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PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION: THE VALUE OF MEANINGFUL
CONVERSATION
FOR THE STUDIO ART EDUCATOR

THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Art Education in the
College of Fine Arts at the University of Kentucky

By

Christopher Bryant

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Allan Richards, Professor of Art Education

Lexington, Kentucky

2017

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION: THE VALUE OF MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION FOR THE STUDIO ART EDUCATOR

This thesis explores the strong support for collaboration in schools' while synthesizing literature already conducted on the subject. The primary objectives of this thesis is to discuss possible scenarios as to why educators are not collaborating, explore characteristics and implementations of collaboration with three specific groups including colleagues, stakeholders, and practicing professionals, and identify four key benefits of collaboration which include improved health, pedagogy, autonomy, and time. Evidence supports the idea that teachers who work in isolation can hinder growth within their profession. Additional evidence provides conclusive evidence that supports the benefits of collaboration by adding responsibilities to key contributors by holding them accountable for student learning.

KEYWORDS: Collaboration; Professional Learning Committee; Colleagues; Stakeholders; Practicing Professionals

Christopher Bryant

04/18/17

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Professional collaboration amongst art educators is vital to the success of teaching practices and our professionalism. Art educators should not endure all of the challenges of teaching alone. As educators, we should strive for a common vision that not only allows seasoned teachers to share their expertise, but also mobilize and build upon visions from younger staff (Danielson, 2009). From personal observation and experience, currently, art educators are not taking full advantage of collaboration. Basic, pessimistic assumptions which are preventing educators from seeking outside assistance, include loss of time and energy, endangered autonomy, and diluted pedagogy. Purposeful collaboration with colleagues, stakeholders, and professional artists will alleviate some of the hindrances that concern most art educators. This will help to facilitate a framework from which to create a support group to strengthen their teaching efforts.

Statement of the Problem

My observations as a teacher have shown me how reluctant educators can be when it comes to collaboration. Even though professional conversations yield distinguished teachers (Danielson, 2009), there is often a focus on the negative sides of collaboration because it is perceived as another task in the ever-mounting list of teacher responsibilities. Obstacles such as loss of time, adverse effects on teacher health, lost autonomy, and undesirable pedagogy should not inhibit the desire to collaborate. Art

educators need to focus on common interests and generate supportive conditions in continuous learning, growth, and professional development while allowing one another to collaboratively work together to reach shared goals, and expand educational capacity (Brown & Schainker, 2008). The groundwork provides examples and introduces specific goals appropriate for art educators to successfully collaborate utilizing resources. This thesis explores the main groups with which to collaborate, why these groups are most beneficial and how an art educator can use these specific associations to become a more distinguished and efficient teacher.

Significance of the Study

The demands on teachers seem to grow immensely every year, most of these requirements are obligatory but teachers are rarely compensated for their work. The social and emotional demands of teaching are very stressful. Danielson (2009) compares the educational profession to the demands of medicine, with vastly different rewards, while also discussing the inherent responsibility of continuous learning. Teachers need to figure out how to make better use of their time, or the burn out rate will continue to grow (Vandenberghe, & Huberman 1999). By creating a network with which to rely on, the stresses that many teachers, both new and veteran, feel can be alleviated.

A qualified network of individuals and professional conversations can create learning communities with similar teaching beliefs committed to improving teaching and helping students strengthen skills. The value of professional collaboration provides teachers with current issues within the classroom and allows them to direct their teaching

toward making them a more proficient educator. Though the front end of creating a network of collaborating resources may be strenuous, the rewards will far outweigh the disadvantages.

Purpose of the study

Between educational obligations, goals, and differences among individual learning demands, educators may find themselves overwhelmed. Conversations shared among colleagues can be a great way to reduce anxiety and improve professionalism. However, educators often perceive collaborating as a waste of time, an invasion of their pedagogy, a means of lost autonomy, and an unnecessary use of energy (Danielson, 2009). Art teachers need a support system dedicated to essential instructional management. This system should consist of individuals and organizations that share a similar vision and can help the educator create rigorous lesson plans to benefit a wider range of students. Through the evidence collected in this thesis, it will become apparent that the quintessential groups for collaborating are colleagues, stakeholders, and professional artists.

An educator's effectiveness deals less with the attributes of one individual and places more emphasis on collaboration based within the school (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). We should look no further than our professional colleagues for an active resource in order to generate efficient lesson planning (Berry, Daughtrey & Wieder, 2009). This resource can be separated into three tiers: (a) tier one consists of fellow art educators, regardless of grade level; (b) tier two consists of other arts-based disciplined educators

such as those who teach music, visual and performing arts, and humanities; and (c) tier three consists of all other educators within the district. This thesis defines and explores how collaborating with fellow educators allows a teacher to evaluate the learning environment of his or her classroom, gain insights into the student's academic ability, and discover new effective pedagogy based on the curriculum.

Stakeholders, which include administrators, parents, and members of the community surrounding the school, also contribute to successful collaboration and the welfare of students. These individuals have specific interests in supporting students inside and outside of the classroom (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Collaboration examples within this group can be seen in various forms including committees, community arts nights, parent-teacher conferences, focus groups, and feeder-school task forces. These avenues provide reliable communication networks between schools, home, and the community which generates insight into the students' support system in order to better understand the complexities of students' learning needs. This engagement supports improved pedagogy, community involvement, a common vision for student achievement, and illustrates benchmarks related to our vision for student success.

Last, working professionals reach beyond the school walls to art organizations, local artists, university-sponsored workshops, and community-based art education. These individuals deliver an alternative look at students' success with special skills, materials, and possible career paths. Collaborating with these individuals can relieve financial burdens connected with art supplies that schools cannot afford. These organizations can help foster positive autonomy for the teacher with supplemental educational abilities which reinforce the educator's curriculum. In turn, educators can foster learning beyond

one's skill, creating a scaffolding of rich rigorous pedagogy. Additionally, working professionals add new ways for students to overcome obstacles and connect with the curriculum outside of the classroom. This may also invigorate teacher's interest in their job.

Limitations of study

Professional collaboration associated with this study reflect resources and methodology for high school art educators. The information provided within this study has been organized, in general, as a framework that may not cover all areas of collaboration. Educators should respectfully understand that the resources laid out within this thesis create a starting point for art educators in order to design more distinguished pedagogy based on their curriculum and rigor.

Definition of Terms

Action plan. Proposed idea generated from a teacher, learner or institution in order to address specific issues directed toward a common goal.

Active learning methods. Learning methods directed to actively engage students' abilities during the learning process.

Administrators. Individual who oversees daily operations within the school system and

typically include principals, vice principals, and student deans. They are school advocates who establish goals and objectives based on their communities and educational programs.

Autonomy. Recognition and responsibility of the learner being solely accountable for his or her knowledge during the learning process.

Clarity of purpose. Statement that outlines clear goals for specific achievement.

Collaboration. Act of multiple individuals working together to accomplish or solve a similar issue.

Collaborative learning. Act of several students working together in order to complete a task or solve a common goal. This instructional method supports students to learn together.

Colleagues. Educational professionals who hold similar positions within one's school or to a lesser degree school district who holds a similar position within one's profession, or faculty by association.

Community-Based Art Education (CBAE). Refers to an organization to provide learning about the arts within a community setting. Although the setting may vary, media and engagement of the arts are typically hosted by professional artists or community arts centers.

Cooperative learning. Form of learning that requires the collaboration of several students working together on a specific task. This style of learning holds each student responsible for a particular goal that is part of the larger task. The entire task cannot be completed without the achievement of every student's goal.

Kentucky Core Content. Educational policies containing academic standards that provide tools for lessons based on the arts and humanities. The Kentucky Visual Arts Standards are based on the four national core standards which include creating, performing, presenting, producing, responding, and connecting.

Curriculum. Educational document that includes subjects and materials used by an educational organization; generated to ensure a student's learning includes adequate skills, knowledge, and abilities are covered within the lesson.

Evaluation. Judgment based on specific assessment guidelines. This may be completed by an individual, group or institution depending on the target. Associated with Teacher Professional Growth and Effectiveness System, a Kentucky-based evaluation plan for P-12 educators, which targets fair and equitable system to measure teacher effectiveness.

Evidence. Facts of information that offers valid support of a claim.

Facilitator. Individual who directs a group of people in order to achieve a common goal. During the process of achievement, this individual remains neutral and does not provide any opinions related to the goal; stakeholder.

Feedback. Criticism encouragement or guidance provided in response to an individual who is attempting to complete a task; information provided outlines a pathway for the individual to complete the task with desired results.

Formative evaluation. Assessment that takes place during the development of new information. Monitoring during this ongoing instruction is often helpful for tracking one's learning progress.

Goals. Target areas based on ambitions and effort reflecting generic action that may not be measurable or tangible: goals may be immediate or long-term.

Skills. Abilities necessary for completing basic tasks; may vary depending on occupation or education. These skills may include an understanding of technology, communication skills, social awareness, self-motivation, and literacy.

Learning environment. Setting that refers to the social and or physical layout in which an individual or group gains new knowledge; setting is not limited to a physical location. Traditional context refers to an educational experience or classroom.

