

Arts Connection

PROJECT NARRATIVE

ARTS ASSESSMENT IN ACTION: STUDENT LEARNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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[1.a] ArtsConnection, a nationally recognized arts in education organization, seeks support for **Arts Assessment in Action: Student Learning for the 21st Century (AAA2I)**, an innovative, research-based model for teaching and learning in and through the arts. The project will help students and teachers in grades 3-5 utilize formative assessment methodologies to maximize and build ownership of learning for students in the arts and English Language Arts (ELA). The goal is to build assessment capacity in teaching and learning to improve students' educational outcomes and develop meta-cognitive skills they need to succeed in the 21st century. According to *The New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce*, in the 21st century, “workers up and down the length and breadth of the workforce will have to be comfortable with ideas and abstractions, good at both analysis and synthesis, creative and innovative, self-disciplined, ... and work well as a member of a team,” (*Tough Choices or Tough Times*, 2006).

These skills are inherently part of quality arts learning. *AAA2I* will make them visible for students and teachers in theater and dance curricula through formative assessment, and build capacity to integrate them into classroom learning through a series of proven methodologies, including creation of interdisciplinary units of study aligned with standards in the arts and ELA.

The project will operate in 4 Title I schools, involving close to 1,400 students and 45 teachers annually. On average, 90% of these students live at or below the poverty line, which makes them at risk due to financial, social and educational deficits. Many come from non-English speaking homes, and many parents lack literacy skills in their primary language, which has been shown to increase student drop out rates. They live in poor communities, which have higher percentages of single parent households, and/or parents who work long hours to provide the basic necessities and are therefore less engaged in their children's education, which adversely affects student achievement. A recent federal impact study of Head Start, which was designed to

address the deficits of disadvantaged students entering school, found its positive effects on children's learning disappear before they even reach the 3rd grade (Zehr, 2010).¹

Grades 3-5 are a particularly critical time for all students. This is the point in their academic life when learning begins to focus on ideas and generalizations as the curriculum becomes more complex and abstract. However, when it comes to interventions to help at risk students in these grades, efforts mostly focus on basic skills of reading, math, and preparation for standardized tests. Without support for developing higher order thinking skills, including understanding their own learning process and the ability to synthesize information and generalize ideas from one context to another, many of these students hit a "cognitive wall" (Pogrow, 2005) because they lack these basic skills of meta-cognition. Students who are at risk of educational failure, therefore, are not only at risk because they are not reading, writing and able to do math on grade-level; they are at risk because they are falling behind in thinking and reasoning skills crucial to survival in school, the contemporary workplace, and life.

Students in grade 5 are also preparing for the transition to middle school, which has historically been a challenging environment for learning. This major leap for most students from one primary classroom teacher to a multi-classroom schedule requires them to manage multiple assignments in a less personal learning environment. In New York City the result is "a particularly high and unacceptable rate of underachievement" for middle schoolers, with only slight increases in performance for these students compared to the improved outcomes for NYC elementary and high schools the last few years (Noguera, 2007).

AAA2I will help provide participating students with a strong foundation for the educational challenges they face. Quality theater and dance education programs have been proven to engage students in learning and provide a platform for higher order thinking. Research

¹ Full citations are in Attachment 1: Bibliography

by Dr. Rob Horowitz on ArtsConnection’s methodologies for student arts instruction has consistently found the five strongest areas of learning to be *motivation, focus, perseverance, cooperative learning, and ownership of learning* (Horowitz, 2005). A recent study found “an interest in a performing art leads to a high state of motivation that produces the sustained attention necessary to improve performance and the training of attention that leads to improvement in other domains of cognition,” (Gazzaniga, 2008). *AAA21* will build on the motivating power of the arts by adapting and incorporating formative assessment processes to enrich arts learning, empower student ownership of learning in the arts and ELA, and build skills that will help transition and sustain students through the challenge of middle school and beyond.

The definition of formative assessment that underlies this proposal was developed in 2008 by a group of education experts convened by the Chief Council of State School Officers to identify practices that benefit at risk students: “Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that *provides feedback* to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes,” (Hughes, 2009).

Formative assessment is one of the most important strategies used by excellent teachers identified in a number of recent studies (Ripley, 2010), and research has shown the variable that makes the most difference in a child’s education is the quality of the classroom teacher (www.classsizematters.org). Schools in poor neighborhoods historically have trouble attracting and retaining excellent teachers. *AAA21*’s extensive professional development will help teachers integrate formative assessment strategies into their classrooms through the arts and the ELA, focusing on standards for writing, speaking and listening.

In most classrooms, students are rarely included in formative assessment practices despite its capacity to help them relate better to the curriculum, develop self-efficacy, and understand

their own learning. When students engage in formative assessment, “they become more actively involved in a curriculum that otherwise can seem unrelated to their lives and personal experiences,” (Gregory et al, 2000). Research shows that formative assessment has the power to produce unprecedented improvements in student achievement (Wiliam, 2007/2008). Five reviews of 4,000 research studies in the last 40 years concluded that when implemented well, formative assessment can effectively double the speed of student learning (Wiliam). Per Gerunda Hughes, “students at risk of academic failure would be the greatest beneficiaries of the kind of feedback Sadler describes in his seminal research on formative assessment: 1) a clearly communicated standard or performance goal; 2) assess, or help the student assess, current level of understanding; and 3) help the student with strategies to address the gap,” (Hughes, 2009).

By training students in these methods, facilitated by their teachers and ArtsConnection teaching artists, students will develop self and peer assessment skills, and learn to make explicit connections between big ideas in the arts and English Language Arts. In this way, students at risk of educational failure in grades 3-5 will have the opportunity to build a foundation of essential cognitive skills, a sense of self-efficacy, and an independence that can sustain them throughout their academic years and make them competitive in the 21st century.

[1.b] Dr. Heidi Andrade, an editor of *Handbook of Formative Assessment*, and a consultant for *AAA2I*, states, “Formative assessment has recently become a focus of renewed research as state and federal policy makers realize that summative assessments have reached a point of diminishing returns as a tool for increasing student achievement. Consequently, supporters of large-scale testing programs are now beginning to consider the potential of formative assessments to improve student achievement,” (Andrade & Cizek, 2009).

However, too many teachers believe assessment is only summative - what happens *after* teaching - rather than something **ongoing** that happens *during* teaching. And with a national emphasis on high-stakes testing, the potential for formative assessment to advance learning has been relatively unexplored at the school level. As a result, few educators have an articulated assessment practice. Carol Ann Tomlinson notes “teachers ignore assessment when they can, and do it when they have to...it is important that educators realize formative assessment is not an end in itself, but the beginning of better instruction,” (Tomlinson, 2007/8).

In New York City public schools this gap has an added dimension. The City’s Department of Education (NYCDOE) has recently shifted responsibility for school achievement to individual schools and their school leaders, and grades them on student performance on standardized tests (85% of grade), as well as a “quality review”(15%). The Quality Review (QR) by experienced educators includes observations of teaching, use of data for planning and implementing programs, and collaborative interaction among school professionals around academic improvement. The goal is to ensure that schools are using information to help accelerate each child’s learning every day of the school year.

