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Teacher Perception of Student Engagement
in an Arts-Integrated Classroom

by

Staci J. Baker

November 2016

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University in

partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

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A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University
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Dr. Sherry DeVore, Dissertation Chair

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Dr. Michelle Brenner, Committee Member

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree.

Full Legal Name: Staci Jo Baker

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Abstract

Student engagement is a prominent indicator of a student's academic success (Harbour, Evanovich, Sweigart, & Hughes, 2015). Leavy (2015) continued the engagement dialogue by stating the arts can be highly engaging and a high-yield strategy leading to academic success. Research has been conducted on arts integration, but little research specifically aligns arts integration with student engagement (Mason, Thormann, & Steedly, 2004). Further, there is a lack of depth within arts-integration research on all of the "arts" (including music, visual arts, drama, and dance) (Mason et al., 2004). In this qualitative study, student engagement was viewed from teachers' perspectives within one urban elementary school which focuses on arts integration. Seven teachers were interviewed and 10 observations were conducted in various classrooms at the same arts-integrated elementary school. Commonalities among teacher perceptions from those interviewed were identified from the analysis of data. Participants agreed arts integration was a teaching strategy students appreciated and preferred. Additionally, participants reported they enjoyed teaching in an arts-integrated setting; however, interview data revealed teachers at the school site did not have collaborative planning. Teachers in an arts-integrated school must collaborate on lesson planning to effectively create an integrated, collaborative plan (Riley, 2012). The findings from this study may help teachers and school leaders identify the components of student engagement in an arts-integrated classroom within the elementary setting.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures.	viii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Background of the Study	2
Conceptual Framework	3
Statement of the Problem	5
Purpose of the Study	6
Research Questions	7
Significance of the Study	7
Definition of Key Terms	8
Limitations and Assumptions	10
Summary	11
Chapter Two: Review of Literature	12
Conceptual Framework	12
Arts Integration	13
Teacher Perception	42
Student Engagement	44
Student Achievement	50
Summary	52
Chapter Three: Methodology	53

Problem and Purpose Overview	54
Research Questions	55
Research Design	55
Ethical Considerations	56
Population and Sample	58
Instrumentation	59
Data Collection	60
Data Analysis	61
Summary	62
Chapter Four: Analysis of Data	64
Interviews	65
Classroom Observation Data	80
Summary	87
Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions	88
Findings	88
Conclusions	93
Implications for Practice	96
Recommendations for Future Research	98
Summary	100
Appendix A	101
Appendix B	103
Appendix C	104
Appendix D	105

Appendix E	107
Appendix F	109
References	110
Vita	129

List of Tables

Table 1. <i>Categories of Schools Affiliated with Oklahoma A+ Schools Organization . . .</i>	29
Table 2. <i>Teachers' Years of Experience at Current A+ School</i>	66
Table 3. <i>Participants' Planning Strategy</i>	72
Table 4. <i>Student Motivation when Participating in an Arts-Integrated Lesson</i>	75
Table 5. <i>Discipline Concerns in an Arts-Integrated Lesson</i>	79
Table 6. <i>Classrooms Where Students Worked Without Distractions</i>	82
Table 7. <i>Observed Student Climate</i>	84
Table 8. <i>Students' Engagement and Higher-Order Thinking Skills</i>	86

List of Figures

Figure 1. <i>Arts-integration topics</i>	16
Figure 2. <i>Building a lesson plan</i>	18
Figure 3. <i>Arts-integrated lesson plan</i>	34
Figure 4. <i>Perception and behavior</i>	43

Chapter One: Introduction

Arts education has been held in high esteem throughout the ages and is thought to be an essential part of education (Ruppert, 2006). Copernicus (1999) stated in his book *Six Books on the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, “Although all the good arts serve to draw man's mind away from vices and lead it toward better things, this function can be more fully performed by this art, which also provides extraordinary intellectual pleasure” (p. 7). President Kennedy’s vision for the United States educational system encompassed the American spirit as well as a vision for the future of America, furthering the human spirit and specifically encompassing the arts (The Kennedy Center, 2014a). Kennedy stated, “I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we, too, will be remembered not for victories or defeats in battle or in politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit” (as cited in The Kennedy Center, 2014a, p. 1).

One proponent, the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (2012), suggested arts education and integration have the ability to encompass the arts for their originally intended purpose; various art forms can be integrated into core curriculum, creating a richer and whole-child approach to education. Robelen (2012) believed arts integration has the unique ability to capture the attention of the intended audience, thereby increasing student engagement. Conversely, Abdollah and O’Bannon (2012) criticized arts integration implementation. Abdollah and O’Bannon (2012) indicated the arts are hard to quantify as there is not a common definition of what makes up the arts. Through the course of this study, arts integration, student engagement in the classroom, and student achievement were examined.

Background of the Study

Political consultant and strategist Atwater stated, “Perception is reality” (as cited in Forbes, 2008, para. 13). The same is certainly true in a classroom setting. An educator may have a particular view of an academic initiative, and if viewed positively or negatively, the view will determine whether or not the initiative will succeed or fail (Perry, 2010). During the scope of this study, teachers’ perceptions of a current academic initiative, arts integration, were explored.

To define arts integration, an explanation given by Burnaford, Brown, Doherty, and McLaughlin (2007) was used. Burnaford, a published author, a teacher, and an arts integration specialist, collaborated with others to develop a thorough definition of arts integration (Burnaford et al., 2007). Burnaford et al. (2007) described the three-step process of arts integration as “learning ‘through’ and ‘with’ the arts; as a curricular connections process; and as a collaborative engagement” (p. 3).

Ingram and Riedel (2003) also gave a definition for arts integration. Specifically, they focused on how the arts mesh with other curricular disciplines (Ingram & Riedel, 2003). Ingram and Riedel (2003) defined arts integration as “instruction in which arts-related concepts and activities are infused with other academic areas” (p. 10).

Further defined by the Kennedy Center is another description of arts integration. Changing Education Through the Arts (The Kennedy Center, 2016), one of many conglomerates with the Kennedy Center, defined arts integration, “Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both” (p. 2). Of the three

definitions presented, each speaks to curriculum and an art form (music, visual art, dance, or drama) being taught together. Burnaford et al. (2007), Ingram and Reidel (2003), and the CETA (2010) all mentioned similar terms such as “connections process,” “infused,” and “collaboration” to describe an art form and curricular topic being taught together.

Conceptual Framework

Many educational programs promise an increase in student engagement (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Oklahoma A+ Schools, an arts-integration initiative, is not the type of initiative where promises are made that student engagement or student achievement will increase (Dell, 2010). Typically, for an arts-integration program to begin and continue to flourish there has to be significant buy-in for school-wide implementation (Dell, 2010). Learning begins to take place when students are engaged, regardless of arts integration implementation (Dotterer & Lowe, 2011). For a student to take in new knowledge and synthesize new concepts, the student must be genuinely engaged in the classroom content (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Based on this information, the conceptual framework selected for this study was student engagement, specifically in the area of teacher perception (Furrer, Skinner, & Pitzer, 2014).

Marzano and Pickering (2011) advocated, “Student engagement has long been recognized as the core of effective schooling” (p. 3). Many educators have difficulty relating to the idea of student engagement (Jones, 2008). Arts education and arts integration contain a certain level of student engagement through the activities students participate in within the arts realm (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2012). At Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA) in Providence, Rhode Island, students are exposed to arts integration in each classroom setting (Richards, 2012).

Intern Modica from Brown University stated in TAPA's Urban Education Policy Program that he "found a high level of reported engagement among TAPA students" (as cited in Richards, 2012, p. 11). Additionally, Richards (2012) stated:

Work with the students at TAPA has led me to believe that true student-centered education is a rarity, and that student engagement—or rather the lack of true student engagement—is the most pressing challenge in urban education today. (p. 8)

Errey and Wood (2011), both professors at the University of Ballarat in Australia, wrote, "Better learning outcomes flow from higher levels of student engagement" (para. 1).

Educators are continuously looking for the spark or hook that will be the "ah-ha" moment when students finally comprehend a particular concept and are suddenly more engaged in class (Lawshe, 2014). Once the teacher switches to a new concept, the method of engaging students begins all over again.

Recently, an educational poll entitled "State of America's Schools" was released by Gallup (Blad, 2014). Blad (2014) summarized the Gallup results, which focused on student engagement. Gallup collected responses and categorized these responses into three sections (Blad, 2014). From these sections, Blad (2014) surmised, "Emotional engagement at school is the non-cognitive factor that most directly correlates with academic achievement" (p. 2). Further, Blad (2014) explained in a 2009 Gallup study, over 78,000 students were surveyed, and results indicated a one-percentage-point increase in a student's score on the engagement index was associated with a six-point increase in reading achievement scores and an eight-point increase in math achievement scores.

Statement of the Problem

Recent years have brought renewed conversations about how to make education better in America (Azzam, 2009). Specifically, educators are finding arts-integrated instruction can be a critical part of tying curriculum together (Azzam, 2009). According to the Rio Gallinas School of Ecology and the Arts (2013), “Arts-integrated instruction has become an area of great interest over the past decade as schools across the country are discovering the power of the arts when used as a catalyst for teaching across the curriculum” (p. 1).

After the latest budget crisis in the late 2000s, educational systems looked for ways to cut school budgets, and arts education seemed to be at the top of the list (Schwartz, 2015). School districts across the nation are starting to take the brave risk to try arts integration in their classrooms, but their stories need to be documented (Schwartz, 2015). Baker (2013) pointed out arts education programs have been brought into question, asking if “they contribute in any substantive way to education beyond enrichment” (p. 1). The Mississippi Whole Schools Initiative (2016) targeted the correlation between arts education and standard, state-mandated Common Core curriculum and forged them together, further showing integration between subject areas. The Mississippi Whole Schools Initiative (2013b) stated, “Arts integration fosters the student engagement and ‘deeper learning’ that is at the heart of the Common Core and arts integration promotes the interdisciplinary learning that is a vital aspect of the Common Core” (p. 5).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teacher perceptions of student engagement in an elementary arts-integrated classroom setting and to observe key student behaviors in an arts-integrated school. Teacher perceptions from teachers in an Oklahoma school were studied, since arts-integration programs are currently in place statewide. Oklahoma's arts integration program has been active since the summer of 2002 (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014a). Students in several Oklahoma schools have been exposed to an arts-integration program for over 10 years (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014a).

Blom (2016) reiterated the need for research in the area of student engagement featuring arts integration. Further, Blom (2016) stated in her findings some positive attributes to using arts integration in the classroom such as “addressing multiple needs and learning styles of students, teaching social justice issues and moral lessons, and building deeper understanding of important concepts. . . the engagement and academic achievement of students” (p. 2). Blom (2016) asserted students have a better chance of showing the teacher they have grasped a concept if students are allowed to share information in a variety of ways, including arts integration.

A five-year research study was conducted measuring the implementation of arts integration in Oklahoma in conjunction with four universities and five researchers (Duke, 2010). The five-year research study specifically included schools that were embracing arts integration and were affiliated with Oklahoma A+ Schools (Barry, 2010). While the Oklahoma arts integration study was revolutionary in the world of arts-integration research, this particular qualitative study focused on arts integration in relation to student engagement.

Research questions. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are teacher perceptions about student engagement in an arts-integrated classroom?
2. How is student engagement reflected in an arts-integrated classroom?

Significance of the Study

Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana have specific statewide programs implementing arts education and integration (Mississippi Whole Schools Initiative, 2013a; National A+ Schools Consortium, 2014). Due to emerging arts-integration research, a qualitative research study is extremely important in the field of education (Burnaford et al., 2007). Qualitative research methodology was chosen for this study because it “relies on text and data, has unique steps in data analysis, and draws on diverse designs” (Creswell, 2014, p. 183).

Snyder, Klos, and Grey-Hawkins (2014) detailed a four-year process in which a middle school increased student achievement enough to move out of state-mandated corrective action and witnessed a “77% decline in discipline referrals, and overall positive change in school climate based on teacher, staff, student, and parent perception” (p. 2). Schwartz (2015) reported on a comparable study of recovery with student achievement scores in Vermont. Third-grade students completed their end-of-year standardized test with only 17% of students achieving at the proficient level (Schwartz, 2015). After five years of arts integration at the school, the end-of-year third-grade scores climbed to 66% proficient (Schwartz, 2015).

Duma and Silverstein (2014) echoed similar finding in a small-scale meta-analysis of three arts-integration studies. Their findings revealed positive impacts of arts

integration on “student learning, engagement, attitudes about learning, creating a collaborative culture, changing teachers’ beliefs and practice in arts integration and reenergizing their teaching” (Duma & Silverstein, 2014, p. 15). Recently, Mississippi State University Professor Judith Philips, a Stennis research associate, stated in *Science Daily* that effective arts integration does impact student learning (“Effective Arts Integration,” 2013).

Qualitative data sources are often interviews and observations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Specific to this study, compilation of data from interviews and classroom observations may provide current educators with what an arts-integrated classroom looks like, whether lesson-planning collaboration occurs, and which areas of content are integrated. Moreover, a compilation of observation data in classrooms may provide insight to student engagement as well as understanding of the individual teacher’s perception in an arts-integrated setting.

Definition of Key Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined:

Arts integration. Arts integration is the collaboration between an art form and a core subject area while allowing students to engage in creative activities (The Kennedy Center, 2016). Schwartz (2015) applied arts-integration techniques to classroom instruction by aligning arts integration with differentiated instruction.

Creativity or creative process. Batey (2012) defined creativity as “a creative product . . . deemed to be novel or original and useful or adaptive” (p. 56). However, Batey (2012) explained for centuries the definition of creativity was crippling in the area

of educational research, since agreements cannot be made on a clear, concise definition of the term.

Critical thinking. Scriven and Paul (1987) stated critical thinking is a process in which students take in information, analyze it for meaning, evaluate the information, and then apply it to learning.

Effect size. Hattie (2012) described effect size as a way to measure educational practices and the influence of these practices in measuring their impact on student achievement.

Higher-order thinking. According to King, Goodson, and Rohani (1998), “Higher order thinking skills include critical, logical, reflective, metacognitive, and creative thinking. They are activated when individuals encounter unfamiliar problems, uncertainties, questions, or dilemmas” (p. 2).

Nonlinguistic representation. Marzano (2010) defined nonlinguistic representation as follows:

[A] mode of processing involves constructing images of incoming information. Images can refer not only to mental pictures but also to smells, tastes, and kinesthetic sensations, such as how hot or cold something feels. Because this mode of processing goes beyond visual imagery, we refer to it more broadly as nonlinguistic. (para. 2)

Additionally, Marzano (2010) stated sometimes nonlinguistic representations are referred to as “mnemonic strategies” (p. 36).

Perception. Perception, as defined by Schulte-Fortkamp and Fiebig (2015), is a process of making decisions based on impressions on the world that narrows the focus of perception to those items perceived through a sensory means.

Student engagement. Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) described student engagement as a method in which students are involved with aspects of a lesson. Furthermore, Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) also stated if teachers are to engage students in a particular subject matter, the students' desire to learn the material and utilize it are important.

Limitations and Assumptions

The following were determined as limitations of this research study:

1. The Oklahoma arts-integration reform model is intentionally implemented with specific frameworks and design.

2. The Oklahoma arts-integration program began in 2002 (Oklahoma, 2010). Since then, hundreds of teachers have been trained in arts integration through the program, thus providing different teacher perceptions in thought and in classroom processes through the implementation process.

3. The teacher interview questions, as well as the observation rubric, were created by the researcher.

The following assumptions were accepted:

1. Years in teaching or teaching assignment were not relevant to the purpose of this study.

2. Teachers have implemented the arts integration curriculum with fidelity.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to obtain teacher perceptions of student engagement and to observe students in an arts-integrated environment. In Chapter One, the background of the study, conceptual framework, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and research questions were presented. The significance of the study, limitations, and assumptions were described.

In Chapter Two, an in-depth literature review is presented on student engagement and its effect on student achievement. Additionally, a thorough definition of arts integration, how arts integration is implemented, and how arts integration affects student engagement is presented. Teacher perception and student perception are also discussed.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

The arts have been a part of the American fabric from its inception (Cherbo & Wyszomirski, 1999). Additionally, education and the arts have begun to strengthen their partnership to create a more collaborative environment (Arts Education Collaborative, 2016a). In the 21st century, arts education as a whole has experienced more and more cutbacks due to lack of funding (Stubbs, 2012).