Lesson plan. Traditional format used for instruction which outlines an educator's goals, objectives, and activities. Objectives, details, and outline may vary depending on the teacher's methodology, curriculum, subject matter, state core-standards, and demographic make-up.

Living Arts & Science Center (LASC). Establishment located in Lexington, Kentucky that provides creative and diverse opportunities for community members, especially school-aged students, to explore and educate themselves in the arts and sciences.

Media.

1. Plural context referring to medium; art based
2. Broad communication through print, radio, television, and the Internet.
3. Members who are affiliated with or employed by communication services such as the press; news-based groups or individuals.

Objectives. Target statements based on the efforts and performance which are desired to be demonstrated after an instructional experience. Attainable outcomes are supported with actions that are measureable as well as tangible; short term.

Parent community. Participation and influences created from students' legal guardians, groups, businesses, and institutions that are essential to the growth and development of a school. The level of involvement can influence the welfare, vitality, and success of students; not limited to affecting the social and emotional experience.

Pedagogy. Methodology designed to deliver content, engage learners, or provide practice. Disciplines may influence pedagogy to do according to academic status, desired achievement, and subject-practice of the teacher or facilitator.

Professional artist. Individual who earns a living from the performance or practice of creating art. Individuals may be traditionally trained or self educated.

Professional conversations. Focus group of educated individuals exchanging various ideas in relation to common work-oriented interests. Typically, interests are generated on the premise of a similar issue with the desire for a resolution.

Professional growth goals. Specifically targeted areas that are identified through an evaluation process and suggest improvement areas. Success and achievement can be obtained through self-reflection, practice, and experience. A mandated practice for P-12 educators in Kentucky.

Professional learning committee (PLC). Group of educators who collaborate on common subjects and creating goals in order to improve teaching practices and academic achievement standards.

Professional organizations. Body of educated individuals who seek to meet the needs of various professions while maintaining public interest.

Reflection. Activity of thought and reasoning based on experience after an event has transpired.

Resources. Materials used by an educator that are considered to be contributing assets to providing students with information.

Rigor. Used by educators to describe expectations according to academic standards in which students are engaged in their own learning. Opportunities are also provided for students to explore more in depth ideas and issues that interest them.

Stakeholders. Individuals who are invested in the welfare and prosperity of a school and its students. Examples include administrators, teachers, parents, students, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials.

Student Growth Goals (SGG). Progress measurement that evaluates specific enduring skills and the proficiency in relation to state or national standards as identified by the educator. The educator collaborates with evaluators to set obtainable achievements and measures progress over time.

Teacher health. Educators' physical, mental, or social well-being. Special areas of interest are sleep, energy, social interaction, quality of life, teaching performance, and stress levels.

Teacher standards. Educational objectives based on guidelines for teacher curriculum and assessment. Principles may vary depending on content area, grade level, and practice.

Working professionals. Often also referred to as practicing professionals, are individuals who have the necessary skills or education that prepares them for a specific role within a profession. Typically, these individuals earn a living by performing, practicing, teaching, or creating artwork.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Research strongly supports the need for collaboration within schools (Hord, 1997). Collaboration between colleagues, stakeholders, and working professionals promotes teacher health, increased productivity, positive autonomy, and enhanced pedagogy. Adding responsibilities to key contributors can create accountability for student learning (Sanders & Kearney, 2008). Building teachers' skills is essential for generating like-minded thinking based on co-design for a target audience.

Alternatively, isolation can distort growth within a teachers' profession. More often than not, teachers are subjected to physical, social and even emotional isolation during their career (Schlichte, 2005). Examples include, (a) *physical isolation* (i.e., teachers working in rural areas who have little access to support systems); (b) *social isolation* (i.e., peers alienated from their colleagues based on territorial objectives and different pedagogy); and (c) *emotional isolation* (i.e., where educators feel unwanted based on personality differences). Utilizing the ideas of collaboration can generate added support for teachers that may be subjected to workplace-barriers.

Unfortunately, teachers are not collaborating because of insufficient time, added stress, fear of lost autonomy, and differing pedagogy (Piercey, 2010). This thesis outlines the benefits of collegial collaboration and provide strong evidence that collaboration among teachers works. Further, it provides evidence that peer collaboration promotes personal growth, relives stress, generates professional learning experiences, and improves support for teachers within the school, community, and with colleagues.

Colleagues

Between state testing, challenging students, uninvolved parents, and apathetic administrators, teachers can become over encumbered with demanding responsibilities. Added stressors generate a taxing work environment and contribute to educators' inability to capitalize on their strengths. Pülschen and Pülschen (2015) discuss the severity of psychiatric illness amongst educators derived from stress. Similar examinations conducted by Pearson and Moomaw (2005) conclude the relationship between teacher autonomy, work-related stress, job satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism are all factors that affect teachers' health. Additional findings indicate that behavioral interventions can be fostered by strong collaboration, and self-management strategies can also be utilized by educators for positive health and well-being (Lorig & Holman, 2003). Collaborators of this form may include colleagues, stakeholders, or working professionals. Schaubman et al. (2011) suggest that collaborative problem solving allows educators to relieve stress by understanding the underlying stressor and to utilizing a positive framework. In addition, forms of collaboration, such as professional learning communities (PLCs), can decrease teacher stress and increase job satisfaction (Ackerman, 2011). Collaborators in this form may include fellow art educators, other arts-based teachers in the building and, more broadly, educators in the school or district.

As art educators working toward common goals, we need to be willing to embrace new practices that may be foreign to our own pedagogy. Closing the effective teaching gap has always been a center of importance. Teachers who have effective pedagogical training and skilled academic knowledge can be leaders in collaborating (Berry,

Daughtery & Wieder, 2009). Our colleagues, who hold similar titles, can often be a valuable asset when searching for additional resources. Learning about professional development, facilitation, and how to effectively collaborate are essential factors that influence teachers' classroom skill sets. Avalos (2011) reviews publications centered around these ideas and describes the effects of professional development based on issues and themes associated with collaboration. Ideas such as professional conversation can bring about academic classroom rewards, generate new pedagogical ideas, and even positive autonomy (Danielson, 2009). These enhanced collegial and social relationships create additional resources including increased job satisfaction and can support positive social-emotional change. Similarly, the process of collaborating with teachers from different professional backgrounds and varying skill levels could lead to reduced stress (Ackerman, 2011). An example of this joint effort could be used when speaking with an English teacher about mandatory writing. This form of collaboration is also known as cross-curricular lesson planning.

Moreover, the outline of collaboration centers around the value, reflection, and informal professional conversations that support positive environment to support teacher development (Danielson, 2009). Important ideas, themes, traditions and contemporary art making provide a framework for art teachers to collaborate on experiences that include developing curriculum and empowering today's students (Gude, 2007). These collaborative practices ask teachers to discuss curriculum, cultural content, and structure. Educators should be able to sense, examine, and explain the structure of art curriculum based on their teachings, and working in tandem with other art teachers can help them do this. In order for effective pedagogic implementation to occur, teachers, and by extension

educational leaders and administrators, need to discuss common core state standards necessary to meet requirements embedded within 21st century skills (Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016).

Another reason collaborating with colleagues can be beneficial is because one of the hardest things to quantify is the value of an educators' time, and collaborating can help free some of that time (Gulamhussein, 2013). Many ideas of collaboration such as PLCs and coaching models require additional work; when a strong working model is established, the initial energy spent saves teachers time in the future. Should there not be limitations to a teachers' professional expectations? If so, how do we measure the amount of time an educator has been mandated to spend toward professional development? While many districts provide stipends or include professional development within our work schedule, perhaps we should reflect on this idea of loss time and calculate the added benefits and possible outcomes brought about by effective collaboration (Raywid, 1993).

Collaboration focus-areas help teachers to examine an interdisciplinary model program in the arts that includes traditional curriculum and utilizes outside collaboration that encourage the school's success (Trent & Dwyer, 1998). Additionally, educators need to consider how this idea can be manifested into long-term benefits. Through in-depth collaboration surrounding school reform, Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001) discuss art education and its development in an ever-changing world. For our art programs to thrive, we must work with emotional intelligence garnered from collaborating with others so that we can provide dynamic communication necessary for proficient job performance and be seen as a vital asset to our peers, administrators, community, and professional artists (Goleman, 1998).

Conversely, collaborating with colleagues may not always provide the best resources for a teacher. Vastly different pedagogies, unfocused efforts, or toxic individuals can prove a detriment to professional collaboration. While working through these issues provides no guarantee, by creating the proper framework for positive collaboration, a teacher can be the effective leader to help others understand how to better utilize collaboration.

Stakeholders

What is community-based art education? This idea stems from the teaching practice where the community and educator share interaction and dialogue in order for students to build discerning work. Participating members are typically referred to as individuals who are invested in the welfare and prosperity of a school and its students; examples of participating members include administrators, teachers, parents, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials. These individuals, also known as stakeholders, are a vital asset to the success and improvement of a school.

