the time period just before and just after NCLB (2001) implementation. Chapman's (2005) data findings documented a shrinking of resources allocated to arts education.

Without robust federal and state arts policies to ensure fidelity and integrity in implementation of the programs at many elementary and secondary schools, erosion occurred in all the areas that were markers of high quality arts instruction. Subsequently, the role of existing on-campus arts specialists was severely diminished through lay-offs or reductions in arts class hours resulting in a loss of pedagogical knowledge and student access (Chapman, 2005).

According to the 2004 data, 24% of elementary school principals had already cut arts education classes at that time, and 33% of principals anticipated making cuts. Both the public and teachers began to realize that the intense focus on testing was affecting students' time devoted to art, music, and other subjects in the humanities.

Chapman (2005) recommended a return to a constructivist approach to teaching (as opposed to testing mandates), and called for arts professionals, policy makers, and advocates to "find, develop, and publish other data on patterns in policy and practice" (p. 135) to better illuminate the effects NCLB was having on arts programs and student learning. The clarion call reality of the report was further evidenced eight years later within the second largest school district in the United States, the Los Angeles Unified School District or LAUSD.

Abdollah and O'Bannon (2012) detailed the challenges the district already impacted by massive deficits in operating costs and state funding from the 2008 economic downturn, "[In 2012], elementary school arts education was cut by 40 percent. Cuts in state funding since 2007-08, translated to a $60 million drop in elementary arts funding to a now budgeted $18.6 million. Last year the entire program was nearly eliminated" (Abdollah & O'Bannon, 2012, para. 10). As a result, from 2012-2017, arts integration has become a strategy hedge to avoid total elimination of arts content courses.

During those years, the funding for teacher professional development and curriculum implementation for the arts had been focused on arts integration approaches as way for the LAUSD to keep a semblance of arts instruction within the district due to the absence of discreet arts classes. For some LAUSD schools, arts integration training and curriculum funding was provided for a period of time through a combination of private investment via Megan Chernin's

school reform investment vehicle, the Los Angeles Fund for Public Education (The Los Angeles Fund for Public Education, 2013) (Jordan, 2013), partnerships with local arts institutions and non-profits (Menezes & Torres, 2015), and district funding allocations (Plummer, 2014). This quasi, public-private approach may be considered by some a model alternative to the traditional adequately public tax dollar funded public education that includes arts education. However it is still the responsibility of school districts to adequately fund all courses of study.

Post NCLB (2001)

Post NCLB (2002) federal education legislation was the Obama administration era *Every Student Succeeds Act* (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). This act, a reauthorization and amendment of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (H.R. 2362, 1965), gave states and districts local control involvement for kindergarten to 12th-grade education reform, testing, and accountability decisions while curtailing some federal level influence. The legislation included the following changes for arts education: (a) arts and music are defined and included as subject matter comprising a well-rounded education, (b) Title I funding can be utilized for arts and music education, (c) there is a separate federal arts in education fund called the Assistance for Arts Education fund, (d) the federal Student Support and Academic Enrichment grants can be spent on arts and music education, and (e) there is some funding set aside for afterschool (expanded learning time) for arts and music (Education Commission of the States, 2015).

California State Arts Education Policy

However, beyond the research showing federal level impacts, current California state education legislation, if and when legislation is actually implemented, is further evidence of how

the reality of school is very different for poor students. Since the 1970s many lawsuits against school districts have been filed to ensure equal access and proper funding. The national precedent setting *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* (1963) lawsuit argued that the funding model for schools is discriminatory as it relied on property taxes, thereby giving schools unequal funding resources. The federal court ruled in favor of the school district, pushing the decision for funding to states. In the state of California as recently as 2011 and 2013, cases were heard regarding inequities in state funding for education, such as the combined cases *Robles v. Wong* & *Campaign for Quality Education v. State*, (Campaign for Quality Education v. State, 2016).

Legislation that exists regarding education and arts education in the state of California has significant influence on what is currently available for the arts in schools. To understand why there are not more arts education courses in California K–12 public schools, it is instrumental to examine what state laws and education codes exist, and the effects seen in the wake of their varying levels of implementation.

The long-held interpretation of legislation around education established that schooling is an individual property right. However, this individual right to what constitutes a basic education in state legislation and education code statutes does not always necessarily translate in practice at the district and school site level to a truly equal education in part due to the mass exclusion of the arts in both funding and practice (Richmond, 1992). This disparity includes what types of curricular content and courses are available to students and level of access to the curricular content and courses. In California, it is legislated that course work considered part of basic education to be offered by all schools includes the visual and performing arts. Education code

legislation states the following: “Visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts, with an emphasis upon development of aesthetic application and skills of creative expression” (California Education Code § 51210, § 51220, 1995). However, in many California schools, the curriculum offerings are not being upheld in terms of students receiving access to a full, sequential, standards-based course of arts education in all the disciplines (Plummer, 2013, 2015).

Beyond legislative challenges, another challenge facing urban schools that do want to use an arts learning approach is that teachers in low-SES or rural areas may not have the proper support or training to teach an arts-based or arts-integrated curriculum (Woodworth et al., 2007). One result is during time spent in school, students often do not have access to a high-quality level of arts instruction or arts-integrated curriculum (Rabkin, 2011). Many other factors have contributed to the continual deterioration of arts education in California’s public schools, including that as of 2015, California spends less than other states on public education; below $10,000 per pupil which is ranked in the bottom half of per state spending per pupil on public education (Kaplan, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

The impact of state legislation and education codes on the presence of arts education in the schools of California can be categorized into one of the following areas: (a) state visual and performing arts curricula; (b) funding for the visual and performing arts; (c) quality, equity, and access to arts education; (d) teacher preparation programs and professional development; (e) teacher credentialing; and (f) California university entrance requirements (California Alliance for Arts Education, 2005).

As a defining guideline, the California Education Code is clear: All K–12 schools in the state of California must include courses of study in all of the visual and performing arts. At the state level, California Education Code § 51210(e) mandated visual and performing arts (VAPA), which includes music, dance, visual art, and theater, be included in the school curriculum for all students in Grades 1 to 6. California Education Code § 51220(g) mandated that VAPA be offered to all students in Grades 7 through 12. Arts is a "course of study," and CA Education Code § 51050 stated, "The governing board of every school district shall enforce in its schools the courses of study." However, this is not happening. Many school districts and schools offer incomplete or no arts education courses of study (Woodworth et al., 2007). By not fulfilling the statutes set forth in California Education code, schools and districts not only disenfranchising large numbers of students from a well-rounded education, they are also, either unknowingly or willingly, breaking the law (Plummer, 2013, 2015).

Despite the existence of policy for arts education in California public schools, it has taken over 45 years, since the *Ryan Act* in 1970 (California Education Code §§ 44200-44295, 1970), which narrowed arts teacher credentialing options, for many of the arts portions of the legislation to become enacted piece by piece (California Alliance for Arts Education, 2012). In that time period, the passage of many other pieces of arts education legislation has occurred. For perspective, state standards for visual and performing arts curriculum were not added to the education code until 1995 as a course of study, while state standards for visual and performing arts courses were not adopted until 2001 primarily due to S.B.1390 (S.B. 1390, Murray, 2000) which was adopted as an added chapter in state legislation mandating Visual and Performing Arts standards for California schools.

Table 2

California Arts Education Policy Overview

Policy Area	State Policy
Arts as Core Academic Subject	The term "Academic Subjects" as it applies to designated subjects adult education teaching credentials, means those studies that are liberal, classical and/or related to high school graduation requirements, rather than technical or vocational, including, but not limited to the subjects contained within the following categories: (1) Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills; (2) English; (3) English as a Second Language; (4) Fine Arts; (5) A Language Other than English (specify); (6) Mathematics; (7) Science; and (8) Social Sciences. (CA Admin. Code Tit. 5 § 80034)
Early Childhood Arts Ed State Standards	Yes, *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Vol. 2* (Child Development Division, 2010)
Elementary and Secondary Arts Ed State Standards	Yes, *Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools* (California Department of Education, 2019)
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement—Elementary	Areas of Study, Grades 1-6: The adopted course of study for Grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall include instruction, beginning in Grade 1 and continuing through Grade 6, in the following areas of study: (e) visual and performing arts, including instruction in the subjects of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, aimed at the development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression. (CA EDUC CODE § 51210)
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement—Middle	Areas of Study, Grades 7-12: The adopted course of study for Grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall offer courses in the following areas of study: (g) visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts, with emphasis upon development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression. (CA EDUC CODE § 51220)
Arts Ed Instructional Requirement—High School	Areas of Study, Grades 7-12: The adopted course of study for Grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall offer courses in the following areas of study: (g) visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts, with emphasis upon development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression. (CA EDUC CODE § 51220)
Arts Requirements for High School Graduation	A pupil shall complete all of the following while in Grades 9 to 12, inclusive, to receive a diploma of graduation from high school: (e) one course in visual or performing arts, foreign language, or, commencing with the 2012–13 school year, career technical education. (CA EDUC CODE § 51225.3).
Arts Alternatives for High School Graduation	Not found in statute or code.
Arts Ed Assessment Requirements	Not found in statute or code.
Arts Ed Requirements for State Accreditation	Not found in statute or code.

Table 2 (continued)

California Arts Education Policy Overview

Policy Area	State Policy
Licensure Requirements for Non-Arts Teachers	Types and Content of Examinations: A general subject matter examination authorizing teaching multiple subjects shall include an examination of the candidate's knowledge of the following areas: language studies, literature, mathematics, science, social studies, history, the arts, physical education, and human development. (CA EDUC CODE § 44282) NOTE: Multiple Subject Teaching Credentials authorize the holder to teach in self-contained classrooms such as classroom settings in most elementary schools. However, a teacher authorized for multiple subject instruction may be assigned to teach in any self-contained classroom (preschool, K-12, or in classes organized primarily for adults). (CA EDUC CODE § 44258)
Licensure Requirements for Arts Teachers	Single Subject Teaching Credentials: "The commission shall issue single subject teaching credentials only in the following subjects: (2) Art [and] (10) music." (CA EDUC CODE § 44257) Types and Content of Examinations: "The commission shall adopt examinations and assessments to verify the subject matter knowledge and competence of candidates for the single subject teaching credentials described in Section 44257 [which includes art and music]." (CA EDUC CODE § 44282) Non-Credentialed Teachers: ". . . specialized secondary programs may select as teachers non-credentialed persons who possess unique talents or skills from business, performing arts, or postsecondary institutions. No non-credentialed person shall be retained as a teacher in a specialized secondary program unless, within 60 days after the governing board has hired such a person, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing has issued a certificate of clearance for him or her, which the commission shall issue when it has verified the person's personal identification and good moral character." (CA EDUC CODE § 58803)

Table 2 (continued)

California Arts Education Policy Overview

Policy Area	State Policy
State Arts Ed Grant Program or School for Arts	California State Summer School for the Arts: "It is the intent of the Legislature that the California State Summer School for the Arts be established to provide a training ground for future artists who may wish to study and practice the arts, or to pursue careers in the major performing arts companies and the commercial and fine arts institutions in California" (CA EDUC CODE § 8950), (California State Summer School for the Arts, 2015) Arts Work Visual and Performing Arts Education Program: "There is hereby established the Arts Work Visual and Performing Arts Education Program . . . for the purposes of awarding grants to local educational agencies to develop their capacity to implement high-quality instructional programs that are based on the state adopted visual and performing arts content standards for pupils in kindergarten and Grades 1 to 12, inclusive. (CA EDUC CODE § 8820)

Note. Table 2 is a categorized overview of the various California Arts Education state policies and legislation. Adapted from "California Arts Legislation," by the Arts Education Partnership, 2014. http://www.aep-arts.org/art-scan-state-report-page/?pstate=California .Adapted from *Cal Admin. Code tit. 5, § 80034* (1970). Adapted from *California Preschool Learning Foundations*, (Volume 2), by Child Development Division. Copyright 2010 by California Department of Education. Adapted from Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools, by California Department of Education. Copyright 2019 by State Board of Education. Adapted from Article 2. Course of Study, Grade 1-6 [51210 - 51212] California Education Code §51210 by *California Department of Education* (1995). https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=4.&title=2.&part=28.&chapter=2.&article=2 Adapted from Article 3. Courses of Study, Grades 7-12 [51220-51229] California Education Code §51220 by *California Department of Education* (1995), https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=4.&title=2.&part=28.&chapter=2.&article=3.Adapted from Article 3. Courses of Study, Grades 7-12 [51220-51230] California Education Code § 51225.3 by *California Department of Education* (1976) https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&sectionNum=51225.3. Adapted from Article 5. Subject Subject Matter Examinations and Assessments [44280 - 44298] California Education Code § 44282. by *California Department of Education*(1993), https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&sectionNum=44282. Adapted from Article 4. Credential Types [44250- 44277] California Education Code § 44258. by *California Department of Education* (1976), https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&sectionNum=44258. Adapted from Article 4. Credential Types [44250-44277] California Education Code § 44257 by *California Department of Education* (1976) https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&sectionNum=44257. Adapted from Chapter 6. Specialized Secondary Programs [58800-58806] California Education Code § 58803 by *California Department of Education* (1983), https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&sectionNum=58803. Adapted from Chapter 7. California State Summer School for the Arts [8950-8957]California Education Code § 8950. by *California Department of Education* (1982). https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&sectionNum=8950. Adapted from *History* by California State Summer School for the Arts.

The intervening years have been full of arts education policy, various legislation, and funding gains and losses, going back and forth in those five decades since the *Ryan Act* 1970 (California Alliance for Arts Education, 2012, 2015; see Table 2). Correspondingly the presence and level of arts education in California primary, middle and secondary schools has had many fluctuations**.**

California arts education funding and budget. As one of the largest states in the country, California's overall budgetary spending allotted to education is very low. As of 2015

California ranked 36 among all states in K–12 spending as a share of the state economy in 2014-15 (Kaplan, 2015). California also ranked last or close to last in the nation in the number of students per staff (Kaplan, 2015). California's ranking of 42 out of all the states for the amount of per-pupil spending only serves to reify the challenges for allocating funding toward statewide arts education. This includes taking into account, and the Local Control Funding Formula (AB 97, 2013) which aimed to increase funding to schools. Closely tied to legislation, funding is another major issue facing schools and districts to properly provide arts classes and arts-integrated training for teachers. Since school funding is allocated in federal, state, and local categories and a percentage drawn from sources like residential property taxes, this also contributes to funding inequities.

Compounding the matter of funding, two national events have had significant impacts on the availability of arts education courses in public schools: the *NCLB* (2002) reauthorization and the Great Recession of 2008. The first has siphoned funds and resources away from arts education and the other limited statewide district funding and programmatic sustainability (Sabol, 2010). As a matter of social justice, the unfunded mandates contributed to present equity and access gaps leading to decreased learning opportunities, a loss of cultural capital, and dismantling of sequential arts education. As a whole, the combination of a mixed of legislation with and without enforcement, lack of funding and resources, teacher preparation and credentialing policies, and the unfunded mandate of *NCLB* (2002) have all been factors in the decrease of arts education in California. The second event, the 2008 Great Recession, caused major cutbacks in district and school funding across California. These factors have been not only localized to California but have also affected students nationwide. As a result, there is a

significant lack of arts education courses in schools located in high poverty areas (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). Comparatively, students attending schools in more affluent areas have a greater depth and breadth of arts and arts-integrated courses.

In California, small opportunities for new revenues and increased per-pupil funding have arisen from the passage of Proposition 30 (Proposition 30, 2012) and amended into law (CA Constitution art XIII § 36), and the method for allocating school funding from the state, the Local Control Funding Formula (AB 97, 2013). Schools and districts now have a new window of opportunity to fund arts, hire arts staff, and reintroduce the arts into curriculum (Parker, 2014). Putting LCFF funding toward the arts would be a step toward schools fulfilling their legal mandate.

Charter Schools

A Kindergarten to 12th-grade inclusive of a high-quality arts education can provide students with alternate pathways to academic success, help supplement overall student achievement, increase student engagement, and when used as a reform strategy improves overall school culture (Deasy, 2002; Fiske et al., 1999; Winner & Hetland, 2000). Charter schools, which, due to legislative and policy design, are afforded broader curricular design choices, have an opportunity to implement arts education programs as part of their pedagogy. Charter schools as an alternative to traditional public schools have gained popularity as the schools of parental choice, and seem to offer local communities more choice about how and what students learn. One of the original intent of charter schools was to create places of learning where different approaches to schooling could flourish (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2014). As charter schools in California serve a large population of low-SES students, they have a great opportunity to

implement arts programs to create opportunities for better student learning outcomes. These included having the choice to fund programs such as the arts. However, due to shifts and changes of direction in the implementation of federal and state education policy, some charter schools and charter school organizations have become overly influenced by various privatized, market-based initiatives. An example includes being overly reliant on testing as the sole means to assess the progress of student learning, which as of 2017 is slowly changing (Vergari, 2007).