In a typical week in an elementary school, students attend one to two music and physical education classes and perhaps one session of visual arts (Robelen, 2011). Robelen (2011), as well as other educational professionals, have encouraged teachers to begin aligning their core curriculum and partnering the core subjects with additional curriculum, such as the arts. These types of partnerships have been called arts integration (Robelen, 2011).

The literature review includes a more in-depth definition of arts integration, why educators choose arts integration, and how to begin teaching and planning in an arts-integrated way. Additionally, a thorough examination is presented of arts education and integration programs in the nation, specifically the A+ program, along with benefits and barriers of arts integration. Finally, a presentation of information regarding teacher perception, student engagement, and student achievement is included.

Conceptual Framework

Student engagement is the key to student achievement (Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014). According to Dotterer and Lowe (2011), there is a direct correlation between increased student engagement and increased student achievement. Researchers Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) indicated specific elements must be present for

student engagement to increase: attendance, retention of information, and basic respect. In other words, students first have to attend school to be engaged with academic content, retain that content, and receive basic respect while at school (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010).

Hendrickson (2010) shared from Oklahoma A+ research that five areas of success exist with arts integration. These areas or themes include “higher student achievement, better attendance of students and teachers, decreased discipline problems, stronger parent and community involvement, and a more creative and joyful school climate” (Hendrickson, 2010, p. 4). This research correlates with the need for high student engagement and high academic achievement while allowing for student enjoyment.

A more thorough discussion regarding the definition of arts integration is provided in the next section. Also, the association and connection of arts integration to student engagement are examined. Included are a definition of arts integration, how arts integration may relate to student engagement, review of research on arts integration, and what part teacher perception plays in student engagement, and finally research linking student engagement to student achievement.

Arts Integration

Defining arts integration. Arts integration occurs when one of the artistic areas (music, visual art, drama, or dance) is combined with one of the core educational areas (math, English language arts, or science) to create an interdependent lesson (DeLeo, 2003). The Kennedy Center’s (2016) Changing Education through the Arts program defined arts integration as “an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process

which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both” (p. 1).

It is important to have a clear understanding of what arts integration actually is to completely comprehend the scope of the arts integration implementation process. Arts integration has had an evolution of terms due to various models and implementation methods (Burnaford et al., 2007). Depending on the research project reviewed, arts integration might be called by a different name, such as arts infusion (Kent, 3). At an Arts Education Partnership (2003) forum, a document was created and titled *Creating Quality Integrated and Interdisciplinary Arts Programs*, which included the terms *arts integration* and *arts infusion* throughout the work. In this document, Deasy, director of the Arts Education Partnership (2003), defined arts integration as “the effort to build a set of relationships between learning in the arts and learning in the other skills and subjects of the curriculum” (p. 3). For the purpose of an arts-integration definition in this study, the focus was learning through and with the arts.

Why arts integration? Twenty-first century students must be able to compete in aglobal market upon entering the workforce. The P21 (Plucker, Kennedy, and Dilley, 2016) came up with four 21st-century skills students need to acquire: creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication (P21, 2016). Two of the four components of the P21 (2016) are also listed similarly in another arts program described later in this chapter.

These four areas are of great significance when aligned with what The Kennedy Center (2016) called “Arts Integration Connections” (para. 1). These connections are “21st century skills, Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, Whole

Child, along with two assessment/standard driven indicators: Common Core and the Arts as well as Formative Assessment” (The Kennedy Center, 2016, para. 1). Each of the first four are working on particular facets of the child’s development while the last two are assessing if the child has grasped the taught material (The Kennedy Center, 2016).

How is arts integration implemented? Resources are available on the internet that explain how to get started with arts integration. Below are a few tangible examples of arts-integrated lessons:

1. *Starry Night*: Integrating visual art with science and math.

Utilizing Van Gogh’s *Starry Night* print, use this as an anticipatory set for a science lesson about the solar system. Also, refer to the proportions from the painting to talk about size and shape while focusing on observational skills.

(Riley, 2012, para. 13)

2. Math and Music: Integrating math, science, and music.

Create clay from a rebus, and create a control group by which you’ll compare your experiment. Using one sphere of clay and the other sphere as a constant, begin creating part-to-whole comparisons while separating your variable clay into half, quarter, and eighth pieces. Generate clay equations to solve for 4, then turn it into music notation and create a rhythmic performance. (Baker,

2003, pp. 1-3)

3. Ellis Island Immigration: Social Studies, Photography, and English Language Arts.

Using photography tricks and tips, students refurbish older historical photos with their own personal faces; recreate immigration documents while studying

Ellis Island. A culminating activity when finished was having the students write poems about their experience as an immigrant. (The Kennedy Center, 2014b, p. 1)

Artsedge (2014), in partnership with The Kennedy Center, provided practical information on how to create an arts-integrated lesson. Artsedge (2014) suggested the educator first identify what core-curricular standard(s) the students need to learn. Second, the teacher identifies what art form the students are working on or what would complement the core-curricular standard (The Kennedy Center, 2014b). Once these two areas are identified, then an integrated topic has been created (The Kennedy Center, 2014b). Artsedge (2014) defined an integrated topic as one that is “created by connecting a specific arts focus with a specific curriculum area or a specific concern or need” (para. 5). Figure 1 is a depiction of how arts-integrated topics are created as well as continually refined.

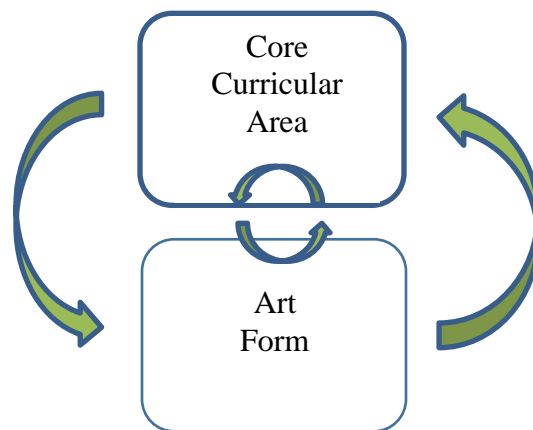


Figure 1. Arts-integration topics. Adapted from “Artsedge” by The Kennedy Center, 2014b, para. 5. Copyright 2014 by The Kennedy Center.

Curricular-integrated planning. Schwartz (2015) stated collaboration with fellow teachers is crucial when planning curriculum and implementing arts integration. Collaboration, according to *Merriam-Webster's* (n.d.), is “to work with another person or group in order to achieve or do something” (para. 1). Kilma, a teacher from the Integrated Arts Academy, stated in her interview with Schwartz (2015) regarding collaboration and creativity, “You really have to understand creativity and that it is critical to students’ understanding” (para. 13). The Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) agreed with Schwartz and Kilma, reinforcing the need for genuine, focused collaboration.

It may seem daunting for collaboration to take place during an already busy, daily school schedule (Chicago Public Schools [CPS], 2015b). Chicago Public Schools (CPS) (2015a) created a template with which CPS teachers guide their planning process. Teachers routinely collaborate during their professional learning community time (CPS, 2015b). Figure 2 is a sample of the CPS lesson planning guide.

<u>Lesson Plan</u>		
Teacher Name:	Class/Course:	
Grade:	Start Date:	Time Needed:
Lesson Title:	Theme:	
Objectives:	CCSS:	
Learning Styles Addressed:		
Modifications/Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:		
Materials/Resources Needed:		
Anticipatory Set:		
Main Activity:		
Assessment Strategy:		
Teacher Reflection about the Unit:		
Follow-up/Next Steps:		

Figure 2. Building a lesson plan. Adapted from “Instructional Planning for Arts Education” by Chicago Public Schools, 2015b, pp. 10-11. Copyright 2015 by the Office of Arts Education, Chicago Public Schools.

Arts-integration program evaluation. A program evaluation featuring Turnaround Arts schools was released by the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) (2015). A Turnaround Arts school is one where “the program focuses on improving school climate and culture, deepening instruction, and increasing student and parent engagement, as a pathway to improved academic achievement” (President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities [PCAH], 2015, p. v). The PCAH

(2015) began in 2012 working with continually low-performing schools. Turnaround Arts schools adhere to utilization of the arts in many settings, thereby also following a set of “pillars” or core commitments and hopefully achieving a greater span of school improvement success (PCAH, 2015). These pillars include the following:

1. Principal leadership;
2. Strategic use of arts specialists;
3. Non-arts classroom teachers integrating arts into core content;
4. The use of teaching artists and community organizations;
5. The engagement of the district, parents, and community;
6. Strategic arts planning;
7. Professional development; and
8. Improvements to the school environment. (p. 9)

These pillars are guideposts to a larger scope of school improvement (PCAH, 2015).

Four of the pillars for Turnaround Schools are the staff, specifically principal leadership, classroom teachers, arts-content teachers, and arts-content teachers in leadership (PCAH, 2015). Within these four groups, participation percentages with arts-integrated lessons, leadership opportunities, and collaboration between arts and non-arts teachers are all measured (PCAH, 2015). The next two pillars derive from leadership within the building-strategic planning and professional development (PCAH, 2015). Both professional development and strategic planning of these areas typically are spearheaded by the principal, but not with Turnaround Schools (PCAH, 2015). Providing building-level professional development and aligning with planning in order for teachers to better their performance in the classroom correlates to the P21 4Cs research (P21,

2016). Finally, the last two pillars are community support and school environment (PCAH, 2015), thereby inviting the community into the school building for performances and using the school building as a public entity, as well as receiving support from the community at large for initiatives at school.

There were several areas mentioned in the Turnaround Arts Initiative as having a positive effect. Some identified areas were increased achievement levels in math and reading as well as global academic progress at the school sites (PCAH, 2015). Additionally, but not proven in all school settings, were decreases in discipline issues and increases in attendance percentages (PCAH, 2015). This corroborates with Weimer's (2012) research implying when students are more engaged, they want to attend school and consequently, student achievement increases.

The Los Angeles Music Center Arts Integration (2012) and the evaluated a three-year experiment looking at the success or failure of the AIP. When the AIP (2012) began, specific areas were targeted such as "district partnerships, professional development for teachers, and ongoing district and school-level support" (p. 3), all of which led to arts-integrated lessons. The AIP (2012) used surveys, classroom observations, and teacher interviews to gain information.

The AIP (2012) concluded the experiment worked based on targeted assistance for teachers, professional development, and the AIP overall. Furthermore, the Los Angeles Music Center tweaked the experiment as the three years progressed, adapting to new circumstances (*Los Angeles Music Center Arts Integration Partnership Evaluation*, 2012). While the AIP (2012) is not complete, the partnership is still being tweaked,

gaining trust with teachers, and walking side-by-side with teachers for the good of students.

Historical perspective on arts integration. Arts integration is gaining new traction in education; however, the arts have been a focus for thousands of years (Schwartz, 2015). The mathematician-philosopher Pythagoras once noticed, “Vibrating strings produce harmonious tones when the ratios of the lengths of the strings are whole numbers, and that these ratios could be extended to other instruments” (as cited in O’Connor & Robertson, 1999, p. 4). Over a thousand years later, Martin Luther, known for posting his 95 theses to officially begin the Reformation in 1517 (Pickford-Jones, 2012), conceptualized, “Whoever has skill in music is of good temperament and fitted for all things. We must teach music in schools” (as cited in Illinois Music Education Association, 2014, p. 2). Luther advocated for the arts and its application in society (Jonathan Edwards Classical Academy, 2013).

President Reagan once synthesized:

Civilizations are most often remembered for their art and thought. I have always believed in the definition of an educated man or woman as one who could, if necessary, reform his or her civilization. That means we must teach our students more than hard facts and floppy discs. We must teach them the rich artistic inheritance of our culture and an appreciation of how fine music enriches both the student who studies it, and the society that produces it . . . The existence of strong music and fine arts curricula are important to keeping the humanities truly humanizing and liberal arts education, truly liberating. (as cited in Wisconsin Advocates for Music Education, 2012, p. 1)

In comparison, Eisner (2005) noted:

The arts teach children to exercise that most exquisite of capacities, the ability to make judgments in the absence of rules . . . The rules that the arts obey are located in our children's emotional interior; children come to feel a rightness of fit among the qualities with which they work. There is no rule book to provide recipes or algorithms to calculate conclusions. They must exercise judgment by looking inside themselves. (p. 1)

The importance of the arts and arts education has been voiced throughout history. Booth (2013) stated arts education started to make its way into daily curriculum around 1900. According to Booth (2013), music and visual art were “thought to improve manual dexterity, making for better factory workers” (para. 4). Additionally, Booth (2013) and Howe (2014) asserted elementary teachers were required to have some type of music training up until the 1930s.

Arts integration has surged in combining arts education with other curricular areas and has taken its place in the ranking of importance in American education and the world (Arlington, 2008). In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement released an article entitled “Ten Years of Arts Integration” and congratulated schools on their high level of interest and implementation of arts integration, specifically through grant programs such as Professional Development for Art Educator (PDAE) and Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD). These grants funded 220 projects in 2002 alone, allowing professional development in arts integration for teachers (U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2012).

Organizations supporting the arts and arts integration. At the present time, there are numerous organizations supporting schools and educational settings in the arts, specifically arts integration (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Possibly the most notable supporter of the arts is The Kennedy Center, located in Washington, DC, and dedicated by Congress in 1964 as a “living memorial” to the late President John Kennedy (The Kennedy Center, 2012, para. 5). However, prior to President Kennedy, it was actually President Eisenhower who began discussions and allocated money for some type of national cultural center (The Kennedy Center, 2012).

According to a Monuments Men Foundation press release from 2011, General Eisenhower, an avid painter, issued unparalleled orders during World War II on two separate occasions for soldiers to “respect monuments so far as war allows,” further stating, “It is the responsibility of every commander to protect and respect these symbols whenever possible” (para 2). Ironically, one of Eisenhower’s personal paintings currently hangs in the Lyndon B Johnson Presidential Library (Lyndon B Johnson, 2016). The Performing Arts Center was named for President Kennedy, who was pivotal in conversations requesting a national center for the arts (The Kennedy Center, 2012). The Kennedy Center was officially opened in 1971, during the Nixon Administration, though President Johnson’s Administration (1963-1968) oversaw the center’s completion (The Kennedy Center, 2012).

As the main supporter of the arts, The Kennedy Center (2016) has several current initiatives in reference to arts in education. These initiatives include the following:

- Any Given Child
- Arts Around the Corner

- Arts and Special Education
- ArtsEdge
- Changing Education through the Arts (CETA)
- Partners in Education
- Partnerships with DC Public and Charter Schools
- Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN)
- Kennedy Center Seminars for Teaching Artist Development
- The Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Award. (The Kennedy Center, 2016, p. 2)

In recent years, the Any Given Child grant was awarded to a school in southwest Missouri (Riley, 2013). Through the use of grant monies from the Kennedy Foundation, arts integration has begun to take hold in some select school settings (Riley, 2013).

Specifically, training for teachers has occurred through the idea of integrating visual arts with core subjects, such as English Language arts (Riley, 2013). A teacher at one of the select schools emphasized she “believes this teaching approach pulls students in and keeps them excited about learning” (as cited in Riley, 2013, p. 1B). Additionally, a principal at one of the schools selected for the grant offered, “Arts integration brings art forms into the content area and it helps kids understand it and retain it longer” (Riley, 2013, pp. 1B-2B).

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (2016) is another resource and supporter of arts education. The NEA (2016) began in 1965 as a separate entity of the federal government and is the largest funder of the arts in the United States. The NEA (2016) “supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America’s rich and diverse cultural

heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America” (p. 2).

In 2015, the NEA celebrated their 50th anniversary as a government entity providing arts resources to the general public and to private entities through state and local funding (National Endowment for the Arts [NEA], 2016). The NEA (2016) provides funding in five categories: arts education, state and regional, federal partnerships, international partnerships, and design. Through these five different groups, the NEA (2016) is able to have more of an impact on arts education as a whole.