A common concern among teachers is the active role families have in their children's school. Epstein and Connors (1992) discuss considerations about family and school partnerships and how an active role in facilitating parent involvement may be obtained by understanding the seven major types of involvement and their effects: (a) basic family obligations, (b) school obligations, (c) school participation, (d) home learning, (e) decision making, (f) governance, (g) advocacy, and (h) community collaboration. Unfortunately, there are several reasons parents may not participate in their

child's education. These obstacles include demanding schedules, ability to communicate with school officials, lack of resources including transportation, or frustrations with school policies (Van Roekel, 2008). Despite these known practices, many schools have yet to establish a solution. An effective teacher learns to establish relationships with key groups such as parents not only to benefit him or herself but also to make students successful.

By including stakeholders in the teachers' pedagogical development, community members play an active role in the growth and development of its youth. In doing so, the educator shares significant responsibilities to ensure quality education occurs and also establishes himself or herself as a resource within the school. Together, educators and stakeholders can unify to determine the needs of students, provide professional development for teachers based on community engagement, develop effective partnering skills, provide transparent district policies, collaborate with postsecondary institutions, generate outreach opportunities, and practice regular evaluation (Saxena, 2014).

Similarly, administrators can also be powerful advocates. Hord and Sommers (2008) explore the possibilities and learning opportunities offered by school professionals, principals, stakeholders, and practicing professionals toward developing creative support while utilizing PLCs. While PLCs may demand significant time to be effective, they can provide teachers with additional resources for bridging the gap between parents and administrators. Inviting a principal or parent into a PLC can generate alternative collegiality that will provide more meaningful lessons (Giles, 2006).

Additionally, collaboration between educators and stakeholders can improve communication, public relations, and parent and community involvement (Knight, 1997).

These additional resources can provide educators with improved practices and relieve possible stressors generally associated with teacher performance based on community expectations. Utilizing strategies in order to overcome the demands of teaching can reduce certain anxieties that occur from day to day.

Additionally, teaching practices are evolving. Art educators must examine recent changes in media education and student lives to provide an accessible set of principles on which curriculum should be based and include rational pedagogic practice (Buckingham, 2013). Evaluation and its application affect both the learning and teaching process. These areas that seem problematic for most teachers can be diminished by utilizing various strategies addressed by Bloom (1971), which present solutions for formative and summative evaluation. Similarly, McLaughlin and Talert (2006) build on extensive evidence that teacher learning communities improve pedagogy and lay out a sustaining collaborative professional culture.

Inviting stakeholders into the classroom can prove detrimental if a teacher does not plan accordingly and maintain control of the environment. Having input from outside sources can be helpful; however, if mismanaged or not structured, this can go against the very purpose of collaboration and potentially cause lasting problems for the teacher in the four key areas that are trying to be strengthened.

Working Professionals

Working professionals are artists involved in constant discovery, problem solving, and discipline refinement who make a living from their practice and provide an ideal opportunity for offering students and teachers, additional skills in the classroom. These

individuals have the necessary skills or education that prepares them for a specific role within a profession. Typically, these individuals earn a living by performing, practicing, or creating art. As educators, it is essential that we also develop our knowledgebase and skills to be an effective partner and advocate for the arts (*Hall et al.*, 2007). Educators and working professionals need to generate a creative partnership even though it may provide difficulties; the reward outweighs the initial struggle. Alternative pedagogy provided by working artists can sometimes collide with the educators' views (Upitis, 2006). However, teachers faced with this conundrum should seek the opportunity to increase teacher subject knowledge, alleviate teacher instruction preparation, and foster new rigorous content by welcoming a visiting artist into their classroom.

Art educators need to assert the role of discipline-based art education within the school system by incorporating successful working artists into instruction (Eisner, 1987). Contemporary art issues addressed in the art world include art theory, art framework, theoretical art, pedagogical art, and content that can be daunting for one educator to be comfortably competent. Thus, utilizing other arts' professional seems like a logical avenue for an art teacher to take to alleviate stress and save time (Gaudelius & Speirs, 2002). Issues such as personal identity, visual culture, popular media, and socializing can then be evaluated and incorporated into a community-based arts education (Ulbrich, 2005) that can enrich a teacher's pedagogical philosophy. Integrating working professionals into our lesson plans allows students the opportunity to build connections with classroom practice.

Educators need to explore programs that allow practicing artists into the classroom who will act as a resource and play an important role in meeting the

educational standards (Stein, 2004). Doing this involves a lot of time at its inception; however, once these connections are established, the teacher will have a pool of working artists from which to constantly pull from to strengthen their class work and eventually help manage time more efficiently. Part of this time will include developing an understanding of the core content being utilized. The Arts and Humanities Kentucky Academic Standards allow for working artists to come into the classroom and instruct the students. These standards are based on the four national core standards that include creating, performing/presenting/producing, responding, and connecting. Many of the anchor standards are applicable to the concept of visiting artists. However, there are three standards that specifically provide educators with opportunities for success when collaborating with an artist. Applicable Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) standards related to practicing artists include:

Table 2.1

Kentucky Department of Education Standard VA:Cr2.1

Discipline: Visual Arts		Artistic Process: Creating
<p>Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.</p> <p>Process Component: Investigate</p> <p>Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches.</p> <p>Essential Question: How do artists work? How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective? How do artists and designers learn from trial and error?</p>		
HS Proficient VA:Cr2.1.I	HS Accomplished VA:Cr2.1.II	HS Advanced VA:Cr2.1.III
Engage in making a work of art or design without having a preconceived plan.	Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.	Experiment, plan, and make multiple works of art and design that explore a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept.

(KDE, 2015, p. 575)

Table 2.2

Kentucky Department of Education Standard VA:Cr2.3

Discipline: Visual Arts		Artistic Process: Creating
<p>Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.</p> <p>Process Component: Investigate</p> <p>Enduring Understanding: People create and interact with objects, places, and design that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.</p> <p>Essential Question: How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities? How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems? How do artists and designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?</p>		
HS Proficient VA:Cr2.3.I	HS Accomplished VA:Cr2.3.II	HS Advanced VA:Cr2.3.III
Collaboratively develop a proposal for an installation, artwork, or space design that transforms the perception and experience of a particular place.	Redesign an object, system, place, or design in response to contemporary issues.	Demonstrate in works of art or design how visual and material culture defines, shapes, enhances, inhibits, and/or empowers people's lives.

(KDE, 2015, p. 575)

Table 2.3

Kentucky Department of Education Standard VA:Pr4.1

Discipline: Visual Arts		Artistic Process: Creating
<p>Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.</p> <p>Process Component: Select</p> <p>Enduring Understanding: Artists and other presenters consider various techniques, methods, venues, and criteria when analyzing, selecting, and curating objects artifacts, and artworks for preservation and presentation.</p> <p>Essential Question: How are artworks cared for and by whom? What criteria, methods, and processes are used to select work for preservation or presentation? Why do people value objects, artifacts, and artworks, and select them for presentation?</p>		
HS Proficient VA:Pr4.1.I	HS Accomplished VA:Pr4.1.II	HS Advanced VA:Pr4.1.III
Analyze, select, and curate artifacts and/or artworks for presentation and preservation.	Analyze, select, and curate artifacts and/or artworks for presentation and preservation.	Critique, justify, and present choices in the process of analyzing, selecting, curating, and presenting artwork for a specific exhibit or event.

(KDE, 2015, p. 577)

Integration and collaboration can be achieved through job shadowing, field trips, arts night, discipline-specific learning, and community events. This process unifies various levels of learning that cannot always be manifested within the classroom setting. Thus, inviting visiting artists allows the classroom teacher to meet these standards.

This joint effort allows the teaching artist to create a support team that focuses on arts-based and arts-related skills, allowing them to create a class curriculum that will not only strengthen the student but also the educator. However, Catteral (1998) cautions this academic strategy of arts integration by suggesting that art experiences do not always

justify a better performing student. The real argument falls on the academic instrument provided by cognition and human development that plays a more active role. Further, generating an active role in the arts world by actively engaging working professionals provides the teacher with the opportunity to become more engaged in her or his learning. Engaging with another group and creating these connections is not something that will happen instantaneously. Seeing this idea to fruition takes time and energy to ensure its success. Ensuring control of how the teaching happens in the classroom could prove stressful; but when handled correctly, this group of collaborators could be the most helpful to a teacher in the long run.

Literature Conclusion

Mastering the art of collaboration requires time and practice; similarly, Hargrove (1998) unifies the ideas of collaboration as a business application offering creative activities, productive meetings and rewarding tools as a management resource during professional conversations. Additionally, based on hundreds of hours of research *Dean et al.* (2010) recommends applying this idea of a skills map developed from business leaders and direct it toward the collaborative techniques utilized within a school system. In order for educators to understand collaboration fully, they must also be able to outline aspects that frame large-scale collaboration such as identifying dimensions of difference, analyzing challenges provoked by concept framing, and analyzing how interventions contribute to connective reasoning and joint learning (*Dewulf, et. al, 2007*).

