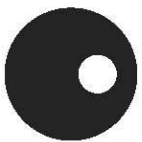


**Arts Corps  
Program Evaluation Report  
2011-2012**

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**MEM**consultants

November 27, 2012



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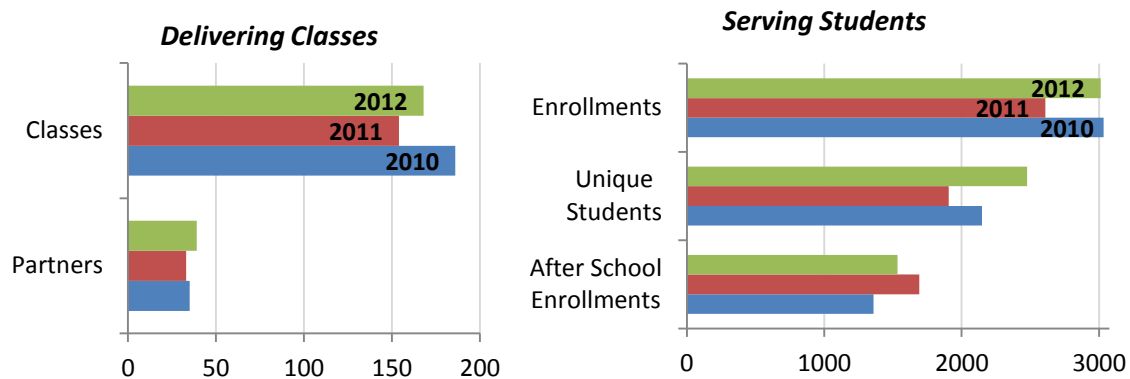
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## Executive Summary

### Access to Arts Education

Program records show that Arts Corps delivered 32,673 contact hours of classes to students in 2011-2012, a substantial (25%) increase over 2010-2011 (26,176 contact hours). The average attendance ratio rose from 75% to 82% this year and the average contact hours per class rose from 10 hours to 11.6 hours.



Arts Corps serves a population of students who are typically underrepresented in in-school arts classes. A recent study of arts access in Seattle Public Schools found that African American, Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan students are overrepresented among students taking less than the average number of arts courses; these students make up almost half (48%) of the students served by Arts Corps programming.<sup>1</sup> The report also found that students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch are more likely to be taking less than the average number of arts classes; Arts Corps partners report that 66% of students served are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

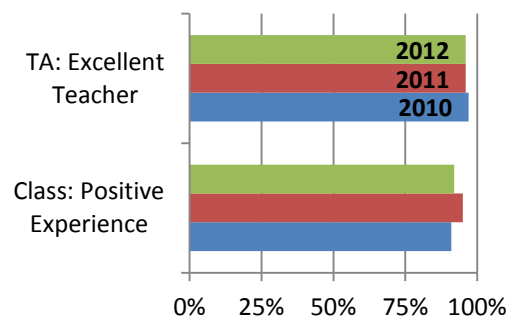
### Program Quality

Indicators of class and teaching artist quality suggest students' experiences this year were very positive overall. This has been a consistent pattern, demonstrating that Arts Corps provides students with a high quality class experience led by excellent Teaching Artists.

Arts Corps uses the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) model for continuous program quality improvement. After an initial pilot assessment using the structured YPQA tool, Arts Corps created a plan to focus on three areas for program quality:

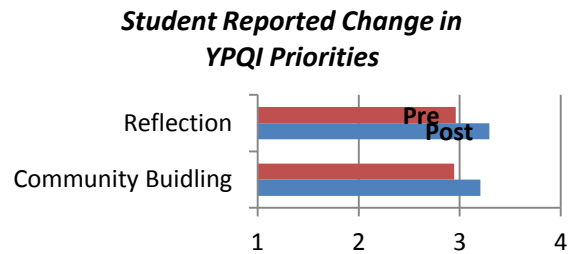
- Student reflection
- Community building
- Staff use of specific feedback rather than general praise

#### Percentage of Students Reporting Quality "Often or Always"



<sup>1</sup> De Soto, Annette. (June 2012). Seattle Public Schools Art Assess Survey and Cohort Analysis. Beyond the Divide.

Student survey responses indicated improvements in YPQI priority areas from program start to finish. In future years, Arts Corps will expand the number of classes observed using the YPQA tool, develop internal systems for communicating findings to teaching artists, and support program quality improvements informed by this observation data.



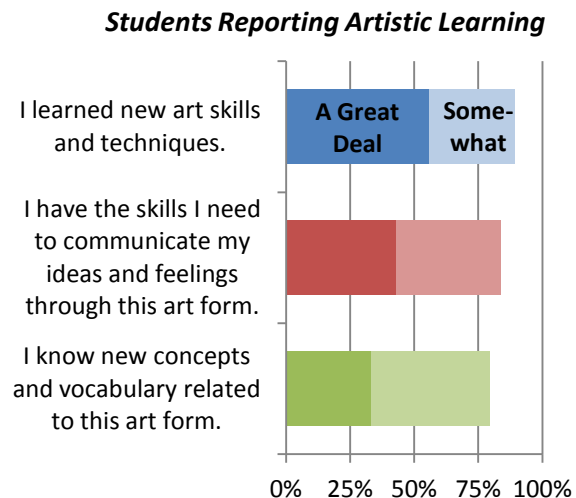
## Learning

Students report learning new art skills, techniques, concepts and vocabulary in Arts Corps classes. Matched analysis of student surveys revealed significant increases in all eleven indicators of creative habits examined.

## Partnerships

Arts Corps partnered with 39 sites this year, up from 33 in 2010-11. Program partners reported a desire to increase arts education opportunities, provide a high quality program and offer opportunities for staff development through role modeling as goals for their partnership with Arts Corps. The majority (88%) felt that their goals for the partnership had been met or exceeded this year.

Two case studies were conducted with program partners to dig deeper into the impact of Arts Corps' partners. Partnership goals aligned with those listed above, though one partner also listed healthy communication and expression as an impact of the partnership. Other youth impacts include increased artistic skill, confidence and development of interpersonal skills.



# Evaluation Report

## About Arts Corps

Founded in 2000 on the principle that all young people – not just those with resources – should have access to quality arts learning opportunities, Arts Corps is now a leading nonprofit arts education organization in Seattle. Starting with just a few classes at six sites, Arts Corps now serves over 2,000 K-12th grade students a year at approximately 40 sites.

Arts Corps places after-school classes and in-school residencies primarily at schools and community centers serving low-income youth who often have few other opportunities for arts learning. Programs cover the spectrum of arts disciplines from dance to visual arts to photography to music, and include popular classes such as Brazilian dance, theater, comic illustration, spoken word, sculpture and more. Programming is designed to foster artistic competencies and creative habits of mind such as imagination, healthy risk-taking, reflection, persistence and critical thinking. The program operates on a school year, with select workshops occurring in the summer months.

Arts Corps has conducted program evaluation since inception and has refined its focus each year to better explore and describe the impacts of arts classes on students. This report represents Arts Corps' evaluation work during the 2011-2012 program year.

## Data Sources

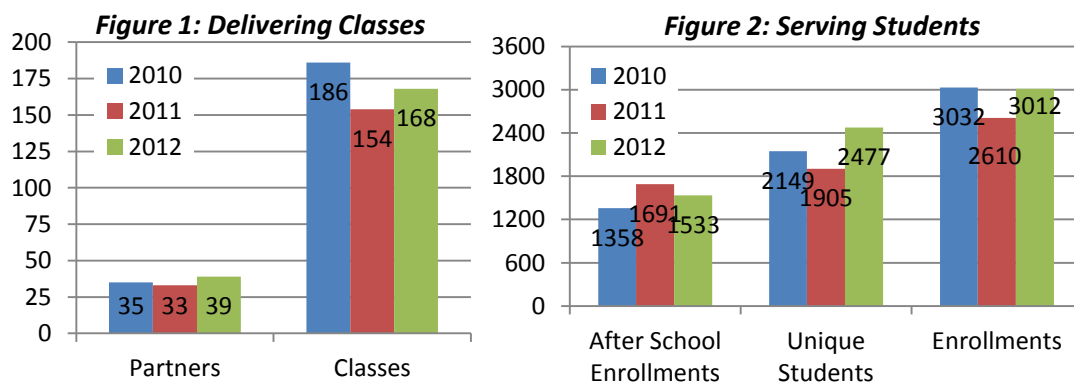
The findings in this report are based on the following sources of information:

- Student Surveys - End of class surveys were completed by 631 unique students in the fall, winter and/or spring quarters.
  - This year, Arts Corps administered a retrospective post-pre survey at the end of each class; respondents were invited to rate their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior after and before their Arts Corps class.
  - Some students completed these surveys more than once, at the end of a fall, winter and/or spring class; only the most recently completed survey was included in analysis.
  - Program records indicate 1,232 enrollments in classes where surveys were to be administered (i.e., after school classes and in-school residencies only; middle and high school only; fall, winter and spring only). Based on this, the end of class survey response rate is 51%, in contrast to last year's response rate of 25%.
- Teaching Artist Surveys – All twenty-seven Teaching Artists responded to an online survey. Questions addressed successes and challenges, support and professional development, student learning, performance and exhibits and youth program quality focus areas. In 2011, 82% of Teaching Artists completed the survey.
- Program Partner Surveys – Thirty-five responses were received from 24 of 37 (65%) program partners. Questions addressed general feedback on the partnership, program impact, youth program quality focus areas and feedback on specific teaching artists. In 2011, 79% of program partners responded to the survey.

- Program Observations – The evaluators observed ten program sessions (five after school programs at elementary school sites and five Teen Artist Program sessions at Youngstown Cultural Center). Observations were scored using an externally validated tool (the Youth Program Quality Assessment) and an internally developed addendum that addressed specific creative habits of mind. This was a new data collection method this year.
- Spruce Street Staff Interviews – Six staff of Spruce Street Secure Crisis Residential Center participated in a structured interview. Questions addressed general feedback on the partnership and program impact.
- Teen Artist Program Student and Teacher Focus Groups – A focus group was held with four students from the Teen Artist Program classes. A second focus group was conducted with five Teaching Artists and Teaching Assistants. Questions addressed program impact, access to arts education and suggestions for improvement. This was a new data collection method this year.
- Student Enrollment Report - Arts Corps recorded data on student enrollment and attendance in Salesforce, a secure online database.
- Seattle Public School District Data – Data summarizing student performance on annual reading and math state tests (WASL or MSP) and student absences per school year was explored for a sample of Arts Corp participants.

## Access to Arts Education

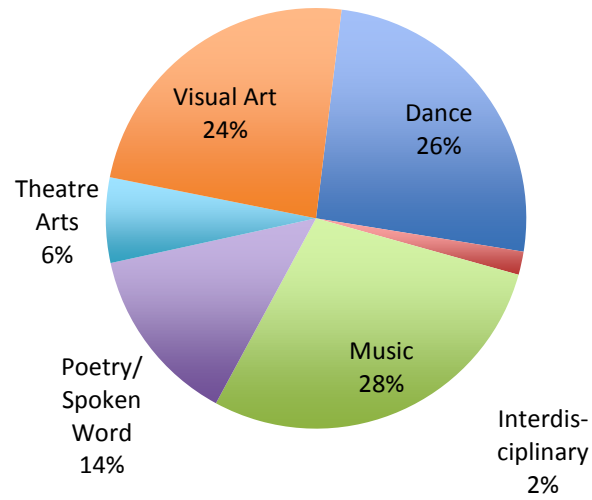
Arts Corps seeks to expose more youth overall to the arts, and in particular seeks to expose youth who otherwise would not have access to arts programming.



