

“Charting the Landscape/Mapping New Paths”: Project Descriptions

1. **Project Name:** Arts Impact
2. **Goal:** I. Teacher-training: To train K-5 classroom teachers to become competent and confident teachers of visual and performing arts. II. Arts-Infused Summer School: To use dance, theater and visual arts concepts shared with other classroom disciplines, and performance-based assessments, to improve student achievement in literacy and mathematics.
3. **Participating institutions/agencies:** I. Teacher Training: Tacoma Art Museum, Museum of Glass, The Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, nine school districts, and the Puget Sound Educational Service District; II. Arts-Infused Summer School: Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma Public Schools, and the Puget Sound Educational Service District.
4. **Your role/expertise in this type project:** I. Teacher Training: *Arts Impact* has been training classroom teachers in arts foundations since 1999. The program uses a concept-based approach, with a pivotal focus on criteria-based assessments. Teaching artists work as mentors to coach teachers in lesson design, teaching strategies, classroom management, and performance-based assessments, while striving for teacher autonomy. *Arts Impact* employs a staff of ten teaching artists, along with arts curriculum and assessment liaisons, and staff deeply experienced in teacher training. II. Arts-Infused Summer School: *Arts Impact* is in its second year of piloting an arts-infused summer school and has created a direct collaboration between its curriculum and assessments directors in the program and parallel experts at the Tacoma Public Schools. Both *Arts Impact* programs employ staff with museum education expertise to make direct connections to museum objects as exemplars of classroom concepts.
5. **Outcomes / successes to-date:** I. Teacher Training: *Arts Impact* tracks and records evidence of arts concepts and skills through performance-based assessments and documentation of artistic work created and performed by teachers in summer institutes. Artist-mentors monitor and advise teachers on their abilities to teach arts concepts and skills to their students. Teacher affirmation of the value of their new arts knowledge and skills for teaching the arts remains strong. Collection of student artistic evidence, compared to lesson criteria, illustrates students meeting a range of lesson criteria. The program continues to track the ability of teachers to demonstrate increased understanding of foundational arts concepts, skills and processes over the course of two years. Currently *Arts Impact* is developing a personal rubric for

teacher and artist-mentor use to track increased autonomy in concept-based arts instruction. Its intended use is for teachers to develop their own on-going professional development plan in the arts. Over 100 teachers have completed the program thus far, with an additional 80 teachers graduating spring 05. II. Arts-Infused Summer School: *Arts Impact* has collected evidence of student learning in arts, math and literacy for 105 students in 2003 and an additional 100 students in 2004. Final findings on the *Arts-Infused Summer School* will be published in October 2005. To date, there seems to be evidence of increased understanding in shared academic concepts.

6. **Lessons learned** : I. Teacher Training: While a final research report will be available in late 2005, a few trends seem to be emerging. To date, understanding and using criteria-based arts assessments appears to enhance lesson analysis by teachers and assure transfer of artistic understandings to students. Enrolling whole schools in professional development in the arts seems to affect school policy. On-going professional development that includes a second year of study begins to provide the depth of study teachers need to reach autonomous instruction in the arts. Classroom teachers are teaching arts concepts and skills to their students. II. Arts-Infused Summer School: While there are definite gains by students in arts and other core discipline concepts, five weeks is a relatively short time for concept mastery. Focusing on fewer concepts increases potential for application and mastery. Collaboration with traditional classroom teachers receiving these summer school students in the fall seems key to continued success for these students.
7. **If we began anew we would ask these questions at the beginning**: I. Teacher Training: These are on-going and crucial questions for the program. *How many and which arts concepts can effectively be mastered by teachers and transferred to students within 92 hours of study and mentorship?* This is an on-going search for *Arts Impact* in order to define optimum program breadth and depth. *Which mentorship components and attributes affect the greatest change in teachers?* Mentorships with artists as content experts and advisers provide crucial opportunities for application of knowledge and skills while teachers reach for autonomous instructional levels. *Which pivotal areas of performance-based arts assessments need to be reinforced for continued objective evaluation of student learning?* Criteria-based assessments knowledge is valued by the teachers and sometimes transferred to other core discipline areas. II. Arts-Infused Summer School: *How can Arts Impact best affect continued use of artistic ways of knowing and showing understandings when students return to their traditional classrooms?*
8. **Critical success factors**: Critical success factors for both *Arts Impact* programs include issues of optimum depth and breadth of concept-based study, crucial

use of criteria-based assessments, and on-going mentorship of teachers to a strong level of autonomy for continuance of their work.

9. **Our next steps will be:** Nationally disseminate research data, lessons learned and shared concept-based focus of instruction, as well as strongest attributes of program dynamics late fall, 2005. Define program capacity for both teacher professional development and student learning programs.
10. **What else?** Based on my attendance at the IMLS meeting, I would encourage extended conversations about viable learning assessment strategies and use of outcome-based evaluation as both a learner focus and for program development and improvement. I would also encourage continued conversation between museum and library professionals on the use of concept-based and process-based approaches to education.