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CHAPTER 3

Collaborative Design

As addressed, research suggests that implementing collaboration with colleagues, stakeholders, and professional artists can alleviate hindrances associated with the teaching profession by providing educators with more time and enriched pedagogy, creating positive autonomy, and reducing stress. Additionally, by providing educators with diverse teaching strategies, the literature suggests that there is a strong connection between educator collaboration and increased student achievement (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Unfortunately, not knowing how to create and foster a network of individuals to engage effectively in collaboration can cause more disruptions to a teacher's classroom than doing nothing. Outlined within this chapter are characteristics of this systematic literature review that provided solutions for educators to collaborate effectively.

Objectives

Considering and synthesizing the literature already conducted on collaboration, the objectives of this secondary research study are threefold: (a) discuss possible scenarios as to why educators are not collaborating; (b) explore characteristics and implementation of collaboration with three specific groups; (c) identify four key benefits of collaboration that include improved health, pedagogy, autonomy, and time.

The most encompassing task in collaborating for educators is getting started. For many educators, the idea of utilizing collaboration as a progressive tool in our teaching

practices can be overwhelming (Scribner et al., 2007). Instead, if teachers recognize the benefits of collaboration that can improve our teaching practices and ultimately provide us with better lessons, new teaching strategies, and give our community a better understanding of what we do, then they have ultimately made the most crucial step in getting started.

Another hindrance towards collaboration lies with teachers' willingness to seek out others who want to collaborate. Educators often overlook alternative sources for guidance, such as stakeholders and practicing professionals who can also contribute to the outcome and wellbeing of our students (Schoeberlein, David & Sheth, 2009). These groups can be utilized to foster new teaching methodologies, skills, and avenues for participants to become involved in the development and success of the school.

Alternately, educators complain about time constraints collaboration emits upon teachers. One of the greatest constraints imbedded within change is time. Educators can avoid misdirected perceptions about the time it takes to collaborate and embrace the benefits that emerge over a longer period of time (Collinson & Cook, 2001). The work of a teacher can be challenging and complex, so much so that it is essential for educators to take the opportunity to strengthen their practices and reach out in these collaborative manners (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007).

Benefits of Colleagues

The people who understand the profession and nature of our struggles are best found within our department. These teachers use the same core content within their

classrooms, integrate the same curriculum, work with the same student body, and work for the same administrators. As teachers, we are committed to the improvement of learning and giving opportunities to students in their artistic endeavors while also demonstrating advocacy for professionalism. Our colleagues can grant us opportunities to strengthen our practices through peer learning, observing, and communicating (Kardos & Johnson, 2007). With all of the available resources, professional conversations have proven to promote teacher learning in the most powerful manner (Danielson, 2009). Professional conversations engage educated individuals in discussions related to common work-oriented interests; typically, interests are generated on the premise of a similar issue with the desire for a resolution to enrich student learning. These conversations can consist of formal and informal coaching, guidance, observation and reflection (Danielson, 2006). While formal conversations are typically aligned with structured ideas of planned observation and performance assessment, informal conversations focus on an idea of impromptu professional growth. By reflecting on our practices, we are asked to dissect and analyze our procedures within the classroom.

However, professional conversations can extend beyond typical settings that add value during and after the conversation has concluded. While PLCs are one form of professional conversations that include a set of ideas or practices, they are not the only collaborative form we can utilize with our colleagues. However, for the purpose of this study, PLCs are considered to be the main area of focus for collaborative efforts for this thesis. By actively participating in these types of conversations, teachers can acquire valuable habits from others while pursuing their own scaffolding (Samaras, 2010).

Professional conversations are implemented through participating in PLCs. These communities of educators collaborate on common subjects and create goals in order to improve teaching practices and student achievement of academic standards. Collaborating members should be open to critical thinking, reflective dialogue, self-examination, and resolving issues that impede student success (Rasberry & Mahaja, 2008). Arguably, this form of collaboration requires participants to invest extra time and energy upfront that in the end generate a lasting change for the better and hopefully alleviate time requirements. Appendix A provides educators with a pre-conference tool that allows educators to be more productive during the PLC. This tool contains a series of questions which attempt to help the educator narrow down their collaborative focus.

When PLCs are implemented properly, they are sustained by the needs of the participants. Extensive research on PLC effectiveness has proven prosperous influence on practicing teachers and their performance. Louis and Marks (1998) assert that increasing student rigor and achievement was a direct outcome of authentic pedagogy after teachers had participated in professional learning committees. When teachers work in cooperating PLC groups, they begin to explore differing instructional methods designed by other instructors. While disciplines may vary according to academic status, achievement, and subject-practice, we can explore these new instructional practices and transform our own pedagogy according to this new information. According to Hord (2004), effective professional learning communities implement the five attributes for success which include:

- *Supportive and shared leadership* in which administration shares leadership roles and allows teachers the opportunity to share input on decision-making;
- *Collective creativity* requires all participants to be actively engaged in the problem solving process;
- *Shared values and vision* ensures an unquestionable commitment toward solving the goals set forth by the committee;
- *Supportive conditions* including positive environment, available staff and applicable resources within PLCs; and
- *Shared personal practice* that require participants to create an inviting environment in which others may observe, discuss, and critique an educator's teaching strategies. (Hord, 2004, p. 7)

Similarly, Ackerman (2011) found that teachers who participated in these forms of professional conversations noticed a decrease in isolated working environments and enjoyed joint responsibility for student achievement, which in turn increased their understanding of curriculum and ability to adapt to lesson modifications. Additionally, McLaughlin and Talbert (2006) discovered that added benefits to professional collaboration stemmed from personal aspirations. Evidence also suggests that educators feel better informed on professional practices such as school itineraries, student achievement, and school objectives, after teachers participated in professional learning communities (Loughran & Berry, 2005).

Unfortunately, many teachers are the only faculty member tasked with their subject matter within the school. In instances such as this, these individuals can

collaborate with educators outside of their department but within the same school, which is known as cross-curricular teaching. If there are teachers in similar fields within a school such as visual arts and music or drama, core content standards cross into each subject matter, and educators can work collaboratively to create lessons that align with other related course throughout the school. This collaboration allows teachers to integrate knowledge, pedagogy, and varying curricula into more than one academic discipline simultaneously (Russell & Zembylas, 2007). Not only is this beneficial, but also because the teachers have many of the same students and know school standards and goals. Their peer collaboration can add diverse methods of teaching to increase student knowledge and understanding across their classes. Teachers can also collaborate with educators outside of their school, but in the same district and discipline, aligning content vertically through the different grade levels or horizontally through schools that teach the same grades. This can help upper-level teachers understand the student population they will be receiving in future years and can help primary-level teachers have the opportunity to know what their students will be expected to know and do in the future.

Generally, PLCs follow a specifically guided plan to ensure the best outcomes for educators involved. First, the plan of learning targets (i.e., objectives and goals, what students will be assessed) are established and explained. Next, teachers can discuss tasks that will occur during the classes of the targeted timeframe so that students can achieve the learning targets. They can also discuss performance by students that have not achieved the established tasks for either behavior or academic reasons and devise a plan to help these individuals. From there, a timeline can be developed for teachers of similar content to follow. If teachers are in different content area, they can sync their lesson plans

to be similar or joined during this time as well. Finally, teachers from different schools can align lessons bringing schools together through similar learning tasks.

A PLC evaluation tool has been provided in Appendix B. This tool provides teachers with a way to gather data on their ability to collaborate effectively. Educators may use this example to improve and identify characteristics that need attention. For the tool to meet our goals, it must evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the collaboration. Questions within the tool reflect upon the ideas of (a) time management, (b) contributions to the department, (c) quality of collaboration, (d) attempts to assess the efficiency, (e) level of collaborative depth, and (f) cross content curriculum all while assessing the quality and effectiveness in an evaluation method.

Collaborating with colleagues can extend well beyond just the planning and discussion phase. Fellow educators can provide a teacher new opportunities such as co-teaching classes, swapping classes for specific lessons, or leading professional development activities to help bolster the knowledge a teacher already possesses. Tenured educators more than likely have already created connections with peers that a teacher can utilize to further enhance his or her teaching abilities. When the idea of collaboration is broadened, or seen for its greatest potential, and others are seen for their ability to strengthen the classroom, the teacher provides himself with nearly limitless opportunities to be king of the world.

Benefits of Stakeholders

Stakeholders are participating members that typically refer to individuals who are invested in the welfare and prosperity of a school and its students. The stakeholders covered in these thesis are the students, parents, and administrators; This group may also include community members, school board members, and local political leaders. “Parent and community attitudes, expectations, and knowledge affect teachers’ classroom efforts and schools; reform goals in many fundamental ways” (McLaughlin& Talbert, 2006, p. 89), and therefore, they are an excellent resource with which to collaborate. We can divide our stakeholders into two different groups: internal and external. Internal stakeholders work within the school system, can control and affect what happens within our schools on a daily basis; they include students, school and district staff, and school board members (RMC Research Corporation, 2009). The second group, external stakeholders, are composed of those who are interested in the well-being and positive outcomes of our schools but do not work directly in producing those outcomes (Stoll & Louis 2007). These individuals include students’ family members, community members, and even the district’s business community. Being able to differentiate the two groups allows teachers to focus precisely on what aspects of the collaboration need to be addressed and how to effectively utilize the two groups during the collaboration process. These individuals can be utilized to enhance the arts experience for our students in a community manner, thus making art a more meaningful part of students’ lives. It is important to note, however, that an educator has a firm grasp on his role and the role of

the stakeholders with which he is going to collaborate, since most of these individuals will not have an education background.