Despite the pressure for California charter schools to conform to norms within authorizing public school districts, the opportunity for innovation in California charter schools is within legislation. Following the lead of Kentucky (the first state to pass charter school reform legislation with the *Kentucky Education Reform Act*, (1990), California had passed into law the *Charter Schools Act of 1992* (1993). The 1992 Charter school legislation in California has been designed to allow charter schools more latitude than traditional public schools to adapt alternate curricular pedagogical approaches. Due to an element of the *Charter Schools Act of 1992* (1993) termed the mega-waiver option, there is an opportunity to implement arts-based pedagogy or any other methodology of instruction. The legislation was also designed for the following among other intentions: (a) an alternative school choice for parents and students beyond the local public school, (b) to create an environment where innovation and change could flourish within the education space, and (c) to allow for the implementation of greater school performance accountability measures for students and teachers (such as standardized test scores). One of the results of the legislation has been that charter schools have proliferated in areas of seemingly least resistance, low competition, and greatest need, California's urban low-income neighborhoods. Considered as markets in neo-liberal terminology, these areas contain district run

public schools that often see dropout rates of up to 60% (Georgiou, 2005). Consequently, charter schools have become for many parents the school of choice, especially in urban, low-income areas, both nationally and in California. As such, they enroll a large percentage of students from low-income families resulting in less diverse overall student populations. Part of the urban charter school reality, is the clustering of ethnically homogenous students from low-SES communities, often African American and Latinx, constrained from potential benefits of sharing school experiences with a broader, more diverse group of fellow students (Frankenberg et al., 2012). One of the most pressing, even if often unacknowledged, challenges that urban charter schools face today is, how the socioeconomic context of students and the communities they are rooted within either prepare students for academic success or keep them perpetually below grade level. In California, another challenge limiting true innovation is due pressure from the contractual relationship of the authorizing district to the charter school. Charter school performance is measured and linked to student performance. The schools have to show growth and progress along academic indicators, leaving very little room for other teaching strategies, such as arts integration. Although inherent within the idea of the charter school structure is the freedom of designing and using innovative pedagogical and curricular approaches, often the practical reality and pressure to evidence student performance relegates to the sidelines interest in trying nontraditional teaching methodologies.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative case study is expanded upon in this chapter. The reasons, process, and methods that structured this study and how the data were collected and analyzed will be reviewed. The reasoning for selecting the particular charter school as subject of the study will be outlined. Lastly, the research methodology, forms of data collection, and overall examination of the validity and reliability of the instruments will be discussed.

Research Questions

This qualitative case study explored school stakeholders' perceptions of an arts-integrated curriculum and pedagogy implemented at an urban elementary charter school. The study sought to understand through student, parents, teacher, and administrator voices, how the pedagogical model of arts integration was being designed and implemented and how a group of African American and Latinx students experienced that curriculum. This study sought to describe the implementation of the Different Ways of Knowing based, arts curricular approach to teaching and learning in an elementary charter school in the greater Los Angeles.

The guiding questions were:

1. How does an arts-based charter school implement the Different Ways of Knowing and arts-integrated curriculum?
2. What perceived challenges, benefits, and opportunities do parents, administrators, and teachers identify for African American and Latinx students experiencing the arts-integrated curriculum at Kahlo Elementary Charter School?

According to Flick (2014), qualitative research is the "study of participants' knowledge and practices, [and it] takes into account that viewpoints and practices in the field are different because of the different subjective perspectives and social backgrounds related to them" (p. 16). The viewpoints of the stakeholders and curriculum drivers at Kahlo Elementary evidenced by their perceptions and examination of the work of the students were critical to gaining insight to the effectiveness of the arts-integrated curriculum at Kahlo Elementary with this case study's target population group.

The frameworks used were Maxine Greene's aesthetic education (Greene, 1978, 1995, 2001), the constructivist model of learning through the arts, Different Ways of Knowing, and arts integration (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). To further investigate these themes and determine the answers to the research questions posed in Chapter 2, the research contained interviews, classroom observations, focus group, and attending school events, to paint a thorough picture of student transformation through the influence of Kahlo's pedagogical approach.

Methods/Research Design

To fully capture the number of interviewees and their viewpoints, experiences, and perception of a charter school's programs, a qualitative case study approach was chosen. Participants included students, parents, staff, faculty, administrators, and alumni. The final number of participants was 21. Teachers and their classrooms were part of the observations; teachers were part of the focus group and interviews, and administrators, parents and students participating in interviews.

The research questions posed sought to analyze the participants perception of what is occurring and how the mechanism(s) of the occurrence of the phenomenon is happening. Flick

(2014) stated, “Another way to study complex issues with qualitative research is to design methods that are sufficiently open to the complexity of a study’s subject” (p. 15). Additionally, the nature of qualitative studies contains elements such as interpretation, natural and holistic overviews, and non-causal inquiries.

Stake (1995) counted four main factors and terms these the “More or Less Special Characteristics of Qualitative Study” (p. 47). These factors include: (a) research that is holistic and case oriented, (b) studies that are field oriented with observables, (c) interpretive with researcher as onsite observer looking for problem-relevant events, and (d) “empathic on the participants intentionality, a design that is predominantly emergent, and aligned with progressively focused emic issues” (p. 47), as determined by the participants’ constructivist experiences. These items of consideration factored in greatly to the choice of Kahlo as the site of study. Stake’s (1995) “more or less special characteristics” (p. 47) emerged in centrality as the fabric of the study at Kahlo. The methods of data collection were semi-structured interviews, a focus group, classroom observations, and school event observations. Through interviews and focus group sessions, the voices of the teachers helped to describe the experience of utilizing DWoK and arts integration approaches and impact on the students. The voices of the administrators helped to capture another aspect of the curriculum and its benefits on a group of African American and Latinx students. As a case study, the research generated may be able to illuminate ideas, trends, or patterns that will be of use in expanding what is known about DWoK and arts integration curriculum practices at charter schools serving similar population groups.

Site Description: Kahlo Elementary Charter School

In fall 2016, Kahlo Elementary Charter School was an independent charter school in the city of Los Angeles, providing instruction to 496 students from developmental kindergarten through sixth grade. The seminal idea of Kahlo Elementary Charter School gained traction in 2004 out of the desires and efforts from a group of Los Angeles parents wanting their children and community to have an Elementary schooling experience focused on the arts. The original group of 28 founding families, majority mid to upper income professionals, made up the base of a coalition that included individual community stakeholders and small business owners, who all pooled their skills and resources to create the first version of Kahlo Elementary Charter. The school, seeking to operate as an independent standalone charter school within the boundaries of the LAUSD was granted its charter in 2006. The school opened in September of that year with a scale up model, starting with the kindergarten and first grade. With the first 120 students enrolled, the school initially had a short-term lease, in a temporary building. This allowed for the school infrastructure to grow along with student enrollment numbers for a few years. By 2010, the school had its charter renewed twice by LAUSD, enrollment had expanded to fifth grade, and the school moved into a new building in a blue collar, working-class, majority Latinx neighborhood of Los Angeles. The geographic area is bounded by relatively middle to upper middle-class areas to the West and North, and working-class areas to the East and South. By the fall of 2016 Kahlo Elementary reached an enrollment of 496 kindergarten to fifth-grade students, all attending a spacious, two-story, central campus. The 2015 CALPADS data reported that 41.5% of the students are classified as economically disadvantaged (defined as students who qualify for free and reduced lunch based on family income and SES classification) with 8.7%

classified as English language learners, which is low compared to schools in the local area, considering that the school is in a predominantly Latinx community. Examining demographics of a nearby elementary school in the same community, shows out of 452 majority Latinx students, 400 students or 96.5% of their population qualifying for free and reduced lunch and 52.4% of the students classified as English language learners. Despite Kahlo being located within a predominantly Latinx community, the population group enrolled there is a majority of White students with 56.3% White students, 36.3% Hispanic or Latinx, 4% African American, and 2.8% Asian or Filipino. The majority White student enrollment reflecting the legacy effects of the founding families' demographics and potentially the community's deferential perception of a difference of effectiveness and culture of the constructivist, arts-oriented, arts-integrated pedagogy and curricular approach. However, over the past six years, Kahlo has diversified slightly with increased enrollment of Latinx English language learners while reducing numbers of White student enrollment. In 2010-2011, data recorded White students at 57.6%, undisclosed two or more races at 9.3%, Hispanic and Latinx at 25.5%, Black or African American at 4.8%, Asian at 1.9%, and American Indian at .2%. For the purposes of this study, the focus was on the Hispanic or Latinx and Black/African American subgroups of those that qualify for free and reduced lunch. Regardless of any potential deferential perception of the community culturally, pedagogical or otherwise, the overall academic performance Kahlo as ranked by last reported 2013 academic performance index (API) scoring was 835 with a state ranking of 7 out of 10 (API measured numerically up to 1,000). Comparatively the nearby neighborhood elementary school received a 2013 API score of 742 with a state ranking of 2. Since 2014 and officially in March of 2015, API testing and tracking for California schools has been suspended in lieu of a

new metric of reporting school performance there is no API data for 2014, 2015, or 2016. With the intent of providing an alternative method of education, the stated mission of the school is to engage children in an inspiring, challenging, and civically active educational experience that embraces learning through the arts. Arts integration is at the heart of the methodology of the curriculum, and one of the school's major goals is to become a model arts integration school. With the mission and goal in mind, the curriculum has been designed such that students at Kahlo have participatory experiences during the school day, as part of their learning including exploring music, dance, visual arts and theatre arts. The six core values of the school are: (a) focus on the whole child, (b) child-centered learning, (c) constructivist environment, (d) project-based, (e) arts-integrated, and (f) authentic family involvement. The curriculum is couched in a constructivist, inquiry-based pedagogy implemented through an arts-integrated approach. Specifically, the theoretical basis of the entire curriculum is based on the DWoK pedagogical methodology, which is evolved from Gardner's (2011) theories of multiple intelligences, that students learn, have cognitive growth, and show intelligence in many different ways. It is anticipated that by observing students working, students and teachers interacting in the classroom, along with gathering data on how administrators are working with teachers and gathering parents' viewpoints on their children's learning progress, that relevant data to help answer the research questions will become clear. Specifically, this researcher is interested in exploring how a group of low-SES children of color experience the curriculum of a particular arts-integrated pedagogy, the intention of the program, and the work they have created in response to it. On describing qualitative research and researchers, Stake (1995) described the act of naturalistic observation without intervention to allow comprehension to arise with the

application of interpretation with a keen eye toward recognition of patterns. My intent is to engage precisely in this same type of research strategy, and let the participant's reality be the guiding through line to address the research questions posed.

The context of Kahlo Elementary Charter School leant itself well to the application of a case study approach. More specifically methods of naturalistic inquiry and participant observation studies were utilized in creating the case study. As Hatch (2002) detailed, the data collection applied included collecting and analyzing artifacts, direct observation as the basis for generating field notes, and conducting interviews with participants. The focus of the case study was on the effect of a DWoK and arts-integrated curriculum on a group of fourth and fifth-grade low-SES African American, African diaspora, and Latinx students, some of whom have attended Kahlo for one year or more.

Description of the Participants and Criteria

This study sought to describe an arts integrated pedagogy, its implementation, and capture the perceived effects on a group African American and Latinx fourth- and fifth-grade students through the lens of the teachers, administrators, parents, and students themselves. Participants were all stakeholders in the school community of Kahlo Elementary Charter School. Study participants included five fourth- and fifth-grade students, three boys and two girls, and five elementary parents. Staff, faculty, and administration participants will consist of six grade-level and arts teachers, one arts administrator, one Principal/Executive Director, one high school student and two high school parents. The final number of participants was 21. Teachers and their classrooms were part of the observations; teachers were part of the focus group and interviews, and administrators, parents and students participating in interviews.

Table 3

Participant Demographics

Participant Pseudonym	Role	Ethnicity	Gender
Dr. Lisa	Principal/Executive Director	Asian	F
Ms. Selenez	Director of Arts Integration/Visual Art teacher	Latinx	F
Ms. Brady	Grade level instructor—fourth- and fifth-grade	Filipina	F
Mr. Villar	Grade level instructor—fourth -grade	Latinx	M
Ms. Trainor	Grade level instructor—fifth -grade	Latinx	F
Ms. Hirman	Visual Arts instructor	Caucasian	F
Ms. Sazer	Dance instructor	Caucasian	F
Mr. Stallen	Music Instructor	Caucasian	M
Jerri	fourth -grade parent (Zane's mother)	Asian	F
Zane	fourth-grade student	Latinx and Asian	M
Judy	fourth-grade parent (Alan's mother)	Asian	F
Alan	fourth-grade student	African American and Asian	M
Kalina	fourth-grade parent (Selena's mother)	Caucasian	F
Selena	fourth-grade student	Cuban/Caucasian	F
William	fifth-grade parent (Bobby's father)	African American	M
Bobby	fifth-grade student	African American	M
Celia	fifth-grade parent (Ariella's mother)	Latinx	F
Ariella	fifth-grade student	Latinx	F
Roderick	High School student	African American	M
Carla	High School parent (Roderick's mother)	African American	F
Sharon	High School parent	Asian	F

Methods of Data Collection

Data collection tools included semi structured interviews, classroom observations, and a focus group. Participants were teachers, administration, students, and teachers of Kahlo Elementary Charter School. These represent the levels of school administration organization and program administration, classroom instruction, and home that allowed for creating a collection of viewpoints or snapshots (Flick, 2014) that were organized and coded accordingly.

Interviews

Constructing a type of cross checking narrative that contains elements of similarity and redundancy through the voices of the various stakeholders via interviews allowed the experience of the various stakeholders to inform the story of the organization and students in the school curriculum case study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed five specific outcomes for interviewing: (a) *here and now constructions*, defined as participant explanations of events, activities, feelings, motivations, concerns; (b) *reconstructions*, defined as explanations of past events and experiences; (c) projections or explanations of anticipated experiences; (d) *triangulation*, described as verification or extension of information from other sources; and (e) *member checking,* or verification or extension of information developed by the researcher (Hatch, 2002). A total of 21 semi-structured interviews with the administration, parents, and teachers provided the participants an opportunity to present their perceptions of Kahlo's instructional approach (Flick, 2014), and their experience in co-creating the elements of the bounded case at hand.

The goal of the semi-structured interviews was to systematically triangulate all of the participant stories for common themes, ideas, and concepts, relating to the impact of the

curriculum on African American and Latinx student learning. The interview relied on the concept of subjective theory: that the people being interviewed will have a personalized viewpoint and set of ideas around the topic at hand. Personal assumptions that are very clear can be uncovered, and combining them with other interviews will allow for validation (Flick, 2014). A semi-structured interview is composed of an open question (what, why, etc.) that draws from an interviewee's existing knowledge. As Flick (2014) stated, "Additionally, theory-driven, hypotheses-directed questions are asked. These [questions] are oriented to the scientific literature about the topic" (p. 218). The purpose of utilizing verbal data was to gain insight into the professional experiences and knowledge of the classroom practitioners, and gathering the expert knowledge for analysis. Interviews of the parents and administrators further revealed perceptions of what types of results the curricular approach is creating. See Appendix A for semi-structured interview questions.

Observations

This case study was contemporary and the site leant itself to allowing for the data collection strategy of observation. As rooted in a broader scientific practice, I sought to account for other types of data which may be present in the interaction of student and teacher, and students in their peer group work settings. Flick (2014) wrote, "An understanding of observation can be fruitful for taking into account that there are many ways of collecting data and that there are many types of data" (p. 295). I observed teachers demonstrating arts integration teaching strategies with the specific groups of students the research outcomes are focused on. I structured the analysis through non-participant systematic observation. Even though limits of observation can include the presence of the researcher influencing the subject(s) being observed, the data I

sought to collect was not all focused on the interaction portion of the observation, but rather what arises out of it. The methodology of teaching practice and the work product generated by the students were of particular interest. The observation protocol was the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center's Education Institute instrument (Franklin, 2005) which was developed specifically to observe classrooms that were implementing an arts integration approach. The observation dimensions included the following eight areas: (a) cooperative, collaborative environment, (b) student engagement, (c) prior knowledge, (d) encouragement of individual expression, (e) inclusive of all students, (f) one on one instruction, (g) active experiential instructional approach, and (h) differentiation of instruction, (i) emotionally safe learning environment conducive to creative risk taking. The Education Institution instrument has three sections, each providing an additional layer to capturing the authenticity of the arts-integrated learning experience.

In this research, I sought to understand the participant perspectives. I did not conduct covert observations, but my participant observations were as unobtrusive as possible. There are levels of participant observer practice that include "passive, moderate, and active" (Hatch, 2002, p. 73). Part of this decision was to be able to fully focus on the activities and attend to the actual capturing of data through rigorous field notes. As the main data generated from observation was field notes, I processed them through a strict research protocol accounting for organized note structure. In addition to the arts integrated classroom observation instrument, (Franklin, 2005) I used a modified approach for observation, based on Appendix B in Hatch (2002). Notations of the activity in the classroom were taken sequentially aligned to the time of occurrence. Finally, observation allowed me to align what is being observed to the semi structured research interviews.

Teacher Focus Group

To get a clearer idea of opinions and attitudes toward the case study of Kahlo's curriculum and its impact on low-SES students of color, I conducted a focus group session as an additional method of data collection with the fourth- and fifth-grade teachers of the selected student cohort. An interactive aspect allowed information to arise from the discussion topic of groups of teachers and groups of administrators. The focus group session did not primarily seek narratives, anecdotes, or specific individual experience; rather, the intent of the focus group sessions was to help generate hypotheses regarding the students learning and growth by taking into account group insights. Information arising out of the focus group helped refine questions that were used in the semi-standardized individual interviews. As the case study focused on a particular cohort of students, teachers were presented with work samples to view during the focus group. See Appendix B for focus group questions/prompts.

Artifacts and Documents

The curriculum and pedagogical approach at Kahlo Elementary was deeply embedded in the DWoK approach (Catterall et al., 1995); therefore, it was important to analyze many of the school's curricular and lesson plan documents to add meaning to the overall data analysis. The bulk of the documents were what is considered open archival access: available to the public within a specific archive and openly published and available to anyone interested as the school is a publicly funded charter school (Flick, 2014). Documents were provided via the Kahlo school administration, teachers, and accessible via their website. Student produced artwork and artifacts were also a part of the ongoing data collection analysis. In analyzing the student work, I looked for correlation between the assigned work in class and students responding to the lesson plans.