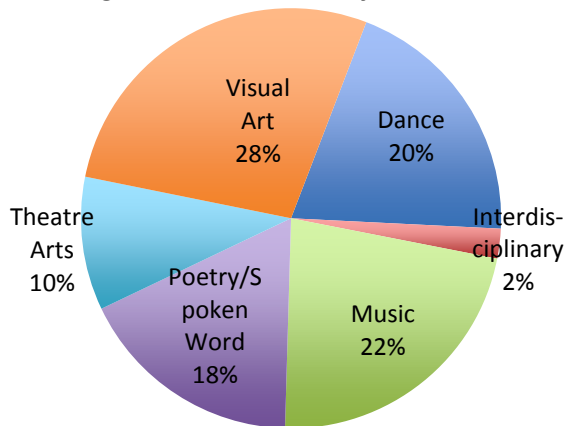
### Program Records – Students Served

- Arts Corps partnered with 39 sites this year, up from 33 last year.
- Arts Corps provided 168 classes during the 2011-12 school year and summer. This represents a 9% increase from 2010-2011, when Arts Corps provided 154 classes.
- Arts Corps served 2,477 unique students during 2011-2012. This represents a 30% increase from the previous year (1,905 unique students).
- There were 3,012 distinct enrollments in quarterly classes during the school year representing a 12% increase from last year's 2610 enrollments.
- Approximately 317 students (13%) enrolled in two or more Arts Corps classes this year, down from 22% last year.

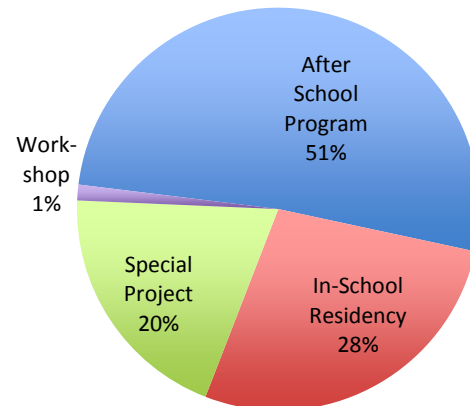
**Figure 3: Classes By Art Form**



**Figure 4: Enrollments By Art Form**



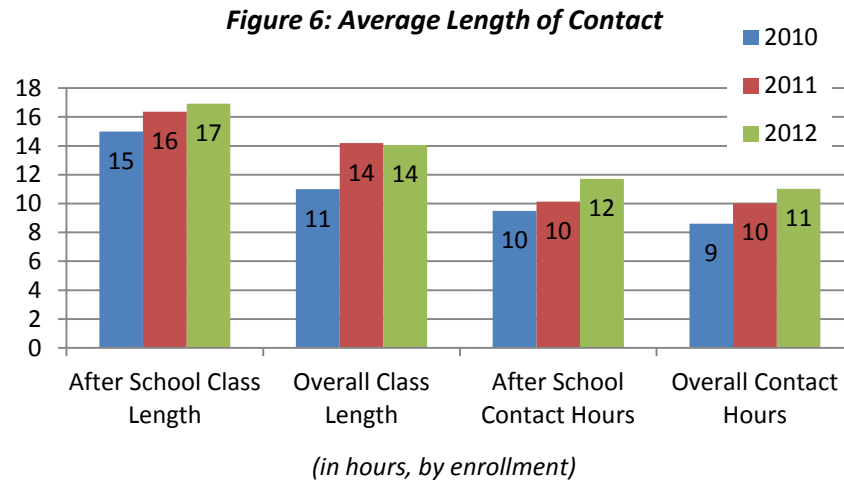
**Figure 5: Enrollments by Class Type**



Gender information was collected on class attendance sheets. In contrast to the past two years, this year Arts Corps served a slightly higher percentage of female students.

Table 1: Gender of Participants			
	2009-2010	2010-2011	<b>2011-2012</b>
Male	50% (1,503)	48% (1,259)	<b>42% (1,254)</b>
Female	46% (1,399)	47% (1,227)	<b>49% (1,484)</b>
Unidentified	4% (130)	5% (123)	<b>9% (274)</b>

## Program Records – Enrollment by Class Type and Class Length



- Overall, most students (70%) enrolled in classes that met for fewer than 16 hours; this year the typical class met for 14 hours, consistent with last year. In 2011-12, 30% of enrollments were in classes that met for more than 16 hours, a decrease from 2010-11, when 39% of enrollments were in classes that met for more than 16 hours. This decrease appears to be related to a growth in the number of in-school residencies, which have typically met for shorter duration.
  - The average class length was 14 hours.
- After School Classes
  - 1,549 enrollments were in after school classes (1,692 in 2010-11).
  - 49% of the enrollments in after school classes were in a class that met for more than 16 hours (59% in 2010-11).
  - Of all the enrollments in after school classes, the typical (median) student was in a class that met for 16 hours (consistent with last year) and the average 'total hours' per enrollment was 17 (compared to 16 last year).
- In School Residencies
  - 829 enrollments were in an in school residency (324 in 2010-11).
  - The typical (median) student in an in school residency was in a course that met for 8 hours (consistent with last year), while the average 'total hours' per by enrollment was 9 (compared to 8 last year).
- Special Projects
  - 596 enrollments were in special projects (452 in 2010-11).
  - Most (85%) special projects met for 13.75 hours while the rest (15%) met for 16.5 hours (all met for 13.75 last year).
- Workshops
  - 38 enrollments were in workshops (143 in 2010-11).
  - One workshop was held this year. It met 4 times for 1 hour, for a total of 4 hours per class.



### ***Program Records – Attendance and Contact Hours***

- Arts Corps delivered 32,673 contact hours of classes to students in 2011-2012, a substantial (25%) increase over 2010-2011 (26,176 contact hours).
- Overall Attendance Ratio: 82% (vs. 75% average attendance last year)<sup>2</sup>

*This number includes students who have 100% attendance in one-time workshops and special projects. 596 students, or 20% of enrollments, participated in one-time special projects resulting in a 100% attendance ratio (526 students, or 20% of enrollments in 2010-11).*

- After School Classes during 2011-12
  - Average attendance ratio of 71% (64% in 2010-11).
  - 19% of enrollments attended every class (19% in 2010-11).
  - 56% of enrollments attended three out of four classes or more (48% in 2010-11).
  - 78% of enrollments attended at least half of the classes (69% in 2010-11).
  - The average enrollment received 11.6 contact hours per class (10 hours in 2010-11; this does not reflect the aggregated hours of unique students who enrolled multiple times).
- In School Residencies
  - Overall attendance ratio of 90% (89% in 2010-11).
  - 64% of enrollments attended every class (57% in 2010-11).
  - 88% of enrollments attended three out of four classes or more (92% in 2010-11).
  - 94% of enrollments attended at least half of the classes (96% in 2010-11).
  - The average enrollment received 7.8 contact hours per class (7.6 hours in 2010-11; this does not reflect the aggregated hours of unique students who enrolled multiple times).
- Workshops
  - Overall attendance ratio of 100% (97% in 2010-11).
  - The average workshop enrollment received 4 contact hours per class (2.6 in 2010-11).
- Special Projects
  - Overall attendance ratio of 100% (100% in 2010-11).

### ***Program Records – Partnerships***

- 74% (26) of classes delivered during 2009-2010 have been maintained by partner organizations for three years, through 2011-2012. *This is a new benchmark that will be tracked over time to measure the stability of Arts Corps' partnerships.*

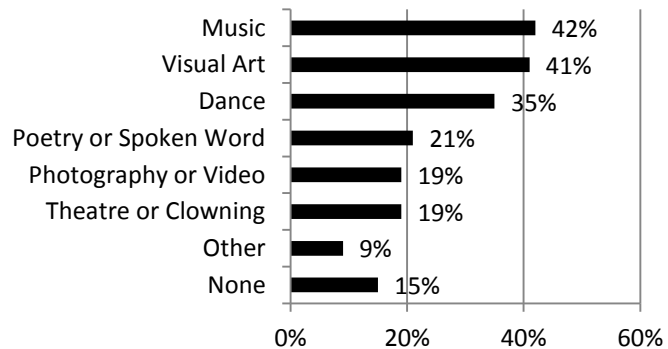
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<sup>2</sup> The attendance ratio is calculated by dividing the number of times a student attended a class by the total number of classes.

### Past Participation in Arts Classes

On their end of class survey, 631 middle and high school students were asked to report on all the art classes they have taken, in or out of school (not counting the one in which they were being surveyed.) Figure 7 details the responses. 15% of students report their Arts Corps class as the first art class they have taken. Last year, 12% of students reported they had not taken an arts class before. As seen last year, music, visual arts and dance were the most common classes that students had previously taken; though last year, dance was most common followed by visual art then music.

**Figure 7: Past Participation in Art Classes**



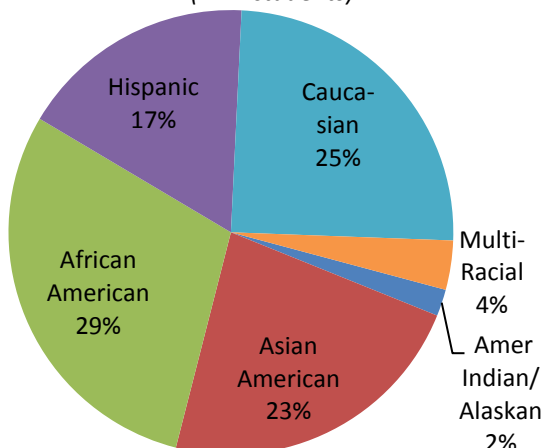
### Student Demographics

Arts Corps uses two methods for collecting data on student demographics:

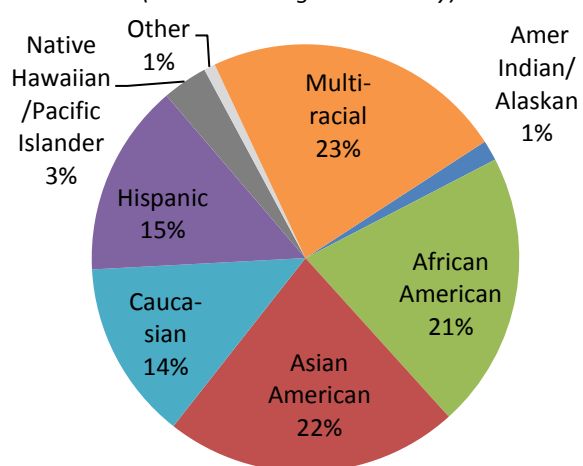
- Program Partner Statistics – Information on student race/ethnicity is estimated based on the students served by each partner program and is not representative of the individual students served in Arts Corps classes.
- Student Survey - For the first time this year, middle and high school students were asked to self-report their race and language(s) spoken at home on student surveys. Since the questions were posed in a “check all that apply” format, some students indicated more than one race or language spoken. (93% of students responded to this question while 7% opted to not respond. The table below shows the responses).