Having planning conversations with stakeholders is just as important as PLC work; however, these conversations should not be structured like they often are in PLCs. Involving stakeholders in decision making within the classroom needs to be much more teacher driven and oriented toward specific goals. It is not a time for parents to tell the teacher what he is doing wrong; rather, a teacher must have a specific goal about how stakeholders can help plan and execute learning activities. Ideally, this type of collaboration will give stakeholders the sense of partnership, drive, and desire to make students' education much more enriching.

Stakeholder discussions can happen in the classroom with students giving them the choice in projects that interested them, in parents' nights with questionnaires and requests for their favorite arts projects from their youth, in meetings with principals asking them what they would like to see happen in their school, and in community meetings with local business leaders, asking how they would like to be involved and what kind of art can be brought into their establishments.

Students as Stakeholders

Often times, the most prevalent stakeholder that teachers tend to overlook are the students in their classroom. Successful collaboration of this measure occurs when a group of students and the teacher generate an action plan that creates positive improvement within the classroom. Getting student-stakeholders interested in collaborating to improve their learning takes committed and skilled leaders who are enthusiastic and well-prepared

to lead the group. Not only will an educator have to understand his or her ideals of practice but also he or she will need to become the cheerleader for promoting these new collaboration methods. Skilled educators will have to guide those involved in the collaboration process through these new ideas in order for them to be environmentally effective and educationally sound (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 1999).

Participants will need several key foundations in order to ensure the collaborative process is successful. First, educators must focus on learning about problems within the teaching practice that could be redesigned and built-upon while adding skillful knowledge consistent with desired learning outcomes. Here students can focus on successful lessons that provided them with knowledge. Second, educators should assess their own creative opportunities as learners and get knowledgeable feedback on their performance. This reflection-centered process allows a teacher to assess how successful the lesson was and determine achievements that were met and not met. Third, teachers need to involve peers, the community and practicing professionals who understand practices, are skilled in other related fields, and may have added benefits that would be a positive effect on our ultimate goal. This idea utilizes the students' participation in a community-centered learning environment.

A student survey has been provided in Appendix C that provides educators with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching practices. Based on the data collected from the survey, educators can evaluate the impact of their knowledge, skills, course material, and delivery during their course. Similar student surveys may exist within your state like the one adapted from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation that is utilized by KDE. Unlike the survey used by KDE, this survey is based on the acronym "FOSTER," which stems

from the idea that all educators promote successful development from their students and their education. This acronym is composed of the following categories: focus, objective, support, trust, educate, and reteach. These context words help students categorize questions, as they pertain to the supportive word.

Parents as Stakeholders

Typically, we place emphasis on the insight and knowledge parents contribute to enhancing their children's education (Comer & Haynes, 1991). But, in order for parent involvement to be successful, we should consider the context and focus on positive relationships that support our students' development. Again, interactions with parents should be positive and structured. It is important that parents turn to the teacher as the leader but not be afraid to voice their opinion in planning and creating the art projects. Even involving parents in making the art with student-led instruction is a type of collaboration that will reinforce an educator's teaching practices.

Stakeholder engagement can be considered vital to the goals and prosperity of a school (Saxena, 2014) and that the necessity of parent and family involvement is paramount. Several external organizations have created various avenues for parents and community members to become more involved in their local schools, such as, Community Based-Art Education, National Art Education Association, National Education Association, Parent Teacher Student Association, Parent Teacher Association, Arts Booster, Parent Information and Resource Center, the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence and the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement. These groups vary from county to state and can be researched through an

educator's specific district. These organizations aim to play an active role in the growth and development of its youth and are often an untapped resource for art educators since they are not often engaged (Van Roekel, 2008).

Collaborating with parents is not only about communication but also about utilization of their abilities and knowledge to assist the teacher. When we acquire feedback from stakeholders and assess suggested improvements for our programs, we also reteach, share, and transform our original goal from creating new artists to establishing an appreciation for the art and more importantly an appreciation for what we do (Smithrim & Uptis, 2005).

Emphasis is typically placed with parents and family members; however, the community has its responsibility as well as assuring the school is held to a specific quality for all students. When stakeholders such as these are evident within a school, there becomes a stronger knowledge for what policies, goals, and funding need improvement within the schools and district (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). It is important that the educator creates opportunities to foster this partnership.

According to Epstein (2005) educators can utilize parent involvement in order to promote student growth by utilizing her Framework on Involvement:

Parenting: Accommodate parents and families with skills and support that provide positive feedback about the students' education. Practices may include family support programs, home visits, school meetings, or workshops. Strategies of this nature should establish environmental support for the student as a learner.

Communication: Share information with families about schools' expectations, goals, school-wide programs, and their students' progress. Establish effective

communication that supports fair discipline and reward measures enforced between school and home. Educators may wish to conduct this through in-person meetings, surveys, email, or over the phone.

Volunteering: Establish a way for families to become involved within their students' school. There are many different after-school activities and programs that students can become a part of including, but not limited to sports, band, academic team, speech team, student council, and the yearbook staff. These various programs are always in need of parent involvement and guidance.

Learning at home: Show support for learning at home by providing information and ideas with parents about how to help their student be successful. Information and strategies provided to parents should be transparent in order to reduce confusion. This can be as simple as setting goals, creating regular homework establishing a calendar with activities for parents, and students or a behavioral monitoring system.

Decision making: Request that parents are consistently active in child's education by participating in school decisions, governing, and advocating through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and other organizations (DePaul, 2000). This requires parents to inform themselves on school or local practices that may affect their child's education. It also allows parents to take action and become an advocate in the event that their views are not being supported.

Collaborating with community: While this idea also supports the need for practicing professionals, it can also correlate with parental involvement associated with the arts. When appropriate, a parent's workplace can provide students with an alternative advocate for the arts. Practicing professions that align with the arts can demonstrate the

appropriate businesses, cultural, and college or university standards outside of the classroom. Additionally, this can strengthen school programs and networking within the school and community.

Furthermore, it is crucial that teachers hold stakeholders accountable for their participation and student achievement. There is a direct correlation between a students' success and parents who are vested in the school community, monitor school work, communicate effectively with teachers, and who identify resources to ensure their students' well-being (Cotton & Wiklund, 1989). When parents are held responsible as stakeholders for the prosperity a students' education, we create additional opportunities for those who want to contribute more to the students' success.

A parent survey has been provided in Appendix D. Parent surveys allow educators to plan and evaluate a student's specific learning needs. Distributing parent surveys at the beginning of the year allows the educator to identify strengths and weakness within the class that may not have been as prominent without parental insight. Provided within the survey are questions related toward the student and parent. Several topics imbedded within this survey include (a) parent communication, (b) student success, (c) student learning needs, (d) previous academic achievements by the student, (e) parent and student past experience with art, and (f) parent interest in helping the teacher. Additionally, parent surveys can provide an added connection between the educator and home. Reaching out to parents early in the year can demonstrates a positive image that the educator is invested in their child's success.

Administrators as Stakeholders

One of our greatest advocates within the school system can be our administrative team. While this list may vary from school to school, administrators typically consist of the principal, vice-principal, student dean and administrative dean. Administrators understand the complexity, expectations, and necessary demands for students to succeed (Normore, 2004). These individuals help create, regulate and enforce rules and guidelines set forth by the district. As stakeholders, their primary objectives are to ensure that teachers have the knowledge, funding, and skills necessary to combat the challenging roles of teaching. Further, the schools' success, educational climate, faculty leadership and management of staff is all indicative of the administrators' accountability. (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Administrators can also be advocates for the success within the classroom through shared planning, decision-making, and responsibility that is built on respect, commitment, and trust (Rubinstein & McCarthy, 2011). These individuals can provide us with resources, professional development, evaluations, assistance with colleagues and other district procedures which can be utilized in and outside of the classroom. As stakeholders, administrators should provide us with alternative sources of support. Constructive criticism can be a resourceful tool used during post assessment conducted by administrators discussing areas of personal growth for the educator and student achievement. Research by Ingersoll (2001) suggests that teachers who felt support from their administration have a greater job satisfaction and demonstrate greater student achievement.

Educators can also refer to administrators as a resource for funding. Principals are typically the main resource for allocating the schools budget. Creating a specific budget for the arts can promote an ethical request to ensure instructional materials are paid for wisely (Bamford, 2006). Relying on the chain of command and their years of experience can provide teachers with clarification for problems associated with budget management which may include how to allocate funds throughout the school year.

Building a collaborative partnership with administrators can lead to beneficial support and admiration. While this is our ultimate goal with administrators, teachers may find themselves in a work environment where this is not the case. In this case, there are several ideas to consider. First, contemplate how your arts program can sustain and develop higher quality learning. Provide your administrators with scientific research that supports the effectiveness of your lessons with student data (Marzano, Frontier & Livingston, 2011). Second, provide evidence that classwork is directly related to the core curriculum. Consider directing some of your attention toward cross-discipline lesson planning that demonstrates your classes value toward other subjects as well as your own. Third, offer solutions for problems that an administrator may see within the classroom and discuss how you can actively reduce or solve the issue. While these solutions provide educators with basic suggestions to strengthen the relationship between administrators and educators, the schools' attitude towards the arts may vary from school to school.