Additionally, I analyzed the work for evidence of student development and achievement of student learning objectives. Beyond technical development, I analyzed the work for students' investing the work with personal meaning, growth in self-identity, critical thinking, acceptance of others, and other types of positive growth markers of learning through the arts.

Analysis of Data

Part of the data analysis was to glean how the institution portrayed itself in terms of the curricular model of arts integration and the DWoK approach in relation to the pedagogical methods carried out in the classroom and supported by the administration and the effects on the students. Prior (2003) characterized documents as going beyond the physical artifact of a piece of paper, or whatever form the artifacts take. Instead, they are to be considered "in terms of fields, frames and networks of action" (as cited by Flick, 2014, p. 353).

Documents, lesson plans, the interviews, the focus groups and the observation data were used to describe the instructional and learning phenomenon occurring at Kahlo. I used an inductive analysis strategy as described by Hatch (2002) to look for "patterns of relationships" (p. 10) and identify categories arising from the patterns of relationships. I followed Hatch's (2002) recommended procedure for data analysis:

1. Read the data and identify frames of analysis;
2. Create domains based on semantic relationships discovered within frames of analysis;
3. Identify salient domains, assign them a code, and put others aside;
4. Reread data, refining salient domains and keeping a record of where relationships are found in the data;

5. Decide if your domains are supported by the data and search data for examples that do not fit with or run counter to the relationships in your domains;
6. Complete an analysis within domains;
7. Search for themes across domains;
8. Create a master outline expressing relationships within and among domains; and
9. Select data excerpts to support the elements of your outline. (Hatch, 2002, p. 162)

Trustworthiness

Data triangulation was the main strategy used to validate the results of data analyses. Flick (2014) stated, "Triangulation means that researchers take different perspectives on an issue under study" (p. 184). In examining the various data collected, I looked for emergent themes and patterns that produced insights far beyond any one method. In addition, I spent a significant amount of time immersed in collecting and analyzing data from observations, interviews, and focus groups. This immersion made up for a certain amount of deep familiarity with the case research and various elements. Participants in the interviews had an opportunity to review their statements and add to or clarify it so that their perspectives and ideas were fully expressed.

Positionality and Reflexivity

This study captured the experiences of an arts-integrated curriculum being implemented at a charter school and the effects it has on a group of students. Having involvement with Kahlo Elementary Charter School as a board member and having designed arts programs at several charter schools in Los Angeles, I have motivation in researching the intersection of arts pedagogy, learning, and students in charter schools.

An indispensable and integral part of qualitative research is the role of the researcher as research instrument. As such attention must be paid to the bias that can occur, especially when conducting research with a qualitative constructivist methodology. The same skillsets that allow a researcher to be cognizant of their influence, notate their bias, also give a researcher the capacity of being a successful research instrument, absorbing the data, and interpreting it with an eye for emerging patterns (Hatch, 2002). I was aware that my role as a former board member at the research site gave me an insider status that could have affected data collection during interviews and the teacher focus group. In order to mitigate any unspoken power dynamics in my interactions with the faculty, the staff choose when we met and gave permission for me to conduct classroom observations. As the researcher, I also have my own sets of beliefs in the power of arts education as a force for social justice. It is my belief that arts education can be transformative for all students, and especially so for students of color. Furthermore, my lived experience of participating in the arts as a student and then as a professional, gives rise to the interest in conducting this research. My interest in creating arts education opportunities for students of color, especially those from low income households, is a focus and concern of my professional work in education. This has influenced the selection of the students that will be participating in the study and the choice of school I will be conducting the study at. The choice of research site was due to the factors of the school contains both a structured arts integrated pedagogy and a percentage of students of color from low income households. These two factors made it a compelling choice for collecting data. Additionally, due to my involvement with the school organization as a school board member, the barriers for access were significantly reduced. Due to this insider position, had access to more school related documents data than otherwise

possible. The decline in arts funding in public schools is a major concern along with the erosion of arts course offerings, and a lack of programs with an arts integration component. My lens of as a person of color and an advocate for students of color, I see there is a social justice need to address the dismantling of arts education in urban public schools.

Limitations

As a qualitative case study focused on one case, limitations were problems of generalizability. As the sample of the population group selected was very specific there were conditions that are not replicable. Therefore, I constructed in my procedures as standardized a process as possible for carrying out the research and analyzing the data.

The act of conducting qualitative research represents a potential disruption into the flow of natural events. There is always the threat of the researcher's presence influencing the interaction of events being observed. The data that the researcher records from the observation is then subject to personal interpretation biased toward the need for patterns to arise. As subjectivity is a component of the research data interpretation, the need for validity and reliability of the instrument and protocol chosen is necessary. However, unlike quantitative research, with largely accepted types of reliability testing, the fidelity of qualitative research will depend on the rigor of the research and my own objectivity as the researcher to accurately triangulate data collection, utilize a valid and reliable instrument, and interpret the findings from a perspective that arises due to patterns in the research. With interviewing and focus groups included as part of the data collection tools, the limitations are the potential for the methodology itself to impact on sensitive topics by "revealing implicit or unconscious parts of participants' relation to the topic of research or the issue of discussion" (Flick, 2014, p. 250).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

> A scholar is his teachers, his own masters, poorly or artfully reconstructed and recombined . . . .
>
> —Howard Gardner, (p. xiii, 1982)

> Children will become like the people who teach them.
>
> —Bill Strickland, Manchester Bidwell Corp (TED Conferences, LLC, 2002, 15:25)

This case study was designed to examine the implementation of arts—integrated curriculum at a charter elementary school in the Los Angeles area. In particular, the study sought to understand how the curriculum was implemented as well as what stakeholders in the school community identified as the challenges, benefits, and opportunities of the curriculum for a group of Black and Latinx students enrolled at the school. The case study was conducted using various qualitative data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and the collection and review of artifacts.

The guiding research questions for the case study were:

1. How does an arts based charter school implement the Different Ways of Knowing and arts—integrated curriculum?
2. What perceived challenges, benefits, and opportunities do parents, administrators, and teachers identify for African American and Latinx students experiencing the arts-integrated curriculum at Kahlo Elementary Charter School?

This chapter presents findings drawn from the research conducted at Kahlo Elementary Charter School. I have organized the chapter in two main sections, each addressing one of the research questions.

Research Question 1: Implementation of Arts-Integrated and Different Ways of Knowing Curriculum

In response to the first research question, I focus on salient pieces of the school's arts-integrated, constructivist learning approach, including curriculum planning and implementation, challenges faced by teachers, and the evolution of the DWOK curriculum over time. Through the interviews with teachers, I identified that the distinct pedagogical approach taken by the school is a strength facilitating a unique learning experience for students and allowing teacher agency and creativity. It also creates distinct challenges for teachers in continuing fidelity to the model. Finally, the interview data revealed evidence that there has been an evolution in the implementation of the DWOK framework, resulting in a more general, constructivist, arts-integrated approach.

Curriculum Planning and Implementation

At Kahlo Elementary, the administrators, grade level instructors, and arts specialists all played roles in designing and implementing the curriculum. While arts integration and DWOK provided a general direction and approach to curriculum design, the actual curriculum, including identifying materials and developing activities and assessments, was designed and implemented by the grade level instructors with the support of arts specialists. This stood in contrast to other curriculums, which relied on textbooks, teachers' guides, and pre-packaged activities. The "home grown" nature of the curriculum and instructional approach at KECS allowed opportunities to engage in constructivist, hands-on learning reflective of the school's mission and goals.

Among teachers, the curricular approach was viewed as a positive, distinctive characteristic of the school. Fourth-grade teacher Mr. Villar gave an overview of the curricular

approach, stating that the teachers and administrators "consider the approach child centered." Similarly, Dr. Lisa described the approach as "constructivist . . . interdisciplinary . . . differentiated . . . creating a curricular experience for students that are anchored in standards and experiences that will be relevant to them." Focusing on the roles played by teachers and students within the constructivist classroom, Ms. Brady described, "The kids are creating their own learning. I look at myself as a facilitator of their experience and their mentor. They're creating the experience." Connecting to research question 1, as a student focused school, the experiential learning that students have is key to understanding not only how the curriculum is designed the way it is, but why.

Arts Integrated Projects

In order to support the constructivist approach typical at KECS grade level teachers and arts specialist teachers collaborated to develop curriculum and arts-integrated projects. Dr. Lisa explained, "Broadly, the approach is a collaborative teacher expertise based approach . . . general education, arts specialists, and special ed teachers." In order to strike a balance between class needs, state standards, and the freedom of developing non traditional pedagogy, the teachers found much planning was necessary. Mr. Villar provided an overview of the planning process, which he stated began before the start of school in the fall and continued at intervals throughout the school year:

> We do, as a grade-level (teams) and as a school, we do map out the state standards. And we do map out the national standards and we do say we want to teach these skills during this trimester and so we will map out the different content areas according to the standards by trimester.

As Mr. Villar described, this alignment work was completed collaboratively within grade-level teaching teams. Ms. Brady affirmed the importance of the grade-level teaching teams in the planning process, saying "A lot of the good planning and the gauging of the way things are executed are based on the teaching teams."

Working together on teaching teams, teachers aligned the overall guiding questions embedded in the learning units to state curriculum standards. Within this bespoke framing, KECS teachers had flexibility to tailor pacing to their classrooms. Dr. Lisa described it as "a program that allows for a framework of . . . essential standards and essential questions . . . that gives the teacher the ability to flex time . . . and spend more time on something if the students aren't getting it, or less if they are." Mr. Villar also emphasized that the approach allowed for good teaching practice to occur during the implementation of the content:

> But it's [the KECS teaching approach] as much based on student need as it is on the actual state standards. . . . [For example] if I saw that they [students] were lacking basic addition skills I could focus on that and remediate.

Teachers also had freedom in designing modalities for student participation in class activities. Much of the student work at KECS was project based, group learning opportunities Mr. Villar described as "based on like their [students'] natural inclinations. So, the natural inclination is to talk and to play and so you want to put them in groups where they are given fun activities." Ms. Brady also attested to benefits of group work for students: "You know they're working cooperatively, they're working in a group, they're challenged, they're allowed to be more creative."

All the grade-level instructors interviewed for the case study had several major content areas they were responsible for covering. These include math, science, social studies, reading, writing, and Cool Tools, a conflict resolution toolkit that was part of an overall PBIS or positive behavior intervention strategy (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013). The arts content, including visual and performing arts curricula, were taught by Arts Specialists. The Arts Specialists also played a role in advising grade-level teachers with grade-level appropriate and Arts Integration approaches. Mr. Villar explained that the grade-level teams met the Arts Specialist teachers "once or twice per trimester to kind of map out the curriculum and map out the project ideas." Mr. Stallen, one of the Arts Specialist teachers, also spoke about the collaboration, describing how the Arts Specialists and grade-level teachers met to "just kind of brainstorm how we can integrate what is going on in their unit." Just as the grade-level teachers collaborated to identify topics, primary sources, and instructional approaches that were true to the constructivist nature of the school, the Arts Specialists collaborated with the grade-level teachers to ensure the arts-integrated approach was present in classroom activities.

The commitment to using arts integration to teach core academic content is reflected in teachers' ability to create their own curricula, focused on group-based projects, created by using design based thinking and inquiry model teaching strategies, with the freedom to incorporate the arts as part of the teaching strategies in class. The school does not mandate arts integration and collaboration. However, it is embedded in the pedagogical approach and is part of the culture at KECS. Evolving out of Different Ways of Knowing, mixed with design-based thinking and inquiry models like Scottish Storyline, the approach was an amalgamation where the total effect as a whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

Most, if not all, of the KECS faculty experienced an adjustment period during which they acclimated to the culture of the school, including learning what arts integration is and how it works. Mr. Villar was encouraged to "think of art as a language" in order to understand Kahlo's philosophy of arts integration:

> And if you frame it like that, then you'll see how it's really easy to integrate. . . and maybe not easy but if you look at art as communication then I think it fits in with any textbook. Any film, any visual you want to give, any manipulative. It's just another way of conveying ideas.

Grade-level teachers' collaborations with Arts Specialists provided a type of ongoing professional development about the nature and practices of arts integration. Mr. Villar noted that "in the past, classroom teachers were also encouraged to participate in art specialists' lessons to reinforce and model engagement and investment in the arts." The latitude that teachers have in the planning, ability to utilize an array of constructivist instructional approaches, the deep connection to arts integration all stems from the founding of the school with value placed in the initial Different Ways of Knowing program, a lab school ethos, and is also part of understanding how the implementation occurs and the benefits for students.

Use of Primary Sources and Artifacts. One of the unique features of the pedagogical model as implemented by Kahlo Elementary is not using standardized textbooks. Instead, as Ms. Brady pointed out, curriculum is designed specifically by instructors to address the needs and interests of the students. Mr. Villar described this process in more detail:

> We frame our teaching. . . . We introduce a topic, we gauge what students already know about it, we gauge what student interest is, and then we introduce them to some sort of primary source or primary document that's related to the subject.

The substitution of primary sources for textbooks and packaged curricular materials was an important part of the approach and supports students in developing the design-based thinking strategy of inquiry. Explained Dr. Lisa, design-based thinking posed a "large, broad, arch question for the students to answer" and "the (relevant) hooks then become where the teachers guide the students' experience." These essential, guiding questions resided at the center of curricular units, providing a central theme to link materials, activities, and assessments.

All modalities of creative endeavor including music, photography, drawing and painting, theatre, poetry, cinema, and dance were used as primary source materials in connection to grade-level academic content. The content was connected to the subject matter lessons much in the same way that traditional textbook content would be utilized. Mr. Villar further explained,

> Another way of thinking of that is I could play a song by one artist in one style of music, and I can play another song [that is] a different style of music. I can ask them [the students] to compare and contrast based on that. . . . I can look at music, I can look at paintings. . . . I can say "Let's compare and contrast using [those resources]."

Since the curriculum is created and designed by grade-level groups and by instructor, grade-level teachers have the latitude to integrate arts content into any of the academic subject areas as a teaching and learning strategy. There are certain anchor units that grade-levels have the option of implementing annually, however new teachers described constantly creating new lessons and curriculum. Ms. Brady explained:

> Grade levels they do have certain projects that they seem to return to over and over again but we do very much have the freedom to . . . to stray from that and create our own curriculum.

Ms. Trainor, a first-year teacher at Kahlo Elementary, further emphasized this point, highlighting how, because the school does not follow a set curriculum: "All of that creativity that is innate in most teachers is allowed to blossom" She went on to highlight how teachers' creativity "allows for different types of learning styles." For example, Mr. Villar described a successful arts integrated project tied to math in which students studied the work of Brazilian artist Beatriz Milhazes, examining her artwork for "arrays and repeated patterns," which in turn supported students' learning about multiplication.

Ms. Trainor detailed how she approached utilizing arts integration content in replacement of traditional academic assignments. The particular learning unit she challenged students to create a YouTube video as a form of persuasive essay. Since much of arts integration implementation is embedded in project-based group work, it was necessary for students creating the video short to work together in different production roles. Connected to arts integration and project-based learning is student relevance, leveraged in Ms. Trainor's project through the link to social media influencers. Teachers observed that much of the entertainment media the fifth-grade students consumed was online and mediated by online influencers and chose to build upon that interest in the project. Ms. Trainor explained further the connection to the lesson, saying: "And so we started with influencers and how people influence each other and make influences around them. . . . The thesis is connected to the writing thesis."

She went on to elaborate that embedded within the actual artifact of the video being created, additional arts discipline skills or strands are covered. In making influencer content, students were required to create a dance and a song. The creation of which was coordinated with the Dance and Music specialists at KECS. The Dance and Music aspects of the assignment are created when students are in their scheduled Dance and Music class rotation.

One of the arts specialists, Ms. Sazer, described the integration of the arts content in the project:

> So, I first had [the students] look at viral dances . . . and then they choreographed their own viral dance and videoed it . . . and then their [grade level] teachers had them write an argumentative essay and a thesis with three [topics] they researched . . . things like adopting animals . . . or equal pay for women.

In the overall unit and in the process of doing the assignment, students also learned media literacy and video production techniques including using storyboards to design and guide their video productions, and learning to design music using Garage Band software, and video editing. Access to production tools was made possible by robust annual parent fund drives, which supported the purchase of laptops and media equipment for student use.

Another example of arts integration was connected to a socio-emotional developmental program called Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013) . The Cool Tools curriculum was used to help students mediate conflict and reflect on their behavior. Mr. Villar, for example, used it in the classroom along with arts integration strategies of analyzing paintings. He described:

> So, I've had kids look at different paintings and I've had them look at our social emotional curriculum, our conflict resolution and say what do you think is happening? What's the story? Who are the characters? What's the event that's happening? And then what social emotional tool do you think would help resolve the conflict that you perceive in this work. Then I've had extension activities by having them act it out[theatre]. . . .
>
> You've got the use of the visual arts to identify kind of characters settings and conflicts.

Mr. Villar gave the specific example of using works by artist Norman Rockwell along with the Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013) :

> Within that cycle of lessons, I had kids choose different Norman Rockwell paintings and then act out the scenarios. Create dialogue, create small scenes. And then perform them for the class, and share what socio emotional curriculum. So . . . so for me it's . . . it's just a springboard. It's just a discussion opportunity just the way to generate conversation, a way to generate language.

As a purposeful feature of the school's approach, the lack of textbooks and creation of original source material, is an offshoot of the Different Ways of Knowing approach that pointed to all arts as useful to teach all content through. It was also in fidelity with the Kennedy Center arts integration model tying into research question one. Also while connecting to the role of student empowerment, student inquiry, and the alternate success outcomes valued for student's development. Another example of benefits for students that teachers identify connected to Research Question 2.