Another supporter of the arts and arts education is the Lincoln Center, located in New York City, New York. In 1959, President Eisenhower participated in the groundbreaking of this multi-faced facility, followed by Bernstein leading the New York Philharmonic in “Fanfare for the Common Man” (The Lincoln Center, 2016). There is much speculation on how the Lincoln Center received its name with no resolution in sight (The Lincoln Center, 2016). Many believe it was named after President Lincoln, while others hold true to the belief that since it was built in an area called Lincoln Square, Rockefeller decided to name the center for the area. Today, the Lincoln Center (2016) houses numerous performing groups, such as the Juilliard School, the School of American Ballet, the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Ballet, and the Metropolitan Opera.

The Wallace Foundation (2013) has been a supporter of the arts, arts education, and arts integration for many years. Specifically, the Wallace Foundation has three main objectives: “strengthen education leadership to improve student achievement, improve out-of-school time learning opportunities, and build appreciation and demand for the

arts” (Grossman, Lind, Hayes, McMaken, & Gersick, 2009, p. 2). Not only does the Wallace Foundation provide funding to various projects relating to the arts, but free, research-based structure is also provided to those served (Grossman et al., 2009).

The Wallace Foundation, in conjunction with The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR), recently published “Foundations for Young Adult Success” (Nagaoka, et. al, 2015). The concept paper is considered a “developmental framework,” aligning various aspects of a child’s developmental stages from age three through young adulthood (Nagaoka, et.al, 2015). The document lists four foundational components which create key factors of success: self-regulation, knowledge and skills, mindsets, and values (Nagaoka, et.al, 2015). Particularly of interest to this study is the values section. Nagaoka, et. al,(2015) defined values as follows, “Values are enduring, often culturally-defined, beliefs about what is good or bad and what is important in life. Values serve as broad guidelines for living and provide an orientation for one’s desired future” (p. 3). Nagaoka, et al. (2015) discussed the alignment of the arts as a vehicle for children to learn through creating and experiences.

Another supporter of arts integration is the National Consortium of A+ Schools (National A+ Schools Consortium, 2014). The A+ Schools began originally in North Carolina with the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts (2016). The Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts (2016) was established within the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in 1993 (UNCOSA, 2016). The core premise behind the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts (2016) was to strengthen the arts through the development of new ideas and concepts involving the arts (UNCOSA, 2016). The A+ moniker originated following early conversations with Ralph Burgard, who was an arts enthusiast from

North Carolina (UNCSEA, 2016). Speaking with M Burrows, the name, A+, came from the theory arts are a core part of curriculum and are the “plus” to the current academic selection (personal communication, October 24, 2016). Additionally, M. Burrows stated, “It came from the idea of arts plus academics, and they shortened it to A+” (personal communication, October 24, 2016).

A+ program. In 1995, the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts (2016) allocated funding for 25 pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade public schools to participate in ongoing professional development combining the arts with current curriculum (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016). Additionally, the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts (2016) provided funding and encouraged participation in a four-year research study on the schools’ progress (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016). Conclusions drawn by the A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council (2016) “attributed the success and sustainability of the program to the use of arts in school reform, the professional development and the network created to support teachers and schools” (para. 1). After the initial four-year process, additional schools began joining the North Carolina A+ Schools model (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016). A similar study was completed in the eighth year of arts-integration implementation in North Carolina, which yielded very similar results as the four-year report (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016).

A report released in 2014 from the North Carolina A+ Schools program showcased three schools who are participating in the arts-integration model (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014). Each of the three schools listed

adhere to the arts and the North Carolina A+ philosophy of the eight essentials (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014). However, implementation of these core beliefs varies in each school listed in the report (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014). One building is an arts and science magnet school in an inner city focusing on “arts, athletics, and academics” (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016, p. 3). The second building featured in the report is a Core Knowledge magnet school in a medium-sized city (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014). The third elementary featured in the report is a small, remote school allowing a focus on child development and creativity (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014).

The North Carolina arts integration model spread to Oklahoma in 1999, Arkansas in 2003, and Louisiana in 2013 (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014). Funded by the DaVinci Institute through the Kirkpatrick Foundation in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Oklahoma A+ Schools (2014a) officially began in 2001. Training the faculty in the original 15 schools occurred in the summer of 2002, and practicing teachers were chosen as fellows and underwent an intense training to become facilitators for A+ Schools (Duke, 2010).

Currently, Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016c) include over 65 schools that actively participate in the statewide network. The table listed below outlines the number of schools currently participating with Oklahoma A+ Schools (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016c). As seen in the table below, schools are listed in one of five categories: Implementation: year one, Implementation: year two, Implementation: year three,

Participating, or Demonstration schools (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016c). These categories came from the Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016c) Affiliation list.

Table 1

Categories of Schools Affiliated with Oklahoma A+ Schools Organization

Category of Affiliation	Schools in Each Category
Implementation: Year 1	3
Implementation: Year 2	3
Implementation: Year 3	5
Participating School	43
Demonstration School	12

The A+ schools reform model includes unique professional development (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014b). The A+ model offers professional development specifically geared to the improvement area the individual school has identified as a need (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014b). For example, if a school needs to work more on curriculum, then the professional learning provided by A+ would be created specifically to address curriculum mapping (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014b).

Additionally, A+ Schools follow a framework comprised of eight essentials (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). Each of these essentials are discussed in detail below and are designed to support the school as a whole as the bedrock of all professional development facilitated within an arts-integrated school and provided by the A+ Schools organization (Barry, 2010). The eight essentials were created in 2001 by the original 25 A+ schools in North Carolina including administrators, teachers, and North Carolina A+ Fellows as a guiding roadmap for A+ schools (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014). The eight essentials include “multiple learning pathways, infrastructure, enriched assessment, experiential learning, collaboration, curriculum, the arts, and climate” (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a, p. 1).

Arts. The arts, as defined by Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016a), are something taught daily and included in curriculum planning. Arts included are visual art, music, drama, dance, and creative writing (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). Additionally, arts are seen of value in the school day (Schwartz, 2015)

A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council (2016) specifically uses three separate terms to describe how the arts are valued: arts education, arts exposure, and arts integration. Arts education is teaching the arts within the school day like any other academic subject (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016). Arts exposure includes “authentic, real-world arts experiences and may occur through collaborative efforts with teaching artists, performing artists, and various arts agencies” (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016, p. 7). Finally, arts integration is learning across the curriculum using arts as a vehicle to do so (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2016).

In 2009, Noblit, Corbett, Wilson, and McKinney co-authored a book entitled *Creating and Sustaining Arts-Based School Reform: The A+ Schools Program*. In the text, the authors described two-way arts integration as a “complementary relationship between the arts and the major subjects” (Noblit et al., 2009, p. 5). The authors further indicated two-way arts integration allows for students to experience core curriculum in a diverse manner, thereby allowing students a greater chance at mastering the distributed curriculum (Noblit et al., 2009). Moreover, the arts are not relinquished to a backseat, but rather a co-pilot in curriculum delivery of content (Noblit et al., 2009).

Curriculum. Curriculum is simply the set of core competences or state standards a school must teach (*Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary*, n.d.). A+ curriculum is aligned with curricular standards but is also integrated with thematic, interdisciplinary units of instruction (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). By creating curriculum in an interdisciplinary way, an eagerness for learning emerges (A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, 2014).

Collaboration. Sterman (2016c) utilized the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21) 4Cs – creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication – to further establish what collaboration means in arts integration. Sterman (2016c) also stated collaboration is something students do not learn on their own but rather must see modeled by adults around them. For this reason, Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016a) included in their indicators that collaboration happens inside and outside of the school day as well as with all stakeholders including classroom and arts teachers, families, community members, and students.

Enriched assessment. Enriched assessment, as defined by A+ Schools Program of the North Carolina Arts Council (2014), indicates assessment occurs in a variety of ways to show a concept or skill has been understood. Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016b) expanded that definition to include that enriched assessment is reflective in nature and can include self-assessment. Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016b) further elaborated on enriched assessment with seven components: clear criteria, multiple evaluations, short feedback loop, arts integration, multiple learning pathways, collaboration, and unexpected outcomes.

Experiential learning. Experiential learning acknowledges the creativity of every student (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). North Carolina A+ (2014) explained experiential learning as “creating hands-on, real world application of learning standards to support engagement, innovation and critical thinking” (p. 7). O’Neal and Runco (2016) described creativity as a process as well as a risk, because the outcomes are original and not able to be predicted by the teacher. Further, differentiated instruction is considered part of experiential learning (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a).

Infrastructure. Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016a) defined infrastructure as the “organization of time, space, technology, and resources to support transformative learning” (para .7). For an administrator, this might include scheduling time for planning among classroom and arts instructors (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). Additionally, Smyth and Landon asserted resources are an integral part of infrastructure, both monetary resources as well as consumable supplies (Smyth & Landon, 2016).

Climate. Simply stated, climate, as defined by Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016a), is an environment where “teachers and students are respected, and the creative process is

highly valued” (para. 8). Sterman (2016b) upheld the Oklahoma A+ School philosophy by stating the learning environment will evolve, in a good way, when arts integration is implemented. This further enforces North Carolina A+ (2014), which stated an imaginative, supportive environment is a place where everyone can be excited to learn together.

Multiple learning pathways. Multiple learning pathways refer to various learning opportunities in which a student can receive and process information in a variety of ways. This could include utilizing Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). In his book *Frames of Mind* (1983), Gardner outlined what he calls various intelligences including linguistic, logical, social, emotional, and non-academic intelligences. Gardner (2016) has since refuted his own theory and stated it is no longer current. Multiple learning pathways involve using various forms of assessments, not just paper/pencil tests (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). Also, included in multiple learning pathways are created time slots during the day to allow for balanced learning opportunities (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a).

Similar to Chicago Public Schools, Oklahoma A+ Schools (Raiber et al, 2010) created a lesson planning template. The template is similar to that of the CPS, but the lesson sections are organized by the Eight Essentials (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). A sample of the Oklahoma A+ lesson plan is shown in Figure 3.

Teacher Name:	Subject:	Grade Level:
Curriculum	State Standards: Essential Question(s): Overarching Concept:	
Arts	Disciplines Addressed (both art forms and core curriculum): <input type="checkbox"/> Dance <input type="checkbox"/> Drama <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Art <input type="checkbox"/> Communication Arts <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity <input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking	
Enriched Assessment	Assessment methods (formative and summative):	
Collaboration	Who will you collaborate with on this lesson? (Colleagues, artists, parents, etc.)	
Multiple Learning Pathways	<input type="checkbox"/> Art Smart <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Smart <input type="checkbox"/> Body Smart <input type="checkbox"/> Music Smart <input type="checkbox"/> Word Smart <input type="checkbox"/> Number Smart <input type="checkbox"/> Self Smart <input type="checkbox"/> People Smart	
Climate	How will this lesson aide in classroom climate? At the building-level?	
Experiential Learning	How will this lesson be creative? How will you address 21 st Century learning skills?	
Infrastructure	Materials Needed: Duration of Lesson:	

Figure 3. Arts-integrated lesson plan. Adapted from Oklahoma A+ Schools Wikispace for teachers and Volume 5 of the Oklahoma A+ Research, 2016 & 2010, pp. 15-19. Copyright 2016 by Oklahoma A+ Schools.

National A+ Schools Consortium. The A+ school reform model has spread nationwide with the National A+ Schools Consortium (2014). The Consortium makes it

possible for any school across the country to participate and receive support, especially schools that might not have a statewide network such as those in Oklahoma and North Carolina (National A+ Schools Consortium, 2014). In 2010, Arkansas A+ became a statewide network for teachers and their schools (Arkansas A+ Schools, 2012).

Beginning in the summer of 2013, Louisiana embarked on the A+ journey with school personnel from several districts attending an A+ summer institute (Louisiana A+ Schools, 2013).

Each of these programs and associations provide professional development and resources for educators around the country (National A+ Schools Consortium, 2014).

Why? What makes arts integration so worthwhile organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts assist teachers in bridging the arts with core subject areas? What benefits are there to linking a core curricular area with visual arts, drama, dance, or music? In the next section, benefits and barriers to arts integration implementation are discussed.

Benefits of arts integration. To fully explore arts integration, it is important to look at its benefits and barriers. Why explore options in education such as arts integration? Robinson (2012) challenged, “People and organizations everywhere can see that current systems of education are failing to meet the challenges we know all face and they’re working furiously to create alternatives” (p. 2). Sterman (2016b) created a definition of arts integration as a teaching strategy to help student understand concepts and how they work together. Robinson (2012) interpreted current educational approaches around the world as failing, with educational leaders grappling to find a solution.

Principal J. Baker in Arizona used an arts-integrated approach to bridge a cultural gap between Native Americans and stakeholders in the community (Sterman, 2016a). Baker and his team of teachers decided to ask the tribe to show students about tribal art, music, and culture (Sterman, 2016a). The result was a successful approach establishing new lines of communication between the Elders of the Hualapai tribe and families in the school community, dispelling long-held myths (Sterman, 2016a). This further emphasized Robinson's (2012) point that an outside-the-box, arts-based solution is valuable and necessary.

Blom (2016) echoed some of the same conclusions as those mentioned in the CPS study. Blom (2016) studied arts curriculum in Ontario, Canada, and discovered classrooms where arts integration occurred and creativity was used as a learning tool resulted in better comprehension of content. Further, Blom (2016) indicated a similar research finding as that of Oklahoma A+ Schools, "[The] perceptible impact that arts integration has on students is engagement" (p. 97).

Colucci (2011) took Robinson's initial thought (2008) and further expanded it by stating teachers are looking for more non-traditional teaching methods due in part to the additional demands on a teacher's time in the classroom. According to Colucci (2011), one benefit of teaching in arts-integrated ways is to facilitate learning with more content in less time. Taylor (2013) spoke of 21st century skills and utilized them in elementary teacher professional development. He used research regarding the 4Cs (collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking), and had one elementary school divide into small group rotations in a staff meeting, with one station on each "C" (Taylor, 2013).

Small groups re-discovered how they needed to collaborate and plan with one another (Taylor, 2013).

Oklahoma A+ Schools (2014b) has found numerous benefits in schools where arts integration is taking place. In arts-integrated classrooms, both teachers and students want to attend school each day and teacher and student average attendance has increased (Barry, 2010). Teachers and students collectively seem to enjoy their work in an arts-integrated system (Hendrickson, 2010).

Arts integration and creativity seem contagious to educators (Schwartz, 2015). Robelen (2012) wrote about a school leader scrutinizing an A+ school within the Oklahoma City Public School system. Robelen (2012) noticed the school leader was taking numerous pictures and was very impressed with how a science lesson on the food chain could be communicated and demonstrated through the use of visual arts.

Taylor and Zebley (2013) recently visited two elementary schools in Utah and Florida and witnessed something similar to Robelen. Utah sixth-grade students at one elementary school decided to collaborate on three ancient civilizations: Greece, China, and Egypt (Taylor & Zebley, 2013). The results of their collaboration were incredible, as they transformed their school building into a living museum (Taylor & Zebley, 2013). Other students in the building, as well as parents and community members, were invited to the living museum and traveled the “world” learning about these ancient civilizations (Taylor & Zebley, 2013). This type of activity is what Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016b) referred to as enriched assessment.

In Florida, the entire K-5 school created what they call the “Children’s Carnival of Creative Curiosities” (Taylor & Zebley, 2013). This was based on the museum idea

referenced earlier in Utah, plus arcade-style games to accompany the museum stations (Taylor & Zebley, 2013). Just as in the food chain/visual art work experiential learning activity, children in Florida received the chance to integrate their learning into a fun and educational experience (Taylor & Zebley, 2013). As an Oklahoma City school leader was quoted as saying, “They created it themselves” (as cited in Robelen, 2012, para. 52); the same statement could apply to either the Florida or Utah activities. Colucci (2011) advocated for combining subject areas and having the students write about what they are doing in class. Each of these examples are benefits of arts integration.