An example survey is located in Appendix E that assesses the support that our students, educators, and school body receive from the surrounding community. As an administrator, the survey provides feedback that will help improve our school's expectations and actively stay in touch with our staff regarding student's learning habits,

attitudes toward their education, community interactions, and college and career readiness. The survey also evaluates how well the school staff collaborates, communicates, educates, and involves the broader community in its everyday practice. Consider how well the school engages the community and directly impacts the students that live within it. Participating in this survey will provide added clarity about the school's strengths and areas that may need improvement. This survey can also be augmented for community members to provide the school with additional feedback.

Stakeholder Collaboration: Open Studio

Engaging both internal and external stakeholders by hosting an open studio within the school creates a communal space for arts exploration that utilizes the students as teachers. In this scenario, the educator becomes the art practitioner. Who provides internal stakeholders with the skills, knowledge, and experience required to collaboratively make art with the external stakeholders. It is important to understand we are not only using our students as collaborators but also allowing them to lead others through an arts-based project. This interaction requires students to understand skills, concepts, and techniques addressed during instruction or lecture (Crouch & Mazur, 2001). Additionally, Krensky and Steffen's (2008) research suggested that community art must be led by individuals who understood the art making process because art alone does not provide sufficient evidence to evoke change among community members unless led by artists with credibility. When students directly link the teachings to the school curriculum and [Kentucky] Core Content, student achievement and skills are strengthened (Henderson & Strickland, 2013). Similar to our instruction, educators

should ensure that the material covered is hands-on and engaging. Figure 2.1 provides us with a basic open studio flyer. This flyer contains several important factors pertaining to the event including (a) the school's name, (b) location, (c) hosting department, (d) contact number for the school, (e) time, (f) date, (g) event goals, (h) and a website link that provides parents with an instructional outline. Additionally, it may be advantageous to include a sample image on the open studio flyer (see figure 2.1) so that parents without internet access can see what they will be creating.

Figure 2.1

Open Studio Flyer



Four major benefits associated with this form of collaboration emerge. First, students are reinforcing their learning by using practical applications. This added engagement provides students with an alternative rigorous experience where they reflect on the art disciplines and curriculum bestowed upon them to adapt and assimilate new materials under different contexts. Second, not only is the students' participation a significant part of the educational process, but in this circumstance it also strengthens the educators' mental wellness. Additionally, navigating student-centered instruction holds students responsible for their own learning when the educator acts as the mediator (Felder & Brent, 1996). Third, while this form of collaboration does require some time and effort up front, it allows the educator to become a facilitator and manage the instructional environment while the stakeholders educate one another. This form of active learning also allows the educator to be more readily available to answer more rigorous questions during the lesson (Dufresne et al., 1996). Fourth, parent involvement and understanding of what is going on in the classroom yields positive relationships between all parties. It is important that as conductors we understand that participants may not have artistic training. An additional benefit to this type of collaboration should be not to create new artists but to create art appreciation and more importantly an appreciation for what we do for our students (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005).

An Open Studio lesson example is outlined under Appendix F. This outline provides educators and event participants with a project overview, the art medium, goals, objectives, relatable artist (also see Figure 2.1), vocabulary, materials, academic standards, and additional teacher resources that support the lesson.

School-Community Collaboration: Arts Night

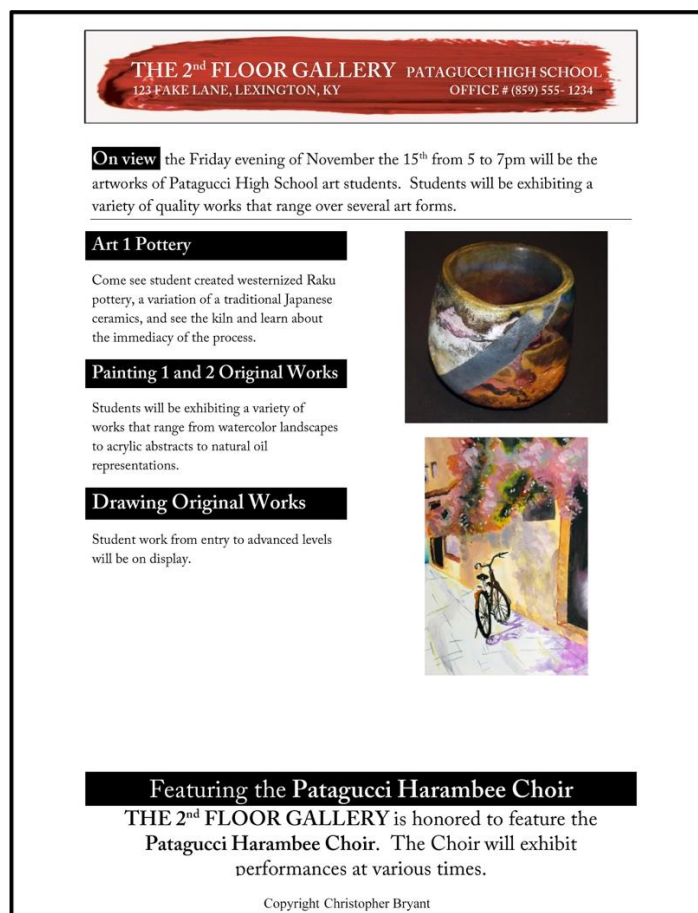
While the open studio concept focuses more on the students' role as collaborators, Arts Night provides parents, families, community members and administrators with the opportunity to show their appreciation and support of the arts and the art teachers. During the initial construction, stakeholders can help organize, promote, install, and curate a show in honor of the students in their school. Finding the right people to assist may require effort at first but once those connections are made and fostered, with time, the educator can rely more on the stakeholders to conduct an arts night, moving the teacher into a more supportive role. When contacting parents for assistance, express an understanding of family's priorities and time constraints. However, focus on the variety opportunities for parental involvement. Create a volunteer list that provides opportunities for parents to get involved. Request that volunteers assist with things like, hanging art, talking down the displays, advertising for the show, and providing refreshments or snacks. In addition, allow parents to provide alternative suggestions that may also assist with this event. Teachers can contact parents via email, phone, or handout with a response timeline.

As stated earlier, finding the right individuals who are genuine collaborators allows educators to mandate meaningful roles for each party members without worrying about participants' accountability. With specific prompting conducted by the art educator, shows could be based on specific art content, events in the community, or school history. Additionally, business leaders could even provide awards to participating students.

As a direct result, this form of event can generate added student enthusiasm that will grow for the arts. Showcased students would feel more connected toward the material while stakeholders develop new connections toward the school and its students' success. Figure 2.2 outlines a basic Arts Night flyer. This flyer contains several important factors pertaining to the event including (a) the school's name, (b) location, (c) hosting department, (d) contact number for the school, (e) time, (f) date, (g) event overview, (h) and displays two examples of exhibited student work.

Figure 2.2

Arts Night Flyer



Benefits of Practicing Professionals

The third group for collaboration consists of practicing professionals or professional artists. As described before, these individuals typically perform or practice creating art. When students have the opportunity to meet and interact with practicing artists, they not only learn new skills but discover the validity of art and its value within the career community. Bryk and Schneider (2003) explain that schools that work closely with the community draw upon available resources outside of the school system benefiting from an alternative and rich curriculum. Building upon that idea, art educators should have a working partnership with other artists and organizations anyway due to shared experiences and schooling so it seems ideal to be able to connect with them and bring them into the classroom. It is not only vital and apparent that practicing artists understand their chosen media, it is also beneficial that an artist's continuously developing knowledge and skills in a specialized area can help supplement an educator's own practical understanding of the media.

The two main concerns with bringing professional artists into the classroom are how to initiate such an endeavor and how to manage the financial concerns associated with it. As for the other collaborative groups, talking with this specific group of stakeholders is typically the smartest place to begin as others' insights can help expand our own understanding of media and conversations are usually free. Given the right circumstance, some professionals may be willing to work with students during classes or in after school arts programs, through association with local colleges or community programs such as the Living Arts and Science Center (Krensky & Steffen, 2008). When opportunities such as this are not available, several organizations such as Artists in the

Classroom, AIC, support the idea of partnering professional artists with local schools. Likewise, donor support can often be funded for professional artists to collaborate with a school if a local business is involved. This mutually supportive partnership can often facilitate a stronger presence of goodwill for the business within the community (Burke, 2003). With the potential benefits of bringing a practicing artist into the classroom, the concerns of the cost are often a needless hurdle that teachers perceive.

Visiting artists can act as an enhancement for the classroom, bringing new ideas and strengthening existing art curriculum by fostering and refreshing the visions of the teachers, students, and the community (Niebur, 1992). Creating art experiences aligned with core content that show students the roles of working artists can promote individuality, positive autonomy, self-direction, and community engagement (Eisner, 2002) for those individual students that may find a connection with those artists. When fostering this collaboration method there should be several things we check for in order to have successful collaboration. Nurturing this relationship generated from collaborating with these working professionals, similarly to parents as stakeholders, it is vital that the teacher serve as the leader and have a desired outcome prepared so that the visiting professional can come in and pilot the lesson with their personal additions.