This year, revisions to the QR make “Assessment for Learning” explicit. Reviewers are instructed to evaluate: how teachers and students use formative assessments to inform their next instructional steps, including the use or development of tools to understand what students know and how best to meet their needs; whether or not feedback to students is meaningful and clear so they understand both their strengths as well as areas to work on; and what opportunities students have to engage in peer and self-assessment (schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/QR). The QR also identifies “well developed schools” as having teams of teachers that consistently gather and analyze formative assessment data, and who work with students to develop reflective practices

through which they learn to assess their own progress and articulate next learning steps. Schools receive funding to support school-based Inquiry Teams to help develop expertise in *looking at data and using the information* to improve student outcomes. However, no formal training program exists for Inquiry Teams, nor professional development focused on formative assessment in the classroom.

AAA2I addresses these gaps directly. Over the course of the four years, teaching artists and classroom teachers will receive direct instruction in formative assessment from Dr. Andrade. Partners will plan and document their use of these processes through Assessment Action Plans and Reflection Tools. Their collaborative inquiry will also include a series of professional development processes developed by ArtsConnection, and facilitated by ArtsConnection Program Managers experienced in these methodologies: Planning and Reflection Process; Observation Protocols; and Lesson Study (See 3.c & Attachment 2: Definitions of Professional Development Processes). Based on the observation and description of individual students and their learning, these formative assessments provide useful information in real time to inform teaching practice. Research has shown collaboration between teachers and artists in these processes is significantly associated with students' abilities in elaboration, self expression, cooperative learning, ownership of learning, and the writing process (Horowitz, 2005).

In Years Three and Four, Inquiry Teams at each of the 4 participating schools will begin to share the data and resources collected from these processes to expand the base of assessment literacy. They will work with students to design tools that help students assess their own learning and that of their peers, and to facilitate meta-cognitive connections between learning in arts and ELA through Interdisciplinary Units of Study. This work will also address an essential gap in the field of arts education—the lack of assessment tools that can effectively articulate arts

learning across classrooms—and help facilitate a conversation with a broader community about the intrinsic value of the arts in helping students learn 21st century skills.

By providing extensive instruction in dance and theater, *AAA2I* will address another gap in the City’s public schools. According to the NYCDOE Annual Arts Report (2008-2009), many students go through school without receiving any instruction in dance or theater. Only 11% of schools have full-time theater specialists and 14% have dance, compared to 64% and 46% with full-time visual arts and music specialists, respectively. This also means a significant number of elementary schools are not compliant with New York State Education Department mandates for arts education, requiring instruction in all four art forms (Anderson, 2010). This is particularly disturbing given a recent report from The Center for Arts Education that found NYC high school graduation rates are linked to access to arts education, with students with the most access and resources having the highest rates. Douglas Israel, the report’s author, noted “We need to close the gap [in access to arts education] as a first step to keeping students in school,” (Israel, 2009).

In a time when the city and state are in fiscal crisis, and the NYCDOE experiences budget cuts on a regular basis, ArtsConnection, a recognized leader in arts education, offers a viable research-based arts partnership model that will provide a broad and flexible framework for enriching learning in and through dance and theater, while fostering students' intellectual development at the same time.

[2] *AAA2I* will create a blueprint for developing a culture of feedback in schools to build student meta-cognition and support achievement of grade-appropriate standards in the arts and ELA. This will be accomplished by applying formative assessment practices to the teaching of theater and dance, and the development of integrated learning experiences in the arts and ELA. Through participation in action research fueled by collaborative inquiry, teaching artists and

classroom teachers will collaboratively create a body of tools, strategies and processes to engage students in their own learning process in and through the arts, and connect those higher order thinking skills to the ELA and other curricula. Online and video documentation, dialogue and dissemination will create networks within the participating schools, across NYC public schools, and nationwide, to share this model and demonstrate its applicability in other settings.

ArtsConnection is recognized as a national leader in arts learning as evidenced in our USED Javits, AEMDD, and PDAE projects, where we developed and disseminated methodologies to articulate arts curricula that develop students' skills, strategies, knowledge and understanding in the arts across cognitive, personal and social domains to help them become more literate human beings. Our methodologies engage teachers, artists and administrators in communities of practice within and across schools to co-construct knowledge about the nature of student learning in the arts and support its integration across the curriculum (Rich, 2006).

The strength of this work is also key to its portability and replicability. While rooted in educational research, the implementation of these methodologies relies on the collective knowledge that teachers and artists develop through classroom practice to progressively build a shared knowledge base. These methods are grounded in easily understood and familiar processes of observation and description. They also incorporate documentation as a key part of reviewing and understanding outcomes, resulting in built-in materials for sharing. The project therefore addresses the fundamental gap between traditional education research and teachers' practice in ways highlighted in a 2002 Hiebert et al article: "the kinds of knowledge practitioners generate through active participation and reflection on their own practice" can be the basis for building a professional knowledge base for the profession (Hiebert et al, 2002).

ArtsConnection has already published and shared with the field descriptions of how to conduct Planning and Reflection Meetings, the Video Description Process and Lesson Study (Rich, 2006). These professional development processes will inform *AAA2I*, especially given their efficacy in helping narrow the achievement gap for English Language Learners in ArtsConnection's current AEMDD-funded work with this population, per an interim report by Dr. Rob Horowitz (2009). The products that will result from *AAA2I* will add to this body of materials. They will document the formative assessment tools and strategies the partners use; illustrate the implementation of formative assessment processes; articulate interdisciplinary approaches in the arts and ELA that integrate assessment for learning; and offer process-oriented descriptions of how we achieved our results. The field of arts education has only recently begun to examine the kind of assessment practices this project focuses on: standards-based, integrated into the learning process, accessible to students as feedback, and to educators as a gauge for effective instruction. By using 4 NYC schools with diverse populations and resources as laboratories, building students' awareness of their learning across content areas, and documenting these replicable processes and strategies as part of the project design, we believe *AAA2I* can be an important model for nationwide use.

To build knowledge in the field, the project will use a range of media and outlets to share information locally and globally. Dissemination will be ongoing throughout the process, reflecting the nature of the project's work, and will utilize the Internet as a key tool for this goal. Although a summative report on an inquiry can be useful, it is not necessarily the most effective way to help others engage in their own inquiry. In *AAA2I*, we will share our inquiry questions on an ongoing basis online to involve a broader audience in conversations about the complex

ideas driving the project. The knowledge, resources and processes developed will also inform ArtsConnection's work in the more than 100 NYC public schools in which it works annually.

In the first two years of the project, participating teachers, artists, and staff will build their own private communication network via ArtsConnection's website to share resources, questions and information, and offer support within and across schools. This will also clarify and pave the way for broader communication of the project's processes and products.

Starting Year 3, we will share the project's products regionally via the NYCDOE Office of Arts and Special Projects as part of ArtsConnection's ongoing involvement in their program of curriculum development and citywide professional development in arts education. To support the needs of schools relative to Quality Review and its mandates regarding inquiry and formative assessment practices, ArtsConnection will also post participants' collaborative inquiries and practitioner-developed assessment processes publicly on its website, and link this material to ARIS Connect, the NYCDOE's recently created secure online platform that connects educators and provides resources and information to help them accelerate student learning.

Nationally, ArtsConnection's website will serve as the locus of dissemination and dialog about the process and products of *AAA21*. Starting in Year 3, email blasts to ArtsConnection's 12,000+ list of educators, researchers, and interested arts and education colleagues will alert them to postings of materials from the project, as well as invite their participation in WebConversations around key points of inquiry in the project. WebConversations is a format initiated last year to collaboratively construct meaning around issues in the arts and education by engaging a virtual community of educators and researchers in ongoing conversations about teaching and learning in the arts. ArtsConnection posts a brief written piece monthly that addresses a current line of inquiry, inviting readers to share their thoughts. Responses are

reviewed by an Editorial Board –ArtsConnection’s Deputy Director for Education, Director of Programs and Web Manager (as needed, assessment consultant Heidi Andrade and the Project Director will join this group for reviewing responses for this grant) – and edited and posted alongside the original posting in order to share experiences and broaden the conversation. WebConversations examples, currently based on work in our two DELTA USED grants, can be found at: <https://www.artsconnection.org/sections/forum/webconversations.asp>.