Celebrations. Beyond the classroom lessons, a big showcase for the arts integration approach of the student work happened annually. These showcases were what KECS termed

"celebrations." The intent of the celebrations was to present a capstone of students work and a presentation of the teaching approach as evidenced by displays of student works. While each grade-level at KECS had a thematic celebration, for the purposes of this case study, only the fourth and fifth-grade celebrations were discussed. The celebrations were typically capstone projects requiring planning and collaboration.

A big part of the celebrations were the other arts components of theatre arts, music, and dance. Students conducted presentations of thematic content in front of the school community that were intended as capstone evidence that demonstrated learning through the KECS methodology. The principal, Dr. Lisa, avoided calling these "plays" or "concerts" as such because the intent was not about the performance aspect of these presentations. Although there were elements of discipline based skills like in Theatre or Music performances, the intent is a community wide presentation of the artifacts evidencing student learning, real time, of the KECS pedagogical model. So even though there were aspects of the celebration that were performance based, with associative learnings happening, the intent of the celebration was a showcase of student development. Dr. Lisa clarified, "[I]t's a way of [students] expressing understanding." The celebrations as an encapsulation of the overall KECS pedagogy connected to reaching higher levels of student comprehension and understanding." As Dr. Lisa noted,

> When we think of how Gardner has modalities, the Arts allow for students to have all different entry points into learning about, say, the American Revolution. As opposed to a textbook and some worksheets that they answer. Those are secondary and tertiary ways of getting at the content.

Mr. Stallen provided an example of the content of a recent celebration, stating, “the fourth grade did California history. . . . Mission perspectives and Indigenous tribes. . . . Chumash and Tongva . . . so we had to do a celebration the showed those two world viewpoints.”

During the times I conducted observations of the campus and KECS-related events, I saw student designed and built miniature scale models of various missions and Native American villages. Students also had an additional assignment to create images, pictures, representing historical clashes the groups may have had. These were shown at art walks that connected to the presentation aspect of the celebrations.

To further evidence the learning, at the celebration I observed, parents and other audience members were given the opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Stallen described:

> [At the] Q & A, this is where all the parents ask questions about the performance . . . [for example’ Why did you choose this dance move? Why did you choose this music? Tell me more about what does this melody come from? The questions force the kids to reveal what they are learning *in class* [speaker’s emphasis] . . . students talked about the struggle of humans versus nature, Spanish versus indigenous . . . how people were treated and the various perspectives of both sides.

The fifth-grade students’ celebration was thematically based on the American Revolution.

Ms. Trainor described the projects presented at the celebration:

> We did (Scottish) storyline . . . taking history elements starting in the classroom, just front loading factual information . . . that was integrated into theatre, where (students) wrote their piece . . . student wrote the play . . . their scenes in theatre . . . the theatre teachers helped.

She went on to explain that through an outreach partnership with CalArts, grad students worked with KECS students on a theatre arts strand during the trimester. She noted that their role was instrumental in creating the work for this celebration:

> The CalArts students helped with the editing process to create the whole [presentation] and then they [the KECS students] were able to integrate . . . characters from class read aloud about the American Revolution and connect it to actual figures from history.

Although they stemmed from grade-level thematic content, most of the actual student skill building and logistics of developing the presentation came from the arts specialists' involvement.

While curricular units were integrated and co-taught, the celebrations happened as an addition to the regularly scheduled class time. As such, a separate allocation of time, resources, and students' and teachers' commitment were required for the preparations necessary leading up to the celebrations. With both grade level specialists' and grade level teachers' time already scheduled during the teaching day, there was, essentially, an ad-hoc effort to put the celebrations together, often falling inordinately on either the grade level teacher or the arts specialist. Ms. Sazer, arts specialist, explained,

> If we don't make it [the celebration] happen, it won't happen . . . it kept getting pushed back. It depends on how often we can meet with the grade-level teachers. Like if they can take on the classroom part . . . or if they can integrate. Sometimes we just have to do it.

With the fifth-grade celebration, the components for creating the celebration consisted of the following process: students learned the history content in class, then students wrote content based on history. The students turned this writing into a playwriting/storytelling format with characters and narrative. After that, the theatre specialists from the college partnerships worked

with students to teach the discipline of theatre arts skills (e.g., staging, blocking, timing, rudimentary acting, etc). The students learned how to act as their characters based on historical content. The grade level teacher, who had some theatre background, also worked with the grade level students. Then, at the celebration, those scenes were presented to parents. Overall, the celebrations were an extension of what happens in the classroom and were opportunities for the parent community to become familiar with the KECS overall approach.

This open sharing of the arts learning transmitted by students to their parents and peers served as a reinforcement of the empowerment aspect for the students. The benefit was a community validation of their knowledge, where students get to demonstrate their content understanding, hard work, and skills development.

The next section will discuss how the Arts Specialist teachers fit within the arts integration model.

Arts Integration and the Arts Specialists

As mentioned in the previous section, at KECS, there were instructors who specifically teach Arts courses: the Arts Specialist instructors. In this section, I discuss the role of the Arts Specialists as it relates to the main theme curricular planning and implementation. I also discuss the perception of Arts Specialists by the other faculty at KECS. The team of four arts specialists at Kahlo represented three disciplines: Visual Art, Dance, and Music. The fourth member and leader of the of the team, the Arts Integration Director, was also a Visual Arts specialist instructor. Examining the role of the arts specialists was integral in understanding how the KECS approach was implemented. The arts specialist instructors were the connective force that kept the KECS arts integration approach viable and sustainable. As Ms. Trainor explained, the arts

specialists are “co-teachers” who are “focused on their strand.” Other teachers described the role of the arts specialists similarly. For example, Ms. Stone noted that the arts specialists are engaged in a “multi-pronged” project in which they are “designing their own curriculums” while also “understanding [the] trajectories” of the collaborative, arts-integrated projects. Mr. Villar described the collaboration:

> Arts Specialists meet with each grade level to plan integrated units to support our . . . classroom. Very often they find a particular project or technique that might fit in with our unit . . . [they] look for opportunities to reinforce what we take on.

As the foundation of the curriculum was based on arts integration as a philosophical approach, the Arts Specialists team was instrumental in guiding understanding among grade level teachers as well as “model[ing] art techniques and integration strategies that support our school approach as an arts integrated campus.” In addition to their own discipline specific courses, and collaborating with grade level teachers for arts integration, the Arts Specialists provided much needed support outside of the classroom, including coordinating field trips, parent events, and showcases.

Arts Specialist instructor Ms. Sazer described her feeling that the arts specialists were “the core of the mission” of the school:

> I feel like we . . . kind of guide teachers with the integration curriculum . . . that’s part of our role here. We also give kids a chance to enjoy arts for art’s sake too . . . we engage them more in the process of art rather than just the product.

Not only were the Arts Specialists important as a team, their team lead played an essential role as well. Ms. Brady described the Arts Integration Director as “the key,” describing their duties as

liaising between the Arts integration team and the grade-level teachers in order to lead the arts integration process.

The arts-integrated, inquiry-based approach taken by KECS privileged the value of process through an arts integration methodology over that of a refined final art product or final artifact. As Ms. Brady noted:

> Our integration is supposed to be deepening the understanding of the arts, and the other curriculum. It's not illustrating it. So in the same way, this project had math and art, but it wasn't about math. You had to use math to get there.

Illustrating this idea of process, Ms. Trainor detailed a lesson she recently completed with her students that linked a Visual Arts lesson on one-point perspective to a math lesson in the grade-level class. Working in collaboration with the Visual Arts specialist instructor, Ms. Trainor and her students "used tools to measure angles, and talked about parallel lines . . . then they [the students] created a 3D sculpture diorama of a math world." Another successful project described by Ms. Hirman, also who was an Arts Specialist, linked photography and poetry to explore and classify the environment within California: "We went out to the different regions, and photographed. [The students] went to the four different climate regions and photographed them, and it was partnered with their poetry." Through this project, students were able to take a multidisciplinary approach, applying the art of poetic writing and the medium of photography to learning of California geography and social studies.

The overall presence of the Arts Specialist instructors reinforced the school's commitment to arts education and also served as a reminder for grade-level instructors to integrate the arts into their lessons. While the Arts Specialists carried the primary responsibility

for arts integration, they consulted regularly with grade-level teachers to identify opportunities for collaboration. In addition, the arts specialists regularly met with students throughout the school year. While these meetings took place on about a six-week cycle due to the size of the school, it did allow each grade level opportunities to meet with the Dance, Visual Art, and Music instructors during each trimester. A vital component of the overall model, the arts specialists seemed to be the anchors and through line connecting students with discipline specific skills learning in the arts. They also served a function of being a bridge for the grade level instructors to use and understand arts integration in a more robust and deeper way then might otherwise occur. Arts integration was not a replacement for discipline specific classes, but worked hand in hand to complement and enhance what students were doing in their grade level classes.

Units, New and Recurring

In order to do large, interconnected units and projects that were Arts integrated across the grade-level and arts specialist teams, a significant amount of planning and co-ordination of efforts was required. At the beginning of the school year, as part of the overall annual planning, the grade level teams met to map out the units and lessons for the school year. These teams also met periodically throughout the school year, which was divided up by trimesters. Part of the appeal of Kahlo Elementary School for the teachers was that they had the opportunity to directly create course material whole cloth, including grade level content, without standardized, leveled textbooks. This was both a boon and a source of tension. One benefit was that instructors could respond directly to the needs of their students, quickly pivoting course content and adjust their teaching approach.

As it related to planning however, the drawback was the significant amount of time and energy required. Additionally, there were limited windows of time to co-ordinate with arts integration specialists. The ideal scenario for annual planning was that preplanned units would be iterated then reused the following academic school year. However, at the time the study was conducted, the decision of creating new units or recycling existing units was not mandatory, but at the discretion of the grade level team and individual teachers. Mr. Villar explained:

> I'd say grade levels they do have certain projects that they seem to return to over and over again, but we . . . have the freedom to . . . stray from that and create our own curriculum.

Mr. Villar explained that often, implementation itself was a significant investment of class time.

> There's always these huge projects that take, you know, weeks, to do . . . sometimes we look at past projects and we say we're going to do this project again, or sometimes, like [the Arts Integration Director] had the . . . idea . . . [then] the whole grade level took [it] in after she suggested it.

Ms. Hirman, arts specialist, also emphasized the issue with longer projects

> There's the dynamic of, you have X amount of hours, and time during the week you meet with the groups, there's also enough flexibility that you can alter and tailor what you're doing in the classroom.

Many factors came into play when a teacher was deciding how to best to integrate the arts. Ms. Trainor had a clear view of what it took when deciding if arts integration was going to be a fit:

> One, it depends on the objective of the lesson; two, how much time do I have for that lesson? Three, what are the needs of the students and how are they going to understand it best?
>
> Another specialist teacher, Ms. Sazer, also spoke on the units changing or altering often:
>
> I would say [that] doing the same thing here happens less than it does at other schools. Like in other schools I've worked at . . . once you're there for two or three years you know the rhythm . . . but here you don't really have. . . . It hasn't happened here yet (for me).

The freedom and benefit that grade level teachers have to pilot new, often untested unit projects also unintentionally results at times in a misalignment of the overall schedule of the arts specialists. This dynamic led to a constant cycle of curricular churn that triggered a react/response approach to new units, rather than a deep cohesive analysis, reflection, and refinement of existing successful units being carried out from school year to school year. There are challenges that occur specifically related to the logistics of implementation.

> The Principal, Dr. Lisa, elaborated on this challenge:
>
> What we're growing towards, which is a challenge for arts integration . . . is we're trying to help the teachers and the specialists to sort of reign in the planning.

The constant logistics and curricular churn is recognized as an existing but avoidable drain on the energy and time resources, which has the effect of hampering the optimal effectiveness of the teaching staff.

Due to the high number of new units every trimester per grade, with the correlating new projects, along with teachers trying to co-ordinate collaboration time together, some projects

became very unwieldy both logistically and practically. The result was unanticipated challenges during the rollout.

Visual arts specialist, Ms. Hirman noted "It becomes challenging when you're reliant . . . you're waiting . . . all these different people [are] involved. It [the project] just sort of grows outward exponentially." Teachers also noted that supplies and tech can be problematic as well.

> And technology, there are so many technological issues. It had nothing to do with the students or the project . . . my time was spent dealing with computer access and media. That was a huge deterrent of me actually teaching students.

Another part of the schoolwide challenge with designing arts integrated units was that there was not a specific requirement or a minimum number of integrated units and lessons required for the grade level teachers to do. This led to grade level teachers either overplanning lessons or relying on the arts specialist teachers for the integration push.

Another dynamic that led to overplanning was that teachers themselves were highly motivated to create new content from scratch. Even though there was an archive of units already completed from previous school year trimesters to choose from. Ms. Selenez who was also part of the curriculum committee detailed further:

> Half of them [the teachers] are choosing to do something else because they are creative. This is the thing about this school. The teachers . . . riff of each other and where we end up is . . . we're designing 10 units instead of looking at the readers/writers trajectory.

In addition to all the grade-level academic content of Science, English, Readers/Writers workshop, Scottish storyline, Social Studies, and Math, the arts integration had to be planned.

However, the administration was cognizant of the freedom that KECS instructors currently had, the impact of it on the instructors' motivation to be totally committed and the resulting artifacts being created evidencing students learning. Connected to the research questions, the time and energy spent by teachers in the area of planning, if re-allocated could have been used to help benefit students in other ways. While teachers found it rewarding if new units were successful, they also inversely found the lessons very inefficient and ineffective for students if the implementation was unsuccessful. This was one part of the model that required further analysis and reformation.

Teacher Agency: Freedom and Latitude

The type of approach that KECS promoted allowed for flexibility in curriculum design and implementation within a series of inquiry based frameworks that could be described as inherently constructivist. There was less adherence to scripted and packaged curriculum and more so reliant on teacher created project-based learning assignments that were designed to lead students to a deeper understanding of the material being covered. Ms. Brady described:

> we try to do some of the same things . . . the teams . . . the grade level teams but . . . we might do the same things but we're going to do it in our own way.

Mr. Villar explained further:

> Start[ing] in week one and then take several weeks to finish. . . . I don't think there's that need for someone to come in and say "How are you using visual arts to teach this language arts lesson? How are you using music to teach this socio-emotional lesson?"

He further noted that the type of teachers that are attracted to working at KECS and who tend to flourish there are

> a certain type of teacher that wants to tailor their curriculum according to their (own) style . . . to their own pedagogy and their own beliefs of what makes an effective learning environment.

Ms. Trainor echoed this sentiment, saying, "because we don't have a set curricula . . . the creativity that innate in most teachers, is allowed to blossom."

That same type of freedom extended to student learning as well. Roderick, an alumni of KECS who was attending the University of Southern California at the time of the interview, elaborated: "I think it comes back to the environment of artistic cultivation and encouragement, and the encouragement to try things and experiment." Ariella Santo, a fifth grade student at the time of the case study interview, concurred, saying, "I like the freedom that they give us to do our own thing." The freedom that the teachers have, kept them energized and provided motivation to continue being innovative and find interesting lessons for students. This is a benefit for students, who in turn, seemed to remain engaged with the classroom learning.

Challenges Faced by Teachers

The reoccurring theme of the challenges faced by teachers during implementation were among the findings that are relevant to answering the research question of "How does an arts-based charter school implement the Different Ways of Knowing and arts integrated curriculum?" The main theme of challenges had several sub themes including the time that instructors have to allocate to actually prepare, the amount and type of resources available, and accountability to implementation, spectrum of understanding of arts integration.

Teacher Preparation Time

KECS grade-level teachers had the responsibility of teaching subject area content including Math, English, Social Studies, Science, and Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013) . The pedagogical model at KECS called for teaching these through a constructivist, inquiry driven, design-based thinking approach that may be arts integrated. However, one of the major challenges mentioned repeatedly was that as this approach was project based, a certain amount of time and preparation was necessary for implementation to be successful and effective. Factors included understanding alignment with "the VAPA standards, the National [arts] standards, and then I have my agenda and then I have integrating the arts, so it's a challenge . . . it's a lot of stuff" (Mr. Villar). Because the school typically did not use prepared curricula or textbooks, teachers also had to acquire and prepare student project materials and supplies. Several teachers noted in their interviews the large amount of time needed to plan a high-quality arts-integrated lesson.

Teachers repeatedly cited a tension between their workloads and the time they had available for planning. For example, Ms. Brady commented, "There is no time to do the work unless you give your own time . . . before and after school . . . that's really tough."

Arts specialist Ms. Hirman concurred, and stated: "[planning] lessons, curriculum . . . [outside] the teaching hours . . . is a full time job. . . . I had to come on Sunday to set up. There's no [other] way."

Similarly, Mr. Villar recalled,

> When I first started working here, teachers would stay until 8-9 p.m. at night and that was not unusual. Three, four nights a week. There was a very long first two years, I was here until 7:30 and 8 p.m. Then I couldn't do it. I just couldn't do it.

Partially the lack of planning time for teachers stemmed from how the school day was structured. With a block schedule, the core academic classes of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Interdisciplinary block (Science/History Social Science) ran from 95-110 minutes. They took up the bulk of the days which allocated for 330 instructional minutes of time between 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. The weekly arts and PE classes were offered in various windows of time throughout the day in a weeks long rotation that depended on the grade level.