Well-designed lessons formed by successful collaboration improve skills and competencies within the arts (Bamford, 2006). Educators can work with the professional artist to design a project that has inherent artistic value or is community relatable. Measuring the impact of the educational experience can be difficult, which is why the teacher's framework of lesson plans is vital in working with this group of stakeholders. Outcomes need to be varied and measureable with accompanying rubrics to show the

effectiveness of the lessons. In this regard, the teacher and visiting artist work in tandem to create the most engaging lesson for the students.

Appendix H contains a visiting artist pre-collaboration interview. These questions are designed to benefit the educator and the artist, enriching both parties' learning experiences while also providing educators with added insight of the goals and expectations for the collaborative lesson. Conducting this interview before collaboration begins can help the educator determine whether hosting a visiting artist will be beneficial. In addition, Appendix I contains a post-collaboration assessment for the visiting artist. These questions focus on the successes and weaknesses of the collaboration after it has been conducted. While pre-assessment is important, we need to make continuous collaborative efforts to improve our practice.

Again, funding should not be a hurdle for educators as there are several options to fund visiting artists who may charge for their instruction. While sometimes artists may donate their time, we often find ourselves trying to gauge an equitable rate that is consistent with professional standards. We also need to take into account the cost of tools, equipment, and other materials that may be used during this visit. If you do not have the funds within your budget or your administration is not willing to find the funds necessary, you might want to look into various other donors. Local community businesses or grants may be an external source of revenue for the arts.

This type of collaboration may last well beyond the time spent by the artist in the classroom as students continue to work on the project. Continued discussions with the working professional will ensure that the teacher's understanding of the process and outcome will continue to be focused in the right direction.

Professional Artists in the Classroom

Looking for professional experiences can occur through local universities or even other countries. In such instance, a local university obtained a grant that allowed several visiting artists from the United Arab Emirates to enter the classroom and discuss their work. During their visit students were introduced to the artists' background, differing cultural beliefs, inspirations and artistic practices. Exposing students to this form of professional arts knowledge enhanced the typical classroom experience by surrounding them with new content and added perspectives.

Student further explored curricular connections to the arts by engaging in a tangible art experience. Students were asked to photograph their interpretation of words and turn the experience into a form of symbolism. This supportive learning process gave students the opportunity to use polaroid cameras in order to build connections between shared experiences from the visiting artists and their own. A detailed lesson plan provided by Lamya Gargash (2016) has been provided in Appendix J. This outline provides information on the medium, concepts, activity, timeline, student benefits, and limitations within the lesson.

CHAPTER 4

Summary and Conclusion

As stated earlier, collaboration is key to making a teacher successful but may not always occur. This chapter seeks to summarize why collaboration is beneficial for teachers of all levels of experience.

When collaboration with colleagues, stakeholders, and practicing professionals is conducted correctly, teachers can alleviate problems associated with the teaching professionals which include allocating time more efficiently, enriching pedagogy, creating positive autonomy, and reaping health benefits. Collaboration is an essential tool used to promote professional learning strategies between the educators and the groups he or she recognizes as the most beneficial for his or her classroom.

When a teacher uses stakeholders as fellow planners and surrogate instructors, he or she frees up time which can then be applied back towards teaching. Stress levels can lessen when a teacher has time to reflect and recover from the demands of the job. Of course, the collaborating process also provides a teacher with the chance to reinvigorate his desires to teach so he can focus on new styles and ideas for teaching all while creating the potential for a substantial element of self-driven determination. Furthermore, collaboration will provide educators with the opportunity to enhance their abilities while integrating the members who surround them when conversations related to teaching practices are imbedded within the context of the collaboration and conducted with the quality of teachers in mind. Overtly, educators who continuously build upon their

knowledge skills and resources will improve their pedagogy, autonomy, productivity and feel more confident.

This paper concludes that understanding the value of collaboration is essential amongst all participating members before, during, and after collaboration has occurred. By understanding the positive impacts gained from collaborating, educators can strive to diminish misconceptions keeping them from taking the necessary steps to make this happen. Through collaboration, educators and participating members will be able to create a community built on shared strategies that will be mutually beneficial. The tools provided within this thesis will assist educators in taking the first important steps. By using these resources, teachers can feel confident in pursuing additional avenues that will enhance their teaching abilities, creating a sense of competency and desire for innovation. Furthermore, when teachers have the ability to conduct well prepared collaborative activities and not fear negative outcomes based on predisposed assumptions of collaboration difficulties, they can take the first important steps in preparing participants for prosperous collaboration, thus ensuring their success.

CHAPTER 5

Further Study Suggested

This research suggests the strong support for collaboration in schools. Evidence supports the benefits of collaboration by adding responsibilities to key contributors by holding them accountable for teacher growth and student learning. However, this literature review implicates the need for future research. Research tools such as questionnaires and surveys have been provided throughout the appendices. These tools have been created for educators, schools, and other organizations in order to see collaboration reach its full potential. In addition, these suggestions will be beneficial toward further research studies:

- Future researchers should modify surveys to be applicable to their content. Modifications should still meet the requirements suggested within the text. These surveys were created for educators at the high school level and may be limiting under certain contexts. When modifying the surveys, create a starting point that allows educators to assess individual curriculum and rigor according to the applicable school.
- While conducting surveys, insure that participants are consistent in providing data. If members of the collaboration are not willing participants, this will not achieve the desired benefits.
- Participating members should attend training seminars or classes that provide them with more information on collaboration. This will provide them with a better understanding that collaboration has to offer. It will also outline goals of the research project which will heed more consistent results.

- The survey and interview questions should be condensed or simplified. Since time is one of our areas of collaborative improvement, consolidated questioning may condense the time it takes to collect data and provide similar results. Including a control group maybe advantageous to compare survey data.

Appendix A

Lesson Plan Collaboration

1. What is your comfort and experience with this content area?
2. Describe what you need from other teachers (i.e., knowledge, resources, skills) to make the lesson successful.
3. Have you participated in any related professional developments, seminars, or workshops that you found beneficial?
4. What are your objectives?
5. What are your goals?
6. Describe how you intend on meeting your goals and objectives.
7. How will you develop this lesson?
8. How will you engage students?
9. What is your formative assessment going to look like during the lesson?
10. How does your summative assessment allow you to accurately evaluate the success of your teaching?
11. How does your lesson meet the needs for students below, at, and above average?
12. What do your motivation tactics for students look like?
13. How will you manage time effectively?

Appendix B

Measurement Tool for Effective Collaboration

1. How frequently does your department participate in any form of collaboration?
2. What forms of collaboration is your department utilizing and what does that look like?
3. Describe a method of collaboration that has worked for you and your classroom.
4. Describe the level of enrichment you received from this collaboration; If the level of enrichment is less than satisfactory, what would you recommend adding to the collaborative efforts?
5. How can we utilize your prior knowledge of a successful collaborate experience as scaffolding for our own department PLC meetings?
6. Describe how collaborating with other PLC groups could be beneficial.
7. What do you hope to gain from this PLC collaboration?
8. Do you have any creative or innovative ideas that may entice others to want to participate in a PLC?
9. How many times do you think a PLC should meet to be effective and not burdensome?

Appendix C

Student Survey

On the survey, choose what you believe best describes the question in relation to this class. Record your response on the answer sheet that is provided with this survey.

A = Not true
B = Slightly true
C = Moderately true
D = Mostly true
E = Very true

Focus

1. My classmates are engaged during class.
2. My classmates provide the teacher with respect during instruction.
3. My classmates follow directions based on the teachers' expectations.
4. Class time is devoted to learning.
5. The teacher exhibits good classroom management.

Objective

6. The classroom objectives are clearly outlined each class.
7. My teacher explains topics in several different ways that I can understand.
8. If something is unclear, the teacher devotes extra time toward better explaining the material.
9. My teacher can tell when the class understands the material.

Support

10. My teacher is respectful to his or her students.
11. My teacher instructs us to learn from our mistakes.
12. My teacher is a good motivator.
13. My teacher has high expectations for me.

Trust

14. My teacher listens to my ideas and suggestions.
15. My teacher provides us with time to share ideas.
16. My teacher provides us with time to work in groups.
17. Students are not afraid to answer questions in class.
18. My teacher allows us adequate time to explain our ideas.

Educate

- 19. My teacher uses assessment to gauge whether we have learned the material.
- 20. My teacher cares about my success.
- 21. In this class, we learn about material related to the class.
- 22. In this class, we actively learn every day.

Reteach

- 23. My teacher gives us constructive feedback about our classwork.
- 24. My teacher wants me to learn.
- 25. My teacher provides new concepts when I do not understand the class material.