Training sessions will be held to help the project’s staff, teachers and artists use the technology platforms, and the Website Manager will be available for ongoing support. All materials created for the project, along with all the postings and WebConversation transcripts, will be archived on the website for future reference. Select members of the Program Committee of ArtsConnection’s Board of Directors will join with the Editorial Board to review materials and links for the website and for other portals, including USED’s new Open Innovation Portal, to ensure quality resources for the field and expand national dialog on these methodologies.

Outside the virtual world, the project and its products and processes will also be shared through articles in journals, to which the Principal Investigator, Dr. Rob Horowitz, and assessment consultant, Dr. Heidi Andrade, are regular contributors; and the project staff’s attendance and presentations at local, state and national conferences.

[3.a] The goal of *AAA21* is to build the skills students need to succeed in the 21st century workplace: creativity and innovation, analysis and synthesis; and, collaboration or teamwork (*Tough Choices or Tough Times*, 2006). While these skills are **implicit** in quality arts learning experiences, this project will make them **explicit** through the integration of formative assessment processes with standards-based theater and dance curricula, and through the development of interdisciplinary units of study aligned with Arts and ELA standards.

The four-year project will work in 4 Title I schools in grades 3, 4 and 5, reaching over 1,387 students and 45 teachers annually. Students will work with teaching artists in long-term residencies in either theater or dance, depending on their school. ArtsConnection has 35 years of experience providing arts programs in the NYC public schools, working with over 100 schools annually, and its arts partnership model has been the foundation for 3AEMDD grants

As students create dances or develop scenes and characters, they build literacy in the art form; are presented with immediate, authentic opportunities to solve problems both individually and collaboratively that develop their capacity to visualize new possibilities; and connect the arts to their own experiences and to other areas of learning. The arts authentically provide engaging, semantic-rich contexts that offer opportunities for accountable talk, understanding themes and main ideas, written and oral critiques, and procedural narratives that will support students' development of essential ELA skills of listening, speaking and writing. By integrating formative assessment practices into the arts residencies, students will start thinking about the quality of their own products and processes, and increasingly become more self-directed and self-regulatory learners. They will make connections between ideas as they analyze and critique their own work and the work of their peers, set goals for further learning, engage in tracking, reflecting on, and sharing their progress, and develop a practice for making learning visible to themselves and others in the arts and English Language Arts.

To support and facilitate student achievement, teachers and artists will participate in professional learning communities within and across schools to expand their capacity to integrate formative assessment into their teaching practice. We will adapt educational assessment strategies that have been proven effective in other content areas and pioneer their use in arts education. These include direct instruction in formative assessment practices for the classroom

by Dr. Heidi Andrade; and training by the Project Director in using the *Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning*. The *Seven Strategies* organizes research-based recommendations about formative assessment practices into an instructional framework for integrating them into daily teaching and assessment activities. Both practices are structured around three questions: **1) *Where am I going?*** (Strategy #1: Offer regular descriptive feedback; #2: Teach students to self-assess and set goals); **2) *Where am I now?*** (#3: Provide students with a clear and understandable vision of the learning target; #4: Use examples and models of strong and weak work); ***How can I close the gap?*** (#5: Design lessons to focus on one learning target or aspect of quality at a time; #6: Teach students focused revision; #7: Engage students in self-reflection and let them keep track of and share their learning) (Chappuis, 2009).

Educators will apply this knowledge through proven research-based tools and professional development methodologies developed by ArtsConnection with past US ED support: Observation Protocols that build a common language for describing observable criteria in dance and theater; Assessment Action Plans that spell out why, when, where and how an assessment strategy is implemented, and a Reflection Protocol to identify what did and did not work; Lesson Study, which develops and refines collaboratively planned and implemented lessons by artists and teachers; and planning, implementing, evaluating and revising Interdisciplinary Units of Study integrating the arts and ELA (See Attachment 2: Definitions).

Numerous studies have shown that parent involvement in children's education has a tremendous impact on student achievement. *Third Space: When Learning Matters* (Stevenson & Deasy 2005 - ArtsConnection's partnership with PS 130 was one of its case studies), found that the arts were a powerful and easily accessible way to engage parents in the school community.

AAA2I will therefore hold yearly gatherings for parents/families to see their children working in the arts, as well as engage them in the assessment of student learning in dance and theater.

The focus on formative assessment reflects the incredible amount of research that speaks to its effectiveness. “There is broad agreement among both researchers and educators that formative assessment should be on the front burner of education reform efforts because its potential is so great” (Andrade & Cizek, 2009); and reported gains are among the largest for any educational intervention (Chappuis, 2009).

However, as noted earlier, too many teachers believe assessment is only what happens *after* teaching - rather than something ongoing that happens *during* teaching. Not only will *AAA2I* build the capacity of teachers and artists to incorporate ongoing formative assessment in their teaching practice, it will also help them engage students in this process, an innovative and exciting aspect of the *AAA2I* project design.

The ability of students to set goals and assess if they are meeting them is crucial to children’s learning. In his seminal study, Dr. Royce Sadler concurs: “The indispensable conditions for improvement are that the student comes to hold a concept of quality roughly similar to that held by the teacher, is able to monitor continuously the quality of what is being produced during the act of production itself, and has a repertoire of alternative moves or strategies from which to draw at any given point,” (Sadler, 1989).

Andrade identifies three steps in providing effective formative assessment: reveal what counts (clear criteria); give feedback (self, peer, and/or teacher); provide time for revision (improvement) (Andrade PowerPoint presentation, 2009). These steps are at the heart of theater and dance processes; every effective rehearsal incorporates them: a specific focus is set for the day’s rehearsal; artists receive feedback on their work from the director/choreographer or from a

collaborative discussion; and then time is provided to integrate the feedback into the piece. Every theater and dance teaching artist knows this process from their professional work, but it is often not clearly examined and implemented in their teaching practice; most classroom teachers lack even this basic awareness. To make assessment practice visible and examine its impact on learning places new demands on teaching artists and classroom teachers. To support educators in this change, *AAA2I* will not just expose them to new ideas; it will provide the ongoing professional support needed to embed it in teacher practice. As Wiliam explains, “If we want to change what teachers do in classrooms, we need to focus on those actions directly. Knowing what to do is the easy part, actually doing it is what’s hard,” (Wiliam, Dec. 2007/Jan. 2008). His recommendations for structuring successful learning communities include having them run for at least two years with monthly meetings of at least 75 minutes, start with volunteers to the process, establish site-based cohorts, require detailed, modest, individual action plans, and have a facilitator (Ibid). These criteria are consistent with the professional development practices planned for *AAA2I* (see 3.c and Attachment 2: Definitions), which will help teachers, artists and students grow as educators and learners over the course of the four years of the project.

[3.b] *AAA2I* takes a comprehensive approach in its implementation, engaging every level of the school community - administrators, teachers, students, families, and ArtsConnection staff and artists - in the program design.

Students will build 21st century learning skills through a sequential, interdisciplinary curriculum model that is based in achieving grade-appropriate city, state and national standards for dance and theater, and for the ELA in speaking, listening and writing. Students will learn to work collaboratively as *members of a team*; develop their *imagination and creativity* through the creation of original dance and theater pieces that integrate content from the ELA curriculum.