Another arts specialist, Ms. Sazer, recalled the how strong the necessity for planning time was and tension caused: "There was this big tension about [grade-level] teachers being in the arts classes, because they didn't have enough planning time." Planning time is limited for both the arts specialists and the grade level teachers. During the shortened day school schedule, which ended at 1:30 pm, Arts planning and collaboration planning with grade level instructors happened.

Beyond planning time is other "behind the scenes" work required to support students' art projects. This "behind the scenes" work also impacted available time. Ms. Hirman described:

> We have hundreds of students at once, doing the same project, depending on the grade level. So a hundred . . . three to four classes. Those materials need to get prepped . . . say visual arts, fourth-grade ceramics . . . that's 85 ceramic figures that have to made, fired, glazed, displayed. So it becomes a bit of a machine.

Arts integrated, constructivist, project-based work is time, labor and energy intensive. This pointed to certain aspects of the model that may not be ideal or easily replicable. While adequate planning time was always an ask in school settings, within such a model, planning time became crucial in order to present arts integration properly.

Resource Limitations

Time was not the only resource that impacted classroom instruction in delivering an arts integrated curriculum. Several other resource limitations came to my attention during the teacher interviews. In this section I will go over other resources that teachers spoke about, including the impact of not having textbooks, the subsequent research/time impact, the amount of faculty support in class, limited contact hours, and the level of faculty understanding around the definition of arts integration and teaching using an arts integrated approach.

Since textbooks are not part of the regular curriculum at KECS, teachers had to take on all the roles in planning that were required to create units and lessons whole cloth. However outside of teachers' individual motivation and capacity to seek out material, KECS did not seem to have an archival dataset or primary source set of material for teachers to utilize while planning. This seemed to result in a significant amount of pressure on KECS teachers as they were responsible for the student experience without having an already pre-planned curriculum to lean on. It became an added pressure as Mr. Villar said, "We don't have textbooks, we don't have a box curriculum. So it up to me to look for these materials out there in the world. It's up to me . . . it's up to me."

Ms. Brady also found searching for material challenging. She emphasized, "We're not masters of creating curriculum. We may be able to execute, but the actual creation of that stuff can be

tough." Teachers noted that having a staff member dedicated to researching materials for teachers would be a helpful resource.

Not having leveled material seemed to impact how effectively students are learning the content.

As Mr. Villar recalled,

> It's difficult finding kid level appropriate reading materials. We're using research from the computer. We're using library books. It's rare that I have a book that's grade level appropriate. . . . It's difficult for [students] to get meaning from what they read using [only] primary source materials.

In a traditional classroom, a standardized textbook serves as a mediating factor to translate and present primary source material in a digestible grade leveled format. Ms. Brady alluded to the positive reaction students displayed on the rare occasions she used a textbook in class: "It's really funny that . . . if you pull out a textbook . . . these kids literally lose their minds." Ms. Brady elaborated that, given a choice between working on a project or working on vocabulary definitions from a textbook, she believed many of her fifth graders would have rather read the textbook because it was a novelty.

Overall, KECS teachers valued the support they did receive from the school, noting that there are a number of support staff on campus with whom they collaborate. Mr. Villar noted,

> Honestly, I feel like the idea of the one person classroom . . . it's always been a myth, right? I'm here and I also have my SPED team, and I also have the intervention team, and I also have the administrative staff. So I do have a large team.

However, given that there is so much needed to adequately support the students, teachers often feel burdened with the weight of that responsibility. Mr. Villar continued, "One person can't meet all the needs, the academic, socio-emotional, fidelity to preparation for the standardized tests, preparing for the arts integrated project. . . . It's impossible for me." The KECS model places a lot, perhaps too much on the teacher to handle. Used as a model the support staff would have to be included as part of the planning.

Accountability

In general, teachers in this study reflected the feeling that even though the base and evolution of the curricular model at KECS was couched in arts integration, there was no real push from administration to hold teachers accountable for using arts integration models in the classroom. Beyond the expectation that they would facilitate celebrations, teachers reported few requirements, noting that there was not even a minimum number of arts integrated projects within the school year or per trimester. At KECS there was no formal policy or curriculum review process in place related to reviewing the type or level of arts integration occurring. Mr. Villar further explained,

> With the Arts [arts-integration component] . . . there isn't anyone who's going around and holding all the classes accountable . . . and part of the reason . . . is because there are already these long term projects that are designed to be Arts-integrated.

Although the administration had not given clear signals regarding the specificity of arts integration requirements, some teachers expressed ideas about what those requirements might be. For example, Ms. Selenez offered:

> If the priorities are arts integration or if one of the priorities is Arts integration. What are the clear expectations? Are we saying there MUST be three, deep arts integrated projects? . . . every trimester . . . one co-planned with the arts specialist?

Ms. Selenez's ideal situation was the administration mandating a set number of co-planned, co-taught lessons, intended to help grade level instructors build capacity by going through the process. A primary benefit of this, she believed, would be to alleviate reliance on the arts specialists to carry the integration parts of the lessons. Even though the teachers support the model and cherish the freedom of planning, if looked at as a model program, this would be another area that would have to be solved if implementing as a framework.

Understanding of Arts Integration

The working definition of arts integration that KECS aimed to follow is the Kennedy Center model (Silverstein & Layne, 2010). Despite, in theory, having defined parameters of the curricular approach, in practice, the overall understanding of Arts Integration as a defined concept and as a pedagogical approach varied widely from staff member to staff member. Factors included discrepancies in the length of time teachers had taught at KECS, the amount of professional development they had received, and their prior experiences with arts-integrated education. The impact of all instructors having disparate levels of understanding was uneven implementation. Lessons that were only categorized as "Arts-supported" were implemented in some classes. In other classes, the grade level teacher relied upon the art specialist to create the arts-integrated opportunities. A smaller group of teachers were implementing true arts-integrated lessons as defined by the Kennedy Center. Robust professional development in this model did occur for a certain cohort of instructors. However, with instructor turnover, only a handful of

those teachers remained at the school at the time of this research. The dynamic of uneven implementation was recognized by the teachers versed in Arts Integration. Ms. Brady talked about the difference:

> The definition of Arts Integration what I was taught is that it's equal weight . . . that it's equal skill level, and quoting from the text to support the theme in your art piece is used to integrate a skill set with art. I need to see evidence.

Various answers were given regarding instructor understanding of arts integration. Ms. Sazer recalled a professional development session where the staff was asked about arts integration "and there were just very different ideas of what Arts integration should be." Ms. Hirman, arts specialist, pointed to a variety of issues related to understanding of arts integration:

> It's all about expectations, and training, and clarity on roles . . . right now, we're dependent on who happens to be invested, and gets it, and wants to do it, and who doesn't.

The training and professional development plays a large part, Ms. Sazer noted, saying "the new teachers that have come in need to be trained . . . but we haven't really done any training. . . . There hasn't been specifically a 'how to plan an arts-integrated lesson'."

To help develop a better understanding of arts integration, ideally grade level teachers would be present in the arts specialist rooms during class time when their grade level students rotate in. However, in practice, due to the shortage of planning and prep time, most grade level teachers used that window of time as a prep time. Ms. Sazer elaborated,

> it was expressed to me . . . as the norm . . . that teachers would be in here and participating . . . that doesn't always happen. To be honest, the few teachers who do, that changes everything with the kids.

One participant noted that the intention of the administration was to encourage grade-level teachers to participate in the arts specialist classes as part of the ongoing professional development around arts integration. The uneven understanding and lack of consistent professional development for the staff, lead to teachers using arts integration in a scattershot manner. This in turn is not the best experience for students to truly learn using the approach. The original curriculum DWOK which had material was no longer in use and had evolved beyond the first usage.

DWOK: Development and Evolution of Arts Integration at KECS

A significant finding is that a transition of the pedagogical approach has taken place. The overall curricular framework appears to have shifted away from the Different Ways of Knowing curriculum, specifically, to a more generally theoretical arts integrated informed approach bounded by a constructivist framework. As Ms. Sazer, one of the arts specialists explained,

> one of the things I get the sense of . . . there was a curriculum called DWOK..there was someone that was the DWOK co-ordinator..and the approach ..evolved into less DWOK, but arts integration and constructivism.

The loss of institutional memory via attrition, the fading influence of DWOK in education, coupled with natural transitions of leadership over the course of over a decade led to the adoption of other, complementary models, including Scottish Storyline and Readers/Writers workshop. However, the arts specialists have been retained and have a foundational curricular presence.

Early in the history of KECS teachers, DWOK was the primary source material for curriculum and teaching approach through the arts. Teachers who were introduced to DWOK at that time used it mostly as the set curriculum it was. However other teachers saw it differently. Mr. Villar detailed the shift that occurred for him:

> When I was introduced to DWOK, it was . . . a series of project, focus areas, and learning goals. A set curriculum. When my grade level team changed, I was paired with some teachers who had been at KECS longer . . . and they looked at DWOK as a framework, a curricular approach, and a philosophy.

Teachers who were part of the original DWOK cohort had already gone through the stage of learning the methodology using the primary source DWOK materials. Those materials were used as "training wheels" of sorts. The teachers grew in their abilities and understanding of DWOK and became less reliant on using the pre-planned, boxed curriculum and more adept at building new material based on the approach. The incoming cohort of new teachers were at the beginning of the cycle. The first cohort of teachers became the content specialists and, as Mr. Villar described, "They were encouraging NEW projects and NEW ideas but based on that same inquiry and constructivist base." Over time a shift occurred, Mr. Villar explains further:

> This shift was . . . it went from being a very specific targeted, this is the curriculum we use . . . to this is an approach we use. It's the (arts-integrated) approach and the philosophy that we are left with, without the specific curriculum.

The group of teachers at the time of the study did not have background training or historical institutional knowledge of the original DWOK curriculum materials. Mr. Villar continued:

> It's possible the newer teachers are doing elements of DWOK, but they don't know it's DWOK . . . but they might still be doing inquiry-based lessons, they might still be doing arts integrated strategy.

The evolution was perfectly described by the experience of Ms. Trainor, who explained that when she first started working at KECS in 2018, her two mentor teachers walked her through how they applied DWOK, their interpretation of the framework, and the types of lessons they created. The message to her was, "This is how we interpret it, but don't feel pressured to do it our way. You can use your own style; we have our own style." The strength of the original DWOK approach was so effective that founding parents cited the teaching pedagogy as the reason for choosing to enroll their children at the school.

Even though the DWOK approach was part of KECS at the beginning of the school's history, 10 years later it had evolved into something else. The core grounding in a child centered Progressive education philosophy that incorporated Arts Integration remained relevant current as a main strand of influence.

Research Question 2: Perceived Challenges, Benefits, and Opportunities for KECS Students

With the second question I sought to gain insight to what types of outcomes are being observed. What skillsets are students developing and what exactly do parents, administrators and teachers see happening with students.

In this section I present various responses of parents, administrators, and teachers as it affected their own children/students. The answers are presented with each group speaking about challenges and benefits in their respective sections in order of parents first, administrators/ teachers next, then founding parents/student for longitudinal data. Regarding the student voices

and data collection, even though student data collection in the form of interviews did occur, because of the age of the students, and perhaps the trust level, interview answers, in general, were very brief, so the inclusion of student voices is present throughout to support emergent data, instead of having a separate section.

Parent Responses

The group of parents who participated in the case study and interviewed were not easily accustomed to speaking about any possible challenges that their children faced. The interview sessions with the parents yielded more positive responses than negative responses. There seemed to be a palpable hesitancy to be critical of KECS. There was an overall pattern in parent interviews that responses were overwhelmingly positive in speaking to challenges until very late in the interview sessions. There may have been an element of trust building necessary. Additionally, parents may have been willing to have a generally lenient viewpoint towards the school in general, because of the overwhelming benefits they perceived their child was getting from attending the school.

Perceived Challenges

When asked about the challenges, the parents' responses trended towards the positive, as the school and the development of their children were closely linked. For example, Kalina Zara, parent of a fourth-grader, Selina Malinez responded: "I don't see so many challenges . . . as far as the education . . . is concerned." Similarly, Celia Bustos affirmed about her daughter, fifth-grader Ariella Santo: "I know it sounds too good to be true . . . she's a good student, she struggled a little bit with math . . . but she still scored good on the test." Judy Elby, parent of

Shawn, answered, “I don’t really care so much about some particular kid’s behavior or some small hiccup with administration. I support the whole arts-integrated mentality.”

Lack of Diversity. One parent, William Bonney, who was African American, did point out some issues that came up for him and his son, a fifth grader at the time of the interview. There was an incident that involved racially motivated name calling on the playground. The school administrators were effective in taking care of it. Relaying the incident William offered,

> There were a few bullies. I heard kids, little white kids, running around saying, “We’re the white gang,” and stuff like that, and they had formed their little clique.

William insisted that,

> We’re not going to tolerate it. . . . [I told the principal,] “I’ll pull my son out right now if you guys don’t address the issue.” And with the bullying thing . . . I talked to the teacher about it, and they got on it. I liked their intervention, how they handled it.

William also astutely pointed out that there was a significant lack of Black teachers and staff at the school:

> Don’t see a lot of diversity in the teachers there. That’s the one thing that really kind of bugs me a bit. The school is diverse . . . but there aren’t any Black teachers at the school. There aren’t any at all. . . . I would like to know why there’s not one. At least one. There needs to be more diversity.

He further elaborated,

> It was challenging to notice a lack of diversity in the teachers, in the system itself. Not only the teachers, the counselors, the staff. Period. It was very challenging to walk in that school and not see people that I felt like I could relate to.

Both William and his son experienced a lack of visibility on campus. His son wasn't seeing himself reflected in the teachers that are in front of him. As there are Latinx teachers at the school, the Latinx students can see a reflection of themselves in the teaching staff. The KECS application for charter renewal showed that in the year 2017, the ethnic percentages were 46.2% White, 36.3% Hispanic, 3.4% African American, 1.7% Asian, 1.0% Filipino, and 11.3% multiple.

Supportive Environment. Regarding challenges in regards to the learning, William pointed out a perceived drawback with encountering an arts integrated methodology early on in schooling. He relayed that he makes it a point to explain to his son "there ain't going to be no hand clapping in high school." He understands and wanted his fifth-grade son to understand that not all learning will be presented in the same way it is at KECS. In the older grades, middle school or high school, learning will be presented in a completely different way.

Although not a parent, but a young adult who was a former student, Roderick, agreed with the general sentiment about KECS,

> I think because it is such a collaborative and supportive environment, there is a danger in kids becoming so used to it and feeling so safe within it that they are not prepared for the rejection that comes with the outside world.

Similarly, the lenient approach to student behavior at KECS which is a reflection based, student centered model grounded in Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013) and positive affirmations, left some parents with a desire for a more conservative approach. Parent Judy Elby said,

> The only challenge that I think I've seen is when it comes to maybe discipline . . . styles, I'm a little bit more traditional. Like I've told my son, you've got off really easy . . . or something like that. I wouldn't mind more strict discipline.

Leaving the School. Of course, the arts integrated and project based inquiry model wasn't an ideal fit for all students. Fifth-grade parent Judy Elby noted that "the reason why parents usually leave is because their child in particular, even though they love the school, their child in particular needed more structure."

The child's own temperament may affect the response to the environment, especially if a child was previously in a more regimented and traditional schooling environment. All the factors reflect how engaged the child is and if they are to be able to get the most out of the curricular approach. Former KECS parent, Carla, also pointed out:

> Some parents left because (teachers) weren't correcting spelling. I love my child . . . he's got a great imagination . . . but could you please help him with his spelling and his handwriting, because it's scribble.

Carla pointed out, however:

> But I realized he was thriving as a result of that . . . once you start to mandate red marks and X's and things like that, it starts to undermine (students) ability to be their confident selves, and expressing themselves.

Former KECS parent, Sharon, added: "Some parents left the school because there wasn't homework. And they wanted more homework for their kids."

Teacher Influence. In any school, the influence of teachers plays a large role in the experience of students. Jerri, parent of Zane and Arrika, made the point that because of the depth

and interconnected nature of the lessons and integrated projects, that teachers at the school have to be very skilled and extremely adept to keep students interested: “If you don’t have that . . . that structure . . . the teacher that can bridge it . . . than that whole process kind of fails, because NO ONE’s interested in doing it.”

Her main concern at KECS was how teachers were hired. The school experienced teacher turnover at a rate not unusual for charter schools, which is to say, fairly high. However, she pointed out that because the elementary grades rely on a single teacher, if proper vetting of skillset hasn’t occurred, and if a teacher is unprepared for KECS, “It’s sad for that one class, that whole population kind of is sacrificed because, you know, this one person couldn’t do what they were hired to do, and because it’s new!” Although teacher selection is important in any institution, with such a specialized curricular approach, unique environment, and age of the students, the impacts of a subpar instructor is outsized.

Perceived Benefits

At KECS there seemed to be an almost campus wide aversion to students being assigned homework in the traditional sense. Certainly, the parents interviewed for this case study appreciated the lack of homework as a benefit. For teachers new to KECS, it is a bit of a cultural adjustment to not give out homework. The theoretical implication is that KECS represents an opportunity for the child to develop their individuality. The idea of seemingly arbitrary institutional norms and expectations like homework, that come freighted with baggage and subsequent value judgement that affect the child, is one that many parents were aware of, may have experienced, and have internalized.

Cultivating Focus. Since much of the work at KECS is project based and takes place during class time, instead of relying on homework, fifth-grade parent Judy Elby feels her son has greatly benefitted. She feels her son has cultivated a level of creative focus and singular intensive absorption in the work at hand that he did not have prior. Even though this is a lengthy quote, I believe it pertinent and relevant to quote in whole.