Appendix D

Building a Partnership to Support Student Learning

1. What are some of your child's academic and non-academic interests?
2. Describe a time when your child exceeded your expectations.
3. What goals and expectations do you have for your child in the upcoming school year?
4. Last school year, were there any academic challenges that impacted your child's success? If so, please elaborate on what strategies were successful in overcoming these challenges.
5. Describe, if any, concerns that you or your child may have about the present school year.
6. What form of communication works best for you?
7. Describe your expectations for your child in my class.
8. When was your student's last art class?
9. Does your child have any sensory issues that may hinder their ability to create art?
10. Describe your last experience with art.
11. Describe your comfort level in regards to the arts.
12. Describe any interests you have in the arts.
13. Would you be willing to donate art related materials to the school?
14. Would you be willing to help clean up, set up, or manage a school-based arts activity? If so, what type of activity would you be willing to participate in?

Appendix E

Administrative Survey

Assessment scale

1 = Strongly Disagree, area that unquestionably needs improvement within our school

2 = Disagree, area where some improvement is needed within our school

3 = Agree, area where our school meets community expectations

4 = Strongly Agree, area where our school exceeds community expectations

U = Unsure, area that is unclearly defined by data or present knowledge

Collaborative Leadership

1. The staff manages the school effectively
2. The opinions of the community matter
3. The community is included in important decision making within the school
4. The community is actively involved with the school
5. The community can make a difference in the schools' success
6. Programs provide opportunities for the community to become involved
7. The teachers work directly with community members
8. The teachers include community members in classroom projects
9. Programs are provided for teachers to include the community in students' learning
10. The teachers are transparent with expectations of the community

Communication

11. The school provides data on academic progress
12. The community voices ideas for academic progress within the school
13. The teachers visit homes of students
14. The teachers visit community businesses or colleges related to their content
15. The teachers communicate with the community by telephone
16. The teachers communicate with the community by email or written letters
17. The teachers communicate in a respectful manor to the community
18. The teachers use feedback from the community in their classroom
19. The teachers pursue community involvement
20. The community understands how to motivate students

Education

21. The quality of the education from this school is above average
22. The quality of the education from this school meets the needs of varying
scholastic abilities
23. The community members think positively about this school
24. The community members think positively about the schools' teachers
25. The teachers encourage students to do their best
26. The teachers are transparent in their expectations for students
27. The students are expected to behave appropriately

28. The students receive help when needed
29. A variety of school sponsored activities are available to students
30. All students receive positive encouragement from teachers
31. The students are taught how to effectively study
32. The students are expected to complete assignments on time
33. The students are held to a higher standard than surrounding schools within the community
34. The teacher assigns regular homework
35. The students receive opportunities to learn more about topics that interest them
36. The students are well prepared for challenges outside of the classroom
37. The students receive basic life skills
38. The students receive adequate knowledge that prepares them for the next school year
39. All students are challenged to reach their full academic potential
40. All students are provided learning assistance when needed

Community Involvement

41. The community is involved in students' education
42. The community provides support for student academics
43. The community provides support for student sports
44. The community provides support for the arts
45. The teachers are involved in the community

- 46. The teachers are supportive of the community
- 47. The teachers further their skills within the community
- 48. The teachers personally seek out community participants to help inside the
classroom
- 49. The teachers use community members to educate students
- 50. The teachers use business leaders from the community to help educate students
- 51. The teachers use volunteers from the community in their classroom
- 52. I would be willing to contribute to the community

Appendix F

Open Studio Project Overview



**Computer Assisted Art
Bryant**

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Students will learn how to create traditional art using digital methods. This lesson will utilize ArtRage and its ability to experiment with tangible creations in a digital world. Beginning digital artists will get a better understanding of the digital painting, techniques, and quick commands.

Themes

Digital Media

Painting

Landscape Painting

Goals

- Reinforce and build the student's knowledge and language of art through creation of digital painting.
- Develop technical skills and knowledge specific to commands and functions related to the ArtRage.
- Understand how to incorporate traditional methods in a digital environment.
- Identify at least four techniques associated with painting and ArtRage.
- Students will review a Precisionist artist and discuss his/her work and their relation to the medium used in class.

Objectives

- TSW construct a digital image based on a landscape photograph in ArtRage
- TSW create their image on an 11" x 17" watercolor paper (digitally)
- TSW import their reference image to ArtRage
- TSW begin their painting with an under drawing
- TSW work in layers
- TSW use a variety of brush sizes
- TSW demonstrate an understanding of the following techniques: wash, gradients, overlapping, layering, wet on wet wash, and dry brush.

Related Artist

Annie Wood (<https://www.artrage.com/greek-archway-watercolor-tutorial-artrage-4/>)
Utilize this tutorial

Vocabulary

- Elements of Art
- Principles of Design
- Types of Brushes: round, flat, filbert, mop, wash, and fan.
- Techniques: wet in wet, dry brush, glaze, and gradients
- Layering
- Layer Masking
- Gradient

Materials

Computer

ArtRage

Wacom Tablet

Landscape Photograph (preferably digital)

Handouts

- Natural Landscape (digital)
- Self-Assessment Rubric
- Teacher Assessment Rubric

Teacher Resource

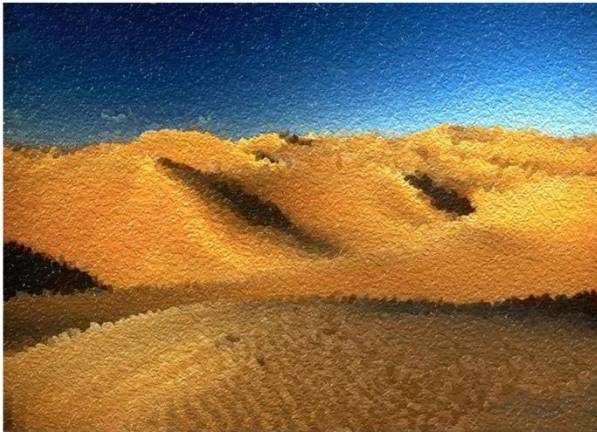
Beyond the computer and ArtRage educators may want to consider other resources for ensuring successful learning is happening at all times. Teachers may use recoding software such as Adobe Captivate to document their lessons. This would benefit students who are absent during instruction. Educators should also generate a timeline that is specific for the class. Programs such as Google Classroom give educators the ability to set assign dates, reminders, and upload classroom materials students may need.

Support educational standards for grades 9-12:

- Lesson plans (tied to Kentucky academic standards) in arts and humanities, social studies, language arts and visual arts
- Reproducible images/handouts
- Teacher art examples
- Previous student examples in direct relation to Teacher Assessment Rubric
- Access to online workshops or training programs

Appendix G

Open Studio Digital Paintings



Appendix H

Visiting Artist Pre-Collaboration Interview

1. What is your primary area of expertise?
2. How long have you been working in this area?
3. What would you like to accomplish on the first day in my classroom?
4. How many days are you comfortable working in the classroom?
5. What materials would you like us to provide?
6. Describe your vision of our collaboration on this project.
7. Could you provide a timeline that describes the lesson?
8. Describe any safety concerns you may have.
9. What are the costs related to your service?
10. What is your comfort level with students? What age group?
11. What is your experience with this age group?
12. Would you be comfortable modifying the lesson for special needs students?
13. What are some possible limitations you foresee?
14. Would you be willing to give a lecture for the school?

Appendix I

Visiting Artist Post-Collaboration Assessment

1. How successful was this lesson from your perspective?
2. What would you like other visit artists to know when they collaborate here?
3. What strategies were effective in making the lesson go smoother for you or in general?
4. Describe areas that were ineffective or that could be improved upon.
5. Describe any other considerations that would have benefited the success of this collaboration.

Appendix J

UAE Visiting Artist Lesson Proposal

April 2016
Proposal

Lamya Gargash

High School Workshop

WORKSHOP TITLE

Photographic paintings

CONCEPT

Recreating a classical painting photographically and taking a picture of the final setup through our cellphones. I am not looking for technical expertise as much as them being able to face up to the challenge in trying to recreate that particular scene. The idea is for them to have fun, work as a team and use their imagination.

CONCEPT BREAK DOWN

1. A small presentation about photography and examples of photographers and their work. There will be a few questions that I will address to the students to find out more about their understanding of photography and what they think makes a good photograph. The idea is to engage them in a small discussion and allow them to express themselves and their ideas.
15 minutes
2. Three classical paintings will be shown to the students and then a vote will be made on which image they would like to recreate.
5 minutes
3. The students will then work in a group and tasks will be assigned (models, stylists, creative directors, set design etc.) They will then go searching for props that we can use to recreate that particular scene, anything from office lamps to items of clothing as well as direct the models. The idea is for them to use their imagination to reconstruct the painting.
15 minutes
4. Once the set up is done pictures will be taken on the cellphone and we will then upload it on the screen. We will fine-tune it slightly on Photoshop and then present the image alongside the original painting. We will have a small discussion about the final image
30-45 minutes

WHAT IS THE IDEA BEHIND THIS WORKSHOP?

- Photography has no limitations and you can also create something from fewer materials
- Students will use their imagination to enhance the composition of the picture
- Challenging the students to think out of the box
- Encouraging team work & cooperation amongst students
- Build communication skills as well as build their confidence
- Gives the students a sense of accomplishment
- Active Learning and engaging in discussions and critique

Note: Permission was granted via email by Lamya Gargash for use of the lesson plan

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