They will build skills of *analysis and synthesis* by responding to, reflecting on, and revising their work; incorporating dance and theater literacy knowledge; and making connections between the arts and ELA curriculum on each grade. Over the four-year grant period, students will become aware of how they *think* as actors, playwrights, dancers, or choreographers, and make connections to other types of thinking, i.e. thinking like a writer, scientist, etc. As they build this meta-cognitive foundation, students will begin to take charge of their own learning: reflecting on the quality of their work and learning, judging the degree to which it reflects set criteria and standards, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and revising accordingly.

Educators (teaching artists/classroom teachers) will participate in extensive professional development to build a formative assessment practice that can develop students' meta-cognition, and support rigorous, standards-based learning. With the goal of improving teaching to improve student learning, the process will maintain a constant focus on student learning goals as it builds a knowledge base in formative assessment, develops a common language in the arts and the ELA standards, and supports partnership. This parallels the citywide focus of the NYCDOE on building collaborative inquiry communities that gather and analyze formative assessment data to inform instruction and help students develop their own reflective practices. In Years 2-3 the Inquiry teams will focus on student achievement of the ELA and Blueprint standards. ELA Standards 2 and 3 will be addressed through Lesson Study and Interdisciplinary Units: 2.) Students will write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression; and 3.) Students will write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation. The educators will select grade appropriate indicators for the standards to focus the design of the lessons and units.

Parents will be invited to open classes over the course of the school year, and to a year-end workshop. The workshop will engage parents in a modified form of the Observation

Protocols, providing a limited list of dance or theater criteria for them to observe in their children working with the teaching artist. Parents, teachers and the artist will share their observations with students, and students will offer their own observations and analysis of their learning.

The schools selected for **AAA2I** are sites where ArtsConnection already has a relationship, where there is support from faculty and administration, and where there is potential for growth (See Letters of Support in Attachment 1). The proposed project will work with all classes on grades 3, 4, and 5 in four Title I schools – two **in dance**, two **in theater**—where the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch averages 90%. **PS 109X** in the South Bronx has 735 students, 325 of whom are English Language Learners (ELLs), and a population that is 75% Latino, and 23% African American. 80% of the parents have limited English skills, and many of them also have limited literacy skills. At **PS 130K**, in the Kensington area of Brooklyn, the diversity of the 484 students goes beyond the statistical breakdown, which is 31% Hispanic, 29% Asian/other (predominately Middle Eastern), 24% Caucasian, and 16% African American. Most families speak a language other than English at home, with over a dozen represented; 81% of students are former ELLs (12.8% current). The **Bronx Little School**, in the Parkchester area, has 200 students, 20% of whom are ELLs. The school population is predominately Hispanic (75%) with the remainder African American, except for 7 Bangladeshi children. Of the 652 students at **PS 29Q** in the College Point section of Queens, 46% are Hispanic, 33% Asian, 18% Caucasian, and 3% African American. Many students are recent immigrants and include 180 ELLs, and many parents also have limited English proficiency.

While all 1,387 students in the program will experience creating, performing and responding in dance or theater annually, only third graders entering the program in Years 1 and 2 will experience the full impact of the 3-year sequential program. However, all 45 teachers will

have 4 full years of professional development, which is key to building a practitioner knowledge base, and ensuring sustainability.

All arts instruction in the *AAA21* Project focuses on scaffolding student achievement from the 2nd grade dance and theater benchmarks to the 5th grade benchmarks as stated in the *NYC Blueprints for Teaching and Learning in Dance and Theater*, which are aligned with state and national standards, and which ArtsConnection collaborated in writing. Benchmarks in the *Blueprints* are only set for grades 2, 5, 8 & 12, and, as noted earlier, most students in the program will have had little to no instruction in theater or dance.

YEAR 1: Student Objectives: Students will address 2nd grade *Blueprint* benchmarks as emerging dance/theater makers, and develop literacy in the art form in 10-session arts residencies in the spring.

- Dance students will invent movements for short dances with beginning, middle and end; develop kinesthetic skills and self-awareness; and apply basic vocabulary of dance forms.
- Theater students will develop acting skills as they explore characterization and use the actor's instrument—the body, voice, and mind— and also expand their knowledge of dramatic structure by creating scenes through improvisation and other creative dramatic processes.
- Students in both art forms will analyze and critique work using self and peer assessment, and record their experiences in Artist Journals maintained throughout the project.

Educators will begin to build capacity to create a cycle of continuous student improvement through student peer assessment and timely and descriptive feedback. They will implement formative assessment into teaching practice through direct instruction in assessment practice, implementation of *Seven Strategies* tools in lessons, planning and implementing the dance or theater residency embedded with peer assessment, and observing student work in the arts using

Observation Protocols to expand knowledge of the art form's criteria (See 3.c and Attachment 2: Definitions of Professional Development Processes for more information).

YEAR 2: Student Objectives: Students will receive 18-session residencies over the fall and spring to advance their skills in dance or theater and address grade appropriate dance/theater making and dance/theater literacy. They will demonstrate knowledge of the Making Connections strand of the *Blueprint* by connecting the arts with ELA standards.

- Students will improvise and choreograph a dance or develop tableaux and scenes in theater inspired by ELA content material.
- Students will analyze and critique work using self and peer assessment.
- Students will make connections to ELA content, analyze and write about the links they recognize between writing and the performance process, and write procedural narratives.

Educators will increase student achievement in the arts through ongoing formative assessment, as they continue to learn about the process and receive technical assistance each year from Dr. Andrade and the Project Director in implementing and refining assessment tools through their Assessment Action Plans and Reflection Protocols. Inquiry Teams in each school will engage in Lesson Study to develop lessons that integrate arts and ELA content materials with formative assessment strategies, focusing on ELA Standards 2 and 3: Students will write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression; and Students will write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation. They will identify specific ELA and *Blueprint* indicators that will drive design of the integrated lesson, the ELA literature to be integrated, and the formative assessment strategies that will help students recognize the links between the two domains.

YEARS 3 and 4 Student Objectives: With 18-session residencies each year, students in the project for 3 years will address the 5th grade *Blueprint* benchmarks in dance or theater and

address the 5th grade ELA benchmarks in speaking, listening and writing through participation in an interdisciplinary unit of study. Students will demonstrate achievement of the ELA Standards by addressing the following ELA indicators:

- Creating imaginative original work based on literature or personal narrative.
- Present original work to adults and peers demonstrating vocal dynamics and appropriate pacing as they address the *Blueprint* standard in performance.
- Ask questions and respond to questions for clarification while in rehearsals and workshops.
- Analyze an event or issue using role play as strategy.
- Use information from personal experiences to form and express opinions and judgments orally and in writing.
- Demonstrate critical analysis and evaluation through their practice of assessment (peer and self): set goals, identify strategies, and track progress in written tools of *Seven Strategies*.

Educators will promote this achievement as they continue to develop their capacity to create a cycle of continuous improvement through the feedback processes of peer and self assessment. This will be supported by their ongoing formative assessment practice and the planning, implementation, revision and re-implementation of an Interdisciplinary Unit of Study by the Inquiry Teams in each school over the two years, focusing on the same ELA standards as Lesson Study. They will share assessment tools online and in year-end conferences that will monitor student progress specific to the benchmarks cited from the *Blueprints* and ELA, and collect and analyze evidence of interdisciplinary learning in their Data Binders.