> But the part I attribute to KECS is that when he does art for himself, it's never just a drawing or a prescribed craft with set materials and output. There's a story being told. There's a world he finds himself in. There may be a mix of mediums, from paint to glue and tape and scissors. He gets very involved and lost in whatever he is doing. Afterwards, he critiques himself, what he likes or what he didn't do well. This is the only time I see him intently focused, other than screen time. But the screen time focus is the opposite type of fixation—it is an outer force reaching in and nabbing (his) senses and attention as soon as the eyeballs lock on screen. Focus on his art activities, however, is a focus and attention he puts out from within himself. And though his only child status and home life contributes, I believe it's the effects of the arts integration approach I'm seeing as well.

Kalina Zara, fourth grade parent, similarly pointed to the effectiveness of the overall curricular approach and how her daughter is really learning: "This doesn't feel like work for them. I don't even know that she's realizing how much she's growing and learning."

Reading. Another parent, Celia Bustos, who is a teacher at a public district school, expressed her surprise at how quickly her daughter was progressing in comparison to other similar grade level students at the public district school despite the lack of homework, textbooks, leveled readers, flash cards, or other reading aids:

> She was already reading! And I was like how is she already reading? Like I'm not even helping her . . . and there's no homework so I was like . . . she's reading and that was like. . . . Okay! She's reading!

William Bonnie, parent of Bobby also observed that "Bobby became a better reader. The Kahlo curriculum helps the slower [students] to gain momentum in reading." Moreover, William stated, because of KECS, Bobby "has shown confidence and is a leader."

Judy Elby expressed that she feels her son and other students have the opportunity to be empowered and guide their own instruction because the integrated approach is broad in scope. She elaborated:

> Strict academics can come at any point in time . . . what they're going through here . . . is a cross discipline of the subjects . . . there's integration and collaboration . . . there's a review and a critique of what they did. . . . All the stuff, to me, is creating a road map in their brain. That is what I consider a transferable skill.

Empathy. Jerri expressed that the curriculum is helping her children and other KECS children to accept who they are individually, develop empathy for each other, have a general socio-political awareness and overall emotional maturity. As a result, she found that both of her children have a level of awareness and discourse around current events. Speaking of her daughter, she said: "She's exhibiting a deep understanding of issues affecting people and society, not just because of her age, but a type of empathetic maturity you know." Jerri described this "empathetic maturity" as an ability to connect ideas across and through time, showing an understanding of the past, connecting to the present and on into the future, that usually comes with age and maturity.

Another parent, Kalina, also mentioned that her daughter developed a sense of the historicity of events and connecting it to current times:

> There's certain things that . . . historical things where she'll say, "Oh, mom, this [historical event] happened at this time." . . . She'll want to talk about it. That's fascinating to me, because I would've never wanted to talk about [events] more when I got out of school. You know?

Jerri specifically mentions to a curricular unit at KECS that introduces students to Spanish mission era California and subsequent impacts on the Native Americans from that time.

She feels that KECS helped her daughter to develop divergent thinking and an ability to think critically. She says her daughter is questioning of everything and add that her daughter describes the KECS as "freeing":

> Because it's so free, I think Arrika was emboldened . . . she will say what she wants to say. I feel like it's the confidence, because you're seen as an individual. So I feel like Arrika, her molding became better here, because it just like confirmed who she is. "I am this way" So I'm really appreciative of that.

Similarly, Kalina noted that her daughter, Selina, is becoming comfortable in speaking out: "I see her express herself really articulately. I think emotionally she's grown lot."

Student Outlook. Jerri also conveyed that her children have strong positive feelings towards KECS:

> Both the children actually love school. Love going to school and being a part of the school. Zane loves the music teacher and loves the visual arts teachers.

William explained there was a social and soft skills aspect to how Bobby was developing at KECS:

> He's learned how to deal the people and how to live in this world, through diversity. . . . He gets along well with everybody. He has White friends, Black friends, Mexican friends, Asian friends. Everybody.

William continued:

> This school has a positive effect on [Bobby's] learning outlook. All of his teachers have been great at the school. That school has been great. They always meet our needs in a timely manner. So I will praise them for that forever . . . they're there for me, us . . . and they know my son, genuinely.

He enjoyed the environment at the school. Bobby has had the benefit of confirmation and affirmation coming from the school that the arts and learning through the arts, is a valid way of learning and validation. William felt that his son was getting a unique experience. He expressed that many people can recall a pivotal experience where a teacher gave a positive or supportive comment that was transformative. William expressed that everyday at KECS, the child's dreams and hopes are affirmed and the experience of school is there to support them. Bobby's outlook and attitude and that of his peers, towards school were vastly different than Williams's own schooling experience:

> They are so different from when I grew up . . . how they see things. . . . They're really focused and tuned into life. . . . Their mind and the technology. They're going to do some really incredible things. . . . He loves all his teachers.

Jerri affirmed that her son Zane, was also flourishing in the environment,

> He gets a lot of his power from being here [at KECS]. And I feel a lot more of that is like, out now, because of his new involvement with the band and being able to show what he can do outside of classroom stuff.

Fifth grade student, Ariella Santo, echoed that sentiment, and showed an basic understanding of the teaching approach being utilized:

> It makes me feel happy because I'm not going to spend my day at school coping, like quotes from textbooks, like no, we're going to inspire it off of art . . . and we're going to make something fun out of it, using some type of art form.

Similarly, fourth grade student Selena Malinez expressed her feeling toward the school: "I like the way that they teach and how I learn."

Choice. A common thread in all the parent interviews was a marked and celebrated difference between parents' experience of schooling and the experience their children were having at KECS. The majority of the parents felt because of earlier negative personal school experiences, that they wanted a more child centered schooling framework for their own children. Judy noted that she could "see that in this school, you don't just end up there. The parents who choose the school, they choose it because of very specific similar ideals." As a result, this dynamic created a very close knit group of parents and children who have a shared experience and alignment in values that created a community of support and learning outside of the school. Judy pointed out that is an unplanned benefit of her child attending KECS:

> Because that's part of learning and I love his friends, and his friends' parents, and that's a big part of school too . . . these kids are on the same wavelength, the same level still, and they are as affectionate as they should be without reservation.

Teacher Responses

The KECS approach was couched in inquiry- and project-based lessons. Embedded in the culture of the school was a student-centered philosophy that compared to traditional, conventional learning environments, seemed to privilege the student with certain freedoms. The very attributes that are strengths of the curricular model, were also detrimental. In this section the data on KECS teachers discussing those challenges for students are presented.

Overwhelming Freedom

An inquiry-based model of teaching and learning provides students avenues of exploring and testing ideas. KECS teachers have seen both the benefits and the challenges of how such an open-ended approach can be simultaneously liberating to some students while the relative freedom of self-directed learning also hinders other students from being fully engaged. The teachers interviewed spoke seeing this dynamic occur within their classrooms. Mr. Villar pointed this out while relaying various student challenges:

> Because of the workshop/lab school model, everything the school does . . . students are encouraged to make mistakes and reflect on it. However, for students, that is very anxiety inducing. Students feel they do a significant amount of work in a project and then it doesn't work. [They think] I can't solve the math problem; I've been trying to write this story and I can't. And starting over from scratch is difficult at that point, even though that is what the model calls for.

Ms. Brady concurred in her interview, explaining that the learning approach "can get overwhelming" for students. Due to the iterative qualities of project-based learning, the model

has a lack of an immediate reward: “I don’t give back a ton of worksheets with a happy face on it.”

Layering in the element of arts-integration in some cases only serves to make an already seemingly long and opaque learning approach even more difficult to handle. For some students the KECS model may not be an ideal fit for where that child is developmentally or temperamentally, at that time. The approach can be off-putting to some students, as Mr. Villar elucidated:

> I’ve seen it . . . they’re in the minority but I see the kids who just don’t want to dance or do music, who just don’t want to do art, and they feel (like) “so I don’t do this. . . . I just want to read. . . . I want to play [video games].”

For young students only in fourth and fifth grade, the academic culture at KECS can appear overly unstructured, especially if a student has transferred from a traditionally structured school.

Students Learning How to Negotiate

The student freedom the KECS academic culture engenders had another double-edged consequence. KECS had a discipline policy that encouraged students to reflect and dialogue in response to any incidents. For a fourth or fifth grader who was still developing emotional controls, apart from the socio-emotional curriculum strategies of Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013) , having a seemingly lenient behavior policy could have been unclear to for students to navigate, especially for student who may have responded better to more traditional rules and consequences. Although the idea was to encourage students develop self-regulation, the unintended short term effect for many students and most teachers was the presence of being distracted from learning during class time. Many teachers pointed out an inordinate amount of

time was spent remediating behaviors. As a result, class time for instruction was often impacted and reduced. Instructor Ms. Hirman shared in her interview: "The thing that frustrates me the most here is during direct instruction, not getting 10 minutes of solid focus(ed) time." Re-enforcing that point, Mr. Villar stated, "[Students] have a lot of freedom; with freedom they tend to play around a little bit."

A beneficial aspect to this particular challenge was that fourth and fifth grade students were becoming empowered, critically thinking about behaviors and consequences towards themselves and others, and learning to negotiate. As multiple teachers shared in their interviews, many things, even school policies, and classroom expectations were apt to be questioned by students. Mr. Villar rhetorically mused: "Everything is up for discussion. Is this empowered or entitled? . . . You see that type of negotiation schoolwide." Ms. Trainor also shared a common student refrain is "Do I have to do it?" surmising that at KECS:

> There's a level of questioning and critical thinking that could come across as defiant. . . . But I have to think about what is this child trying to communicate to me? . . . Nervous? Unease? Upset she had to come to school?

Bringing up the school motto students were encouraged to remember—*You Are My Other Me*—Ms. Trainor explained,

> That's when [the school's concept of] *you are my other me* helps . . . [it] reminds me like this child is just a different version of me, and I'm going to honor her the way I want to be honored.

Expression or Entitlement

However, the larger sentiment in the teacher interviews was clear; although the intent for a lenient discipline policy was to cultivate a student-centered environment, the optics, messaging and practical management was a concern. From classroom to classroom there were different expectations regarding the borders and limitations of student behavior and therefore felt inconsistent. Mr. Villar pointed out:

> Unclear expectations from the admin on how to handle student discipline leads to students wondering, "what am I allowed to do or not do?" If the teachers aren't clear, how are the kids going to know what our expectations are?

Ms. Hirman emphasized: "First year I taught here, I thought I couldn't say the word no . . . and I wasn't the first person to think that you're not allowed to say no." Another teacher, Ms. Brady, relayed an anecdote about a student rolling on the floor. When asked to stop, the student refused and continued rolling on the floor. Ms. Brady reflected:

> This is the only place I have ever worked where kids are extremely combative. . . . I was like, "What do I do?" because there's no traditional consequences here and that was so foreign to me . . . they just write reflections. They just write reflections—that is the only tool. . . . It's hard for me to deal with the disrespect that we accept here because . . . their self expression or whatever. . . . The entitlement is a huge thing here.

This sentiment was echoed by Mr. Stallen, who said that he understood how students who transfer in to KECS and who may come from a more structured, hierarchical schooling and family background, could find it difficult to adjust to the open model at KECS: "Certain students

need more structure. Also, students who may need more of a structured teaching/learning environment may not get that at KECS."

Academic Learning Challenges

The whole intent of integrating the arts, and using the project- and inquiry-based methods was to supplement and strengthen the levels of student understanding in academic subjects like math, English, and science. Like all schools, KECS, had academic benchmarks to hit, that are reported to the district for accreditation. Dr. Lisa spoke to the overall performance of various students:

> What I do see with summative data is our students tend to perform better than the average across the state. . . . The achievement gap right now is, we have a large gap with our Latino students, our special ed[education] students, and technically our ELs [English Learners] . . . our ELs are underperforming.

Referring specifically to the arts integrated, project-based approach, Dr. Lisa specifically pointed out, "What I think is lacking is more strength and rigor . . . within the project's artifacts." Addressing criticisms regarding arts integration as an instructional model, she stated:

> One of the downsides . . . is people think [of] arts and they think it's not rigorous enough. I think one of the challenges is questions around critical thinking and what is rigor and how is that defined here? I think our students are good at critical thinking, I think they're good at rigor in the sense of approaching problems, but our FRLs (students on Free and Reduced lunch) and ELs need more tools in literacy, for sure.

Ms. Brady also pointed out that the students were great readers and writers in general due to the emphasis on writing and critical thinking. However, grammar and structure were lacking,

because there wasn't a strong emphasis on technical elements of English structure. She pointed out additional effects of the non-traditional schooling:

> I feel like we're living in this utopian school setting, and then (students) go to another (grade/school) level, and they have a lot of issues . . . a lot of kids who came from here . . . were destroyed when they moved on to like Royal Magnet Middle School . . . and they got hours of homework and they just did not know what to do with themselves.

She continued:

> The experience of the kids . . . you know they have a good time, but whether or not they're learning the material[?] . . . and so a huge situation in fifth grade is like "Oh my . . . we're about to hit sixth grade and we don't know any of this," and it's like a reality moment.

Ms. Brady pointed out that regarding the length of project-based lessons that students are assigned,

> It's hard for them to stay focused on the task. They get lost in the process . . . the final task gets muddled in the end . . . so because yeah, they're kids, so at the same time this still can get overwhelming for them.

Unique Physical Environment

Even though the research question posed referred to the challenges students may face with the curriculum, during the teachers' interviews, the topic of the open layout of the school came up frequently without any prompting. At KECS, the actual learning environment was considered as influential on the child's experience as the instruction itself. The whole school was uniquely housed in an open warehouse space that was approximately 39,307 square feet. With

floating dividers and large repurposed freight containers forming parts of rooms, walkways, and other spaces, there were no doors or windows to open or close. The only purpose built formal rooms relating to instruction were the dance and music studios. Classrooms were held in the spaces that almost flow into each other, with no walls to bound the class session areas. The dynamic of the open concept in the physical space mirrored the dynamic of the curriculum being open, project based, and collaborative.

A consequence of the open layout was that the school itself and the classrooms spaces were very loud. Students in designated grade spaces that were adjacent to each other could be heard clearly. Since the space was open without a formal ceiling, the noise echoes and bounces, as constant background drone punctuated by students' laughter, students talking, teachers talking and the occasional student outburst. It was over this constant noise that students had to concentrate and teachers struggled to be heard. As a consequence, learning tasks and teaching levels were affected. In her interview, Mr. Stallen pointed out:

> In here the noise levels are a little high. . . . I think the challenge is focus, especially with behavioral issues when kids need an emotional break, and they transition from a quiet space to chaos, and there's kids running around, and there's noise.

Ms. Trainor noted one strategy she used to control the noise in the space: "so, I'm . . . aware of the noise level that my class is making and timing the lessons so we don't interrupt the lessons of others." While Ms. Sazer reflected that:

> They're so used to noise here, it's hard [for students] to come into a quiet room I think . . . noise here is a big issue, and that escalates a lot of behaviors . . . it overstimulates some students . . . feeling like you're in this big open space.

Ms. Hirman emphasized just how much the sound issue affected her instruction:

> The thing I've learned over time is that there's no accounting for that sound issue. Because I started to realize this year, of course they [the students] think it's okay to talk. They can't really hear me; they hear everyone else. Why wouldn't they be able to chat? I don't feel like there's a true sense of . . . where does the line end of your kids [being loud] and the sound? In my room in particular, transition times [are very loud]. There's moments, especially rainy days or when there's an auditorium event or if there's a resident artist running a blender. . . . I can't. The kids are literally banging on the walls outside the classroom, jumping in, running out, that's a lot of extra, to then [be expected] to create an environment . . . the sound, to me, is first and foremost, the issue.

Bobby, a fifth-grade student, when asked about the challenge of noise at the school comments, said that he doesn't notice the sound because, "I think we're the loud ones" in his class. Mr. Villar explained and summed up the sentiment:

> It's loud and that constant noise makes it difficult for kids to self-regulate. Their little brains get overwhelmed with stimuli. They're constantly excited, constantly hyped up. That's tough from a management perspective. It's tough from a procedural, systems, and operations standpoint.

Teachers Discussing Student Benefits

Overall, the teachers and administrators pointed towards many benefits for students. These included high levels of student engagement, high levels of co-operation during groupwork, creativity, imagination, high levels of inquiry, and students evidencing critical thinking. Students developed the freedom to be empowered and have discussions. The project-based units helped

students work together and create comradery and bonds. At KECS, teacher placements were rotations where the teachers moved with the students in grade levels.

Ms. Brady pointed out that students were very motivated to be in school and do the work in classes:

> They're more motivated in terms of problem solving. They're really at good problem solving and creating . . . thinking creatively . . . like I always say give a KECS kid a toilet paper roll and a pencil and they can MacGyver you out of a situation. Like they can make anything out of tape and a piece of cardboard.

Mr. Villar pointed out that while predetermined curriculum pacing is the demand in traditional school, at KECS, students' needs and interest drove the pace and content:

> The biggest difference I've seen . . . was that kids were . . . they seemed just this much more empowered, and I think you [can] also say entitled. . . . This curriculum appeals, I think, to parents and children who maybe weren't successful in a classroom where the rigor and the expectations for their learning was decided somewhere outside the classroom.

For students who fall into the English Language learner (EL) category, the teaching at KECS helped students to be validated and grow since the emphasis was based less on test scores and technical aspects of grammar and more emphasis to the contribution of the student working together with their peers. As Mr. Villar said,

> English Language Learner students are in an environment where they feel normalized in sharing their ideas, everyone is encouraged to work with teams. Everyone's encouraged

> to work with partners. We try and stress that the kids be welcoming and inclusive towards on another . . . that's a big push

Ms. Hirman relayed an anecdote regarding a student who had transferred to KECS from a traditional public school. She had watched him slowly start to open up, with certain aspects of his classwork, a certain project he was working on, becoming more developed.

