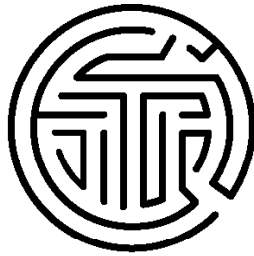




**CDA LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
FINAL REPORT:
EMERGING THEMES**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CCT REPORTS
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CENTER FOR CHILDREN & TECHNOLOGY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Education Development Center's Center for Children and Technology (EDC/CCT) conducted an assessment of the Center of Arts Education's (CAE) Curriculum Development and Access (CDA) Leadership grant program implemented in 18 of the original recipient sites of the Annenberg Partnership program. The overall goals of the research were to assess the following:

- What is the durable impact of the CDA Leadership grant on the host schools?
- What attributes contribute to a successful partnership?
- How has focusing on professional development impact the CDA Leadership grant's goals?
- What are the benefits and barriers of the process of dissemination?
- How does the process of defining and creating a product effect the host school?
- Strategic implications: What will inform CAE if it conducts the CDA Leadership program again?

Interviews were conducted with the arts coordinator, arts partner, and an audience member at each of the three focus schools. In addition, three additional schools were chosen at random and telephone interviews were conducted with their arts coordinators.

Program Context

During the first year of the CDA Leadership program, the schools convened and shared with one another on a regular basis. During the final year (2002-03), schools were left alone to a large extent to pursue their individual "products" and their own "audiences."

Products were unique to each site, ranging from workbooks about their teaching artist program to curriculum guides. During the final year, the CDA Leadership staff contacted about half of the schools – because the schools hosted inter-visitations or a leadership presentation, or the schools contacted CAE with questions. Schools were told that they would be left alone to finish their work during this final year, but some still felt a need for more attention. The EDC/CCT research team reported this need back to CAE, and a culminating meeting of the sites was scheduled for October 2003. This meeting was very well received by the sites.

Overview:

- Schools report a dramatic increase in the incorporation of arts-based activities in the classrooms as a result of the Partnership grant and the CDA Leadership grant. All arts coordinators have been enthusiastic about the opportunities the grants have offered their schools, and their relationship with the CAE staff.
- The Annenberg Grant and the CDA Leadership grant have contributed to an increased sense of community in all of the schools interviewed.

- Student artwork was on display at schools visited.
- Successful partnerships are those in which both the school and the arts partner directly profit from the relationship.
- Arts organizations that have a pre-existing, cohesive arts-infused curriculum appear to be more likely to be successful arts partners.
- In-school audience development is particularly successful and effective.
- Off-site audience development has been adversely affected by Department of Education changes in funding, reorganization, and support of the arts.
- The Department of Education's removal of professional development days from the school calendar interrupted dissemination plans for a number of schools.
- Successful off-site dissemination is often contingent upon connecting with a motivated individual at the audience school who will herald the project.
- The dissemination of arts-integrated curriculum and the development of a final CDA Leadership product appear to be conceived of as two separate entities. There is concern that the final product, which requires a new skill set and large time commitment, will not be reflective of the quality of work and success of the curriculum development and dissemination process.

Themes that emerged from this study reflect program practices regarding Partnership, Professional Development, Audience, Product Focus, and Dissemination.

Implications for Action Related to Themes:

The EDC/CCT research team recommends strategic action based on responses to the core questions asked by CAE. We considered the work at the sites both as finished products and as models for other sites that might apply for Center support.

What will inform CAE in terms of doing the CDA Leadership program again?

The lessons provided by the CDA Leadership program are of a practical bent. The organization and delivery of material and personnel resources rank first. Conceptual and theoretical issues such as matching the philosophical positions of partner organizations also are important to respondents.

- The primary action implied is purposeful and careful planning that brings all the parties together early and often.
- Sharing sessions contribute to the planning of final products by enriching the field of discussion and by providing mirrors for comparison.
- Sharing sessions with selected audiences in the final year proved to be invaluable to several sites.

- Absent external audience relationships, internal sharing was beneficial but did not have the larger framework of comparison.

What is the durable impact of the CDA Leadership grant on the host schools?