Hendrickson (2010) utilized the Oklahoma A+ Schools five-volume research study and elaborated that where arts integration is present, specifically the Oklahoma A+ reform model, schools show “higher student achievement, decreased discipline problems, stronger parent and community involvement, and a more creative and joyful school climate” (p. 4). Moreover, earlier research showed the same effects with students. McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, and Brooks (2004) detailed, “Early exposure is often key to developing life-long involvement in the arts and that exposure typically comes from arts education, community-based arts programs, and/or commercial entertainment” (p. 20).

Barry (2010) examined an arts-integrated classroom and the teacher perception of an arts classroom. Oklahoma A+ Schools (Barry, 2010) cited “teacher empowerment” is “successfully changing school practices” (p. 14). Robelen (2012) described an important component to the Oklahoma A+ School philosophy. He stated, “The (OK A+) network’s strong emphasis on the arts, both in their own right and infused across the curriculum,” is considered a strength of the program (Robelen, 2012, para. 52).

An observation made by Oklahoma A+ researchers was that in arts-integrated classrooms, student engagement increases (Raiber & Jackson, 2010). The teacher is no longer using traditional teaching methods (Raiber & Jackson, 2010). Instead, these methods are new and innovative, keeping the students' interest and engagement levels raised (Raiber & Jackson, 2010). Educators and researchers alike have known for years a high level of student engagement is needed for increased achievement to take place in the classroom (Weimer, 2012).

Barriers of arts integration. While arts education and integration have grown in recent years, there is still more to be done (NEA, 2015). A study completed in 2015 by the NEA involved examination of public participation in the arts. While there are several genres included in the arts, music was the most-participated-in activity (NEA, 2015). However, this also indicates a barrier to arts integration is the lack of drama, dance, and visual arts both within and outside of the school day (Robelen, 2012).

The NEA (2015) study also revealed childhood experience within the arts directly correlates to the degree achieved as an adult. Seventy percent of adults who graduated from college were more likely to have attended an arts activity than those who graduated high school (NEA, 2015). There is a lack of arts participation and engagement from those without a college education (NEA, 2015). Interestingly, there are more Hispanics and African-Americans participating in the arts (NEA, 2015). According to the study, there is a greater "racial and ethnic diversity of adults" participating in "acting, dance, creative writing, and music appreciation classes" than during the previous 10 years (NEA, 2015, p. 71). However, that leaves 17.4 million individuals classified in the 2012

census as “other” when selecting a racial heritage who are not engaged in arts activities (NEA, 2015).

Similarly, Fletcher et al. (2016) discovered a situation with young children through adolescent age (up to the age of 18) who had been through a traumatic situation. Fletcher et al. (2016) used an arts-based approach to help students get over grief from their traumatic circumstances. Facilitators of the trauma project stated that while the activities and group projects helped students, their feelings did not always align with the grant proposal’s guidelines and/or deadlines (Fletcher et al., 2016). Facilitators specifically mentioned a barrier being time required to gain a student’s trust (Fletcher et al., 2016).

Barriers to arts integration in the classroom setting can be equally as challenging as those in a psychological or statistical setting (Fletcher et al., 2016). Consumable supplies, specifically those used in visual arts, always need to be replenished (Cochran, 2016). This creates a great concern for arts advocates, who already spend much of their own money purchasing items for their students (Cochran, 2016).

Equally difficult at times is creating a learning environment which is against the norm for traditional education. Public schools are typically set up to be traditional schools (Huson, 2016). Huson (2016) defined traditional education as “teacher-centered delivery of instruction to classes of students who are the receivers of information. Traditional schools generally stress basic educational practices and expect mastery of academic learning in the core subjects of math, reading, writing, science and social studies” (para. 2). Conversely, Peters (2012) defined a progressive school in part as learning “constructed through play, direct experience, social interaction . . . disciplines

are integrated as children make connections . . . and intelligence is recognized as varied, includes the arts, and is measured in real-life problem solving” (p. 1). As Noodle Staff (2015) pointed out, there are few schools breaking out of the traditional mode and creating new and exciting learning environments. Chandler (2014) echoed the theme from Peters’ progressive idea by stating students need more “frequent time for play, discussion, problem-based challenges, collaboration . . . anything designed to make learning a bit more active” (para. 5).

The arts and student engagement. Chapman and Vagle (2011) discussed in their book, *Motivating Students*, how arts programs have been cut due to recent funding issues. They also mentioned how in certain schools, teachers have found ways to incorporate the arts into daily curriculum to provide an arts experience for the students (Chapman & Vagle, 2011). Chapman and Vagle (2011) explained when teachers blend the arts into other curricular areas, it is “providing meaningful opportunities to read, write, and problem solve” (p. 11).

Hattie (2009), a professor with the University of Melbourne Graduate School of Education and the director of the Melbourne Education Research Institute, conducted a research meta-analysis on arts programs. Hattie (2009) utilized, in-part, Butzlaff’s 2000 study and discussed how reading music assisted with reading linguistic notation. Butzlaff (2000) also reported reading music and working with a musical group might “instill a sense of personal responsibility, which in turn leads to heightened academic responsibility and performance” (p. 2). Butzlaff (2000) mentioned he was cautious about the findings of the study due to the effect size. Nevertheless, though a small number, Hattie (2009) found music specifically resulted in an increase of positive behavior.

Additionally, Hattie (2009) wrote about another study relating the study of music and achievement in mathematics. Vaughn (2000) indicated “a modest positive correlation between the voluntary study of music and mathematical achievement” (p. 1). Winner and Cooper (2000) conducted a research study regarding the arts (no specified medium) and the link to student achievement. The findings of the study showed a small connection to academic achievement (Hattie, 2009). Winner and Cooper (2000) stated, “They were careful not to assume causality, and suggested that studying the arts may lead to greater engagement in schooling, which in turn leads to greater academic achievement” (as cited in Hattie, 2009, p. 32).

Teacher Perception

The focus of this research study was to obtain teacher perceptions of student engagement while participating in arts-integrated activities. Before discussing teacher perception, how might one define perception? Bernhardt (2004) used words such as *observation* and *belief* to explain how perception might be defined. Bernhardt (2004) defined perception as “a view, judgment, or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter,” as well as “a belief stronger than impression and less strong than positive knowledge” (p. 54). Bernhardt’s (2004) definition of perception was used for this study.

When thinking of teacher perception, Hargreaves (2000) identified, “It is what teachers think, what teachers believe, and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get” (p. ix). Bernhardt (2004) concurred by stating, “We implement new concepts and change behaviors . . . to change student perceptions, teacher perceptions must change, which requires teacher

behavior to change” (p. 56). As shown in Figure 3, the cogs on the wheel are all interrelated. Teacher perception has directly been affected by student behaviors in the classroom, and these perceptions directly affect student perceptions of the teacher and perhaps the content being taught (Bernhardt, 2004).

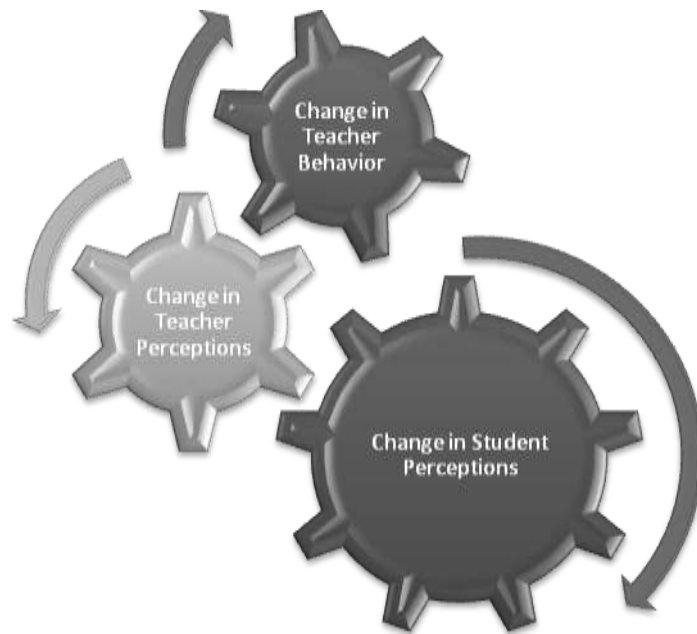


Figure 4. Perception and behavior. Adapted from *Data Analysis* by V. Bernhardt, 2004, p. 56. Copyright 2004 by Eye on Education.

Lee and Cawthon (2015) stated when implementing arts-integrated curriculum into classroom practice, it is vital to prepare incoming teachers with arts-based strategies. Demir (2015) concurred, “The better a society raises its teachers, the more these teachers will be able to transfer their knowledge and skills to their students” (p. 181). Further, Bernhardt (2004) formulated if a teacher’s behavior needs to be altered, the professional development for the teacher needs to change.

Speaking specifically about professional development, an intentional focus on facilitation of the actual professional development experience as well as the follow-up support needed to implement the professional development is essential (Bernhardt, 2004). As teachers continually learn new strategies and receive support in implementation of these strategies, the ultimate goal is student achievement (Bernhardt, 2004). To reach a mass of students, educators know they need to create high student engagement (Dotterer & Lowe, 2011). Nobori (2012) stated, “High-quality professional development is essential” for arts integration to be successful (para.7). Continuing, Nobori (2012) asserted teachers “just need to learn some of the fundamentals so they will be better able to think of ways to merge art concepts with other content” (para. 7). In the next section, student engagement is explicitly defined and discussed further.

Student Engagement

Actor and director Woody Allen once said, “Eighty percent of success is showing up” (as cited in Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010, p. 53). As mentioned earlier, the Oklahoma A+ research team found teacher and student attendance increased in classrooms where arts integration was implemented (Hendrickson, 2010). Educators are certainly aware attendance is the first step to high levels of student engagement and achievement (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Reid et al. (2014) described attendance issues students’ face as those “frequently based on the sense of security, comfort and confidence they have in school environments” (p. 5). In other words, students must feel they belong at school for true student engagement to take place (Reid et al., 2014). Therefore, to begin the discussion on student engagement, a definition of student engagement is imperative.

Definition of student engagement. Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) defined engagement as something that “involves learners’ need, desire, and commitment to attend to, participate in, cooperate with, and self-regulate their learning” (p. 51). In *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, Marzano and Pickering (2011) included a different point of view when defining engagement in four distinct areas, while providing a guiding question to accompany the term. These areas are listed as emotion (How do I feel?), interest (Am I interested?), perceived importance (Is this important?), and perception of efficacy (Can I do this?) (Marzano & Pickering, 2011, pp. 3-15). The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (2013) stated there are also four organized themes based on 10 engagement indicators. The organized themes are “academic challenge, learning with peers, experiences with faculty, and campus environment” (National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE], 2013, p. 8). Further, the NSSE (2013) stated authentic student engagement is critical for excellence achievement. Learners need to be in charge of their learning and attend to the type of learning they have experienced (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010).

Further, Hattie (2009) wrote about student engagement in his book, *Visible Learning*. Hattie (2009) detailed each child contributes an engagement level toward his or her own learning, while the teacher’s contribution is the engagement of all students. Engagement in a classroom is dual-ownership between the teacher and the student (Hattie, 2009). Similarly, Healey et al. (2014), stated the development of engagement is “staff and student learning and working together to foster engaged student learning and engaging learning and teaching enhancement” (p. 7).

Hattie (2009) also listed “clear learning intentions, transparent success criteria, and making learning visible to the student” as specific elements that need to be in place to achieve high levels of student engagement (p. 49). Likewise, Healey et al. (2014) linked four criteria with student engagement and a teacher/student partnership. The criteria include the following: “1) learning, teaching and assessment, 2) subject-based research and inquiry, 3) scholarship of teaching and learning, and 4) curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy” (Healey et al., 2014, pp. 7-8).

What student engagement looks like in the classroom. Hattie (2012) described how educators might see student engagement, “For some, learning occurs if the students complete the task, show interest and engagement, and ‘pass’ tests” (p. 33). Strauss (2015) concluded classrooms with high student engagement look quite different from traditional classrooms and have several attributes. These attributes include “independent problem solving, students struggling and persevering, physical movement and serious play, students imagining creative approaches to challenges, real world connections, a wide variety of student work and types of assessments, student-led discussions, and social-emotional skills and empathy” (Strauss, 2015, pp. 1-2).

Hattie’s (2012) description does not align with the previously discussed definition used. The description does not express any clear success criteria or transparency; instead, it sounds more like what a typical classroom might be—students having responded to what the teacher has asked them to do with no buy-in, no real-life goal or connection, and no autonomous engagement, which is exactly what Hattie (2012) wanted. Hattie (2012) quoted Nuthall’s research, stating only “25% of the specific concepts and principles that students learn are critically dependent on private peer talk or the choice of resources with

which students can engage” (p. 33). Hattie and Nuthall conveyed the message students have a need to be authentically engaged in the content they are learning (Hattie, 2009).

Presenting student engagement in a slightly different way, Healey et al. (2014) shared two separate arenas of thought on student engagement: “1) student engagement as the way in which students’ invest time and energy in their own learning, and 2) the ways in which students are involved and empowered by institutions to shape their learning experiences” (p. 15). Conversely, Chapman and Vagle (2011) painted a different picture of student engagement, specifically at the beginning of a lesson. Teachers might open with a funny story or allow students to “see relevance or connections to the world community” as a beginning portion to a lesson (Chapman & Vagle, 2011, p. 6).

Saeed and Zyngier (2012) also spoke of the impact authentic student motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, has on student engagement. Authentic engagement is important for any type of measurable achievement to take place (Hattie, 2009). Ultimately, teachers have continued to create engaging classrooms by motivating their students’ “intrinsic desire to want to be in school and grow academically, cognitively, and emotionally” (Chapman & Vagle, 2011, p. 7).

Hattie (2012) defined the “hook” as something to “grab the student’s attention” (p. 65). Once students are “hooked,” or involved in the lesson, they remain engaged through “setting tasks that are appropriately challenging, assigning work that is important and meaningful, building variety into content and assessment tasks, and utilizing material that arouses curiosity and is interesting to young people” (Martin & Dowson, 2009, p. 345). Nagro, Hooks, Fraser, and Cornelius (2012) referenced the variety of tasks needed in order to continue lessons at a high rate of engagement, stating, “Teachers can use a

continuum of strategies during whole-group instruction to maintain student engagement, gather information to inform future instruction, and monitor student progress” (p. 243).

Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) concurred with Hattie (2009), Chapman and Vagle (2011), and Martin and Dowson (2009). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) discussed the Pyramid of Student Engagement in their book, *Learner-Centered Instruction*. The pyramid has six different levels that begin with the most basic engagement needed in the classroom and progress to the highest levels of engagement (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). The foundational layer of the pyramid is attendance and retention; the middle layer of the pyramid includes participation and intrinsic motivation and satisfaction; and the highest layer of the student engagement pyramid consists of social connections and self-regulation (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Simply put, “Students who build and demonstrate the skills of social connections and self-regulation tend to be optimally achieving at academics and developing as persons” (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010, p. 53).

Self-efficacy. To further explore the idea of self-regulation and in some cases its direct effect on student engagement, Chapman and Vagle (2011) also discussed the term self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is “[the students’] belief in their own capacity to grow and positively affect their learning” (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010, p. 8). Marzano and Pickering (2011) also capitalized on the idea self-efficacious students are highly engaged students. Marzano and Pickering (2011) devoted an entire chapter in their book, *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, to self-efficacy and the guiding question “Can I do this?” (p. 117).

Students must believe they can achieve what educators are asking them to achieve in the classroom (Marzano & Pickering, 2011). Marzano and Pickering (2011) actually suggested several instructional strategies to assist students while increasing their self-efficacy. Some of these strategies include allowing students to set personal academic goals, providing specific praise and feedback, providing examples of self-efficacy, and perhaps the most important, teaching the students self-efficacy (Marzano & Pickering, 2011).

Hattie (2009) also wrote on self-efficacy:

The key dispositions are the way the student becomes open to experiences, their emerging beliefs about the value and worth to them from investing in learning, and the manner in which they learn that they can build a sense of self from their engagement in the learning enterprise. (p. 32)

Stated in layman's terms, students need to have a firm judgment of who they are to achieve a state of self-efficacy and self-regulation (Hattie, 2009). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) noted, "The highest goals of engagement are to build students' skills at making social connections and self-regulating to satisfy their learning needs across contexts" (p. 52).