Figure 8 shows race/ethnicity of all students served by Arts Corps Partners, grades K-12. Figure 9 illustrates student middle and high school survey responses (“Other” responses included: mixed, Somali, Brazilian, Native, Indian, European and Human.)

**Figure 8: Partner Reported Race**  
(K-12 students)



**Figure 9: Student Self-Reported Race**  
(middle and high school only)



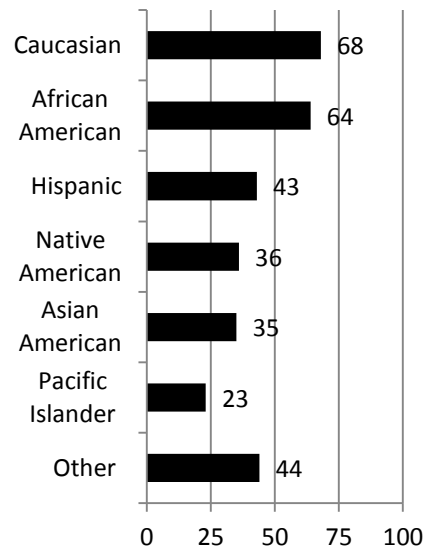
There is on major different between student self-reported race and ethnicity, and the rates reported by partners. Approximately one out in four middle and high school students (23%) self-reported inclusion in more than one racial or ethnic group, compared to program partners who reported only 4% of their students to be multi-racial. This may be because district reporting tools discourage multi-category responses while the survey made this an easy option. Figure 10 illustrates the multiple ethnicities indicated by students who self-reported belonging to more than one race.

A recent study of arts access in Seattle Public Schools found that African American, Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan students are overrepresented among students taking less than the average number of arts courses.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is notable that these students make up almost half (48%) of the students served by Arts Corps programming (estimated based on information provided by program partners.)

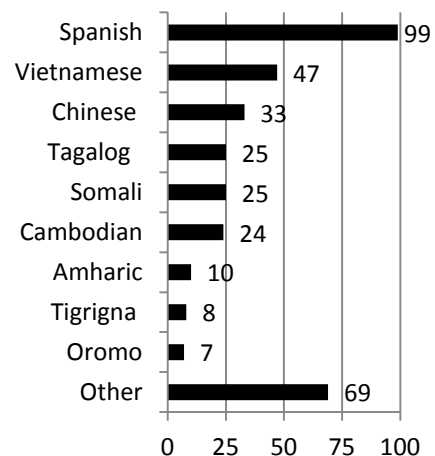
Arts Corps partners report that 66% of their students are eligible for free or reduced lunch (68% in 2010-11). Seattle Public Schools report that students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch are more likely to be taking less than the average number of arts classes.<sup>4</sup>

English was the most common choice of language, with 488 students (77%) indicating that English was spoken in their homes. This option was removed from the data reported in Figure 11. The second most common language was Spanish, which was selected by 99 (16%) students. "Other" responses included: ASL, German, Hindi and other regional Indian dialects, Arabic, Thai, Swahili, Hmong, Jamaican, Japanese, French, Russian, Portuguese, Ilocano and Korean.

**Figure 10: Student Self-Reported Race**  
(multi-racial students only)



**Figure 11: Student Self-Reported Language**  
(other than English)

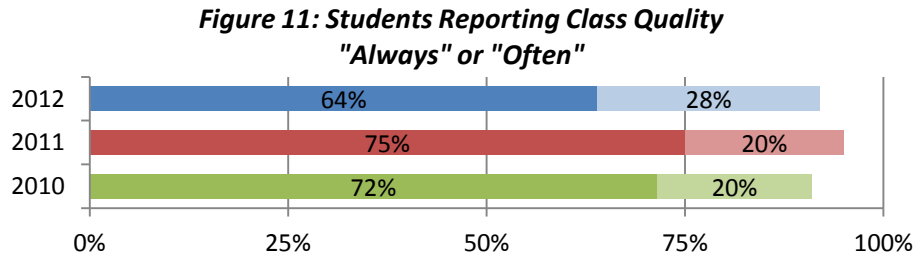


<sup>3</sup> De Soto, Annette. (June 2012). Seattle Public Schools Art Assess Survey and Cohort Analysis. Beyond the Divide.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## Program Quality

### Student and Partner Ratings of Class Quality



While students rated overall program quality at a similar rate as past years, they were less likely to report quality “always” this year when compared to the recent past. When asked if there was anything they would like to share about their Arts Corps experience, 19% of students chose to write about their positive experience. The following quotes are examples:

- *It is great and helpful for everyone and builds everyone's skill level.*
- *It is super amazing; it's boosted my team working ability and confidence by A LOT!*
- *It's really cool because I always liked art and I really, really wish you guys would teach us more.*
- *This class is awesome. It's my favorite thing to do after school.*

Student suggestions for what could be different or changed about the program clustered into the following themes:

#### *More or longer classes*

- *I think that the art class should be longer and it should be more often.*
- *I wish we had more time to practice and be together.*

#### *More people in the classes*

- *A lot of people stopped coming, I hope later semesters have a bit more frequent students.*
- *I wish more kids would come. It can get lonely.*

#### *Different activities*

- *I wish it was different if it had stuff besides clay*
- *I wish that things were more organized and that projects need to be carried through each session so studio time will be used more efficiently*

#### *Logistics*

- *We practice in a bigger, more sound environment.*
- *I wish there was a different music software program to use. I am not a big fan of garage band*

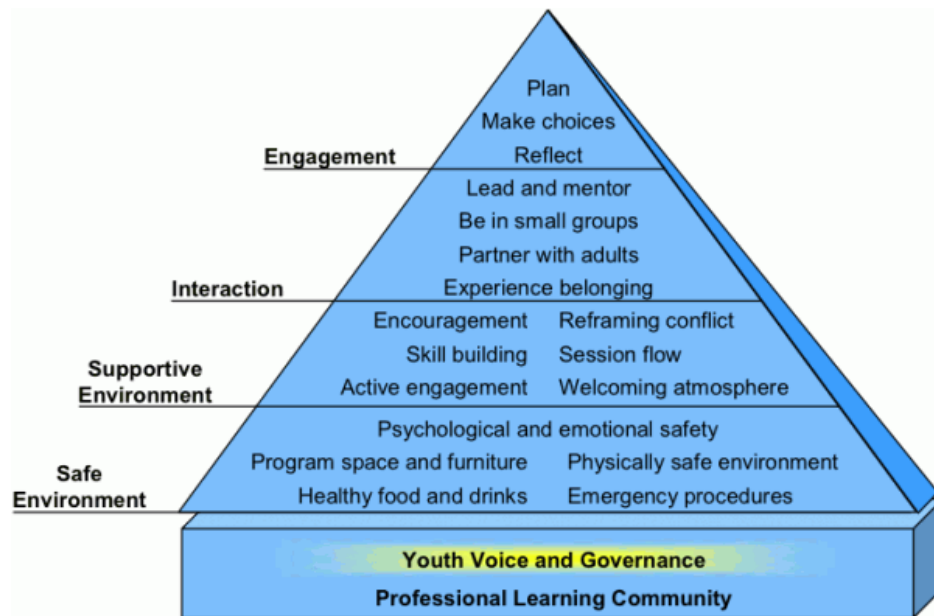
#### *Problems with other students*

- *That girls that have to talk, giggle or laugh every other 3 seconds you can't get anything done.*
- *I wish the two teachers were more enforcing the rules and more serious for a lot of students talk a lot and there is nothing much they can do.*

Program partners were asked to rate the overall quality of Arts Corps classes at their facility on a scale of 1-7 where 1=Needs Improvement and 7=Exceeds Expectations. All (100%) partners believe Arts Corps meets or exceeds their expectations, with an average score of 5.9/7. Last year partners gave Arts Corps a 6.0/7 (this was adjusted because the scale last year was 1-10).

## ***Youth Program Quality Assessment***

The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation developed the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) as a tool for observing and evaluating youth programs. The YPQA incorporates research on best practices in youth programming into four categories: Safe Environment, Supportive Environment, Interaction and Engagement. The tool is designed to capture a snapshot of program quality on a given day in order to stimulate program staff reflection, planning, and action to foster program improvement.

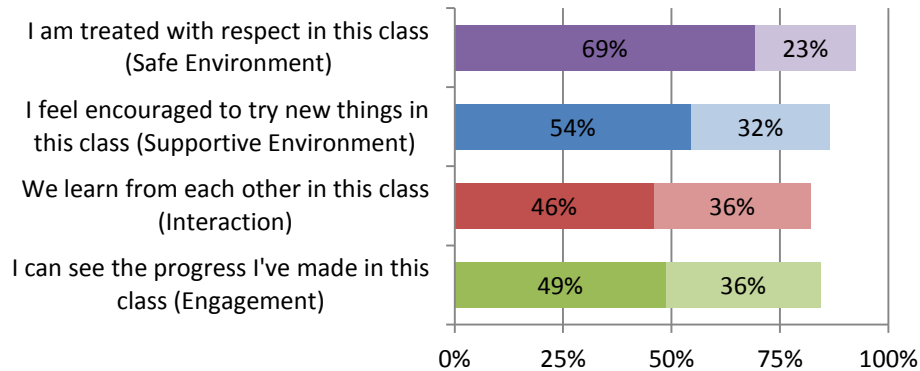


In spring 2011, Arts Corps engaged in a pilot of the Youth Program Quality Intervention, which is comprised of using the YPQA tool for continuous program quality improvement through a regular assess-plan-improve cycle. After the initial assessment, Arts Corps created a plan to focus on three areas for program quality:

- Student Reflection
- Community Building
- Staff use of specific feedback rather than general praise

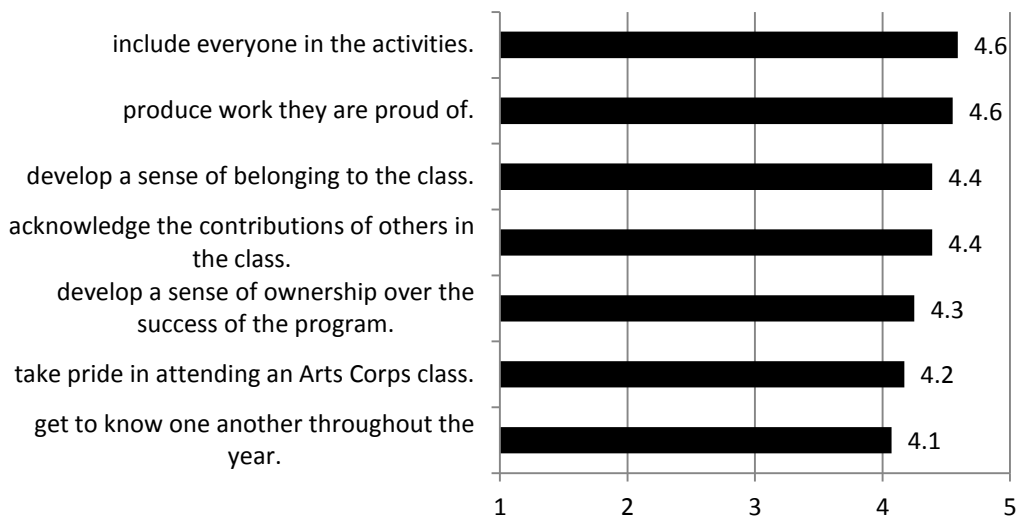
New survey items were added to student and partner surveys this year (and existing survey items were re-examined) to explore Arts Corps' success in bolstering these and other areas of program delivery. First, students were asked to reflect on certain elements of program quality that are aligned with the YPQA and have been identified as important for Arts Corps program improvement efforts. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 12.