[3.c] *AAA2I* will build a model for utilizing formative assessment and interdisciplinary learning to improve the achievement of at-risk students and support the development of 21st century skills in each of its four public school sites. By the end of the project's four years,

faculty in grades 3-5 in each school will have an articulated, research-based formative assessment practice, and a capacity for developing interdisciplinary study. Learning communities based in collaborative inquiry at each school will be able to design interdisciplinary curricula addressing standards in both the arts and the ELA Standards in writing, speaking, and listening, as well as applying these skills to other content areas. As a result, *AAA2I* will address many of the criteria in the NYCDOE Quality Review for using assessment practices and data collection and analysis focused on student improvement (See Attachment 2: Definitions of Professional Development Processes for full descriptions of all practices referenced in this section).

The professional development component of the project will ensure these outcomes by building the capacity of the education partners—classroom teachers and teaching artists—to integrate formative assessment practice into their teaching, including engaging students in the process; and to work collaboratively on interdisciplinary projects. Based on practices ArtsConnection has developed over seven USED grants, and affirmed by the recommendations of Dylan Wiliam (Wiliam, 2007-2008), *AAA2I* will not only teach educators new skills and strategies, but provide ongoing support within and across sites for implementation of these assessment and collaborative planning tools.

A pillar of this scaffolded approach will be two full-day Arts Assessment Conferences (October & June) each year of the project for all participating classroom teachers and teaching artists. School Leaders will also be invited to attend. The conferences will be facilitated by the Project Team’s Project Director, Project Associate and Program Managers for each school, and provide direct instruction and assistance in formative assessment by Dr. Andrade, and in the *Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning* by the Project Director. Classroom teachers will participate in arts workshops with their school’s teaching artist(s) to learn the Observation

Protocols in their school's art form, which provide observable criteria, build a common arts language, and engage the partners in the first steps of effective formative assessment practice – observing what counts and giving feedback – as well as to collaboratively plan the arts residencies for each year to help support the project's goals and objectives. Support across schools at the conferences will help the participating teachers and artists to implement Assessment in Action Plans and the accompanying Reflection Protocol, review their success and revise as needed. Developed with the support of the 2008 Artful Learning Communities PDAE Grant, these tools support the implementation of formative assessment strategies into classroom practice, and provide for continuous improvement through a process of feedback and revision.

School-based reflection meetings of each site's participating teachers by grade level with their teaching artist, facilitated by the program manager, will take place after every four workshop sessions each year to assess student learning in the art form, review the results of the Observation Protocols, and reflect on the teachers' implementation of and make revisions to formative assessment process. School Leaders will be invited to participate in these meetings, and they will be recorded and transcribed for project documentation.

Each school will also identify an Inquiry Team of four teacher volunteers from the participating grades who will work with their ArtsConnection program manager and teaching artist on the interdisciplinary processes of **Lesson Study** (Year 2) and creating **Interdisciplinary Units of Study** (Years 3 & 4). These processes will be introduced and reviewed in Arts Assessment Conferences in those years, with each school's lessons and units of study developed, reviewed and revised in on-site school meetings outside of school time.

Lesson Study will engage the inquiry teams in the spring of Year Two in collaboratively planning and implementing lessons that integrate assessment strategies with content from the

ELA curriculum to address the writing, speaking, and listening standards. A teacher and artist team will implement the lesson, which is videotaped for review by the group for evidence of the desired goal in student responses, and revised as needed. Inquiry Teams will gather evidence in response to the inquiry question: *How does formative assessment improve student learning?*

In Years 3 and 4 the teams will develop interdisciplinary units designed to address both arts and ELA standards and continue to integrate peer and self assessment strategies into these projects. The structures used to support the unit design process will be informed by ArtsConnection's current work with English Language Learners (AEMDD 2008). The unit will be implemented in spring of Year 3, evaluated at that time and revised in the fall for re-implementation. An example of the integrated content may include connecting students' dance learning to poetry and the study of metaphor as they create original dances drawn from words and images of Langston Hughes' poetry. In theater, students might use a work of literature to develop original scenes through improvisation, and to write character autobiographies. The design of the units will be driven by the student learning goals - the ELA and *Blueprint* indicators selected by the educators. The resulting student work will provide evidence for the Inquiry Teams' examination of: *How does formative assessment help students to make cross discipline connections and improve their achievement of ELA standards?*

The production of Arts Assessment in Action videotapes will support continuous improvement within each school's learning community. These edited videos of formative assessment strategies implemented in the classroom - based on action plans, lesson study and the interdisciplinary units - will provide the partners with the opportunity to observe students learning in and through the arts and ELA, to assess the effect of formative assessment practices, to generate feedback, and to revise instructional practice.

The documentation at each school—videotapes, meeting transcripts, assessment plans, inquiry team processes and products, select student documentation— will be collected in *AAA2I* Data Binders that will be used by the Project Team in their monthly meetings to assess the progress at each school, and examined at school-based reflection meetings to explore how formative assessment improves student learning. The binders will also provide information for sharing across schools and with a broader audience.

After the four years, participants will have a deep and broad knowledge of how to incorporate multiple assessment methods into their teaching practice, and will serve as valuable resources within their school communities. In addition this knowledge will be shared horizontally across the participating schools through participation in the Assessment Conferences and through the ArtsConnection website, and on local, state and national education platforms.

While we believe the **products** resulting from the proposed project – assessment tools, DVDs, interdisciplinary units of study et al –will be accessible to a larger audience beyond their original classrooms, we also believe their utility and the project’s contributions to the field are increased by sharing the **processes** used to achieve them. They can provide a road map for educators and schools to plan interdisciplinary studies targeting standards and specific indicators in both content areas; and to build professional learning communities engaged in the ongoing assessment of student achievement. Perhaps most important is the development of a formative assessment framework applicable to any content area that supports students in becoming self-regulated learners, skilled at analysis and synthesis, and adept at working in collaboration.

At the end of four years, *AAA2I* will have helped scores of educators facilitate over a thousand students achieving challenging arts and ELA standards and becoming self-efficacious

learners. As students become self-regulated learners, they become students at promise of educational success, rather than students at risk of educational failure.

[4] ArtsConnection will staff the *AAA2I* project with experienced professionals who have demonstrated their ability to successfully manage grants and achieve objectives on previous USED-funded projects. ArtsConnection does not discriminate in its employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. Staff and teaching artists selected to participate in this project reflect the broad diversity of the City of New York.

Project Director Joanna Hefferen has been ArtsConnection's **Director of Professional Development** for the last decade, and has successfully managed two USED PDAE projects (2005, 2008) and been a team member on two ArtsConnection AEMDD initiatives, providing professional development to participants. Ms. Hefferen was on the team that created *The New York City Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Theater* and a contributing writer to the *Visual Arts Blueprint Addendum on Planning and Assessment*. She has worked as a theater consultant to the NYCDOE, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and University of Massachusetts and recently completed training in the *Seven Strategies* at the Assessment Training Institute.

Project Associate Lauren Dunwoody Collins is an ArtsConnection Program Manager who has researched the relationship between language learning and learning in dance and theater as part of ArtsConnection AEMDD DELTA grants. She previously worked as an educator, artist and administrator at the Museum of Modern Art, Sports & Art in Schools Foundation, and Museums of Fine Arts (Houston, Boston).

Grants Manager Tavia Huggins, ArtsConnection's Deputy Director for Finance since 2003, oversees financial reporting, budgeting and accounting, including financial and

programmatic reporting for all city, state and federal grants issued to ArtsConnection. Ms. Huggins has over 15 years experience in non-profit accounting and grants management.