Academic resilience/persistence. Converse to self-efficacy/self-regulation is academic resilience/persistence. Hattie (2009) pointed out, "Achievement + effort + engagement = success" (p. 49). Students must persist in their academic efforts to achieve the results they desire (Hattie, 2009). Hattie (2012) defined persistence as something the students can "engage in such deliberate practice that requires many skills" (p. 110). Chapman and Vagle (2011) also commented on building self-efficacy not only within

students, but building self-efficacy in educators as well. Chapman and Vagle (2011) stated, “The notion of efficacy—the confidence we have in our ability as educators to find creative and possible ways of engaging students plays a tremendously important role in student motivation and engagement” (p. 159).

When educators think of how student engagement is increased in classrooms, building self-efficacy is not always the first thing that comes to mind. However, research has shown building self-efficacy is a strong component to creating a classroom where student engagement is higher (Chapman & Vagle, 2011). Sun and Rueda (2012) asserted, “Although there are many motivational constructs, self-efficacy is central to promoting students’ engagement and learning” (p. 193).

Student Achievement

RAND Education (2012) presented the role teachers play in student’s lives may be the number one indicator of student success. This beats out school leadership, school facilities, and environmental factors (RAND Education, 2012). Hattie (2015) recently updated his 195-effect size, meta-analysis research in *The Applicability of Visible Learning to Higher Education*, from his original 2009 text, *Visible Learning*, which included 138 research studies in the meta-analysis. Hattie (2015) asserted the top two indicators of student achievement are “teacher estimates of achievement and collective teacher efficacy” (para. 4). New data presented shifted from the 2009 data, which indicated self-reported grades, Piagetian programs, and response to intervention were key indicators to student achievement (Hattie, 2009).

Where does this research leave the arts? Implementing an arts-integration program in a school and increasing student engagement in the classroom leads to student

achievement (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Catterall (2012) found students with high involvement in the arts were less likely to drop out of school. Twenty-two percent of students in 2008 with low-arts participation did not finish high school (Catterall, 2012). The students' counterparts with high-arts participation were at a 4% dropout rate (Catterall, 2012).

Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) noted, "Each characteristic of engagement can build on each other to make student success more likely" (p. 66). Students need to be physically and mentally present in the classroom (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Hattie (2012) discussed how students can become "ambivalent; they (students) simply are not engaged in the learning process" (p. 112). Students who are indecisive may simply look like they are engaged instead of actually being fully engaged (Hattie, 2012).

Educators need to be attentive to students' needs and goals; both those goals at school as well as personal goals (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Hattie (2009) stated, "[Where] there is more engagement . . . there are higher achievement outcomes" (p. 119). Cano (2015) confirmed this in her research on student achievement, student engagement, and behavior issues in the classroom. Cano (2015) found a direct correlation between low student engagement and behavior issues as well as low student engagement and low achievement levels. This confirmed Hattie (2009) and Cornelius-White and Harbaugh's (2010) assertions students must be mentally, as well as physically, engaged in the classroom activity to achieve higher academic goals.

Summary

The bodies of research reviewed have been based around three main topics: arts integration, student engagement, and student achievement. Research has shown there is a direct correlation between student engagement and student achievement (Hattie, 2009). Additionally, research examined in this chapter has shown the whole-school reform of arts integration impacts student engagement. The design of the research project was to explore teachers' perceptions of arts-integration implementation. In Chapter Three, the methodology of the research study is discussed at length including research questions and design of the study, population and sample of the study, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Student engagement is important to teachers, but “has become an increasingly important issue among the research community” (Silver & Perini, 2010, p. 1). The purpose of this qualitative research study was to investigate teachers’ perceptions of student engagement in an arts-integrated classroom. A qualitative research methodology was chosen because it allows for careful “reflecting on the role the researcher plays in the study . . . analyzing the information through multiple steps of analysis, and mentioning approaches for documenting the accuracy—or validity—of the data collected” (Creswell, 2014, p. 183).

The researcher utilized the work of Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2014) and Smith (2015) in regard to phenomenology and the effort to interpret what the interviewed participants were trying to communicate. Moreover, Smith (2015) stated, “The researcher trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world” (p. 26). The researcher attempted to glean information via classroom observations as well as teacher interviews.

The intent of the research was to explain what arts integration is, how arts integration might impact student engagement, and how teacher perceptions of arts integration might have an impact on student engagement. Classroom observation data were analyzed to determine how student engagement is reflected in an arts-integrated classroom. Teacher perception data collected via interviews were examined to determine how teachers perceive student engagement in the arts-integrated classroom. Each of these data collection items were created for this research study.

Problem and Purpose Overview

The perceptions of teachers were an essential component to this study. Teachers have to become personally invested in a new theory and want to see or accomplish some type of change in the classroom (Fullan, 2006). Within this type of situation, the teacher's perception is what drives the teacher to have a change in behavior, thus allowing a change in the student's engagement (Bernhardt, 2004). Consequently, when students perceive whether or not teachers enjoy what they are teaching, it has a direct correlation to how engaged the students truly are—both physically and mentally (Frenzel, Goetz, Ludtke, Pekrun, & Sutton, 2009, Johnson, 2013). Through the lens of student engagement behaviors, this research project was designed to provide a clearer understanding of teacher perceptions of student engagement within arts-integrated classroom settings.

Information gathered in this research can assist administrators and teachers to increase student engagement and thus student achievement (Stephens, 2015). Additionally, strategies which may already be currently implemented in the classroom and ways these strategies may increase student engagement were a focus of this research. Stephens (2015) took this notion one step further by sharing, "Teachers high in confidence (self-efficacy) are more likely to engage in pedagogy that is characterized by positive, proactive, and solution-focused orientations, resulting in increased student motivation and engagement" (para. 5). Finally, the impressions of the interviewed participants assisted in forming topics to explore at a later time.

Research questions. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are teacher perceptions about student engagement in an arts-integrated classroom?
2. How is student engagement reflected in an arts-integrated classroom?

Research Design

To measure teacher perception in a thematic manner, the qualitative research approach was deemed appropriate for this type of research (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative methodology included observational data of student engagement from classrooms in an Oklahoma school as well as interview data from teachers at the same facility. Yin (2014) referenced appropriate types of qualitative research, one of which is participants “performing in their everyday roles” (p. 9). Trochim (2006) called research completed in a natural setting field research.

Prior to beginning any research, IRB approval was obtained (see Appendix A). Permission was granted from the receiving school district in Oklahoma (see Appendix B), along with confidentiality procedures to ensure anonymity of all participants (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the teacher interview questions (see Appendix C) and classroom observation rubric (see Appendix D) were field tested for quality assurance (Creswell, 2014). Field testing took place at an elementary school with arts-related, certified teachers participating. Suggested changes were made, and the rubric and interview questions were field tested again with different certified arts-related teachers within the same school (Creswell, 2014).

While observing in classrooms, the classroom observation rubric (see Appendix D) was completed each time. The classroom observation rubric allowed for anecdotal

notes to be taken and coded for emerging themes (Maxwell, 2013). The classroom observation rubric focused on student engagement observed in the classroom.

The other source of data for the qualitative research study was teacher interviews. Teachers were interviewed on a voluntary basis and signed the informed consent document (see Appendix E) prior to the interviews beginning. Those interviewed also received a copy of the participant recruitment letter (see Appendix F) for their records. The projected sample to interview included a minimum of five and maximum of 10 teachers. Seven teachers consented to participate in the study. Interview questions pertained to student engagement and the teachers' perceptions of student engagement within the classroom. Teachers had the option during the interview to skip questions they did not want to answer.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were treated fairly and with gratitude for their time spent talking with the researcher (Pillay, 2014). The researcher maintained the confidentiality of the participants and anonymity at all times (Trochim, 2006). Prior to the interview, each participant was asked to read and sign an informed consent form, which included the purpose of the research as well as confidentiality and anonymity processes (Pillay, 2014). Prior to the interview beginning, each participant was informed he or she could stop the interview or skip an interview question at any time (Creswell, 2014). Until the completion of the project, data (audio recordings, transcripts, and observation rubrics) collected will be kept in a locked cabinet as well as stored electronically on a secure server (Maxwell, 2013). Data will be kept in a locked container under the supervision of the investigator for three years and then destroyed.

Interview participants were assigned a number or pseudonym to maintain anonymity (Creswell, 2014). Classroom observations were also assigned a numerical code to preserve anonymity (Creswell, 2014). Once teacher interviews were completed and transcribed, member checking occurred so the interview participants had the opportunity to review their transcripts and edit as they saw fit (Harper & Cole, 2012). This ensured another layer of reliability (Harper & Cole, 2012).

It is of utmost concern to maintain the highest levels of confidentiality at all times. It should be noted the researcher works for Oklahoma A+ Schools as a contracted fellow/professional development specialist and has access to Oklahoma A+ schools that are now implementing an arts-integration initiative in their school sites/districts. To decrease any bias that might have been present, data findings were reviewed by the dissertation committee members. All documents, as well as audio recordings from teacher interviews, were kept in a locked cabinet during the study. All data will be kept on a secured server and destroyed after a three-year time period.

The process of gathering data was a strict process. Teacher interviews followed a semi-structured interview approach. Interviews were audio recorded. Recordings were transcribed following the interviews. The average time interviews took was 15 minutes. Participants had the opportunity to answer up to 10 questions. Seven participants were interviewed. At the completion of the research, the dissertation will be published, and participants at the school site will be notified via email to the administrator.

Likewise, classroom observation rubrics were gathered as if the primary investigator was an observer who did not seek opportunities to become a participant within the classroom. Classroom observations were conducted in a minimum of 10

minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes in the classroom. Further, a minimum of 10 classrooms and a maximum of 20 classrooms were observed. Documents gathered from observation rubrics, teacher interviews, and audio recordings of teacher interviews will be kept in a locked cabinet and stored electronically on a secure server. All data will be kept in a locked container for three years and then destroyed.

Population and Sample

The Oklahoma school district is one of the largest in the state, educating more than 21,000 students (Oklahoma Department of Education, 2016). Oklahoma A+ Schools (2016b) have grown in number since 2002, now serving over 65 schools across the state. The population for this study included 65-plus schools, of which 60 are early-childhood/elementary schools, elementary schools, or elementary/middle school configurations (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016b). Participants for the study were from one urban district in Oklahoma. This particular school district was selected due to longevity in the Oklahoma A+ program.

One specific school district in Oklahoma, and one specific school site, were selected for this study. The school was chosen due to accessibility, various demographics including student services in grades kindergarten through sixth grade, a student population of over 500 students, and longevity in the Oklahoma A+ program. There were 32 teachers serving students at this location and 52 total staff members. Certified teachers were purposefully selected because of the location in which they taught. A purposive sample is one that can “help the researcher understand the problem and the research question” (Creswell, 2014, p. 189). Seven teachers who taught at this specific school site agreed to participate in the face-to-face interview.

Instrumentation

The researcher wanted to have two separate forms of data collection for this study. The data collection instruments used for this investigation included a teacher perception interview form so the interviewer could spend time with the participants and allow them time to share personal anecdotes, experiences, etc., without interrupting classroom instructional time. Additionally, the other data collection instrument selected was a classroom observation rubric that allowed the observer to watch classroom behaviors and to pick up on subtle nuances by students and/or staff in order to complete a picture of what is occurring within the class. Both documents were created with this research in mind.

The researcher created the teacher interview questions. Oklahoma A+ Schools' research was utilized as guidance for the interview questions (Barry, 2010). To ensure clarity and understanding among the interview questions for teachers, the interview questions were field tested by an independent group of certified teachers for guidance. Changes were made based on suggestions from the independent test group, then re-field tested with a different group of certified teachers in order to ensure validity of the form.

Additionally, a classroom observation rubric was used to document student engagement. Using the classroom observation rubric, a Likert scale was used for observation stems listed on the form. The Likert scale ranged from one to five, with one being no students engaged, two being a few students engaged, three being half the class engaged, four being most of the class being engaged, and five being the highest level of student engagement. Anecdotal data were also collected under the Likert scale continuum, and specific boxes were marked when observing student behaviors which

indicated student engagement. Notes taken during the observation were categorized for key words or phrases (Maxwell, 2013). The classroom observation rubric was created from a compilation of classroom walk-through documents currently used by a Missouri school district.

Data Collection

An application to conduct research was submitted to Lindenwood's Institutional Review Board, and approval was given. Additionally, permission from the school district in Oklahoma was obtained. Then, the collection of school-site teacher interviews and classroom observation data occurred.

Teachers from the selected school received a cover letter explaining the study, along with an informed consent letter (see Appendix E). The informed consent letter was signed by seven teachers acknowledging participation in the interview. The teacher perception interviews were conducted at the participating Oklahoma school during the spring 2016 semester. Teachers had the autonomy to skip questions or stop the interviews at any time. The interviews allowed for comparison and coding of data.

During the same time frame, an observation rubric was completed based on the classrooms available in the participating school. Classrooms were selected via cluster sampling (Bluman, 2014) based on the current grade level that school year. Cluster sampling is where the researched population is divided into clusters, a random sample cluster occurs, then research is measured in the random sampled clusters (Trochim, 2006). There were 10 classroom observations completed using the classroom observation rubric.

Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) stated when looking at programs, specifically in professional development, it is important to look at “professional development that is sustained over time” (p. 921). This statement confirms why these interview and observation data were gathered for research in an Oklahoma A+ school. Oklahoma has had longevity in the A+ professional development program since 2002 (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2010).

The process of gathering data was a strict process. Teacher interviews followed a semi-structured interview approach (Creswell, 2014). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed following the interviews (Creswell, 2014). The estimated time for each interview was 15 minutes. Participants had the opportunity to answer up to 10 questions. Maxwell (2013) shared interviews can give access to the researcher about observations not seen. It was this researcher’s intent to gain a two-sided perspective through interviews of candidates and completion of observations in their classrooms.

Likewise, classroom observation rubrics were completed by the researcher only as an observer who did not seek opportunities to become a participant within the classroom. Classroom observations were conducted in a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes. Time was closely monitored to ensure the maximum number of classrooms could be observed during the day. Moersch (2013) stated classroom observation times can range from two to three minutes up to 25 minutes.

Data Analysis

All data collected from the observation rubrics and teacher interviews were analyzed for themes (Creswell, 2014). Coding was used to classify the transcribed data (Maxwell, 2013). Open-ended questions utilized in the teacher interview process, as well

as emerging themes from the observation rubrics, assisted in a more in-depth qualitative study (Creswell 2014). Maxwell (2013) described this type of analysis as “identification of units or segments of data that seem important or meaningful in some way” (p. 116). For this study, the researcher followed Maxwell (2013), and data were categorized with room left for “developing. . . coding categories” (p. 116).

Initially in the coding phase, several themes emerged from the data (Creswell, 2014). Themes that emerged from teacher interviews as well as classroom observation rubrics led to deeper meanings of the descriptions (Maxwell, 2013). A thorough understanding of emerging themes occurred while looking for an opportunity to “interconnect themes into a story line or develop them into a theoretical model” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). Through careful coding, a prominent theme emerged allowing for further exploring and deepening the understanding of the theme (Maxwell, 2013).

During the interpretation of data process, research questions were utilized as filters for the qualitative data and themes (Creswell, 2014). Maxwell (2013) cautioned researchers not to mix data and research questions, as the research questions are part of the research triangulation. Maxwell (2013) further stated research questions are meant to “formulate what you want to understand . . . interview questions are what you ask people to gain that understanding” (p. 111).

Summary

In Chapter Three, the qualitative research design of the research project was presented. Teachers from one Oklahoma school site were selected and had the opportunity to participate in interviews to gather their perceptions of arts integration. Moreover, a classroom observation rubric of student engagement was completed in arts-

integrated classrooms. Data were analyzed through different phases and filters of coding while looking for emerging themes and descriptions (Creswell, 2014).

In Chapter Four, analyzed data are disclosed along with themes that emerged from the data. Interview data are shared, along with various tables to assist in understanding data presented. Additionally, classroom observations are examined by statement from the classroom observation form, followed by data from the 10 completed classroom observations.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Data

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teacher perceptions of student engagement in an arts-integrated, elementary classroom setting. According to Fagan (2015), No Child Left Behind changed the student-success focus from “individual students to a focus on tests, standards, and accountability” (p. 2). Teachers may feel more pressure to have high standardized test scores than to create thinkers and problem-solvers (Fagan, 2015). Walker (2014) believed teachers are feeling more pressure than ever for high achievement scores.