> I want to cry every time he comes to talk to me about it. . . . He wants me to know if [the art and project] is working on this level. Which is so invested for him. . . . I would always check for understanding . . . but I just see a level of engagement right now that I'm really excited to see. He's really happy. I did see kids that maybe were penalized in a traditional public school system. . . . I do see them breathe much easier here. I do see them happier; I do see that they're more relaxed.

Ms. Hirman credited Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013) in helping students working to resolve issues: "I'm watching third graders work out their drama on their own, and I'm just kind of watching." She said that over time, year over year, the students do show signs of emotional growth and maturity. "So I don't know if it always pays off, one year to the next, but you start to see that growth." When asked how much of that is attributed to natural growth and age and how much of that is attributed to the school, Ms. Hirman said,

> I attributed it all 100% to the school . . . as I am in other schools, I don't see that kind of communication, or ways of resolving differences at all. That's not happening.

Ariella Santos, a fifth-grade student who had been at the school since kindergarten, spoke about her feelings towards KECS and the growth she had seen in herself,

> My poem was about what I'm going to miss from KECS . . . because it has made me stronger and umm, braver and smarter than before when I first started attending.

Founding Families

This section presents the voices of two parents whose children attended KECS close to the founding of school early on in its history as well as that of one young teenage alumnus. Parents Sharon Lane and Carla Griffith were interviewed and then subsequently Carla's teen-aged son, Roderick, was interviewed. Sharon's teen-aged daughter Samantha was not interviewed, but was mentioned in the parent responses. Roderick, at the time of the interview, was graduating high school, had been accepted to college and was planning on starting in the upcoming fall semester. The inclusion of these voices was fortuitous, as KECS was celebrating its 10th year anniversary at the time I was conducting my research. A series of commemorative gatherings, including a founding families' all school reunion, provided the opportunity to include these voices that represent a longitudinal perspective.

Opportunities for Students

According to the founding families, one of the practical opportunities graduating KECS students have was that KECS was positioned as a feeder school for a local LAUSD magnet school with a strong film and media focus. Roderick was an KECS student who had attended William N. Royal Middle School magnet after graduating KECS.

Carla relays that there was a moment when her son and the first cohort of KECS students tracked into Royal Magnet,

> The feedback from the magnet school teachers for the Kahlo cohort . . . was that the Kahlo kids were bringing the levels of discussion up by 10 notches in terms of critical

> thinking and class discussion and leadership in a way that those teachers had never seen before.

Sharon emphasized "Our kids were on the leadership counsel" at the high school.

Empathy, Fortitude and Self Confidence

During the initial founding of KECS, the changed location three times. Accordingly, the founding group of students at Kahlo endured those changes which acted as a bonding experience for that initial group. Attending the magnet school was the first time the former KECS students were "out of the bubble." As Carla described: "They were in a bubble being at Kahlo . . . so maybe all of those changes, campus changes, teacher turnover, all the turmoil . . . maybe it did help them become stronger kids." She mentioned a bullying incident at Royal Elementary in which her son confronted the other student and handled it in a very mature way:

> That is a demonstration I think of also what Kahlo did for him in terms of character building, being aware of other people. In terms of empathy, in terms of standing up for yourself."

Carla's son Roderick explained the influence of KECS on his development:

> The lessons when it came to how our behavior and we present ourselves to the world, stuck more than (anything). . . . I can't remember any of my lessons from the one year I spent in private school.

Roderick went on to describe how one of his KECS teachers helped to guide his behavior:

> She took the time to . . . talk to me about why and what I was doing was disruptive . . . or why what I was doing wasn't helpful to our learning as a whole . . . and involved me more in that way which made me reflect on it more and remember it more long term.

Carla made a similar comment about the perceived effectiveness and long-term benefits regarding the conflict resolution strategies used at KECS, particularly Cool Tools (UCLA Lab School, n.d.; Miller, 2013).

> I felt like that was something that embedded empathy in our children. . . . I believe that's something that sets the kids that went to Kahlo apart, the kids that embraced the Cool Tools, is that they have a higher degree of empathy.

Roderick noted that his KECS schooling experience, "allowed me to broaden my thinking, and also be a lot more confident in my thinking and in sharing my thoughts." He further added:

> KECS gave [me] the confidence to try different things, explore different types of art, feel free to express your thoughts and what's on your mind. . . . I think the freedom of expression and the encouragement of expression, definitely helped me.

Roderick said there was a consistent message that reinforced encouragement and to be open to new experiences:

> My parents and the school messaged that I'm capable of doing anything I want to as long as I'm willing to fight for it. . . . I think it comes back to the environment of artistic cultivation and encouragement . . . the environment of encouragement to try things and to experiment and really force yourself to take the next step . . . and to step out of your boundaries. . . . I always had a space where I didn't have to or I didn't even consider any fear of what I was trying or what I was going to do next.

The progressive curricular elements, a supportive environment, and encouraging teachers, were all essential ingredients in helping Roderick and other students to feel confident about schooling:

> Self-reflection and being in a space where you are encouraged to make mistakes . . . being able to try new things without fear of judgement . . . being encouraged to try new things at such a young age made me confident, and helped me deal with perceiving my world and understanding things through art.

Carla's interview answers affirmed Roderick's comment,

> Student empowerment was a very big piece of Kahlo Elementary Charter School. And empowerment in the way that they were encouraging students to be confident in their ideas, and not to edit themselves, and second guess themselves.

Both Sharon and Carla relayed how their children opened up in response to the level of support from the teachers and their own peers. Sharon said her daughter Samantha was very closed off from her previous public school experience and went from: “Clinically shy . . . very quiet, but . . . she believed in the teachers. The teachers supported her, and so it allowed her to be able to be shy, but still thrive.”

Carla spoke about Roderick's development:

> He really came into his own at KECS. . . . Something that Kahlo did was allow him to nurture his ability to make disparate connections in life . . . I think the wonderful thing about Kahlo as that the imagination was nurtured, particularly by the teachers at the lower grade.

When the first group of KECS students went to the Royal Elementary Magnet Program, they were all top performers. As Carla stated, "They may not have perfect grammar, but they were the leaders and the top of the class."

Redefining the Foundation

Sharon succinctly connected the underlying thematic philosophy of the KECS parent founders to the implementation and current iteration of the curriculum. This was an articulation of the same reason why many of the parents did not voice many "challenges" regarding the school, the curriculum, and their child's experience. The parents all had a similar attitude and set of ideas regarding what values they held as important regarding schooling. As Sharon stated:

> You're redefining what the foundation of the student is, right . . . confidence, creative thinking, all those things for us we agreed was the first building blocks, right? All the other things could come later.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the data was presented and analyzed with emerging themes and subsequent findings that examined the implementation of an arts integrated curriculum to explore the connection of theory of practice and to understand the benefits, challenges and opportunities that school stakeholders identified for a group of Black and Latinx students enrolled at an urban public charter school experiencing the arts integrated curriculum. The findings were positioned within the themes of understanding how the Different Ways of Knowing curriculum transformed over time, chronicling student growth, and gathering evidence on how to address the arts education equity gap in California charter schools.

Findings that were identified for the curriculum were a transition from Different Ways of Knowing as a pedagogical foundation to a broader in scope arts integrated approach, that provided a high value, engaging constructivist, project based learning opportunities for students. Arts integration as a grade level teaching strategy is highly complimented by concurrent separate visual

and performing arts class within the school day. There were specific arts integration implementation challenges that teachers have including time, lack of primary sources, and general understanding and training of arts integration as a theory and practical approach. Student facing findings as reported by parents and administrators identified paired benefits and challenges including fostering creativity and student choice versus entitlement, personal connection and highly supportive student focused culture versus the transferability of the approach, and student development of empathy versus the lack of diversity among the teaching staff. The data showed a very strong support and appreciation from the entire school community, parents, teachers, and students for the alternative methodology and opportunity to learn and appreciate schooling in a different way that was fundamentally opposite a conventional schooling model. For participant parents this fundamental difference is why they chose enroll their Black and Latinx children, so that they have a chance for a more enriching schooling experience.

The research found that in order to implement a highly effective arts integration model across the entire school, a significant amount of ongoing consistent professional development would be required. The research also found that the multiple ongoing inquiry based teaching models in use are helping to bolster the effectiveness of the arts integration strategy. The subsequent chapter provides an overview of the study, addresses the two research questions, with a discussion of the findings and implications for practitioners in the field. The chapter closes with recommendations for future research, reflection and conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings drawn from the present case study of KECS, returning first to the theoretical frameworks that structured the study and then turning to the issues of equity framed in the introductory chapter. The purpose of the study was to explore KECS stakeholders' perceptions of the school's arts-integrated curriculum design and implementation. In particular, this study sought to understand the experience for students of color within this unique charter school environment as a way to address the arts access and equity gap in public schools and public charter schools, which predominantly affects Black and Latinx students.

The chapter begins with a brief summary of findings organized according to the two research questions that guided the study:

1. How does an arts-based charter school implement the Different Ways of Knowing and arts-integrated curriculum?
2. What perceived challenges, benefits, and opportunities do parents, administrators, and teachers identify for African American and Latinx students experiencing the arts-integrated curriculum at Kahlo Elementary Charter School?

Following this summary, I discuss these findings in light of the three theoretical frameworks that shaped this study: Greene's theory of aesthetic education (Bose, 2008; Denaway, 2013; Greene, 1978, 1995, 2001; Holzer, 2009), the Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK), (Johannesen, 1997, 2004), framework, and arts integration (Silverstein & Layne, 2010). Then, I turn to a discussion of how the findings highlight tensions related to equity and

access to arts integrated education, particularly for students of color. Finally, I conclude the chapter by identifying implications and recommendations for various stakeholder groups involved in arts integrated education, including program directors, principals, curriculum specialists, and teachers.

Summary of Findings

In response to the two research questions, findings included:

- The arts integrated curriculum provided valuable constructivist learning opportunities that were engaging to students and encouraged critical thinking and creative expression.
- Students benefitted from both the visual and performing arts curriculum, which allowed students to develop artistic skills, and the arts integration curriculum, which allowed them to apply those skills, along with critical and creative thinking to other content areas.
- While the teachers appreciated and supported the constructivist and arts-integrated curricular approaches, they did experience challenges related to finding time to create curricular materials and find appropriate primary sources for use in the classroom.
- Overall, the case study indicated that the school had undergone a transition from adherence to the DWoK curriculum to a general arts-integration approach.
- Parents, teachers, and students identified various benefits and challenges for students at KECS, including tensions between the school's student-centered, constructivist approach and concerns about students' feelings of entitlement bolstered by the environment. Additionally, parents, teachers, and students noted personal connections

to the school and curriculum, as well as opportunities to develop and express empathy through the arts-integrated approach as benefits, while questions were raised about the transferability of the skills and dispositions valued within the school. Interviewees further identified as a challenge the lack of diversity within the school community.

Curriculum Planning and Arts Integration

At the time the case study was conducted, 10 years after the founding of the school, the specific curriculum of Different Ways of Knowing was no longer in use as a distinct model, however the individual elements of the model such as the connection to lab school learning rooted in constructivist theory, the project based group work, the idea of using an arts infusion as part of implementation, the intent of critical thinking development and content exploration through the arts, interdisciplinary in conception, students driving the inquiry and the collaboration between instructors, those ideas, are all being utilized actively in the current implementation. The main theme that became prominent in the teacher interviews for this first question, was teachers' concerns around curricular planning and implementation.

In Chapter 2, the Kennedy Center model of arts integration was discussed. According to Silverstein and Layne (2010),

> Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate meaning through an art form. Students engage in the creative process to explore mutually-reinforcing connections between an art form and another curriculum area to meet evolving objectives in both. (pg. 1)

I chose this particular definition out of all the models of arts integration covered in Chapter 2 because of the relevance to Kahlo Elementary School. The ideal of arts integration

seemed to be a vestigial expectation held over from the Different Ways of Knowing model. It was also an ideal part of following the Kennedy Center definition of true arts integration. As the curriculum has evolved, the Kennedy Center model is what KECS adopted and strived to incorporate into the curriculum.

In the challenges section of the findings, teachers all confirmed even though they all strove to implement arts integration to the Kennedy Center standard, it was very difficult to do so. While they all had one or two detailed lessons that were successfully implemented, some teachers admitted that they were doing more "arts supported" lessons rather than true integration many times. The reasons for this varied including the level of individual teacher's understanding, resource limitations, planning and implementation challenges, time, in addition to annual campus wide teacher churn or turnover. Additionally, there wasn't a dedicated full-time position of a singular arts integration curricular coach to whose sole job it was to train staff, coach them, build capacity and reflect on what worked and what didn't. Even though the school had a full-time position allotted to a faculty who holds the title "Arts Integration Director," the actual functions of that role were divided up and shared between instructional duties as an arts specialist, administrative duties, and external programmatic outreach. As the role was designed at the time of the study, having enough bandwidth to focus exclusively on arts integration curricular review and training with all teaching staff was not feasible.

Without fidelity of the arts integration program design, correlations to student outcomes wasn't as clear cut as the literature states. In order to achieve the type of arts integration that Bresler (1995) termed "co-equal cognition," both the aims and approach of the lesson have to be implemented and focused on creating beneficial cognitive impacts. As noted in Chapter 2, the

arts piece of the integrated learning can't be subservient or just window dressing to the other content. Even though students at KECS do engage in “creative processes that explore mutually-reinforcing connections between an art form and another curriculum area” (Silverstein & Layne, 2010, as cited in Duma & Silverstein, 2014, p.4), the frequency, quality, and consistency vary from grade level to grade level, teacher to teacher, and lesson to lesson. However, what does act as a mitigating factor is the sustained frequency and consistency of intent throughout the school at all grade levels evidenced by the following: a variety of inquiry based methodologies, a constructivist framework, the constant presence of arts based activities, and a dedication to an alternative set of success outcomes, all seems to influence the presence of similar benefits for development and academic achievement observed from just using an arts integrated approach.

Eisner (2004) noted that “the arts express meaning in a way that cannot be expressed in any other modality. Students may have cognitive abilities that are beyond their immediate capacity to express, except through the arts.” The arts integration approach provides students an alternative method of understanding the material. All the teachers interviewed expressed a similar sentiment about overall student comprehension of academic material being stronger and students being able to show understanding through the arts. Mishook and Kornhaber's (2006) study investigating the effectiveness of arts integration at various schools also noted that arts integration programs had more success of improved outcomes when there was stronger level of administrative support. In her interview, the KECS principal recognized the need to spend more time to support that aspect of the curricular planning. At the time of the interview, the principal was also responsible for executive director duties, which heavily impacted her time improving instruction and instructional strategies. In the handful of amalgamated strategies, arts integration

remains as the cornerstone, not only because of its legacy through Different Ways of Knowing, but also because of the freedom that teachers have in planning and implementation. There is a creative application of planning content using arts integration, that despite the challenges of time, resources, collaboration, and understanding, was liberating for the instructors at KECS. The parents found value in it, the students exhibit positive benefits, and the staff embraced it. The benefits from the findings as applied to KECS are in alignment with the literature from Chapter 2 in connection to Maxine Greene's (1995, 2001) tenets of aesthetic education in relation to schooling. The broad themes that concerned Greene in relationship to aesthetic education development were as follows: Freedom can only be attained in the social context of community, and how social justice pertains to freedom; imagination and the arts provide experiential opportunities for students, helping to wake up empathy with and for others; and in context of formal education, the role of the teacher in helping students develop inquiry skills and applying that vision of questioning to help students start their journey toward freedom. Which ultimately is freedom of the student developing into a fully realized individual consciousness attuned to the needs of the collective/community. At KECS, the reflexive and responsive level of planning of lessons, was considered a constructivist approach, with the teachers building out lessons that responded to the specific concerns, interests, and developmental needs of the students at that moment. On the other hand, the very freedom to create new content generated a level of anxiety and created logistics issues among the arts specialists. Even the grade level teachers experienced similar impacts to affecting the academic calendar in a way that caused deviation from the curricular map starting from the beginning of the school year.

Whereas the first question had more of an emphasis on teachers, the second research question was more focused on parent voices. The main challenges that were identified from parents were as follows: the lack of representation of Black/African American faculty and staff, a school culture environment that may be perceived as overly edifying and underpreparing students, parents withdrawing their children from the school (for a variety of reasons), and a perceived lack of thorough vetting for newly hired teachers. The benefits of the curriculum for students identified by parents were helping to cultivate focus, students acquiring reading and writing skills, students developing empathy towards others, and increasing student's enjoyment of school and the schooling process in general. Another finding was that all the parents interviewed valued the different ways of knowing and different set of skills that KECS helped their children develop. The outcomes were vastly different than perhaps what was expected at a traditional school following a more conventional approach to education. Teachers also reported challenges and benefits from the aspect of instructional outcomes and environmental influences. Part of the challenges include what I have termed as overwhelming freedom. That is, the lab school modeling, the constructivist dynamic, the arts integration and inquiry models are so open ended and student driven to an extent that for some students it can actually be anxiety inducing and detrimental to their learning. An extension and almost opposite of the overwhelming freedom is the general academic culture where students are thriving and becoming empowered to the point of positive disruption. That is, students are constantly actively engaging in the critical questioning of seemingly every aspect of their teaching and learning environment. Is this empowerment or entitlement? Academically there are certain aspects of the education experience that instructors also spoke about. Even though students are developing impressive capacity for

reading, certain subgroups like EL students are behind according to the standardized testing models utilized to capture baseline performance. However, this doesn't preclude other measures of success which the EL subgroups demonstrate achievement in as attested to in teacher interviews. Even though the students have become comfortable with and enjoy writing, the findings suggest that many students have are structural issues with writing overall, including problems with grammar and spelling. This again is a reflection of what standardized models measure regarding student growth at this grade level. Other related findings include that the lack of homework and textbooks may that underprepare students with untenable expectations when they move on to upper grades. Apart from the curricular model, but part of the overall experience, is the actual school environment. The open layout of the campus location within a large warehouse space contributes to an overwhelmingly persistent noise issue. The noise factor impacts student performance and teacher effectiveness, undercutting the potential full effectiveness of the school experience. All teachers spoke about this as a persistent underlying problem. Even though is a known issue, the design of the physical layout and architecture of the building makes it very difficult to remedy.