Consultant Dr. Heidi Andrade will provide direct instruction and technical assistance in formative assessment practice, helping participants understand the links among formative assessment, the arts, and ELA. She currently works on ArtsConnection's PDAE 2008 grant with the NYCDOE focused on the arts and assessment. An editor of the *Handbook of Formative Assessment* (2010), Dr. Andrade (Ed.D. Harvard) is Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology and Methodology at SUNYAlbany, where she teaches classroom assessment, educational psychology, and self-regulated learning; and a faculty member of The Project Zero Classroom Summer Institute at Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

ArtsConnection **Program Managers** with extensive experience in arts education model projects will facilitate activities for *AAA2I*. The four Program Managers are familiar with the ArtsConnection methodologies described in the proposal, and are experienced facilitators of inquiry-based learning communities. Resumes are attached for **Rajeeyah Finnie, Erin Loughran, Eliza Mason, and Haruko Yamauchi**.

ArtsConnection **Teaching Artists** are integral to *AAA2I* in engaging students in authentic quality arts learning experiences and helping them make curriculum connections. The seven artists for the project have worked with ArtsConnection in the NYC public schools for at least five years, and are experienced in both partnership and pedagogy.

Web Manager Joelle Worm is a former Program Manager who re-designed the ArtsConnection website. She will manage all activities related to the website, including preparation of materials for the USED Open Innovation Portal and facilitating WebConversations.

Dr. Rob Horowitz, Principal Investigator, is Associate Director of the Center for Arts Education Research at Teachers College, Columbia University, and has directed over 30 arts-based program evaluations over the last several years, as well as basic research on the effects of the arts on human development. Dr. Horowitz will direct a team of senior graduate and post-doctorate researchers with broad experience in research, assessment, evaluation and professional development: **Elizabeth Beaubrun**, Doctoral Candidate, Columbia University, **Amy Kleiman**, M.A., Columbia University; **Dr. Rekha Rajan**, Ed.D., Columbia University; and **Dr. Dan Serig** (Ed.D. Columbia University), Associate Professor at Massachusetts College of Art and chair of its graduate program in arts education. This team has worked together with Dr. Horowitz on over 30 research and evaluation projects, including ArtsConnection AEMDD and PDAE projects, and are currently completing a four-year evaluation of ArtsConnection's AEMDD DELTA-MS program. Dr. Horowitz is an independent evaluator not involved in program implementation.

[5.a] ArtsConnection has successfully managed seven USED grants and has provided support to new USED grantees in the implementation and management of their projects. *AAA2I* will be actively managed by a seven-person project team consisting of the Project Director, Project Associate, Grants Manager, and four Program Managers who will meet monthly to review the progress of the project toward goals and benchmarks, and schedule and plan the professional development activities. They will actively manage the project against the Timeline and Milestones (see Attachment 2: Timelines & Student Objectives, Outcomes and Milestones), and will make adjustments, if needed, as the project progresses. The Program Managers facilitate the planning and implementation of all activities in the school, providing a built-in feedback loop for the project by gathering key information for the team's decision making and refinement of the project, and taking recommendations back to each school site. The Grants Manager will monitor

expenditures against the project budget weekly and report to the Project Team monthly or sooner if issues arise. All project activities and meetings of the Project Team will be documented in writing for accurate reporting and ongoing monitoring.

The Project Director and Associate will meet bi-monthly with the Principle Investigator to receive key feedback on the effectiveness of program activities and how the needs of students, teachers and schools are being met to inform their decision making and revision process.

The Project Team will meet monthly with the *AAA2I* teaching artists to ensure the quality of the arts learning. Artists will receive support in planning residencies with formative assessment, and in maintaining Data Binders. Evidence of student learning documented in the binders will be examined regularly for data on the project's goals and objectives.

The Project Director and Associate will teleconference monthly and as needed with Dr. Andrade to plan the assessment training and support activities. Completed Assessment Conference Feedback forms will inform planning and identify next steps in this component of the project. Dr. Andrade will also provide feedback on Inquiry Teams' progress, based on her work with them in small groups at the conferences, and examining data from their written tools.

Each school's team of teachers and a school leader-liaison will participate in the semi-annual Assessment Conferences. The Program Manager assigned to each school will facilitate communication among school representatives, artists and the Project Team, and all professional development activities at the school level. The school-based team provides overall guidance for the work in the school, ensures that goals and objectives of the project are being met, and constructs ways for what is being learned to be shared with the whole school community.

As part of their participation in the project, all schools have agreed to engage in 25 hours of professional development with ArtsConnection teaching artists and staff each year, and

designate an administrative liaison to support the program. School leaders will ensure that the necessary time, space and resources will be available to guarantee the project runs smoothly, and ArtsConnection staff will facilitate all aspects of learning for educators and students.

Nationally recognized as a leader in arts education, ArtsConnection has over 35 years of experience in the NYC public schools. With arts programs in over 100 city schools, we have the experience and capacity to reach the goals of the project within a realistic time frame. The residency structure will provide students with adequate time and instruction to achieve stated objectives. In Year 1, students with very limited experience in the arts will be involved in a 10-session residency in either dance or theater to provide baseline data for the development of the subsequent sequential program. Residencies expand to 18 sessions in the remaining years to provide students with appropriate time to meet standards in both an art form and ELA.

In order to accomplish the *AAA2I* objectives, the project is scaffolded to provide educators with the support they will need to integrate formative assessment and to design and implement Interdisciplinary Units of Study. Year 1 builds a partnership through inquiry and action research as the team examines arts criteria and a process of peer assessment. In Year 2 the process of Lesson Study layers in the integration of ELA content material, ELA learning targets, and self and peer assessment. In Years 3 and 4 the project ramps up from lessons to units with clear learning targets defined by both ELA and dance/theater standards. The project also provides adequate meeting time - reflection meetings, Lesson Study or Unit Study Meetings, and Assessment Conferences - for educators to plan, assess and revise based on evidence of student learning. This material is documented and managed with support from the Program Manager, who will maintain the *AAA2I* Data Binders for each site.

ArtsConnection's Program Committee of the Board of Directors will meet yearly with the Project Team to ensure goals are being addressed and milestones achieved for the whole project, and to bring resources and effect linkages so that what is being learned in the project can be shared more broadly. The Program Committee, chaired by Board Member Patricia Morris Carey, Ph.D., an Associate Dean at New York University, includes representatives with expertise in school assessment and educational practices. The school-based teams, Project Team and Program Committee serve as checks and balances to ensure effective management of the project. In addition, representatives from the Program Committee will be on the Editorial Board that will serve as arbiter for the materials to be disseminated (see section 2 of this narrative).

ArtsConnection has a proven track record for effective dissemination of the models and methodologies we have developed. Our organization has presented at national conferences, hosted national symposia, had our materials published, facilitated citywide professional development events, posted materials on various websites, and currently maintains interactive WebConversations on our website focused on the work with English Language Learners in AEMDD 2008. The newly created position of Web Manager supports these dissemination efforts. To achieve the technological aspects of the proposed dissemination plan, the Project Associate will collaborate with Web Manager to set up structures for the development of a web-based *AAA2I* community, identify resources and linkages locally and nationally, manage the necessary hardware and software, design training sessions to use the various technology and media platforms, and assist in translating materials to web-appropriate formats.