Fagan (2015) alluded to the possibility arts integration may be the unconventional, out-of-the-box method causing student achievement to increase. Ludwig and Song (2015) validated teachers who utilized arts integration in the classroom also had students who scored higher on standardized tests. Oklahoma A+ Schools (Raiber, et. Al, 2010)) stated there is a difference between schools where arts integration is implemented and schools where arts integration is not utilized.

The ultimate goal in education is student achievement; however, in a high-stakes testing environment, other facts are indicators when determining the success of students (Scott, Parsley, & Fantz, 2014). One of these indicators is teacher perspective (Scott, Parsley, & Fantz, 2014). A qualitative approach was chosen to answer the following research questions:

1. What are teacher perceptions about student engagement in an arts-integrated classroom?
2. How is student engagement reflected in an arts-integrated classroom?

Interviews

Interviews were one of the data collection tools used for this study. All interviews were completed between the researcher and the teacher in a quiet setting and were audio-recorded. Prior to when the interview began, the researcher gave the participant a copy of the Recruitment Letter (see Appendix F) and had the participant sign the Informed Consent document (see Appendix E). All personal interviews were completed in one day at the school site. To maintain confidentiality, all seven participants were labeled with pseudonyms such as Participant 405A, Participant 405B, through Participant 405G.

Interview question one. How long have you participated with <Name of Participating> A+ School as a teacher?

Data gathered on teacher's longevity at the research site varied. Teachers interviewed for this study ranged from one to 18 years of experience at the current school. Of those interviewed, the average time teachers had spent at the participating school was seven years. As a reference point, Oklahoma A+ Schools had been in full implementation throughout the state for 15 years (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014a).

Table 2

Teachers' Years of Experience at Current A+ School

Participant	Years of Teaching Experience at this A+ School
Participant 405A	6
Participant 405B	4
Participant 405C	1
Participant 405D	12
Participant 405E	18
Participant 405F	1
Participant 405G	14

Interview question two. Describe what high student engagement looks like in any classroom? In your classroom?

At the onset of the interview, teachers were asked what they thought student engagement looked like [in the classroom]. Common answers included listening, talking, cooperating with other students (pairs or groups), writing, teaching other students, and overall *doing* things. Participant 405A shared that high student engagement looked like the following:

Active participating. Listening. Speaking. We do writing. We do research.

Verbal back and forth. They [students] move around the library classroom area.

They check themselves in and out of the library. It is an independent, self-help library and we just monitor.

Participant 405E stated students might not always be at their desks working, but in the floor or alternative seating around the classroom. Two participants talked specifically about high student engagement as “hands-on” (Participants 405D & 405F). Participant 405D went on to state high student engagement looks like students “completely on-task...noisy, active, a bit exhausting...lots of questions, high-energy...it’s creative.” The comments made by interviewed participants regarding student engagement mirror what previous authors mentioned in the research reviewed in Chapter Two (Chapman & Vagle, 2011; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010; Hattie, 2009; Martin & Dowson, 2009).

Regarding how high student engagement looked in his or her particular classroom, Participant 405E stated high student engagement might look “like chaos...it’s not always everybody sitting at their desks. We’re doing things. They’re [students] busy doing things, not just sitting and listening, but participating.” Participants 405D and 405E mentioned high student engagement generally involved some type of flexible seating arrangement. Participants 405A and 405B agreed with Participant 405D, who regarded active participation as students listening and answering questions and noted the noise level may raise in a classroom setting when students are fully engaged.

Interview question three. How does utilizing arts integration in the classroom help you as a teacher? Help your students?

Participants interviewed unanimously stated, “Yes,” they thought arts-integration helped them in the classroom. When asked how, each participant went on to share specific aspects of how arts integration helps in the classroom, specifically with

engagement. Participant 405E quantified arts integration helps engage students by getting them to “move and think.” Participant 405C shared he or she had not participated in any type of arts integration training yet, but felt arts integration still helped in the classroom.

Specific examples of arts-integrated lessons cited included “integer art” and “various graphing and coordinate grids in color.” Participant 405D mentioned several examples of activities done in the classroom, but specifically stated:

It helps me to keep it interesting for the kids but I think it also helps me tie it to other curriculum and in other areas. I am not an artist but I love the arts and so if there’s a way to interject vocabulary experiences, things like that, into the classroom, it makes me happy.

Participant 405G stated planning arts-integrated lessons is “highly motivating,” to him or her. Booth (2013) spoke about the shift from external motivation to internal motivation when students are fully engaged in their learning.

A common factor in a few responses was that participants referenced utilizing paper/pencil-type activities as something students have to do for grades. Participants 405A, 405B, and 405G mentioned arts-integrated activities provide students the opportunity to participate in the learning process without having to write all the time. Participant 405G shared a situation that occurred in her classroom as an example of arts integration:

I had another little guy. He’s littler than the other Xth graders...and he’s really quiet in class. Whenever he has a project, his comedic side comes out. I let him...take a page from his science book called, “How to Transform Mars into a

Livable Planet,” and what all it would take. One of their choices was to turn that article into a new story. So, he took some of that information and then he had this whole power point thing going on behind his back, about the football scores, the football league on Mars, here’s the top basketball players, in the weather on Mars today – it just took it a step further. It lets the kids have a creative outlet.

Riley (2012) spoke to assessment concerns, stating any disciplines integrated together need to be assessed equally in an arts-integrated activity.

Many participants mentioned arts integration helps students stay more engaged in their classrooms, and arts-integrated lessons helped students remain focused. When speaking of engagement, one participant mentioned arts integration helps grab and maintain students’ attention in the classroom. Participant 405D stated arts integration in the classroom provides an opportunity for students to have a “little bit of a creative outlet to explain your thinking or experience something a little differently.” Participant 405G mentioned particular activities regarding student engagement and arts integration such as students creating “puppet shows, talk shows, plays, and using Prezi. Students get excited about these.”

Some participants mentioned the *way* students learn as part of their answers to describing how arts integration helps students in the classroom. Participant 405G stated arts integration in the classroom helps students, because, “it engages the way they learn.” Participant 405E echoed this thinking by stating, “There’s different ways to be smart...you’re good at music, you’re good at drawing, you’re good at dancing.” These were direct references to Oklahoma A+ training, as one of the Eight Essentials is Multiple Learning Pathways, which directly trains teachers how to plan lessons that

include all modalities of learning, not just reading or writing (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). Other statements from interviewed participants included discussion on how students learn best [through arts integration] and have greater ownership of their learning. Others mentioned were teaching in an arts-integrated manner helped students with vocabulary, was described as hands-on, and created an overall sense of on-task behavior exhibited by students in an arts-integrated classroom.

Interview question four. Describe how teachers in your school formulate or plan arts-integrated lessons.

All participants interviewed spoke about the planning process, regardless of collaborated, arts-integrated lessons. As seen in Table 2, Participant 405D stated when planning she “looks at vocabulary” related to the art form she is interested in integrating into her lesson, while she searches for “a natural fit” into her curriculum. Five out of the seven participants interviewed specifically stated they “don’t know how other teachers plan,” implying lesson planning and continuous-collaboration is not present at the school site.

Few of the interviewed teachers mentioned looking on the internet for arts-integrated lesson ideas through Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest. Participants 405C and 405F mentioned working with their teaching partners to plan. Only Participant 405F talked about collaborating and learning what the other teachers are doing to create a plan for shared students. Participant 405F elaborated:

I’m not sure how other teachers really do it, but what I do is go to those teachers from Xth and Xth grade, and I kind of see what it is they’re doing and I try to tune it into what I can do with my students. We’ve had workshops before on

integrating arts into the curriculum whether it was music or it was drawing, things more hands-on.

One teacher commented specifically about planning that could contribute to the longevity of the Oklahoma A+ Program at this specific site. Teacher 405E stated since the school initially embarked on the arts-integration journey, there was significant teacher turnover with only 12 of the originally trained staff still working at the school site. She also detailed specific teachers who had experienced the initial five-day training with Oklahoma A+, insinuating most of the staff had not had extensive training in arts integration. This was an explanation of why many did not know how other teachers plan, nor did they recognize the collaborative expectation to plan together (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a).

Table 3

Participants' Planning Strategy

Participant	How do you formulate or plan arts-integrated lessons?
Participant 405A	Internet for ideas; collaboration with others not mentioned
Participant 405B	Internet for ideas; collaboration with others not mentioned
Participant 405C	Collaborates with a grade-level colleague
Participant 405D	Starts with vocabulary; collaboration with others not mentioned
Participant 405E	Does not know how to answer; does not know how others plan
Participant 405F	Collaborates with grade-level colleagues; does not know how others plan
Participant 405G	You-Tube; Internet for ideas; collaboration with others not mentioned

Interview question five. Have you seen a difference in students' engagement levels when utilizing arts integration versus no integration? If so, in what way?

Each participant interviewed remained steadfast in his or her opinion that arts-integrated lessons yield higher levels of student engagement. Participant 405A detailed what was observed in the classroom setting during arts-integrated lessons:

They [students] don't just talk about their seat work; they talk about their active involvement, and that's when you know the teacher's really hitting the spot and involving the students and everything they're being taught. They like to do more artsy stuff. I can tell if they like that, they like to express themselves better through art as opposed to other schools.

Every teacher interviewed concurred students seem to enjoy activities in class more when an art form is incorporated.

Participant 405C, who taught in other school sites before coming to this particular research site, stated students at the participating site “liked to express themselves better through art as opposed to other schools.” Participant 405D mentioned former students have come back to her classroom, talked with her about the way she taught a particular subject, and expressed they missed the way she integrated the arts into the lessons. Participant 405G described how the difference between arts-integrated lessons or more traditional lessons is evident in how the students react. Participant 405D had a similar comment, affirming, “They [students] found some pleasure/enjoyment in learning what they were learning.”

Participant 405G described a particular lesson with two parts: one integrated with the arts and one not integrated with the arts. Participant 405G went on to state the non-integrated portion of the lesson went in the trash, because the students did so poorly on the assignment, which involved looking items up on the internet and filling in the blanks on a worksheet. The portion of the lesson that included arts-integration, however, allowed the students to be “immediately engaged.” Participant 405G detailed when the students physically “make something to go with the research” being conducted in class, “then they [students] care.”

There was one participant who stated an opposing view to having an arts-integrated lesson. Furrer et al. (2014) talked thoroughly about the relationship between high or low student engagement and the perception of the teacher. Participant 405F

stated there were times when arts-integrated lessons make students over-stimulated, thereby lowering the engagement level in the classroom.

Interview question six. When participating in an arts-integrated lesson, do you feel student motivation increased/decreased? In what way?

Each participant agreed student motivation increases during an arts-integrated lesson. However, as seen in Table 3, Participant 405E also stated a drop was evident during an arts-integrated lesson when a student expressed he could not do a particular activity within the lesson. Participant 405E stated students sometimes say, “I can’t draw; I’m not very good at this.” Therefore, 405E noted he or she tries to balance arts-integrated lessons so every student in class can be successful.

A similarity noticed by all participants was increased excitement, increased engagement, increased understanding of a topic, and/or students’ ownership in their work. Participant 405B mentioned hearing a student saying to another student, “I never understood that before. I actually got it today.” Participant 405D also cited a conversation between former students and heard them say, “I miss the way you taught math, or I miss the way you taught science.” Both 405B and 405D talked about the increased levels of engagement in their classrooms as well as ownership when an arts-integrated lesson is being taught. Participant 405G mentioned a previous administrator at the site and that this principal always talked about student ownership. Participant 405G further elaborated by stating, “They just care more...if they can own it, they’re going to do it.”

When participants were asked in what way they had seen student motivation increase or decrease, there were parallels in how participants described witnessing the

level of motivation. Participants mentioned when an increase in motivation seems evident, they notice the following: noise levels in the room increase; shoulder-to-elbow partners are talking; students are manipulating things with their hands; and visual art media such as colored pencils, crayons, or markers, are being used. When motivation appears to decrease, students are quiet and do not “put themselves out there.” Participant 405G stated simply, “I [the teacher] want learning to be fun; if I’m not having fun, the kids are not having fun.”

Table 4

Student Motivation when Participating in an Arts-Integrated Lesson

Participant	Student Motivation Increased/Decreased	In What Way
Participant 405A	Increased	Student engagement increases
Participant 405B	Increased	Student understanding increases
Participant 405C	Increased	Student engagement increases
Participant 405D	Increased	Student engagement increases
Participant 405E	Both	Student excitement could increase or decrease depending on the student’s skill level
Participant 405F	Increased	Student engagement increases
Participant 405G	Increased	Student engagement increases

Interview question seven. If students were asked about their own level of engagement in the classroom, what are your hunches about what they might say in regard to arts-integrated classes versus non-arts-integrated classes?

Participants interviewed were united in their responses to this question. All participants said they thought students would say they are more engaged in an arts-integrated classroom. Four of the seven participants interviewed said their students would probably not know they had participated in a different type of learning activity. Each of these four participants mentioned “fun” or “play” in their explanations.

Participants 405A, 405B, and 405G also mentioned increases in student attendance as a result of arts-integrated lessons. Vega (2013) spoke to an increase in student attendance with arts-integration programs as part of effective integration strategies. Participant 405D shared:

If it's done right, I don't think that kids know. Classify a classroom as that was a fun class or that was a fun project versus I don't like that class or that subject or that teacher or whatever. I really enjoyed this. I understand this better now versus well, it was just math class type of thing. They like it. It's fun. It's not work. Additionally, Participants 405A and 405D revealed they had overheard conversations between students about the teacher talking the whole class time and how boring those teachers' classrooms were. Participants 405A and 405D deduced classrooms that are engaging have more arts-integrated activities planned for students.

Interview question eight. In your opinion, do you believe arts integration helps students grasp what they are learning even more? If so, how? If not, why?

Participants agreed they think arts integration helps students grasp concepts taught in the classroom. They also agreed arts integration is another way for students to learn during a lesson. Participant 405C shared that by bringing in various ways to learn material, teachers meet the different learning modalities of students. Participant 405A explained the students' grasp of learning:

It hits the different learning stages and they, they just have more ownership to it because they can feel it, see it, touch it, hear it, everything like that...when you have ownership in your learning, you tend to be more interested and involved, and then you look forward to it if it's mentioned again.

Participants 405C, 405D, and 405F also suggested arts integration may help with memory and retaining information from a lesson. Participant 405D recounted a moment last year during state testing when, as the room was being monitored, he or she noticed students were mouthing the words to songs they had learned in class regarding a concept, creating motions with their bodies, and "tapping out parts of their body to help them figure out measurements."

Riley (2012) noted students have specific responsibilities in an arts-integrated setting. Riley (2012) described from the students' perspective, "integration demands creativity, problem-solving, perseverance, collaboration, and the ability to work through the rigorous demands of multiple ideas and concepts woven together to create a final product" (para 2). Participant 405F stated often a "funny jingle or some type of rhythm" helps students with the concept they are learning.

Interview question nine. When teaching an arts-integrated lesson, do you have more or less discipline issues, on average? Why do you think that is?

As seen in Table 4, all but one participant agreed less discipline occurs in an arts-integrated lesson. Participant 405B summarized, “Students are more engaged and more likely to pay attention, and they’re less likely to be chatting with their partner about something unrelated.” Other participants alluded to students being more engaged and having less time to be off task. Participant 405A specified students’ minds are involved in an arts-integrated lesson, thereby promoting engagement. Participant 405A also detailed:

Students whispering to a group and...manipulating with their hands and so they’re already thinking, the wheels are already turning, and you can see it just by the reactions on their faces and the way they sit. They’re not slouching in the chair... their eyes are on me, and their body language tells me what they’re doing and what they’re thinking. Not what they’re thinking, that they are thinking.

Participant 405F brought up a different perspective, maintaining students can become over-stimulated during arts-integrated activities since they do typically create excitement in the classroom. Continuing with that same thought, Participant 405F asserted some students with disabilities know “what is expected of them and know what we’re supposed to be doing and staying on track.” No other teacher interviewed mentioned a similar viewpoint.