**Figure 12: Students Reporting YPQA Elements  
"Always" or "Often"**



Second, Program Partners were also asked if they witnessed certain elements of program quality in Arts Corps classes at their site. Figure 13 illustrates their responses. The majority of Program Partners somewhat or strongly agreed that Arts Corps classes encouraged these elements of program quality.

**Figure 13: Arts Corps classes encourage students to...**  
Partner Agreement: 1=Strongly Disagree; 5=Strongly Agree



Several Partners gave examples of their observations or suggestions for improvement.

- *Students can sometimes say really inappropriate things to each other when being creative but the TA set up the expectations that there is no wrong way to do the art. She also shared that everyone is different so their work is going to look different. Positive comments were the only acceptable comments. This made the entire project go smoothly. She made a point to review the expectations at the beginning of each lesson and that was awesome too! ~ Program Partner*
- *Per the activity students were engaged in, they were able to "own their art", collaborate with each other and build a sense of teamwork. They created a mosaic that instilled a lot of pride from them. ~ Program Partner*
- *This particular focus on visual arts/painting/ceramics lent itself to more of a personal experience for students. Each individual was responsible for his/her own product, so there was little reliance on peers to complete their work. Perhaps one way to build a sense of class belonging is to include a group-constructed product or small group projects as well as individual work. ~ Program Partner*

Student surveys also asked youth about reflection and community building. Students were significantly more likely to agree that these statements described them after Arts Corps class than before. Figure 14 illustrates their responses.

**Figure 14: Student Reported Changes related to YPQA Goals**



This year, observations guided by use of YPQA tool were expanded to two groups of Arts Corps programs, elementary and All-Access classes. These observations were considered pilot on how Arts Corps could expand observations to multiple classes and gather useful program quality feedback for program managers. Because elementary students do not complete end of class surveys, the YPQA tool for younger youth was administered with five such classes. All five Teen Artist Program classes also were observed given a recent increase in organizational investment in this program that is not provided “where students are” but rather requires youth to travel independently to the class site. External evaluators certified to administer the YPQA visited five Elementary School classes and five Teen Artist Program classes.

The pilot observations resulted in the following lessons learned about how to improve use YPQI model for a continuous quality improvement process within Arts Corps.

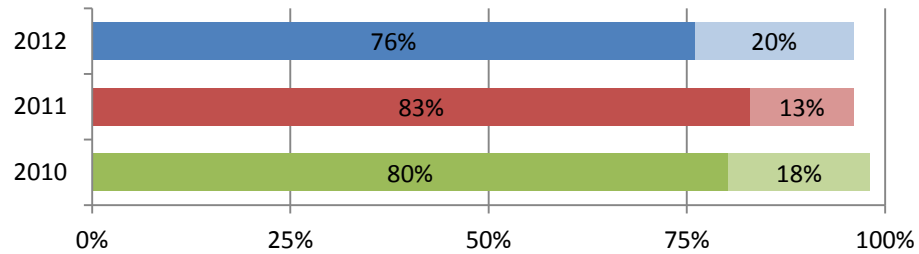
- Observations should be scheduled on a “typical” class day to provide an accurate snapshot of the typical program experience, even if this requires last minute rescheduling.
- Teaching artists should be provided a basic orientation to the YPQA tool prior to observation so that they buy-into the observation and the usefulness of the data it can provide, and fully engaged in the Observe-Plan-Improve cycle. It would be ideal if teaching artists are trained to conduct internal observations and given a chance to use the YPQA tool to conduct an observation.
- Managers must manage the culture around YPQA within the organization and communicate how scores will be used. Staff inevitably wants to know “what happens if we receive a low score?”
- YPQA data should be used for either internal program improvement or external program evaluation purposes, but not both. If the scores are used to assess program quality for outside audiences, staff might be motivated to sample only the strongest programs for observation. If the data is to inform program improvements, there is a good reason to observe programs that might be facing challenges, and create a culture where staff and

teaching artists are open to receiving a low score so that program improvement strategies can be identified and implemented.

- Arts Corps must develop a system for communicating scores to teaching artists, allowing time for questions, and consistently following through with an action plan informed by the data. This is potentially a time-consuming process and should be put into place well before the end of the year.

### Student and Partner Ratings of Teacher Quality

**Figure 15: Students Reporting Teacher Quality  
"Always" or "Often"**

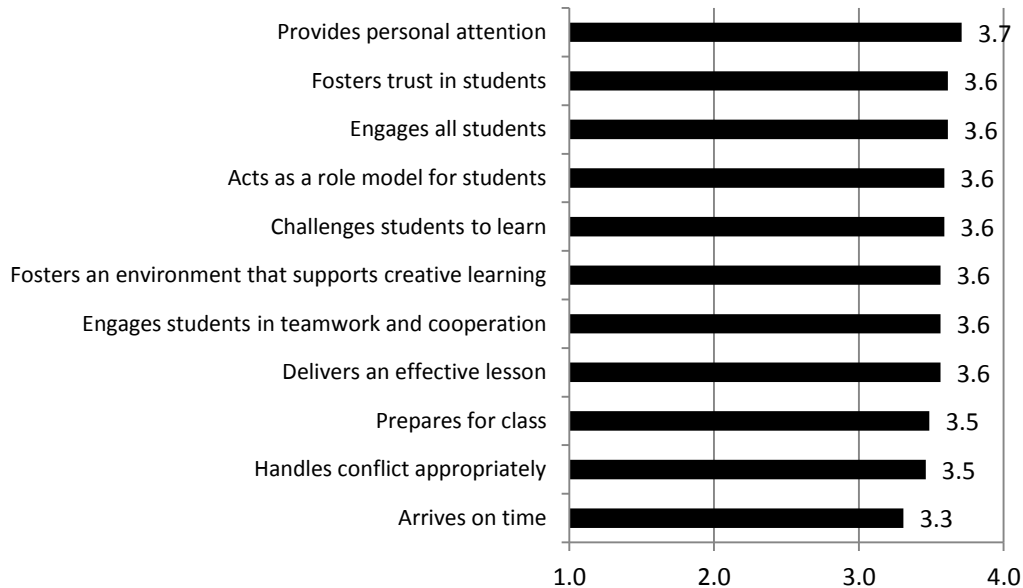


As with class quality, students reported overall quality at a similar rate as past years, but were more likely to report quality “often” than in past years and less likely to report quality “always.” The following quotes illustrate student examples of teacher quality:

- *I think [the instructor] is doing a great job, like sometimes he can be a little strict but other than that he is pretty good.*
- *Our teacher is an amazing role model and a great person!*

**Figure 16: This Teaching Artist...**

1=Strongly Disagree, 4=Strongly Agree



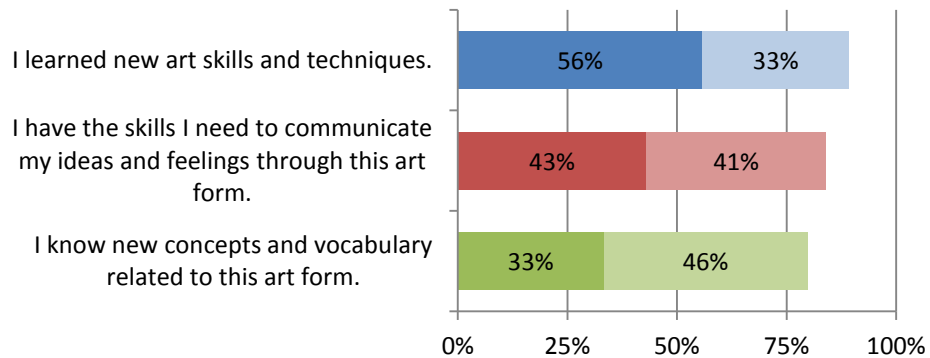
Most Program Partners agree or strongly agree that Arts Corps Teaching Artists meet classroom expectations. Figure 16 illustrates their survey responses.



## Learning

### Artistic Competencies

**Figure 17: Students Reporting Artistic Learning  
"A Great Deal" or "Somewhat"**



Student responses to open-ended questions indicate that students increased their artistic competencies as well.

#### Skills and Techniques

- *[I learned] The flow of my words and to put them together as a poet.*
- *I learned thinking techniques to close your eyes to think more clear.*
- *Drumming, volume because I can now drum and the tempo low and high*

#### Communication through the Arts

- *I have learned that instead of holding things in I can pull out a piece of paper and write about it.*
- *Well the most important I learned was that drama is made to express yourself in dramatic ways*
- *I've learned how to communicate with others through the dynamics of live music.*

#### Concepts and Vocabulary

- *Learning the 4 concepts of break dance: top rock, footwork, freezes, and power moves.*
- *I learned what the meaning of punctum was, and why some photographers take certain pictures.*
- *The most important thing I learned is a lot of different stage terms.*

Teaching Artists were mixed in their assessment of student learning:

- 44% of Teaching Artists agreed that most students learned and improved their skills a great deal.
- 44% of Teaching Artists agreed that many students learned and improved their skills a great deal, but there were some who didn't learn as much.
- 11% of Teaching Artists agreed that student learning was mixed, with some students improving a great deal, some improving a little and some not at all.

Teaching Artists were asked to elaborate on how they assess student learning in their classroom. While all teachers had a method for assessing student learning, they are intentionally customized to the class and the needs of the particular students, and thus there was not a consistent method of assessment. For example, some teaching artists quizzed students or asked them to demonstrate a particular competency and others relied on observation (formal or informal).

- *It starts at the beginning of the year; I measure all the students' proficiencies in the studio and their knowledge on day 1 and then use that as my baseline to measure their growth through out the year.*
- *I have regular warm ups and tests to evaluate where the students are at. Most of it is formal, some of it informal. These are mostly initiated by me, and sometimes initiated by students.*
- *At the end of class before they leave we either have a "freestyle" dance circle or I ask each child to show me one thing they learned in class that day.*
- *Whether their s!#\*t was dope or not...The proof comes by way of the hairs on my arms. At some point in the lifespan of a class, my hairs should stand up on end. It happens when the container is safe, people are telling truth, and a moment of real humanity occurs.*

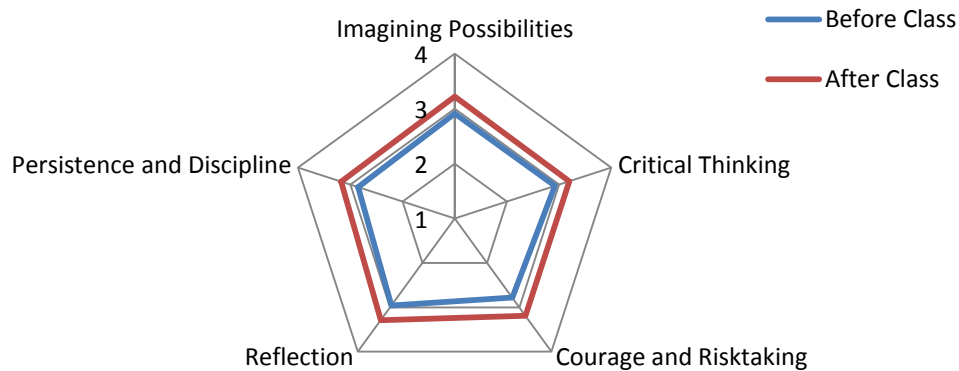
### ***Creative Habits of Mind***

Arts Corps focuses on fostering five Creative Habits of Mind, which are described below with italicized bullets that list the survey questions designed to tap student practice of each habit.