Benefits, Challenges, and Opportunities

Benefits

Benefits that teachers reported regarding students experiencing the KECS approach, was an awakening of creativity in students, the students feel empowered and help to drive the content, students develop problem solving and critical thinking capacity. Teachers reported students feeling validated in their creative voice, and develop empathy towards each other. Overall, the campus, faculty, staff, curriculum and curricular design is supportive of students

with an intentionally designed school culture that facilitates student's growth into emotional maturity while helping to instill confidence. The school is a place where students can make mistakes, creatively and personally, and learn to reflect, then grow from them. Ultimately this is what parents are valuing, and seek as the building blocks for students in their development. By shifting the expectations of what an education institution is supposed to do, the very relationship that students develop with school, their teachers, and the process of schooling is different.

As an origin point, the ultimate influence of DWoK and its pedagogical design is reflected in these outcomes. Even though some 10 years on, there has been an evolution into incorporating a broader mix of pedagogical approaches, there are elements of the six main components of DWoK that still remain, as stated in the literature, (Johannesen, 2004; Mason, 2005). These include:

- Teachers plan curriculum both independently and collaboratively around a big idea or main theme based on content standards. The delivery of the instruction is inquiry based, intended for students to start creating their own questions around the material.
- The emphasis is around student driven inquiry and the goal is for students to be reflective and knowledgeable about the content they are learning.
- Building capacity within the teaching corps to form a knowledge base of arts-integrated teaching strategies. The aim of this is twofold, develop school based leadership that is versed in the approach AND focus on reform by student improvement as measured by various types of data.

Even with a remaining vestigial influence of just half of the DwoK original structure, the additional approaches of Readers/Writers workshop, Scottish Storyline, and other inquiry models

in addition to the dedicated arts classes, all serve to round out the total pedagogical model that KECS has. Combined with skilled and knowledgeable teacher practitioners, the student benefits outlined above are achievable as consistent outcomes.

Challenges

Entitlement or Empowerment

The various inquiry based models in use at KECS empower students by creating safe space for them to make mistakes while in the process of exploring solutions. The project-based aspect is ideal for students to work together in groups, and the inquiry aspect helps students develop their voice and critical thinking. The challenge that instructors have is finding the balance of classroom control between students demonstrating their empowerment and students who are being disruptive with behavior issues. While students are encouraged to participate and voice their thoughts and opinions, there are students who may take advantage of the non-traditional structure with excessive talking or acting out. Teachers I interviewed in the case study felt that perhaps there is a sense of entitlement among some of the students in their behaviors. There is also a tacit agreement it is difficult for instructors to discern the difference between the part of the schooling which is highly child focused, and the part that becomes overly permissive to student behaviors, especially when instruction is being disrupted.

Transferability of Approach

Given the amount of personalization that occurs in the program, and the level of responsiveness of curriculum that teachers at KECS are encouraged to embrace, students are having a unique schooling experience. Aspects of this unique approach include no homework and no textbooks. The challenge occurred when students matriculate into middle school or

transfer to another school while still an elementary school student. The skillsets necessary to succeed in a traditional school, such as managing to do homework, and working from a prescribed textbook are atrophied or non-existent. Students have to adjust and there was a certain amount of struggle that took place for a student to re-adjust or acquire those skills once in a traditional school setting.

Black Teachers Matter

A trait that both parents and teachers mentioned as being prominent among students in their development is that of empathy. One of the parents spoke about an encounter on campus with his Black son dealing with racist remarks and bullying from a group of white students. The remarks were racially motivated. This was a shock for a school where the culture is quite open, accepting and parents consider themselves as relatively progressive. At the same time, there is no Black representation among the teaching staff or grade level teachers. So the Black students do not see themselves reflected in the program, while White, Latinx, Asian, and other students may see themselves reflected in the teaching staff. So how can students have an opportunity to develop empathy without having proper representation? There is a gap between the ideal that the school strives to follow and the reality of the teaching staff.

Opportunities

KECS was a public charter school that is successfully addressing the arts equity gap. For the parents of the Black and Latinx participants in the case study, the pedagogical approach and supportive school environment represented a choice for their children to experience the type of curriculum that perhaps would be present at an expensive private school. The parents all expressed the goal of their children being at KECS, was to provide an experience that was

different than their own public school education. With the exception of one parent who did attend a school of the arts for high school, the majority of the parents reported that the arts were underfunded, not present, or not presented as an option for them during their own schooling. Even as a public charter school in Los Angeles, KECS is an outlier with the amount of arts that students have access to, and how it is embedded within the school day schedule and grade-level content. KECS presents an equitable arts experience not present in most schools. Since the majority of students at public charter schools are Black and Latinx, and they are not receiving the adequate amount of arts education under California state law, the lack of access is a glaring issue of social justice that needs to be remedied. The Black and Latinx students at KECS represent the ideal of what students could be experiencing and benefiting from at school if the arts and an arts integrated approach were present. Unfortunately there is an arts equity gap, which is part of the achievement gap that Black and Latinx students are facing. The opportunity for choosing a different experience for their children and having access to the arts is why the parent participants of my case study chose KECS. The founding parents of KECS were also seeking different outcomes when they started the school.

The latter parts of the findings in the opportunities section included the voice of founding parents and a founding former student of KECS. At the time of the interview the student was graduating a high school of the arts and was anticipating freshman year at USC in the School of Cinematic Arts. The student is now a sophomore. The longitudinal aspect this group of voices represents are key to understanding the arc of the school from its founding and the intentions of the founders to the current iteration. Additionally the former student and his parent were able to look back in reflection on what was gained through the KECS experience. They credited the time

at KECS with helping Roderick to develop a critical thinking framework to approaching courses taken in middle school, a motivation to participating in class discussions, and pursuing leadership opportunities such as student council. They described other attributes that Roderick developed such as, empathy for others, fortitude to persist in the face of challenges, and self confidence in thought, action, and expression. Camilleri and Jackson (2005) asserted much that same, in their findings that a benefit of being involved in an arts education focused school, students developed confidence, self-discipline, and focus that carried over into academic performance.

All the parent participants in my case study held the values and personal development of their children as confident, creative, imaginative, self-driven, individuals who were curious about life, as the primary importance. Greene (1995), similarly held values that parallel, "Of all our cognitive capacities, imagination is the one that permits us to give credence to alternative realities. It allows us to break with the taken for granted, to set aside familiar distinctions and definitions" (p. 3).

Implications and Recommendations

Using forms of the arts integrated method and strategy within individual grade levels, schools, and school districts, there is an opportunity to reconsider what the metrics and success outcomes should be for students. Arts integration has proven to be highly effective tool for whole school reform. Various benefits include culture change, grade improvement, increased student understanding and comprehension of various academic content, development of aesthetic appreciation for the experience of the arts, student confidence and engagement increases, and signs indicating development of critical thinking capacity. However, as this case study has

demonstrated, there are a number of considerations and challenges that must be addressed in order to implement and sustain an arts-integrated approach. To this end, I offer the following recommendations for various stakeholders in arts-integrated and charter education as well as recommendations for future research.

Executive Directors of Charter Schools

- Allocate funding for a minimum of three to four full time arts specialists that represent the various strands of art disciplines. Instructors in Visual Arts, Dance, Theatre, and Music.
- Allocate funding for a Director of Arts and an Arts Integration Curricular Coach to support teaching and curriculum design.
- Allocate funding for facilities to support arts education, such as an art room, a dance studio with wood floors, mirrors, and support bars, music studio and rehearsal room, and a theatre room.
- Ensure that sustainable and ongoing funding is allocated to fixed and renewable art supplies, equipment, and maintenance of arts education facilities.
- Emphasize to your board of directors the necessity of continuing to fund and allocate resources to arts education.
- Advocate for the arts with your board of directors by emphasizing the need for policy describing the role of the arts in the school organization to be adopted into the mission and vision of the school(s).
- Emphasize to the principals the importance of including the arts on their campus.

- Empower your principals to actively be inclusive of the arts within the culture of their schools.
- Become familiar with the benefits of arts education and arts integrated programs on improving school cultures, and student outcomes.

Arts Program Directors, Coordinators, Arts Administrators

- Partner with city and county arts orgs in mutually beneficial initiatives that benefit arts offerings at schools.
- Be an advocacy conduit between the Executive Director and the Principals.
- Create energy and momentum by establishing an arts integration team or committee that is made up of various school stakeholders. The arts integration team or committee can be responsible for maintaining the presence of arts integration through reviewing curriculum and assessments, coordinating professional development activities, advocating for arts integration throughout the school community and with others outside the school in order to create partnership opportunities.
- Plan regular professional development opportunities for both arts staff and grade level/content instructors.
- Ensure the fidelity of the arts integrated approach by reviewing lesson plans and supporting where necessary.
- Find opportunities for parents to participate and engage in the arts enriched environment such as art walks and showcases of content. Different in concept than a talent showcase, an arts integration showcase would focus on the learning of concepts through the arts as opposed to just a performative aspect.

- Outreach and engage in local arts orgs and creatives in partnerships, art workshops and artists residencies. Field trips to local arts institutions are important as well and teachers should be encouraged to be inclusive of exhibitions in order to support material being taught in class.

Principals

- Schedule time for all the strands of arts disciplines to be present in the school day for all grade levels throughout the school year.
- A specified number of units should be specifically mandated for arts integration course work during a defined portion of the school year. Additionally, there should be a fixed number of units for teachers to create and implement on the fly. This will preserve the freedom that teacher's value, while keeping the integrity of the calendar, and preserving time for the arts instructional specialists to lock in time on their calendars for supporting the arts integrated units.
- Invest in arts integrated curricular training, invest in resources, supplies and equipment, including traditional art supplies, media technology, musical instruments and other necessary arts materials.
- Before, during and after the planning cycle and throughout the school year teachers require consistent professional development in planning and using arts integration methods. Teachers need adequate time for planning and collaborating individually and with the arts specialists, above and beyond the normal time allocated. Teachers also need a repository of primary source, grade leveled material to utilize in their lessons.

- The budgeting and hiring of a curricular coach specializing in arts integration is necessary. This will keep the program and teachers on the same common understanding of the arts integrated methodology.
- Create a system where teachers who have gone through training mentor the younger teachers.
- Arts integration works hand in hand with discrete arts instruction. It is not a replacement for investment in and support of performing and visual arts classes, that all students take as part of their regular school day classes. The discrete art classes focus more on skills building that is performative/production oriented in artifacts and outlook specific to the respective art form or discipline. The two are mutually reinforcing and support each other, but are fundamentally different things. Arts integration works well in conjunction with other inquiry based models. KECS uses Scottish Storyline and Readers/Writers workshop.
- Parental support and buy-in is key, KECS has the Celebrations, similarly opportunities for students to showcase and present their learning and understanding of the content material serves as a capstone experience that can involve the community.

Teachers

- Planning arts integrated lessons is time consuming and resource intensive. If an arts instructor is available for collaboration that is the ideal. Arts integrated lessons are constructivist, inquiry driven, and project based. The Kennedy Center definition is an ideal working model. Without primary source grade leveled material, teachers will spend a significant amount of time building lessons and assessments. Since the

approach is inquiry based, students should have many opportunities to co-shape the nature and direction of the discussions to better strengthen their understanding of the material at hand.

- Allow for students voices to be included in the lessons.
- Provide an environment where students feel supported and feel comfortable making mistakes.
- Ensure that the lessons developed are truly arts-integrated. Arts integration is an alternative avenue through which students can demonstrate understanding and mastery of both arts and non-arts content.

Future Research

Areas for future study would be to look at arts integrated program effects using quantitative data and longitudinal data. In this case study I was able to interview one student who graduated from KECS and was seven years removed from elementary school. Future studies could include cohort groups from other types of arts integrated programs, urban, suburban, and different population groups. What did students gain, learn or develop that stayed with them into middle school, high school, and beyond? This case study had a relatively small sample size, which greatly limits the overall results generalizability. Even though the root curriculum at KECS is based on a specific arts integrated model, Different Ways of Knowing, much evolution has occurred and other inquiry-based models are being used at KECS in conjunction with arts integration. As such it is difficult to fully ascertain how much of the results are specifically correlated to students learning through arts integration. Future studies could isolate to grade levels and groups of students who are learning only through arts integration. In this particular

case study, the student participants were elementary school aged. As such the answers to the questions were limited. Future studies could include more open-ended questions designed to allow older students more opportunity to expand and elaborate.

Conclusion

This case study has provided a description of how one charter elementary school implemented the Different Ways of Knowing and arts-integration curriculum, highlighting the processes for curricular planning and implementation of arts-integrated projects across disciplinary areas as well as the intersections of the arts-integration approach with visual arts instruction. It described a number of challenges faced by teachers in designing arts-integrated units, including different levels of understanding of what arts-integration means and the need to research and acquire primary sources for use in arts-integrated units. The study uncovered that the school has transitioned from its initial adherence to the DWoK curriculum, which shaped the original philosophy and approach within the school, to a general arts-integrated approach, which retains the constructivist nature of DWoK. In discussing perceived challenges, benefits, and opportunities for students, parents and teachers discussed several tensions encountered by students in navigating the arts-integrated approach.

The findings of the case study will contribute to ongoing research on arts integration, in particular as evidence of how the DWoK, aesthetic education, and arts-integration frameworks can work in practice. In addition, the information uncovered about benefits and challenges experienced by students have helped identify implications and recommendations for other schools aspiring to implement an arts-integrated approach. While arts-integration like that seen at KECS remains rare in the charter school world, this case study provides one example of a system

that, although not without its faults, has worked for more than 10 years, and has evolved to meet the changing needs and resources of the school community.

APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Interview questions for Kahlo staff (teachers and administration)

1. What is your position at Kahlo?
2. How long have you been at Kahlo?
3. Do you have a background of practice in a specific arts discipline? If so what?
4. Compared to your teaching practice prior to Kahlo, is using DWoK and arts integration strategies a change?
5. How often do you use these approaches in your classroom?
6. What are the drawbacks with DWoK and arts integration methods in regards to your teaching practice and in regards to the students?
7. Do you collaborate with other teachers on arts-integrated classroom lessons on a regular basis?
8. What impact has DWoK and arts integration curriculum had on your students?
9. Are students more engaged when arts integration strategies are utilized?
10. What effects do you observe on the students' behavior?
11. What effects do you observe on the students learning in academic content?
12. How do you integrate the curriculum with art?
13. What role do the arts specialists play?
14. Do you see students experience any changes of skills or understanding in arts or academic content because of the DWoK, arts-integrated approach?
15. What do you think the challenges are for teachers using this approach?
16. What do you think the challenges are for students using this approach?

Interview questions for Kahlo parents

1. How did you hear about Kahlo?
2. How long has your son or daughter been at Kahlo?
3. Do you have a background of practice in a specific arts discipline? If so what?
4. If applicable compared to schools prior Kahlo, is using DWoK and arts integration strategies a change for your son or daughter?
5. What are the drawbacks with DWoK and arts integration methods? In regards to Kahlo' teaching practice and in regards to the students?
6. What is the impact that Kahlo' DWoK approach and arts integration curriculum has had on your son or daughter?
7. How does your son or daughter feel about school?
8. What effects do you observe on your son or daughter's behavior?
9. What effects do you observe on your son or daughter's learning in academic content?
10. Do you see students experience any changes of skills or understanding in arts or academic content because of the DWoK, arts-integrated approach?
11. What do you think the challenges are for teachers using this approach?
12. What do you think the challenges are for students using this approach?

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Protocol

Questions about arts integration and DWoK

1. How is this charter school different from other schools you've taught at?
2. Is arts integration and DWoK actively taught at Kahlo?
3. Do you think that this approach could be successfully implemented at other schools?
4. Do you need the arts specialists to implement the DWoK and arts integration curriculum?

Questions about students

1. What have you observed about students' learning while utilizing the DWoK and arts integration approach?
2. What do you think is the ideal method of learning for students?
3. Does this approach increase student's creativity? What about their imagination? Elaborate and give examples.
4. Does this approach teach students about the elements of various art forms? Elaborate and give examples
5. Are students evidencing a development of aesthetic awareness as they go through the school year? (For example a maturity in their artwork, development of style, use of arts vocabulary, etc.)
6. Is DWoK a way for students to evidence deeper knowledge of academic content?
7. Does this type of learning help students develop their self-identity?
8. What is something you have seen the students develop by being immersed in this type of curriculum?

Questions about school and environment

1. Are the physical space and resources of the school conducive to teaching and learning arts integration strategies?
2. What are challenges for implementing this at other schools?
3. Is the administration supporting classroom practice through resources and training?
4. Are parents supportive of the alternative teaching methods?
5. Do you work in collaboration with your colleagues?
6. Do the students support each other's work?

To expedite the discussion, I will distribute a questionnaire with the following basic identifying questions below.

Name_____
Email_____
Grade Level / Subject Area _____
Years of Teaching_____
Years at Kahlo Elementary_____
Previous experience with arts integration and DWoK curriculum _____

_____

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