The CDA Leadership program assumed that several positive consequences would derive from the focus the program placed on dissemination. Consequences such as the refinement of an integrated arts curriculum, strengthened partnerships with cultural organizations, and in-school audience development were assumed for the host schools, and a strengthened sense of community, new curriculum options, and new professional development options were assumed for the audience schools. These issues are part of the emphasis on sustainability that has always been a part of the CAE program, but the answers to the questions depend upon research conducted after the funding has ceased. CAE plans to conduct a sustainability study of the durability of CDA Leadership project features to provide answers to these important findings:

- Action to define and collect the resources necessary to realize these assumptions needs to be taken by the whole school /cultural partner organization community.
- High level administrative commitment to the conceptual bases of the program—integrated arts curriculum, school/cultural organization partnership, the provision of time for professional development for both teachers and teaching artists – is necessary for the effort to be sustained.
- Partner organizations and schools need to strengthen their own ability to work flexibly across their own boundaries and constraints, if they are to develop durable programs.
- The CDA Leadership program demonstrated that partners need to work to identify and support close personal relationships among their leaders and staffs to sustain the program.

What attributes contribute to a successful partnership?

Several characteristics of successful partnerships emerged from the program, as well as several things that can lead to failure. The strength of pre-existing programs and curricula is an attribute that seems to be a great help, but it is also something that is difficult to provide if it does not already exist. Those programs that could build on an existing base were able to move on to greater success. Building dissemination products is not the same as building a working partnership over time, as in the CAE Partnership program. CDA Leadership can function as a follow-on program to the Partnership program, but it cannot function the same way as that program.

- Action that leads to a successful CDA Leadership partnership program begins with the selection of already strong programs that each have something to gain from the new partnership relationship.
- Time needs to be spent working on shared organizational values and objectives and working toward compromises when necessary.

How does focusing on professional development impact the CDA Leadership grant's goals?

The respondents indicated two distinct benefits from the professional development focus: greater collegiality among school staff and between school staff and partner organization staff, and increased opportunity to share dissemination products in professional settings. Findings included:

- Well-organized sessions were especially appreciated.
- Demonstrating respect for work and persons were criteria for successful professional development sessions in CDA Leadership.
- Creating more “hands-on” and activity-based sessions is important for the work to be effective.
- Working closely with an audience school, as most CDA Leadership sites did, had important consequences for both the host and the audience schools and should be a feature of future programs.

What are the benefits and barriers of the process of dissemination?

Roadblocks were caused by changes in the educational environment, namely the restructuring of the New York City Department of Education and changes in the way Project ARTS was sustained, deprived some sites of an audience forcing the sites to spend more time discussing what they “used to do” rather than what they “plan to do” with their demonstrations. The benefits or detriments of the shift from future thinking to reflections on the past have yet to be identified.

- Actions to remove many of the barriers to the continuation of the dissemination process for CDA Leadership must be taken by school leadership and policy makers. Such actions are beyond the range of most program participants, who are left with few options other than to take an active advocacy role.
- Professional development days and sessions have to be designed that will meet the needs set forth by the central administration and by the program itself.
- Focusing on community building, collegiality, and shared values in professional development sessions could strengthen resolve and help motivate participants.
- CAE needs to be especially strong in its public push for capacity building and professional development as a way of changing what happens in school classrooms and in its demonstration of respect for and support of the teams that have persevered with CDA Leadership.
- Partner organizations and schools need to work together to assure that contracts continue to be available from the school system to support demonstration and dissemination work.
- The connection between the Partnership and the CDA Leadership programs at CAE needs to be spotlighted and built upon. The CDA Leadership sites would have little to demonstrate without the years spent in the partnership program, and the partnership program needs to demonstrate the importance of the work its schools and partner organizations have done.

- The CDA Leadership sites need to work closely with CAE to plan ways that the demonstration workload on school administrators is reduced and so that the dissemination work can be done more efficiently.

How does the process of defining and creating a product effect the host school?

Schools usually describe their products as well-educated students. Thinking of themselves as producers of instructional strategies and materials is secondary. Nonetheless, coordinators and staff at the CDA Leadership schools reported the program's process to be highly motivating for staff who got recognition for the professional quality of their work and who found that principals were more supportive.

- Recognition is a primary way for attitudes to be changed, thus the CDA Leadership needs to work with sites to make sure that school and community leadership is aware of and impressed by the quality of work being demonstrated.
- Documentation of teachers' uses of the materials and demonstration of the ways that their classroom teaching is changed is necessary at this point.
- Attention needs to be paid to the impact of the products on students and the potential for positive uses in instruction. That means that CDA Leadership and CAE need to think about evaluation of the products and the presentation of the results of the evaluation to the educational community.

What are the benefits derived from the process of dissemination? The process of having to define and create a product?

The assumption of the CDA Leadership program is that the sites have developed products/practices that have improved student learning.

- Now that the products and practices are ready for dissemination, the program needs to return to an aggressive evaluation mode and test the final products in use and new sites.