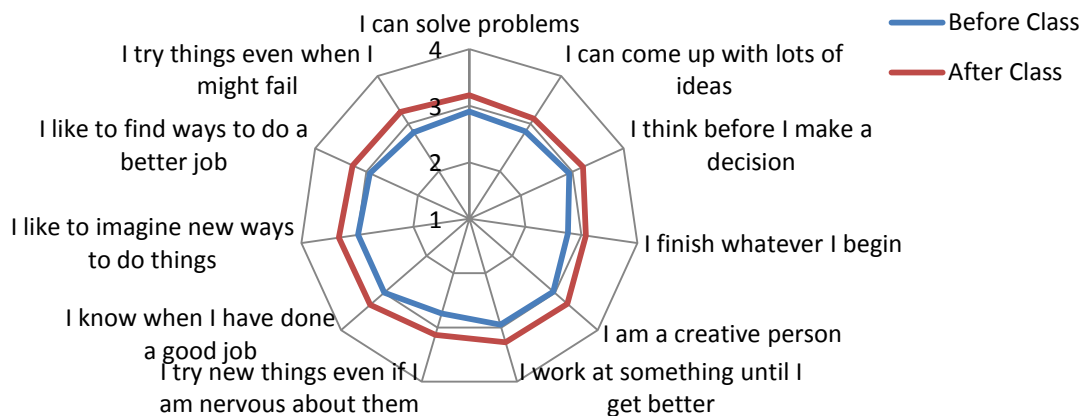
- **Imagining Possibilities:** to conceive of imaginative possibilities, pursue a vision, generate ideas, and respond to new possibilities as they arise
  - *I can come up with lots of ideas*
  - *I like to imagine new ways to do things*
- **Critical Thinking:** to generate and apply criteria for what makes good work (process); to solve problems creatively; to examine ideas; to make connections between unlike things
  - *I can solve problems*
  - *I think before making a decision*
- **Courage and Risk-taking:** to work outside of comfort zones; to tolerate ambiguity, to resist "shoulds & oughts"
  - *I try things even when I might fail*
  - *I try new things even if I am nervous about them*
- **Reflection:** to recognize what is personal & distinctive about oneself and one's work; to reflect on success of final solution
  - *I like to find ways to do a better job*
  - *I know when I have done a good job*
- **Persistence and Discipline:** to develop mental & physical discipline: how to attend, concentrate, persist, coordinate
  - *I finish whatever I begin*
  - *I work at something until I get better*

Students were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement after completing their Arts Corps class, then reflect on their behavior prior to enrolling in the class. For every item, students reported they were *significantly* more likely to agree that the statement described them after their Arts Corps class than before. Figures 17 and 18 demonstrate the pattern of responses on a 1-4 scale, where 1=Strongly Disagree and 4=Strongly Agree. Questions are grouped by creative habit in Figure 18 and shown individually in Figure 19.

**Figure 18: Changes in Self-Reported Creative Habits**



**Figure 19: Changes in Self-Reported Creative Habits**



Student responses to open-ended questions indicated learning related to the Habits of Mind.

#### *Courage and Risk-Taking*

- *How to not care what people think of you when your dancing, to just go dance and do your thing.*
- *What I learned in this class is that I have to be confident about my writing and when I share my writing.*
- *To not be afraid to try new things (in public).*

#### *Imagining Possibilities*

- *Expanded my thinking about poetry and my writing*
- *That you can make a beat just thinking of anything*
- *That if you are drumming, be creative and do free styles.*

### *Persistence and Discipline*

- *To express how I feel, and to never stop writing. Keep going when you're stuck.*
- *I have learned that it is okay to make mistakes*
- *That some mistakes are sometimes a good thing.*

### *Reflection*

- *That a poetry that I had written down usually has to do with one of my childhood memories.*
- *The most important thing I learned is the true meaning of poetry and what it's all about.*

### **Use of Post-Pre Format for Student Survey**

*Initial analysis suggests the use of the post-pre survey format (implemented for the first time this year) produces similar pattern of survey responses to the pre- and post-program survey format used in prior years, and results in much higher response rates (See Table 2). Table 3 compares the mean responses to survey items this year to past years.*

<b>Table 2: Pre-Post Survey Response Rates</b>	11-12	10-11	09-10
Survey Response Rate	51%	25%	29%

<b>Table 3: Mean item response</b>		<b>11-12</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>09-10</b>
I am a creative person	<i>pre</i>	3.0	3.3	3.4
	<i>post</i>	3.3*	3.2*	3.5
I can come up with lots of ideas	<i>pre</i>	2.8	2.9	2.9
	<i>post</i>	3.1*	2.9*	3.3*
I like to imagine new ways to do things	<i>pre</i>	3.0	3.0	3.1
	<i>post</i>	3.3*	3.1	3.4*
I can solve problems	<i>pre</i>	2.9	3.1	3.0
	<i>post</i>	3.2*	2.7*	3.2*
I think before making a decision	<i>pre</i>	2.9	2.8	2.8
	<i>post</i>	3.2*	3.1*	3.1*
I try things even when I might fail	<i>pre</i>	2.8	2.9	3.0
	<i>post</i>	3.2*	3.2*	3.3*
I try new things even if I am nervous about them/I don't hold back, even when something is new.	<i>pre</i>	2.7	2.8	3.0
	<i>post</i>	3.1*	3.0*	3.3*
I like to find ways to do a better job	<i>pre</i>	2.9	2.9	3.1
	<i>post</i>	3.3*	3.2*	3.4*
I know when I have done a good job	<i>pre</i>	3.0	3.2	3.2
	<i>post</i>	3.3*	3.2	3.2*
I finish whatever I begin/I don't give up easily	<i>pre</i>	2.8	2.8	3.1
	<i>post</i>	3.1*	3.2	3.4*
I work at something until I get better	<i>pre</i>	2.9	3.0	3.2
	<i>post</i>	3.3*	3.3	3.4*

\* indicates a significant change, where  $p < 0.05$

### ***Teaching Artist Self-Report of Fostering Creative Habits***

Teaching Artists were asked to rank the creative habits in the order from the one they focus on the most to the least in their classrooms. The five creative habits were ranked in the following order:

1. Courage and Risk-Taking
2. Imagining Possibilities
3. Persistence and Discipline
4. Reflection
5. Critical Thinking

### ***Structured Observation of Creative Habits***

Together with MEMconsultants, Arts Corps developed an addendum to the YPQA that served as a structured observation tool used for measuring Creative Habits practice in the classroom. It follows the YPQA structure with possible scores of 1, 3 or 5 on a variety of indicators. The tool was piloted in Elementary classes, revised, then piloted again in the Teen Artist Program classes. The tool is a “work in progress” that will continue to be refined to inform organizational learning. An example of one page of the tool is below.

EXAMPLE: Youth have opportunities for courage and risk taking.

*Note: **Courage and risk-taking** is defined as follows: to work outside of comfort zones; to tolerate ambiguity, to have confidence in one’s abilities, to resist “shoulds & oughts”*

<b>1</b>	Staff discourage students from making mistakes	<b>3</b>	Staff neither encourage nor discourage youth to try new things that might lead to making mistakes	<b>5</b>	Staff actively create a space /class culture where making mistakes is okay or encourage youth to try things that might lead to mistakes
<b>1</b>	Staff do not provide youth with opportunities to explore new or challenging activities	<b>3</b>	Staff provide one time-limited (five minutes or less) opportunity for youth to explore new or challenging activities	<b>5</b>	Staff provide multiple opportunities or an extended opportunity for youth to explore new or challenging activities
<b>1</b>	Few students capable of completing tasks/activities without frequent reassurance from staff	<b>3</b>	Some students are capable of completing tasks with minimal or no reassurance from staff	<b>5</b>	Many students are capable of completing tasks with minimal or no reassurance from staff

## ***Transfer of Learning and School Performance***

Arts Corps asserts that creative habits are valuable not only for the production of art, but also because they support performance in school and work settings. To explore this hypothesis, Seattle School District data was obtained to examining differences between Arts Corps students and other students on the following indicators of school success:

- Student performance on annual reading and math state tests (WASL or MSP)
- Student absences per school year

A sample of two elementary, one middle and one high school were selected for this study because, among Arts Corps school-based classes, they had the highest number of students consistently served in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. These schools are:

- Kimball and Van Asselt Elementary
- Mercer Middle School
- Chief Sealth High School

The Seattle Public School's Research & Evaluation Department provided five years of attendance and academic data for students who attended these schools for at least one of those five years. Students who participated in Arts Corps programming were indicated in the dataset, and non-Arts Corps students in the same grades/enrolled in the same schools served as a comparison group.<sup>5</sup> Because demographic data was not provided by the district (to preserve the anonymity of students), no analysis to examine the similarities/differences between the program and comparison groups was conducted (beyond matching by grade level and school).

This report highlights the most interesting findings of this analysis.

### **Improved Reading Scores are Correlated with Elementary Arts Corps Participation**

Arts Corps has provided after school programming continuously at Van Asselt and Kimball Elementary Schools since 2006-2007. Any student who attended Kimball or Van Asselt for both 09-10 and 10-11 in specific grade levels were included in the analysis.

Academic Year	09-10	10-11
Student Grade Levels	3-4	4-5
Arts Corps participants	17	17
No Arts Corps comparison	290	290
<b>Table 4: Elementary Sample Size</b>		

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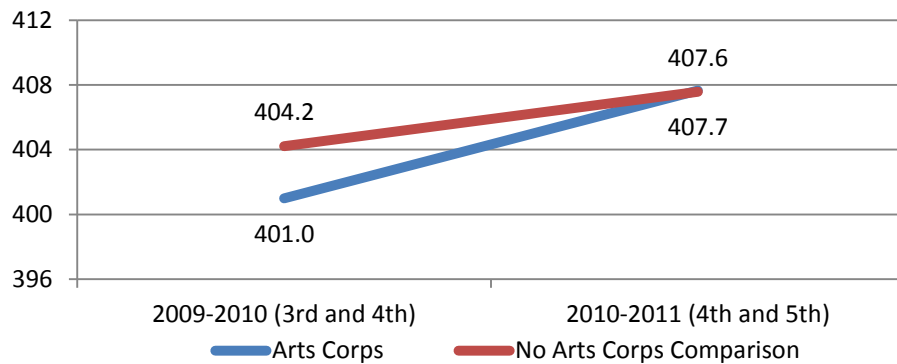
<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that the "no Arts Corps comparison" group likely includes Arts Corps students; because Arts Corps does not have access to District IDs, it depends upon others to provide them and is not able to obtain IDs for every Arts Corps student. Because the dataset has no student identifiers, some Arts Corps students some may be misidentified as comparison students.