[5.b] Joanna Hefferen, Project Director will spend 50% of her time on the project and will provide overall management to ensure progress toward stated benchmarks. She will liaise with internal and external partners, manage project consultants and facilitators, and oversee the

implementation of methodologies to ensure the progress of the project toward stated objectives. In addition Ms. Hefferen has trained in *Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning* at ATI and in *Teaching for Interdisciplinary Understanding* at Project Zero – Harvard University Graduate School of Education – and will provide professional development on these frameworks.

Lauren Dunwoody Collins, Project Associate will coordinate the day-to-day logistics, record-keeping, and communications required for an effective program, and provide administrative support to the Project Director. She will spend 60% of her time on the project. Major responsibilities include: schedule meetings and facilitate communications among all stakeholders, collect, collate and help analyze data collected from the Inquiry Teams' practitioner research, interface with technical support staff and consultants to support online postings, conversations and WebConversations, and day-to-day administration of the project.

Grants Manager Tavia Huggins will spend 7.5% of her time on the project, monitoring expenditures against the project budget weekly and reporting to the Project Team monthly or as needed. She will ensure contract compliance, reporting and fiscal management of the project.

The **four Program Managers** will each spend 25% of their time facilitating the day to day activities in one of the project schools. Since many of the residency activities occur simultaneously across sites, one Program Manager per school ensures efficient management. Program Managers create schedules with the schools and artists and facilitate all professional development meetings in the school – Planning and Reflection Meetings, Assessment Action and Reflection Plans, Lesson Study and planning and reflection for Interdisciplinary Units of Study (see Attachment 2 for Definitions). They will support maintenance of **AAA2I** data binders at their school lab site, and will be responsible for gathering the documentation and analyzing the data from the previously mentioned professional development processes. They will also provide

the Web Manager with materials for posting, and play an active role in responding to questions from our online community of educators and arts administrators.

Dr. Heidi Andrade, Consultant will provide instruction and technical assistance in formative assessment practice at the two Assessment Conferences each year. Dr. Andrade will teleconference monthly and as needed with the Project Director to plan the events and to give feedback on the project. She will also serve on the *AAA21* Editorial Board and will be available to consult during Project Team Meetings (See Attachment 1 for her Letter of Support).

Rob Horowitz, Principle Investigator and a team of four evaluators will make at least 50 classroom observations annually. They will provide ongoing feedback to the Project Team concerning progress in reaching goals and objectives, with Dr. Horowitz and/or designated team member meeting bi-monthly with the Project Director and Associate.

[5.c] The three formative assessment principles central to this project are essential to all systems of continuous improvement: reveal what counts, give feedback, and provide an opportunity for revision or improvement. They are embedded at all levels of *AAA21* – student, educator, administration, evaluation - and its processes and tools – Inquiry Teams, Observation Protocols, Lesson Study, Action Plan/Reflection Tool, and Interdisciplinary Units of Study. In *The Teaching Gap*, these principles are also recognized as integral to the development of a long-term continuous improvement model for teaching and learning (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

All activities in the proposed project are focused on and build from **student achievement** of grade appropriate arts and ELA standards and 21st century learning skills, and how formative assessment facilitates that achievement. Students will engage in processes of peer and self assessment, reflect on the quality of their work, identify strategies for improving quality, and revise their work accordingly. These processes will deepen students' understanding of

curriculum material and interdisciplinary learning, improving their performance. They will also be responsible for tracking and sharing their progress in both written formats (Artist Journal and Seven Strategies Tools) and orally, making their learning visible to themselves, their peers, and their families. Their progress will also be tracked by educators through Data Binders that include: samples of student work, assessment tools, and videotapes of student work.

Data from these methodologies will inform the work of **the educators (teachers and artists)**, who will identify specific indicators in the arts and ELA standards to track with this data in both reflection meetings and inquiry team meetings, providing essential feedback for their planning and revision processes. Educators will receive instruction in effective feedback and continuous improvement methods from Dr. Andrade, and apply these in the classroom utilizing the Assessment Action Plan and Reflection Protocol. These tools as well as Lesson Study and Interdisciplinary Units will make the work visible, provide data, and support educators in examining and improving the effectiveness of their work. These reflective protocols will also support educators in setting clear learning goals and aligning the assessments with these goals. The collaborative structure of the Inquiry Teams also incorporates continuous improvement through ongoing articulation of clear learning goals, implementation of lessons focused on these goals, examination of the effectiveness of lessons by the teams, and revision of the lessons based on feedback from colleagues and from student data. Arts Assessment in Action videos will additionally serve as reflective tools and provide visual feedback to help teams improve the work. The educators will also complete feedback forms after every Assessment Conference. This information will provide data for the planning of subsequent conferences and help the Project Team identify next steps.

The Project Team facilitating these professional development processes in the schools will meet monthly to examine the results of student work and professional development across schools to ensure the project is on task, to share best practices, to problem-solve and to provide feedback to the schools. Their work will serve as documentation of the project as a whole, and will be shared across all ArtsConnection programs to improve partnerships in over 100 schools.

The Evaluation Team represents the next level of continuous improvement. Their instruments will be refined and their evaluation informed by the work of all the preceding processes, as well as by quantitative data. The principal investigator and/or a member of his research team will provide ongoing formative evaluation information to the Project Team to help improve the quality of the project, and they will share their processes and findings with the greater research and evaluation community through postings on our website. This **Online Community** will provide a broader perspective on the project through questions and feedback, allowing the Project Team and evaluators to practice formative self-assessment via WebConversations and other dialog formats.

[6.a & b] The evaluation will be conducted by the Arts Education Research Team, led by Principal Investigator Dr. Rob Horowitz, Associate Director of the Center for Arts Education Research at Teachers College, Columbia University. He will direct a team of senior graduate and post-doctorate researchers drawn from each of the arts disciplines with broad experience in research, assessment, evaluation and professional development: Elizabeth Beaubrun (Doctoral Candidate, Columbia University), Amy Kleiman, (M.A., Columbia University), Dr. Rekha Rajan (Ed.D., Columbia University), and Dr. Dan Serig (Massachusetts College of Art, Ed.D. Columbia University). This evaluation team has worked together with Dr. Horowitz on over 30 research and evaluation projects (See also 4. Personnel, and attached Resumes).

Design and Analysis: The evaluation will employ a quasi-experimental design, with an additional, systematic qualitative component. A pure experimental design is not feasible, because: 1) It is not possible to randomly assign children to control and experimental groups within the operating schools, as the program will work with intact classrooms that were constructed to meet the needs of the students and schools; 2) A randomly-selected larger unit of analysis (i.e., classrooms or schools) would be inappropriate for assessing student achievement and would not yield sufficient n for significance testing; 3) The NYDOE has been, and is currently, engaged in a long-term effort to systemically re-institutionalize arts education through several initiatives (including the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts*). Therefore some teachers and students may have already benefited from arts integrated instruction; 4) The proposed project is seeking a systemic effect on participating schools' teachers and students and, therefore, the project will not seek to limit arts opportunities for currently non-participating children. NYCDOE, participating schools, and ArtsConnection will not seek to limit arts education opportunities for children who are not participating in this proposed intervention for the purposes of a controlled experiment. This would not be practical or educationally desirable, and would contradict NYCDOE policy.

Performance data will be obtained at the outset of the project for participating students. These data will include New York State standardized achievement tests, measures of students' knowledge and skills in the arts, measures of teachers' ability to integrate the arts, and demographic data. NYCDOE will supply a randomly-chosen matched, equivalent non-treatment sample of students from the overall City database (students will be matched on SES, LEP, Special Ed and other available characteristics). Throughout the course of the project, the equivalence of means will be tested (t -test) for the overall groups and various subgroups (e.g.

schools, grades, SES, LEP, disabilities) to ensure that the comparison groups maintain similar characteristics. The same individual students will be tracked over the course of the project.