Students were assigned to one of two reading groups:

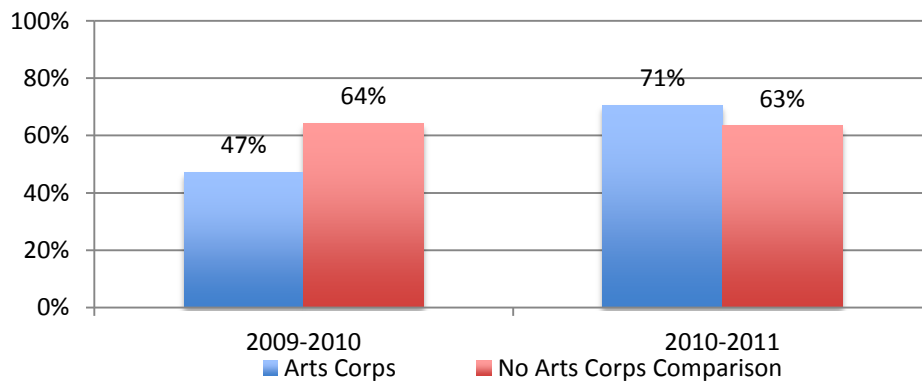
- Meets Standard, defined as achieving a score level of L4 (advanced) or L3 (proficient) on the MSP.
- Does Not Meet Standard, defined as achieving a score level of L1 (below basic) or L2 (basic) on the MSP.

This data shows that Arts Corps participation is correlated with improvements on the reading test from spring 2010 to spring 2011, as detailed in Figures 20 and 21 and Table 5.

**Figure 20: Mean Reading Score**  
Arts Corps vs. No Arts Corps



**Figure 21: Percent of Students who Meet Standard in Reading**  
Arts Corps and No Arts Corps Comparison



	Arts Corps		No Arts Corps Comparison	
2009-2010	9 students at L1 or L2		90 students at L1 or L2	
2010-2011	5 improved at least one level 56% improvement	4 stayed the same	30 improved at least one level 30% improvement	60 stayed the same or got worse
Table 5: Year to Year Change in MSP Reading Levels				

### Arts Corps Enrollment Associated with Fewer Absences in Middle School

Arts Corps has provided after school programming continuously at Mercer Middle School since the 2008-2009 school year. Students were included in the study sample if they were in 6th grade in 2008-2009 and attended Mercer Middle School continuously for all three years of middle school. Students were separated into three groups:

- High Arts Corps – defined as students who received a high dosage of Arts Corps programming because they enrolled in at least 6 quarter-long classes
- Low Arts Corps – defined as students who enrolled in only 1 quarter-long Arts Corps class.
- No Arts Corps – defined as students not ever enrolled in Arts Corps

Academic Year	08-09	09-10	10-11
Student Grade Level	6	7	8
High Arts Corps participants	12	12	12
Low Arts Corps participants	9	9	9
No Arts Corps comparison	163	163	163

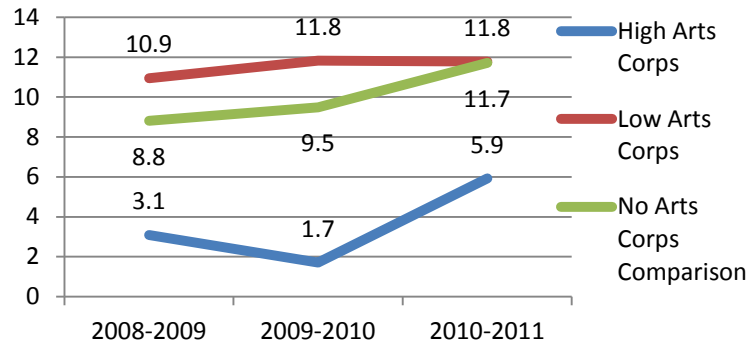
**Table 6: Mercer Middle School Sample Size**

Students were also assigned to one of two absence groups:

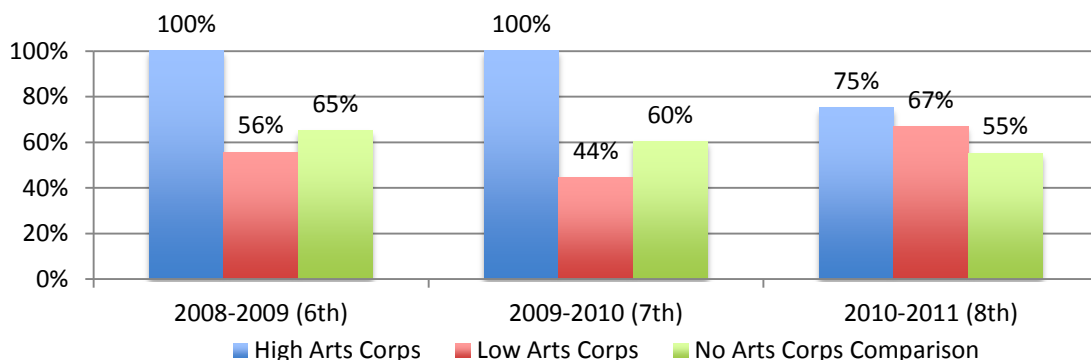
- Low Absences, defined as fewer than ten absences in a particular academic year
- High Absences, defined as ten or more absences in a particular academic year

These numbers indicate that students who enroll in multiple Arts Corps classes attend school more regularly than those who do not. The percentages and means for the “High Arts Corps” group are significantly higher than no Arts Corps in school years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 (indicated by a one-way ANOVA and *Tamhane T2* post hoc tests; details of analysis available upon request).

**Figure 22: Mean Number of Absences**  
High, Low and No Arts Corps



**Figure 23: Percent of Students in Low Absence Group**  
High, Low and No Arts Corps





## Partnerships

### *Achieving Shared Goals*

Arts Corps Partner Programs were asked to describe their goals for this year's partnership with Arts Corps. Most partners expressed a desire to bring more arts to their site and/or to offer a quality youth program experience.

- *Our major goal was to work together to provide an outlet of arts in our afterschool students. We also wanted to incorporate cultural relevancy in our partnership and offer performing arts based classes.*
- *My goal was to bring in another medium of art - using clay. This is not something I am comfortable teaching.*
- *I do not remember the exact goals, although I remember talking with Lara about how we would partner to provide activities that offer cohorts of youth the opportunities to build positive relationships with each other and adult role models, develop tangible skills and self-confidence, and reflect on their learning.*
- *Our goals are to engage youth in activities that are in line with academic standards and have enrichment and recreation components. In addition to achieving attendance standards for students.*

Two partners specifically mentioned staff development as a goal of the partnership.

- *To expose [our] teachers to service based arts experiences.*
- *My goal was to take a back seat and watch how an artist teaches art so that I could attempt to duplicate the process when teaching art on my own.*

Partners were next asked to describe the extent to which their goals had or had not been met. Twenty-two of the twenty-five partners (88%) who responded to this question felt that their goals had been met or exceeded.

- *We have met those goals. Students have shown increase in academic achievement and have met their attendance benchmarks of two times a week or more for more than 3 months.*
- *This goal has been met--the children have gained new knowledge and have strengthened their skills.*
- *Our school works toward bridging the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots". Arts Corps helped provide programs that students couldn't otherwise afford.*

Three sites described challenges in meeting their goals for the partnership.

- *I feel like these goals have been met in 2/3 projects that we partnered on this year. We have had challenges in implementing [one] residency, partially due to a risk that we took to work with a class of students. There are a multitude of factors that have made this particular residency less successful than others in the past. In addition, in our after-school poetry class, we did not build as strong or consistent of a cohort as I would like to see.*
- *The offering of GLEE went off with a few glitches here and there, but overall great. Hip Hop, on the other hand, was not so successful. We have already had meetings with Arts Corps about this...*
- *We only had 4-6 students enrolled. Those students who did participate had an incredible growth in skills and also benefited from the small group size and one on one attention they were able to get from [the Teaching Artist]. He is a very caring and skilled teacher and did great work with the kids we had. The only regret is that we didn't have more kids in the program. Next year we are expecting a much bigger age range and therefore bigger group.*

Finally, Program Partners were asked how Arts Corps could do a better job of helping each site meet their goals for the program. Some partners suggested continuing current practices of consistent communication, access and program quality, specifically the teaching artists.

- *Continue the great work with instructors and YPQA.*
- *I appreciate the consistent communication from the Arts Corps supervisor in regards to logistics to the project.*
- *To continue to be flexible with costs for programming and to continue to provide the creative classes that are offered.*

Other themes that emerged were assistance with recruitment, changes to program structure or content and more youth involvement.

- *Our programs are so established that I get lazy about recruitment, so maybe we could work together to approach each year like a new year and recruit like the program is new, even though it isn't.*
- *Any assistance in marketing our program and getting the word out to the school community, such as posters or fliers would be a big help.*
- *One of the ideas that we have for the upcoming year is to implement a Youth Leadership Council where we will have youth interns to help to determine what programs will be offered, assist with recruitment and retention of students, etc. If we partner together to include youth council members in the planning process, I think that we will experience greater success overall.*
- *This is difficult because it would probably be more spread out, but to have longer residencies that are implemented within the Project Based Learning format.*
- *We need to consider if we can teach these classes after school or extend the program over the summer.*
- *I was completely satisfied with my experience with Arts Corps this year. The only area that I felt could have been improved upon is that more extensions or variations for early finishers could have been provided. Some students were "finished" and became distractions for those still working on their progress.*

## ***Spruce Street Case Study***

Arts Corps has partnered with Spruce Street Inn Secure Crisis Residential Center since 2005. Spruce Street provides a safe place for at-risk youth who are in crisis to stabilize for up to 15 days while they work with a counselor to find suitable living arrangements. The facility offers 18 beds for youth who fall into one of these primary categories:

- Youth who are found in dangerous situations by law enforcement, have a runaway report or are in violation of a curfew ordinance,
- Youth who are referred by their Family Reconciliation Social Worker because their family is experiencing conflict, or
- Youth in state care who are in need of placement.

In 2011-2012, two Arts Corps' teaching artists provided one poetry, visual art and acting class each week. To better understand the role Arts Corps plays in helping this partner achieve its mission and to clarify the impact of the partnership, six interviews were conducted with staff at the organization. Interviewees included program managers and residential counselors. The themes of these interviews and example comments are detailed below.

### Impact on Partner Organization

#### *Quality Youth Programming*

Spruce Street staff value Arts Corps' ability to provide engaging, positive activities for youth. They also value the fresh perspective and different experiences of the teaching artists as a complement to their work with the youth they serve.

- *Having Arts Corps come in as a new group and a fresh face, the kids listen to them more. They aren't the staff here bossing them around; they are here to have fun. These youth don't have fun lives, and fun is important and healing for them.*
- *They walk in and bring this fresh energy and fresh face. It's no more of us forcing the youth to do educational stuff. Arts Corps brings in more stories and a variety of backgrounds for the kids to connect to.*
- *I've fought to keep them in place and to keep Arts Corps in the budget, because they really help our program better serve youth.*

#### *Staff Support*

Staff members value that Arts Corps provides a stress-reducing break from supervising duties as well as an opportunity to catch up on other responsibilities. They believe they are better able to serve the youth when Arts Corps frees them to tend to other duties without persistent interruptions.

- *We can have a little less on our shoulders when Arts Corps comes. We can focus on more time being one-on-one with the kids. That's really helpful.*
- *Being able to distract the kids for an hour is amazing. I can finally get paperwork done. I have so much stuff going on, having Vicky or Jeff come in makes a huge difference.*
- *My favorite part is that they have a set plan when they come in. It's nice for us because we are always cooking food or doing paperwork, so if it gets us some time, that's really important.*
- *I've had a few Arts Corps people help us. Even come into the kitchen and help me. Sit at the table and observe and talk to the kids. It's a good thing they are here.*

## Impact on Youth

### *Healthy Communication and Expression*

Spruce Street staff stressed Arts Corps' ability to help youth communicate emotions and express their needs in a healthy way.

- *[The most important impact of this partnership is] getting the kids to express their feelings. They have so many things going on and they don't know how to express what they are going through. Vicky comes in and tells her stories and shows how she expresses herself. Through poetry, she gives the kids structure to express themselves.*
- *For us to be able to get a glimpse of what a youth feels through their poetry, we can learn who they are and how they express their emotions. The poetry really helps me understand how a kid expresses emotions and how they respond. It's better than a file I can read.*
- *The art can be a stepping-stone for expressing what is really going on with their lives. Conversations start with a little acting or drawing but then really open the doors to other topics.*
- *The kids can get it out in a way that is healthy in poetry. They put it out in words and it's healthy.*
- *Some kids have the creativity, but they don't feel usually show it with each other. Arts Corps brings out something that they usually hide among their peers. They can express themselves in a way they didn't know they could.*

### *Artistic Activities*

Staff notice residents continue their artistic endeavors outside of class time.

- *The kids are really happy when certain groups come through, and Arts Corps is one of them. Sometimes the youth can pick up the art even when Arts Corps people aren't even here. They continue painting or poetry even then. It helps us as a team.*
- *Quite a few kids continued to write all the time after doing couple of classes with Vicky. And it gave them something to be excited about. They still paint and write when the teaching artist is not here. They wanted to write poetry for Vicky. Lyrics for songs, stuff like that.*

## Recommendations for Improvement

### *More Programming*

Spruce Street staff members wish Arts Corps could increase programming and add programming in the summer.

- *If Arts Corps could come every single day, I would be so happy.*
- *Get Arts Corps in for the summer too; we usually have fewer kids in the summer, but now, due to budget cuts or whatever, that's not true anymore. We've been consistently at 10 kids or above. Continuing through the summer would be a great thing.*
- *I want more acting groups. The kids used to stay 3 to 5 days. Now they stay for 15 days. So we can't have the exact same class every week, or the kids think: We are doing this again?*

### *Appropriate Boundaries for Youth in Crisis*

Residential counselors believe it is important that teaching artists receive training and feedback on appropriate boundaries when working with youth in crisis. Conversation topics that are appropriate with a general population can be sensitive or trigger youth in this setting.

- *Sometimes a teaching artist asks questions in a way that seems like prying to the kids. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. For our current teaching artist, he's a lot better now, as he got more training and oriented to our setting. Every new teaching artist needs this training.*
- *I think about boundaries as sometimes the feelings get too emotional. Teaching artists come in from the outside and don't know the circumstances of each youth. If they don't know what can trigger someone, it could take me an hour to deescalate a youth after the teaching artist leaves.*

## ***Teen Artist Program Case Study***

### About the Classes

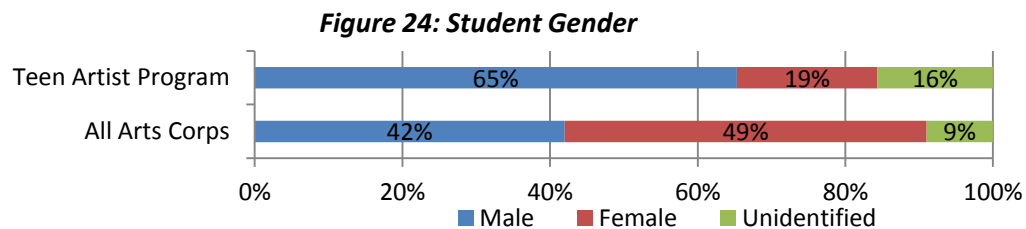
Arts Corps' Advanced Teen Artist Program provides free, after-school arts classes for Seattle area youth at Youngstown Cultural Arts Center. Arts Corps is the lead arts organization working in partnership with Youngstown in its All Access Program, which brings free after-school arts classes to teens. Arts Corps has taken a leadership role in the All Access program, including marketing, recruitment and coordination of the quarterly Showcase events.

Arts Corps offers multiple beginning classes to teens in the area at local schools and community centers. The Teen Artist Program provides students a chance to continue their focus on creative practice at their neighborhood cultural arts center.

### About the Students

In 2011-2012, there were a total of 147 enrollments in the Teen Artist program classes. Forty-two students (51%) enrolled in more than one class, resulting in 83 unique enrollments. Seven of these were in multiple classes, while 35 re-enrolled in the same class for multiple quarters. Five students enrolled in more than one class for multiple quarters. Two students (5%) reported that their Arts Corps class was their first arts class.

Figure 24 illustrates the gender of enrolled students. The higher percentage of males is due to the number of males enrolled in All Access Breakdance (92% of enrollments are male), Music Production (87% of enrollments are male) and In the Studio (100% of enrollments are male). The majority (93%) of females are enrolled in Glee or Writing Circle and three of four unidentified students (74%) are enrolled in Writing Circle.



### Data Collection Methods

- Student Surveys – Thirty-seven of the students in the teen artist program (45%) completed a retrospective post-pre survey. Their responses are analyzed below.
- Focus Groups – Teen Artist Program students and Teaching Artists participated in separate focus groups as one part of the overall program evaluation strategy. Both focus group discussions were guided by two evaluation questions:
  - What is the impact of the Teen Artist Program classes?
  - How can the Teen Artist Program classes be improved?

The themes that emerged from the discussions and survey results are described on the following pages.

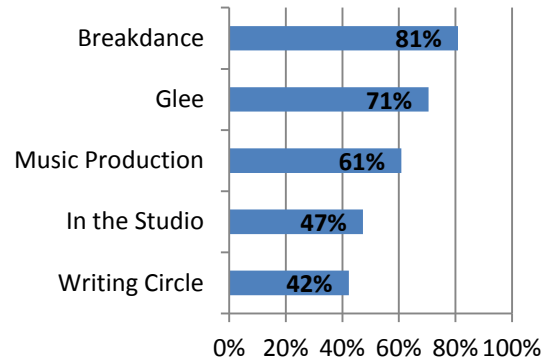
## Student Participation

The average class met ten times for 17.6 hours. The average student attended six of the ten classes resulting in a 63% attendance ratio and a total of 1,641 contact hours with Teen Artist Program students.

- Twenty-three (16%) enrolled students attended every class.
- Sixty (41%) enrollments attended three out of four classes or more.
- One-hundred-four (71%) enrollments attended half of the classes or more.

The average attendance ratio for Teen Artist Program classes (63%) is much lower than Arts Corps overall attendance ratio of 82%. Some classes have higher attendance than others, as illustrated in Figure 25.

**Figure 25: Student Attendance Ratio**



Teaching Artists report a semi-predictable pattern of ebbs and flows in student attendance. They would like to minimize dips in participation rates and foster high attendance rates for a consistent cohort of students. Additionally, some point out a tension between the desire for low-barriers to participation (i.e., the “drop in at any time” model) and the commitment to advanced skill-building (which requires consistent attendance to deliver a sequential curriculum).

- *For attendance, for next year, I would like to see Arts Corps utilize their relationships with classrooms. Incentivize participation. They should get extra credit from their schools. That's done with the outreach days, but it's not well targeted. If people from Ballard High come here, we should be able to tell their teachers so they will get extra credit.*
- *I wonder, is Teen Artist Program cool because it is drop in? They come in all the time, but where are you going? I think about The Service Board, it's successful because it is selective. It has inspired commitment. It's hard for me to know what to expect [and plan for, as a teacher]. Are we a drop in because everyone is cool and can come in? Or are we trying to get the best so they can excel? I don't know.*
- *Maybe the older kids can come back and get those volunteer hours. I get all these kids who don't know what they want to do, how can they delegate that energy? We need youth mentors to help with that. Being intentional about filling in slots for volunteers. This is what you get. This is the incentive. .... What if we go after grant money for kids for stipends based on attendance? For work training. It's more serious, and shows a sense of accountability. It's a real job.*

## Class Quality

All (100%) students surveyed agreed, “This class is a positive experience” and, “This teaching artist is an excellent teacher.” For each question, almost every student (97%) responded *almost always*, while one student (3%) responded *very much or often*. These student ratings of class quality are much higher than those of Arts Corps classes overall.

Students describe the welcoming, supportive atmosphere fostered by the Teaching Artists. Some describe how their Teaching Artists balance being a highly skilled professional artist while successfully relating to the students as they develop their skills.

- *First day, I was freaking out because I was late. People were talking about how they already knew instruments. I was like, I am gonna suck because everyone knows an instrument. But we worked together off everyone's vibes and it made me comfortable. ~Student*
- *I was new here and so scared. When I came here they made me feel comfortable. ~Student*
- *He not only makes himself like a teacher, but also your buddy. He likes showing you songs off YouTube or other people. He puts himself back in his years when he was new at instruments and he makes you feel like he is learning along with you. ~Student*
- *I think the majority of the teachers have a sense of what they are doing and they are experienced. That's what makes it better. Sometimes they are just there to teach. It is cool that they tell you what they did, their journey and career. You are drawing off ways they learned. The writing circle is just to relax. ~Student*
- *She knows how to talk with us and if we cannot do the way that she wants, she will try more ways. To see what we can do for us. ~Student*
- *While I really enjoy writing with Kelly, I really imagine going there to do prompts. Even when I started with the guitar, she helped me incorporate it into my music. ~Student*

Teaching Artists reflected on their responsibilities towards mentoring youth into future artists. Some described their own development first as an Arts Corps student, then Classroom Assistant, and ultimately a Teen Artist Program Teaching Artist, and appreciate that Arts Corps creates this avenue for advancement for youth:

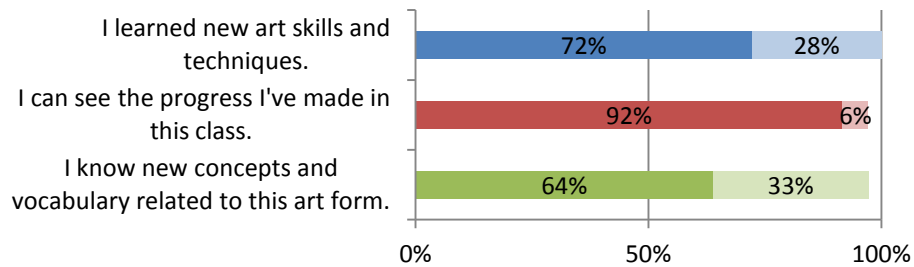
- *When I was taking classes, I didn't have a goal. When I kept going, I found out what I wanted to do. As I pursued that, I am here now, teaching these kids. Everything I have done is positive, as a dancer. The more we can teach the next generation, the more they can give back later. ~Teaching Artist*
- *We become role models that we can be artists and making it as real people in society. That was different from what I was learned growing up. ~Teaching Artist*
- *The kids started asking me how to be a teaching artist. So the next generation is latching on to it much earlier. They see what we do and they want to do it. ~Teaching Artist*

### Artistic Competencies

Both Students and Teaching Artists believe that the Teen Artist program classes have a culture of professionalism, which reinforces and further fosters the dedication to skill-building in a particular art form that students bring.