The evaluation will investigate the program's effectiveness at achieving its 4 objectives:

- 1) Students who participate in the *AAA21* Project for three years will meet the 5th-grade benchmarks in the NYC *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Theater or Dance*, aligned to New York State and national standards.
- 2) Students participating for three years will achieve the appropriate grade level ELA standards in Speaking, Listening, and Writing.
- 3) Students will develop their ability to set personal and ensemble goals, engage in peer and self assessment of these goals, strategize on how to address these goals, and track their progress.
- 4) Teachers will develop the capacity to create a cycle of continuous student improvement by peer and self assessment strategies and provide timely and descriptive feedback.

Variables within three broad groups (defined by the program objectives) will be measured: 1) program implementation variables (Objective 4), measuring the degree and quality of teacher/artist participation, the success of collaboration and implementation, and the quality and effectiveness of curriculum materials; 2) teachers' professional development variables (Objective 4), measuring knowledge and application of arts integrated instruction, the ability of teachers to sustain deep and meaningful connections between the arts and academic curriculum, and the effectiveness of professional development components (inquiry teams, reflection meetings, lesson study, and observation protocol); and 3) student development variables (Objectives 1, 2 and 3), measuring academic achievement, arts proficiency, 21st century skills, and self-assessment practice. Analysis will seek to determine if, and how, the first two variable groups described above influence changes in student development. Several analyses will

investigate causal relationships among implementation, professional development, and student variables: 1) academic achievement scores will be compared between the matched treatment and non-treatment groups; 2) participants (teachers and students) will be ranked according to their degree of exposure (professional development, classes, etc.) and the quality of their participation (as measured by rating scales, see below) and assigned to high and low groups for additional comparison; 3) regression analysis will determine the best predictors (among implementation and teachers' professional development variables) for changes in student achievement, arts proficiency, motivation and other areas of student development; and 4) systematic qualitative analysis using NVIVO software will seek to triangulate data from different types of participants and sites, identifying common or contradictory patterns, to help refine and validate an appropriate causal model. Qualitative data will also be essential for ongoing formative evaluation. All analysis will control for SES and special education students.

Control Groups. Three sets of control groups will be used for the quasi-experimental analysis. **Treatment and Control One:** State scores, and rating scale results, will be gathered for all 3rd, 4th and 5th graders in participating schools each year. The initial treatment group scores/results (3rd - 5th grade, Year 1) will be compared with the scores of students entering the program in Years 2 through 4, either in 3rd grade or through transfers. At the end of 4 years, we will compare scores of students who have had varying degrees of participation in the program (one to three years). If the program is effective, then the effects should be stronger with longer participation. **Treatment and Control Two:** We will compare scores of participating students (treatment) with students in NYC Peer Horizon schools (control). NYCDOE selects up to 40 peer schools for each elementary school, based upon the percentage of students at each school that are English Language Learners, Special Education, Black/Hispanic and Title I eligible. We

will also obtain an equivalent random sample of students from the NYCDOE database, matched according to SES, ELL and other characteristics, and compare their scores with those of participating students. **Treatment and Control Three:** A within-sample analysis will compare scores/ratings of the most successful classrooms with those of the least successful classrooms. Classrooms will be assigned to high and low groups based upon 1) the success of program implementation at the classroom level, 2) the ability of teachers to employ techniques learned through professional development, and 3) the degree of successful collaboration between artists and teachers.

Instrumentation will measure progress towards each goal and objective described in this proposal. The principal standardized measures will be the New York State ELA and Math tests. Individual students' scores will be tracked over the complete length of the project.

Dr. Horowitz has previously developed observation protocols, surveys, rating scales and rubrics based on national and New York State standards in the arts, as well as the *NYC Blueprint for Learning and Teaching in the Arts*. Instrumentation for assessing teaching and learning within the National Standards for Arts Education were developed for the evaluator's project within *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* (Fiske, 1999). Instrumentation for assessing learning within the New York State Learning Standards for the Arts were first developed for a project with Harlem School of the Arts. These measures have been piloted, revised and otherwise administered on several evaluations of programs for professional development of arts specialists and student achievement in the arts. The measures are effective for determining: 1) the degree to which teachers address each content standard in the arts; 2) the balance between content standards; and 3) the balance between arts and academic instruction within arts-integrated instruction, and the integrity of instruction within the arts disciplines

These measures will be used at the outset of the project to develop a profile of participating teachers and students. Additionally, Dr. Horowitz developed rating scales and observation protocols for evaluating ArtsConnection AEMDD grants. A peer-reviewed paper on the rating scale development was presented at the 2005 AERA conference in Montreal (Horowitz, 2005) with a more complete description published by the Dana Foundation (Rich, 2005). Several rating scales are designed to assess teachers' ability to integrate the arts, collaborate with visiting artists, and perceive children's development in the arts. Other rating scales measure children's cognitive, social and personal development through the arts. These instruments have been tested for reliability and validity and will be an important data source for measuring program goals. More recently, the evaluation team developed an observational protocol for tracking student achievement, teacher/artist practice and partnership implementation in the ArtsConnection DELTA program. The protocol, Classroom Assessment for Learning and Teaching (CALT) yields detailed quantitative and qualitative data on program goals. Details of the development of CALT are in the VSA publication *The Contours of Inclusion*. The observation protocol was first presented at the American Evaluation Association conference in November 2007 (Baltimore). Other instruments will include: 1.) surveys of participating teachers and school-based administrators (Likert-type scales, descriptive data, and open-ended questions), 2.) interviews with teachers, school-based and ArtsConnection administrators and staff, 3.) observations of classroom instruction, professional development, planning meetings and other program activities and 4.) content analysis of program materials, including curricula, peer assessments, and artist journals.

Data collection at participating schools will be continuous throughout the project. New York State test data will be obtained as soon as they are available each year from the NYCDOE.

Surveys will be used to assess each program component, both to provide formative assessment and develop understanding of their potential impact on teachers and students. Comprehensive surveys will be administered to all participants in mid-fall and mid-spring each year to assess teachers' development of new skills/understandings and the application of new classroom practice. Participating teachers will be interviewed each year, as well. Other student assessments (rating scales) will be conducted at least twice a year. CALT classroom observations will take place throughout each school year (at least 50 each year).

Reporting and Dissemination will include yearly interim reports (available each September during the grant period), and an overall final report. Instruments developed through the project will be made available to participating schools, ArtsConnection, NYCDOE, other AEMDD recipients, and others in the field once they are tested for reliability/validity. In addition to dissemination strategies proposed by ArtsConnection (described elsewhere in this proposal), the evaluation results and methods will be presented at national conferences where Dr. Horowitz has presented before, such as AEA, AERA, ASCD, NDEO and AEP.

Accountability: Through the surveys and observations, the evaluation team will monitor the implementation of each program component described in this proposal narrative. Data will be promptly provided to participating schools, NYCDOE and ArtsConnection to help determine if program activities are effective and are meeting the needs of students, teachers, and schools. Dr. Horowitz will work closely with participating schools, NYCDOE and ArtsConnection to provide continual and timely formative evaluation data that can ensure the program's effectiveness. Dr. Horowitz and his team will meet bi-monthly with the Project Team, and confer more frequently through phone, email and discussion during site visits.