- *Unlike most music classes I've been to, this is the most serious, which I really appreciate. I really enjoy the time to work on my songs and becoming a better artist. ~ Student*
- *The teaching artist does a wonderful job and her teaching style is more serious and helped me become a better musician, which I think is a really big part of this. ~ Student*
- *This class is about commitment, seriousness, and an opportunity to work on something and present it. I don't want to work so hard if I can't present something. ~ Student*
- *Last summer, we had a hardcore professional training camp of returning students. I told the students, I'm going to challenge you. They were really into it. ~ Teaching Artist*
- *It's really motivating to me to go from the afterschool level to the semi-professional level with the students. ~ Teaching Artist*
- *The students see all these experienced artists and it adds professional feeling. ~ Teaching Artist*

**Figure 26: Students Reporting Advanced Skill-Building  
"A Great Deal" or "Somewhat"**



- All (100%) students surveyed agreed somewhat or a great deal that, “Because of this class, I learned new art skills and techniques.”
- Most (97%) students surveyed agreed somewhat or a great deal, “I can see the progress I’ve made in this class” and “Because of this class, I know new concepts and vocabulary related to this art form.”

### Creative Habits of Mind

Students and Teaching Artists attribute an increase in student self-confidence and positive risk-taking to Teen Artist Program class participation. Students focus their comments about confidence around their artistic expression while Teaching Artists assert that this confidence generalizes to settings beyond the arts class.

- *I am more comfortable playing what I want to play. I am less self-conscious. I gained confidence. ~ Student*
- *Now, when I write something and make a beat or loop, if I like it, I keep it in my head. You think over and over about it and the lyrics. I just repeat it when I feel like saying it and it builds more confidence with your work. You search to make it better. ~ Student*
- *I used to have trouble talking openly around people. Now I can have a conversation without being timid or scared. I can be more relaxed in certain situations. ~ Student*
- *[The impact of Teen Artist Program classes is] confidence. That allows the student to explore and take risks. Arts Corps helps structure that. With confidence, students make better choices, better social choices. ~ Teaching Artist*
- *We can take it to a level that is higher than in a mandatory class. We can make them take bigger leaps and risks because of that. ~ Teaching Artist*
- *When you see students rise to the occasion and become their optimal self, it’s amazing. They can bring that confidence to the real world. ~ Teaching Artist*

Both students and Teaching Artists believe that skills developed in Teen Artist Program classes are useful beyond the arts class; they specifically name communication, self-expression, teamwork and social skills as pertinent.

- *Since I want to be a rapper, I can incorporate what I learn here to everything. Just social skills. You open up more and you want to talk more. Express yourself. ~ Student*
- *They help you express yourself. I think when you are thinking about music, you forget all the other stuff like problems. You can calm down. ~ Student*
- *To better your music you have to better understand yourself. This class won’t help me get to know myself completely, but it’s one of the steps. ~ Student*
- *With confidence and becoming more social, they work better as a team. Instead of putting people down, they help out. ~ Teaching Artist*
- *What they learn here is bigger than the arts world itself. ~ Teaching Artist*

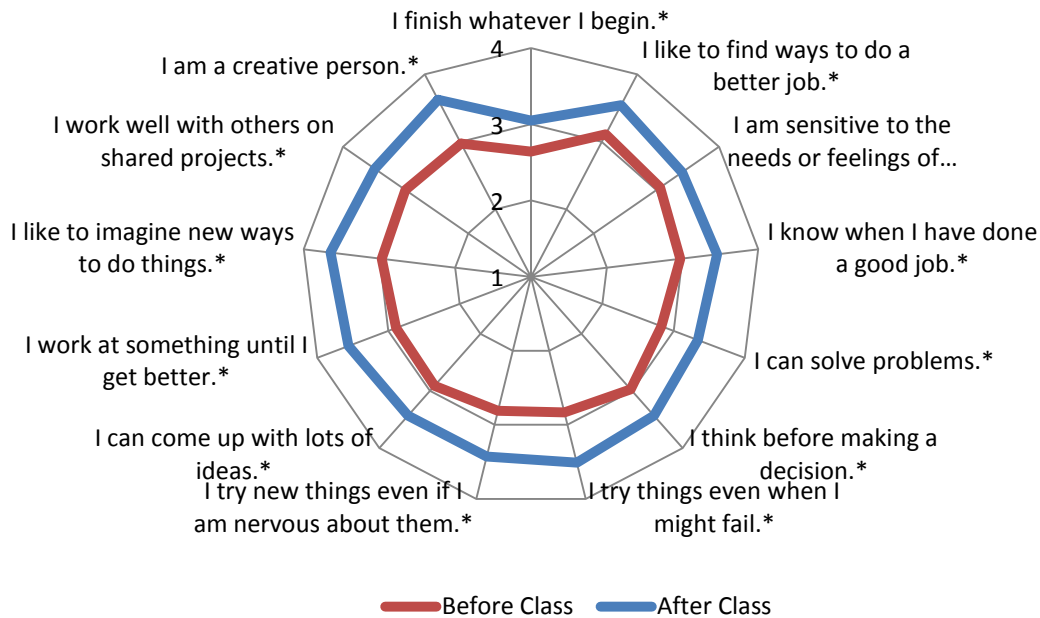


Increased confidence and risk-taking, communication, self-expression, teamwork and social skills are all indicators of student development of creative habits of mind. Student survey responses indicate significant increases for all survey questions measuring creative habits (indicated with a \*). Table 7 illustrates the effect size for each question. An effect size of around 0.5 is considered medium, while an effect size of around 0.8 is considered large.

Table 7: Creative Habits Effect Size	Effect Size
I am a creative person.*	0.82
I work well with others on shared projects.*	0.76
I like to imagine new ways to do things.*	0.75
I work at something until I get better.*	0.67
I can come up with lots of ideas.*	0.66
I try new things even if I am nervous about them.*	0.63
I try things even when I might fail.*	0.61
I think before making a decision.*	0.53
I can solve problems.*	0.50
I know when I have done a good job.*	0.49
I am sensitive to the needs or feelings of others.*	0.48
I like to find ways to do a better job.*	0.45
I finish whatever I begin.*	0.40

Mean pre and post responses are illustrated in Figure 27 on a scale of 1-4, where 1=Strongly Disagree and 4=Strongly Agree.

**Figure 27: Students Self-Reported Change in Creative Habits**



## **Lessons Learned**

### ***Consistent Quality***

Arts Corps continues to meet or exceed benchmarks of success set by past evaluations. Arts Corps continues to serve a steady or increasing number of students each year. Measures of program quality produce consistent results year-to-year, while new measures of quality were put into place to uncover other opportunities to improve program quality.

### ***Youth Engagement***

Arts Corps aims to bridge the opportunity gap by targeting programs towards youth who might not otherwise have access to arts education opportunities. Newly released data about arts access in Seattle Public Schools underscores the importance of considering student race and ethnicity when working to increase access to arts education for all students. Arts Corps currently serves a diverse group of students and is successfully providing programming to students who are least likely to have access to arts classes during the school day. To maximize program impact on this specific population, Arts Corps should continue to be strategic about where it forms partnership and delivers programs.

### ***Youth Skills and Dispositions***

Student surveys provide consistent evidence that Arts Corps fosters creative habits: imagining possibilities, critical thinking, courage and risk-taking, reflection, persistence and discipline. The youth development field, nationally and in King County, is increasingly focused on understanding the relationship between proximal outcomes such as these and the longer-term behavior and academic outcomes, such as school and post-secondary success. Arts Corps is a leader among its peers in its consistent measurement of and reflection on its impact on student skills and dispositions related to students learning and thriving.

Teen Artist Program participants report the program affords unique opportunities for advanced skill-building that could lead to a career in the arts. The drop-in format serves to make this opportunity accessible to all youth with an interest in developing their artistic skill in a particular medium; however, for the youth to fully benefit from a curriculum that develops advanced skills, consistent attendance is necessary. Arts Corps should work to reconcile the need for predictable attendance with this “drop-in” culture that prioritizes accessibility.

### ***Impact on Partner Organizations***

The Spruce Street Partnership case study reveals that Arts Corps positively impacts at-risk youth and supports the organization serving them to fulfill its mission. Teaching artists provide a new and positive learning experience for youth while supporting staff to meet the expectations of a demanding work environment. This partnership enhances youth development of healthy communication and self-expression skills.

Arts Corps should continue to explore the impact of this and other partnerships on the individual youth served and the organizational partner. Arts Corps could focus intensively on a partner each year, using a combination of focus groups and interviews to ask in-depth evaluation questions. In subsequent years, a more limited set of interviews with key stakeholders should be sufficient to maintain good communication and program monitoring.

### ***New Strategies for Evaluation***

This year, Arts Corps explored several new evaluation strategies with the goal of continuous quality improvement. These include:

- Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) – Arts Corps expanded the number of classes observed with the YPQA tool this year as a continuation of its pilot, but has not yet fully trained faculty and staff on the tool, or developed an internal system to implement a complete Assess-Plan-Improve cycle at regular intervals. A priority during the next school year is to develop the internal training, supports and communication channels necessary to maximize the value of the data collected for teaching artists and program staff. Arts Corps will also be looking at ways to integrate YPQA methods with its race and social justice work.
- Creative Habits Observation Tool – Arts Corps developed an observation tool to accompany the YPQA that measures specific classroom practices related to fostering creative habits of mind. By continuing to develop the Creative Habits observation tool, Arts Corps can use observation data to complement the student self-report data for more valid measurement of how their programs encourage students to develop creative habits of mind.
- Retrospective Post/Pre Survey – This year’s pilot of a retrospective post/pre survey to replace pre and post class surveys was a success. Arts Corps should continue to use this survey format, as it requires fewer organizational resources to administer and responds to teaching artist and student requests that they complete surveys less frequently.
- Partnership Case Studies – This year, Arts Corps initiated two case studies to more thoroughly understand the impact of their community partnerships. These case studies provided insight into how Arts Corps successfully creates a set of shared goals and tailors programs to meet the needs of each partner organization. Arts Corps should continue to explore the organization’s impact on its organizational partners.