Table 5

Discipline Concerns in an Arts-Integrated Lesson

Participant	More or Less Discipline Issues (on Average)
Participant 405A	Less Discipline
Participant 405B	Less Discipline
Participant 405C	Less Discipline
Participant 405D	Less Discipline
Participant 405E	Less Discipline
Participant 405F	Depends on the Activity
Participant 405G	Less Discipline

Interview question 10. When experiencing an arts-integrated lesson, are students more/less likely to take ownership of their learning and complete their assignment?

Each participant interviewed agreed students are more likely to take ownership of their learning during an arts-integrated lesson. When asked this final question, participants gave examples of what ownership looks like in their classrooms. Participant 405A mentioned, “You can see creativity flowing” when students are contributing to an arts-integrated lesson. This participant went on to explain this is in direct contrast to a copied color sheet where everyone’s finished products look the same.

Participant 405D said students are enjoying “using technology to get creative with their projects...they’ve taken the basics and run with it. Students are more proud of what they’ve done and it’s fun to see them show off to their parents.” Participant 405E spoke

about students thinking this type of teaching was “play” and creatively thinking “outside the box.” While in one classroom at the school site, the observer watched as students made clocks with paint so they could understand primary and secondary colors, while learning to tell time.

Classroom Observation Data

Ten classrooms were observed over the course of two days. The observations were conducted at various times throughout the day and included special area classes as well as lower and upper elementary grades. As the observation was taking place, the classroom observation rubric was used. The classroom observation rubric was created utilizing a Likert scale of one to five, with one being the lowest and five the highest. The observer also noted if a learning objective was present in the room, what the teacher did specifically to promote high student engagement (if observed), as well as a checklist of possible classroom activities the teacher may have created to encourage high student engagement. As with the teacher interviews, all documents will be kept in a locked cabinet for three years.

Statement one from observations. Students’ body positions show they are attentive to the teacher and/or students (students sitting up, high energy levels, asking questions of teacher or peers).

Of these 10 classrooms, four classrooms were rated a three, two classrooms were rated a four, and four classrooms were rated a five. Specific things noted by the observer in the four classrooms rated the highest were students physically active in class. Students were either utilizing a computer program and coding, using art mediums to tell time, or using art mediums to work with their math facts. The classrooms given a lower score on

students' body positions were involved in lower-level activities such as watching a presentation or completing a worksheet.

Statement two from observations. Students working on an assignment without distractions.

Students working on their assignments without distractions varied from class to class. Ten classrooms were observed, and one classroom received a two, two classrooms received a three, five classrooms received a four, and two classrooms received a five. The classroom which received a two on the scale did not have a learning objective visible and only allowed for classroom discussion or teacher-led question-and-answer for engagement strategies.

Classrooms observed and given a three based on the scale included one objective on student presentations as well as an activity on persuasive writing. Engagement activities listed for those given a three were presentations, independent student work, group work, classroom discussion, hands-on/active learning, and peer evaluation. Classrooms that received a score of a four and five for statement two did not have a learning objective visible to the observer. However, the number of engagement activities for classrooms placed on the scale at a four or five increased from six engagement strategies/opportunities to 10. These included group work, classroom discussion, independent student work, guided practice, hands-on/active learning, advanced/graphic organizer, summarizing/note taking, question/answer, peer evaluation, and project-based learning.

Table 6

Classrooms Where Students Worked Without Distractions

Classroom	Likert Scale	Learning Objective Visible	Engagement Activities Observed
Classroom 1	2	Not observed	Classroom discussion Question/answer
Classroom 2	3	Student presentations Persuasive writing	Presentations Independent student work Peer evaluations
Classroom 3	3	Not observed	Classroom discussion Group work Hands on/active learning Independent student work
Classroom 4	4	Not observed	Classroom discussion Group work Independent student work
Classroom 5	4	Not observed	Group work Guided practice Hands on/active learning Independent student work Advanced graphic organizer
Classroom 6	4	Student presentations	Classroom discussion Summarizing/note taking
Classroom 7	4	Math polygon art	Classroom discussion Guided practice Question/answer Advanced/graphic organizer
Classroom 8	4	Not observed	Classroom discussion Hands on/active learning Independent student work Guided practice
Classroom 9	5	Primary and secondary colors	Hands on/active learning Question/answer Independent student work Advanced/graphic organizer
Classroom 10	5	Not observed	Hands-on/active learning Independent student work Peer evaluation Project based learning

Statements three and four from observations. (3) Students working to complete an assignment with minimal teacher input needed. Students are confident in their knowledge of the subject matter. (4) Students verbally answering the teacher's questions when appropriate. Answers are on-target with the subject matter of the lesson.

Minimal teacher input was observed as students were working in their classrooms. Due to the time of year of the research observation, students were finishing their quarterly or end-of-year projects. On the scale, there was one classroom with a score of three, six classrooms with a score of four, and three classrooms with a score of five. Ten classrooms were observed for statement four regarding students' verbal replies to a teacher's question. Similarly, for statement three, of the 10 classrooms observed for statement four, there was one classroom with a score of three, five classrooms with a score of four, and four classrooms with a score of five.

Statements five, six, and nine from observations. (5) Students are having fun in their classroom (smiling, humor is used, laughing). (6) Students feel comfortable in their classroom (asking questions of peers, and when appropriate, asking the teacher questions). (9) The classroom climate is conducive for learning.

Data for questions five and six showed all classrooms received the higher marks with all fours or fives given. Statement five related to students having fun in the classroom, which only resulted in two scores with the highest mark of five, whereas statement six addressed the students feeling comfortable in the classroom and resulted in a five different scores of five. This supports what Stephens (2015) shared regarding establishing rapport and trust with students, allowing everyone to use humor when appropriate. The researcher noted while listening to student conversations during the

observations, a theme began to emerge. Specifically, on statement five, students supported each other and gave verbal praise such as, “Cool! Good job! Yes!” Data for statement nine were similar to the fours and fives from statements five and six with one score of 3.5 out of a five-point scale.

Table 7

Observed Student Climate

Classroom	Students having fun in their classroom (Likert Scale)	Students feeling comfortable in their classroom (Likert Scale)	Classroom climate conducive for learning (Likert Scale)
Classroom 1	5	5	5
Classroom 2	4	5	4
Classroom 3	4	4	3.5
Classroom 4	4	4	4
Classroom 5	4	5	4
Classroom 6	4	4	4
Classroom 7	4	4	5
Classroom 8	4	5	5
Classroom 9	4	4	5
Classroom 10	5	5	5

Statements seven and eight from observations. (7) Students appear to be actively engaged in their learning (writing, creating, discussing, debating, performing,

evaluating). (8) Students are using higher-level thinking skills to complete their assignment (Bloom's Taxonomy).

Statements seven and eight were combined for summarizing purposes, since both dealt with student engagement and/or higher-order thinking skills. Based on statement seven, as shown in Table 6, students appeared to be more actively engaged in their learning based on 10 classroom observations with the lowest score of three.

Nevertheless, with statement eight, students were observed using higher-order thinking questions on three observations that resulted in scores of two or three. Interestingly, in the data below, each of the 10 classrooms observed had a one to two-point increase on active engagement than the counterpart of higher-order thinking. There was one exception to this rule, where the higher-order thinking was higher than the active engagement.

Table 8

Students' Engagement and Higher-Order Thinking Skills

Classroom	Students' Active Engagement (Likert Scale)	Students using Higher-Order Thinking Skills (Likert Scale)
Classroom 1	4	4
Classroom 2	5	4
Classroom 3	4	4
Classroom 4	4	3
Classroom 5	4	3
Classroom 6	3	2
Classroom 7	5	4
Classroom 8	5	5
Classroom 9	5	5
Classroom 10	5	5

Teacher-promoted student engagement. Another area where data were gathered included anecdotal and field notes concerning observed actions by the teacher to promote high student engagement. During the 10 classroom observations, three teachers were observed using higher-order thinking questions to help extend students' thinking and further discussion in class. Three other observations included engaging activities such as students writing a letter to themselves in the future, students writing story boards for commercials they created, students practicing their coding with animated objectives,

and students creating words with specific letter tiles. In four of the 10 observations, this section (promoting student engagement) was left blank.

Arts-integrated activities observed. The researcher also took anecdotal notes describing specific arts-integrated activities observed. These activities included student-created commercials with green boards, color wheels painted on a paper clock, computer coding, students explaining their handmade dioramas and mobiles to accompany presentations, and a color-coordinated math symbol wordle.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to obtain teacher perceptions of student engagement while students were in an arts-integrated classroom environment. The setting designated for this study was an urban school that had been affiliated with Oklahoma A+ Schools for many years. A total of seven teachers were interviewed on the same day and at the same school location. A total of 10 classroom observations were completed during a two-day span at the same school location.

Chapter Four consisted of a summary of interviews and classroom observations at the arts-integrated school. Each participant in the study had been at the school site longer than six months; however, training on arts-integrated methods could not be confirmed with each participant. All personal interviews were transcribed and filtered through key word searches for emerging themes. The classroom observations were equally filtered for key word summaries and included emerging themes.

The findings from the analysis of data are presented in Chapter Five. Research questions are presented and thoroughly discussed. Conclusions and recommendations for future research are also presented.

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

Student engagement continues to be a driving force in students' educational success (Hattie, 2009). A teacher's perspective of a student's engagement level is essential to the student's overall academic achievement (Harbour, et al., 2015) Harbour et al. (2015) stated student engagement is one of the most prominent indicators for a student's academic success. Educators need to gain students' attention and identify when students are working at a high engagement level.

Harbour et al. (2015) also spoke about the need for effective practices in the classroom in order to maintain student engagement. Leavy (2016) stated the arts can be highly engaging, thus making arts integration a worthwhile instructional strategy to incorporate into the classroom for high-yielding results. Though arts integration may be an instructional strategy, implementation of an arts-integrated classroom without proper training is difficult.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to measure teacher perceptions of student engagement within an arts-integrated setting. Teaching the arts in school is not a new concept; however, utilizing arts-integrated instruction throughout the school day in all classroom settings is documented rarely in research. In Chapter Five, the research questions are revisited and answered. Findings from the research are presented. Additionally, conclusions, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research are provided concerning teacher perception of student engagement.

Findings

This qualitative study was designed to elicit the perceptions of teachers in regard to student engagement within arts-integrated classrooms in order to answer two guiding

research questions. Literature from Chapter Two was also used to provide further depth to the findings of this study. All teachers interviewed worked at the same arts-integrated school as part of the Oklahoma A+ Schools network. Teacher interview data were transcribed and scrutinized for emerging themes regarding student engagement. Themes were then applied to the following research questions:

Research question one. What are teacher perceptions about student engagement in an arts-integrated classroom?

Teachers interviewed had various teaching backgrounds with diverse professional development regarding arts integration. Teachers in this study ranged from completing their first year of teaching at the arts-integrated school through completing their 18th year of teaching at the arts-integrated school. Four of the interviewed teachers mentioned significant professional development on arts integration while teaching in their specified setting. Two teachers who were interviewed admitted to finding integration ideas on You-Tube, Pinterest, and Teachers Pay Teachers, since they had not been trained on how to integrate the arts into their classrooms.

Participants in this study were asked to “Describe what high student engagement looks like in the classroom.” Each teacher responded similarly by describing an active student population. Participant 405C described student engagement as involving the “cognitive, auditory, and tactile” portion of the brain. Individually, participants described actions they had witnessed when students were perceived to be highly engaged in a lesson. Participant 405D described these actions as “noisy, active, high-energy, lots of questions, hands-on and creative.” Participant 405F echoed the same sentiment in the

interview by describing if student activities are “more focused, more hands on...students enjoy what they are doing...they are very involved.”

Participants in the research were asked about how arts integration might help them in the classroom. Several referred to students retaining information at a higher rate and named arts integration as a causal factor, because the lesson was taught and received in such a fun, different way. Participant 405B mentioned students “participating in the learning process.” Participant 405A referenced numerous projects or activities students recalled and alleged the retention of information was due to additional coloring, painting, and creating activities completed by students during a particular unit. Participant 405A went on to describe this entire process in one word: “ownership.”

Participants who did not mention students retaining information taught in class instead mentioned teacher enjoyment in teaching/facilitating arts-integrated lessons. Participant 405D stated in her interview that teaching in this manner makes her “happy.” Participant 405G echoed a similar comment stating arts integration in the classroom is “highly motivating.” These two statements correspond with what Stephens (2015) detailed regarding factors in student engagement and motivation. Stephens (2015) stated if teachers are finding enjoyment as well as feelings of wellness, these factors have a direct impact on student engagement and motivation. Stephens’ work coincides with Hendrickson’s (2010) summary of Oklahoma A+ Schools research regarding a “joyful school climate” (p. 4).

Participants were asked how the school formulates or plans arts-integrated lessons. All participants commented they did not know how others planned, but did share how they personally planned. One participant shared she planned by utilizing vocabulary

from various curricular areas (405D). Another participant stated she planned by asking the question, “If I were a kid, what would I want to do?” Infrastructure is one of the eight essentials within the Oklahoma A+ model, a guide used as collective expectations of schools involved in this network (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a). Collaborative planning is an expectation for an OK A+ school (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a).

Participants were questioned about what they believe their students might say in regard to arts-integrated lessons or non-arts-integrated lessons. Interestingly, teachers all agreed, with the exception of one, they thought students would say they enjoy arts-integrated lessons more than non-arts-integrated lessons. Participant 405E felt students would say, “We didn’t work. We played.” This finding does seem to contradict what teachers mentioned about planning in isolation and not knowing how other teachers planned, while still believing their students would say arts-integrated lessons are more engaging.

Participants were asked about discipline in an arts-integrated setting and if they had experienced more discipline or less discipline. Most agreed they had less discipline, although one participant stated it depended on the activity and if students were in a sensory overload. Participant 405G stated the reason why she thought there was less student discipline was because the students were “more engaged. They [students] don’t have time to get in trouble. They’re not worrying about what someone else is doing, because they’re all focused.” Participant 405E described excitement students experience while taking part in an arts-integration activity, thereby decreasing the off-task behavior leading to discipline issues in the classroom.

Research question two. How is student engagement reflected in an arts-integrated classroom?

Participants were questioned about how utilizing arts integration in the classroom helps them as professionals. However, a follow-up to that initial question was how participants thought arts integration helps their students. Answers received were that arts-integrated lessons create novelty and allow for the brain to better retain information gained in class. Additionally, being out of their seats, moving around the room, and utilizing non-traditional space such as flexible seating were also mentioned. Four of the seven participants spoke about learning styles and students learning in a way they learn best. Learning styles, or Multiple Learning Pathways, is mentioned as part of the Oklahoma A+ Essentials (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016a).

Participants were asked if they had seen a difference in student engagement levels when they were facilitating an arts-integrated lesson as opposed to a time they were teaching without an arts-integrated component. Participant 405A noticed a difference in an after-school program and further explained, “They don’t just talk about their seat work; they talk about their active involvement.” Participant 405C had previous years of experience in a teaching setting other than an arts-integrated setting. Participant 405C contrasted the professional experiences by emphasizing, “I can tell that they [students] like to express themselves better through art as opposed to other schools.”

Following the question on student engagement, participants were asked if they had seen an increase or decrease in student motivation. Participants talked specifically about how arts integration has provided a different way of teaching. Complimentary to that, Participant 405D stated student motivation has increased, because arts integration

has provided opportunities for students to shine. Students are completing assignments “just because they enjoy it.” Participant 405G circled back to ownership and replied, “If they can own it, they are going to do it. That’s why I try to do as much...as possible.” Both of these comments provided a connection that student motivation may be directly linked to student engagement.

Participants were asked if they believe arts integration helps students grasp what they are learning even more. Participant 405F shared, “Yes, I think it helps with their memory.” Participant 405F went on to explain during lessons where content may be harder to absorb or understand, a jingle or some type of rhythm can be created to solidify the students’ thinking. Interestingly, all participants expressed arts-integrated lessons help students learn better.

Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn from participants’ responses to specific interview questions, which were aligned with the research questions guiding the study. Shared teacher perceptions, identified through a thorough process of refinement and dissecting of data, allowed for themes to emerge. The following themes emerged after a detailed examination of participants’ transcribed interviews as well as classroom observations. These identified themes allow for further exploration of student engagement as well as arts integration.

High student engagement. Each participant agreed high student engagement is necessary in a productive classroom. Additionally, participants also had numerous examples for how high student engagement might look. There did seem to be a disconnect between high student engagement and those participants who mentioned

needing to take a grade and assign worksheets. Participants 405C and 405G commented at times they give students a worksheet, not because it elicits student engagement, but because it provides a numerical value for a grade book. While this is a reality for teachers applying an art form, Burstein (2014) stated, “The goal for conceptual learning was measure by doing, not by a paper and pencil assessment” (p. 137).

Arts integration may help teachers and students. Participants agreed an arts-integration type of initiative does help student engagement and/or teacher motivation. Participants continued to provide examples of lesson ideas and ways they create an environment conducive for learning through high student engagement. A byproduct of this discussion was individual participant’s own engagement and excitement as each shared about his or her classroom. Two participants actually labeled their excitement as teacher motivation.

Cohesive planning is essential to collaborated, arts-integrated lessons. None of the participants knew how anyone else planned. Two of the participants spoke about planning with a teaching partner. Interestingly, these two participants had been at the school site the least amount of time with the least amount of training. Participants who had received the extensive, five-day training were not planning collaboratively with other colleagues. Participants did not ever mention a directive or expectation to plan with fellow teachers. Participants did find great value in teaching in an arts-integrated manner and had figured out ways to create innovative activities.

Arts integration is worth the time and effort. Participants were asked in several different formats if they feel the input needed to create strong, arts-integrated lessons is worth it. All participants agreed they see an increase in student engagement

within an arts-integrated classroom. Additionally, all participants agreed student motivation increases in an arts-integrated lesson. One might surmise arts-integrated lessons do yield high student engagement and/or an increase in student motivation. An, Capraro, and Tillman (2013) determined at least 10 hours of professional development must occur on how to create arts-integrated lessons in addition to numerous hours after the training collaborating with college professors on lesson plans. While the interview participants in the present study expressed arts-integrated lessons are important to student motivation and student engagement, compared with An et al. (2013), the participants have not put in the required work on collaboration and professional development to see the true gains in student engagement and achievement.

Students enjoy and retain more information in an arts-integrated setting.

Participants were asked what they thought their students would say about arts-integrated lessons compared to non-arts-integrated lessons. Participants agreed students enjoy arts-integrated lessons. Additionally, participants also agreed curriculum taught in conjunction with arts integration helps students retain information. Riley (2012) mentioned students have specific responsibilities in an arts-integrated classroom such as owning their learning through making connections to the curriculum.

Student discipline decreased in an arts-integrated classroom setting. All participants agreed student discipline decreases due to students being focused and engaged in their learning. Participant 405D indicated learning in these types of settings is louder and can appear more chaotic than in a non-arts-integrated setting. Participant 405F mentioned student discipline could increase if students are in a sensory-overloaded environment.

In an arts-integrated setting, students have more ownership of their learning.

Participant 405A described ownership in student learning as something students do not dread and something creative. Participant 405C aligned ownership more with student choice and students being able to select their assignments from a menu of options. Finally, Participant 405E went on to say the more student ownership in an assignment, the more the work does not feel like an assignment but more like play.

Implications for Practice

Learning begins to take place when students are engaged (Dotterer & Lowe, 2011). Student engagement is an area of focus for educators in the classroom, regardless of arts integration. As discussed in Chapter One, for an arts-integration program to begin and continue to flourish, there has to be significant buy-in for school-wide implementation (Dell, 2010). Following key conclusions to the study, student engagement and motivation continue to be a key factor in affecting student achievement within an arts-integrated setting. Areas of the study where impacts can be made in regard to student engagement are discussed in the following sections.

Consistent, ongoing professional development. Some participants spoke of training received when Oklahoma A+ Schools first came to Oklahoma in 2002. However, according to Participant 405E, there were only 12 staff members who were part of the original training in 2002 and who were still working at the participating site. Teachers spoke of having a few hours of training but not an immersion in arts integration.

In addition to a high staff turnover, there had been administrative changes at the site as well. Oklahoma A+ Schools provides training for administrators as well as revisiting topics that need to be addressed from prior trainings for school sites,

particularly with a large staff turnover (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2011). Therefore, it is possible administrative changes may have affected overall professional development topics, training, and curricular planning. Using the Oklahoma A+ Eight Essentials, there has been a breakdown in one of the Essentials, titled Infrastructure (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2011). Specifics lacking in Infrastructure are continued buy-in using arts integration with the staff, continued shared vision for Oklahoma A+, and scheduling relevant professional development for the staff.

Curriculum and collaborative lesson planning. Question four of the teacher perception interview was the only question with a simultaneous response on behalf of the participants. Each participant spoke of the lack of understanding in how other teachers plan at the school. Davies et al. (2013) spoke specifically about the importance of collaboration:

An important feature of the pedagogic environment that can promote creativity is the nature of the relationship between teachers and learners, including high expectations, mutual respect, modelling of creative attitudes, flexibility and dialogue. There is strong evidence that pupil creativity is closely related to opportunities for working collaboratively with their peers, which can productively extend to peer and self-assessment. (p. 88)

To be clear, this research was not focused on collaboration and communication among teachers, specifically regarding their curriculum. However, as alluded to by the participants, collaboration regarding curricular planning, which is one of the Oklahoma A+ Essentials, was not observed.

The researcher sensed a desire from participants to collaborate on curriculum and lesson planning. Participants 405A, 405B, and 405D mentioned wanting to be able to plan with other teachers. At the time of this study, no current collaborative plan was in place for curriculum development at the site.

Recommendations for Future Research

This qualitative study was designed to elicit perceptions of elementary teachers in regard to student engagement in their arts-integrated classrooms. It is necessary to obtain teachers' perceptions within the Oklahoma A+ network to determine if the findings from this study were site-specific, district-wide, or state-wide. An area not addressed in this study was talking with students and gleaning their input regarding their perceptions of student engagement. Additionally, asking students their perceptions of teacher engagement as well as exploring how they define arts integration would be beneficial. Further, a triangulation of data with parent input on student engagement and teacher engagement, along with the parents' understanding of arts integration would provide a richer, more comprehensive study.

Participants were not asked a litany of demographic questions at the onset of the interviews. Specifically, information such as gender, age, years of experience in education, subjects taught, or type of classrooms might impact perceptions of arts integration and perceptions of student engagement. This information would be helpful in focusing on appropriate, sustained professional development for teachers at arts-integrated school sites.

Other demographic areas that could be used in comparative data would be schools' socioeconomic data, teacher attendance rates at arts-integrated schools versus

non-arts-integrated schools, student attendance rates at arts-integrated schools versus non-arts-integrated schools, as well as student achievement benchmarks at arts-integrated schools versus non-arts-integrated schools. Research into each of these areas would continue to uncover data points for comparison with other schools within Oklahoma.

Expanding the sphere of school sites where interviews occurred would enrich the literature surrounding teacher perceptions of student engagement, as well as a more global-perspective of arts integration. Within Oklahoma, there are currently more than 65 schools involved with Oklahoma A+ (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2016c). Each school has entered at various points during the tenure of Oklahoma A+ (Oklahoma A+ Schools, 2014a). Increasing the scope of qualitative research would allow for comparative data based on years of experience with Oklahoma A+ accompanied by comparative data on rural, urban, and suburban schools.

An area identified through the interview responses was the lack of collaborative planning among staff members. Expanding the course of research to further explore if staff members understand why planning collaboratively is worthwhile and the benefits of collaborative planning is indicated. Additionally, examination of why planning is not occurring and what strategies can be implemented for deep, two-way collaboration to occur is indicated.

Finally, the last area for further research would be completing this research in other states involved with the National A+ Schools Consortium (2014). This could include this research study in addition to the exploration of various demographics mentioned above at the student level, school district level, or the state level. Nonetheless, conducting a longitudinal study across state lines would provide a national perspective on

the state of student engagement, how teachers perceive student engagement, and how arts integration fits into the discussion of engagement.

Summary

This qualitative study was created to gather teachers' perceptions of student engagement in their classrooms, specifically where arts integration is embraced and encouraged. Interview questions were created to ascertain teachers' knowledge of student engagement within an arts-integrated setting. Academic persistence as well as student achievement and how student achievement is affected by student engagement were also topics discussed. In addition to interview questions, observation data gathered in classrooms were also included in this study.

The findings in this study supported literature presented in Chapter Two. Participants described what student engagement looks like in the classroom and how student engagement is impacted in part by arts integration. Moreover, the high level of engagement in the classroom is seen as a key indicator in student achievement among participants interviewed.

Appendix A

LINDENWOOD

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

DATE:	May 6, 2016
TO:	Staci Baker, EdD
FROM:	Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board
STUDY TITLE:	[898169-1] Teacher Perception of Student Engagement in an Arts-Integrated Classroom
IRB REFERENCE #:	
SUBMISSION TYPE:	New Project
ACTION:	APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE:	May 6, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE:	May 6, 2017
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research project. Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to the IRB.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the completion/amendment form for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of May 6, 2017.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

If you have any questions, please contact Megan Woods at (636) 485-9005 or mwoods1@lindenwood.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

If you have any questions, please send them to mwoods1@lindenwood.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board's records.

Appendix B**Permission**

I, _____, grant permission to Staci Baker, the primary researcher, to conduct qualitative research at _____ Elementary through observation rubrics and teacher interviews.

By signing this permission form, I understand that the following safeguards are in place:

1. I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
2. The identity of the school district, and the participants, will remain anonymous in the dissertation or any future publications of the study.

I have read the information above, and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction.

Signature

Date

Appendix C

Teacher Interview

Date:

Time:

Interviewer:

Interviewee: #

1. How long have you participated with <Name of Participating> A+ School as a teacher?
2. Describe what high student engagement looks like in any classroom. In your classroom.
3. How does utilizing arts-integration in the classroom help you as a teacher? Help your students?
4. Describe how teachers in your school formulate or plan arts-integrated lessons.
5. Have you seen a difference in students' engagement levels when utilizing arts-integration versus no integration? If so, in what way?
6. When participating in an arts-integrated lesson, do you feel student motivation increased/decreased? In what way?
7. If we were to ask students about their own level of engagement in the classroom, what are your hunches about what they might say in regard to arts-integrated classes versus non-arts-integrated classes?
8. In your opinion, do you believe arts integration helps students grasp what they are learning even more? If so, how? If not, why?
9. When teaching an arts-integrated lesson, do you have more or less discipline issues, on average? Why do you think that is?
10. When experiencing an arts-integrated lesson, are students more/less likely to take ownership of their learning and complete their assignment? Why do you think that is?

Thank you for your time today.

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Form

Teacher Perception of Student Engagement in an Arts-integrated Classroom
Scale of 1---5 with 5 being the highest level of student engagement.

Grade: _____ Subject: _____ Time In: _____ Time Out: _____

- 1) Students' body positions show they are attentive to the teacher and/or students (students sitting up, high energy levels, asking questions of teacher or peers).

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- 2) Students working on an assignment without distractions.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- 3) Students working to complete an assignment with minimal teacher input needed. Students are confident in their knowledge of the subject matter (taking ownership of learning activities, not re-teaching).

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- 4) Students verbally answering the teacher's questions when appropriate. Answers are on-target with the subject matter of the lesson.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- 5) Students are having fun in their classroom. (Smiling, humor is used, laughing)

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- 6) Students feel comfortable in their classroom. (Asking questions of peers, and when appropriate, asking the teacher questions)

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- 7) Students appear to be actively engaged in their learning (writing, creating, discussing, debating, performing, evaluating).

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

8) Students are using higher-level thinking skills to complete their assignment (Bloom's Taxonomy).

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

9) The students' classroom climate is conducive for learning.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Learning Objective (written somewhere in the room for everyone to see)

Specifically, in what ways does the teacher promote high student engagement? (for written dialogue heard in classroom, anecdotal notes only)

Engagement Activities:

- Classroom Discussion
- Cooperative Learning
- Group Work
- Guided Practice
- Learning Centers
- Hands-On/Active Learning
- Presentations

- Summarizing/Note Taking
- Question/Answer
- Independent Student Work
- Peer Evaluation
- Advanced/Graphic Organizers
- Nonlinguistic Representations
- Project-Based Learning
- Similarities/Differences

Describe specific arts-integrated activities observed in the classroom.

Appendix E

LINDENWOOD

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

“Teacher Perception of Student Engagement in an Arts-Integrated Classroom”

Principal Investigator: Staci Baker

Telephone: 417-xxx-xxxx

E-mail: sjb289@lindenwood.edu

Participant _____ Contact info _____

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Staci Baker under the guidance of Dr. Sherry DeVore. The purpose of this research is to gain teachers’ perspectives of student engagement in arts-integrated classrooms.
2. a) Your participation will involve:
 - A voluntary interview (face-to-face) with questions pertaining to arts integration and student engagement. The interview participants will have the opportunity to answer 11 interview questions.
- b) The interview is a one-time event taking no more than 20 minutes of the participant’s time. The interview session will be audiotaped.

(Permission to audio tape: _____ (Initials) _____ (Date))

A minimum of 5 and maximum of 10 teachers will be interviewed in this research.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.
4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about student engagement and arts integration.

5. Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.
6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy:
 - Each interview transcript will be coded with a pseudonym, and each observation will be assigned a numerical code.
 - You will be given the opportunity to review the transcript from your interview and clarify or amend any portion to assure your thoughts were interpreted correctly.
 - As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study.
 - Since the sample is small, there is a slight possibility the identity of participants may be recognized from their responses.
 - The information collected will remain in the possession of the investigator in a locked cabinet and/or password-protected computer.
 - All documents will be destroyed after three years.
7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Staci Baker, 417-xxx-xxxx or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Sherry DeVore, 417-881-0009. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) through contacting Dr. Marilyn Abbott, Provost, at mabbott@lindenwood.edu or 636-949-4912.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I may retain a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature	Date	Participant's Printed Name
Signature of Principal Investigator	Date	Investigator's Printed Name

Appendix F

Recruitment Letter

<Date>

Dear Arts-Integrating Teacher,

My name is Staci Baker, and I am a doctoral student at Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO. Currently, I am studying teacher perception of student engagement in an arts-integration classroom. I am interested in scheduling an interview with you during my visit to your school site on _____ to gain your perspective.

Your participation will involve answering interview questions and will take no more than 20 minutes. Your involvement in the study is voluntary. You may choose to not participate or to stop the interview at any time. The results of the research study may be published, but your personal identifiable information will not be disclosed. The findings from this research study will help educators learn more about teachers' opinions regarding education, arts-integration, and student engagement. Additionally, there will be a classroom observation completed in your classroom. The observation will take no more than 10 to 15 minutes.

Should you have questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email at sjb289@lindenwood.edu. By completing the interview, you are agreeing to participate in the described project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Staci Baker
Doctoral Student
Lindenwood University

Please keep this Informed Consent Cover Letter for your records.

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Vita

Staci J. Baker attended Southwest Baptist University for her undergraduate degree and Lindenwood University for her master's and specialist's degrees. She obtained her Bachelor's in Music Education in 2001, master's degree in 2006, and specialist's degree in 2009.

Staci started her career in education with Moore Public Schools in Oklahoma in 2001 as an elementary music teacher teaching grades first through sixth. After three years in Oklahoma, Staci moved to Missouri where she taught elementary music with Springfield Public Schools for three years, grades kindergarten through sixth. Staci then became a school administrator for Springfield Public Schools, deepening her knowledge as an administrative liaison and summer school coordinator, instructional specialist, early-career teaching coach, and professional development specialist.

In the summer of 2012, Staci was hired as an associate principal with Branson-IV Schools and then became a building principal in the summer of 2013. She was principal of a kindergarten through third-grade building serving the north side of the Branson School District. Staci then went to Galena Public Schools in the summer of 2016, where she currently serves as an elementary principal working with preschool through sixth grades and as the Director of Federal Programs. Staci is an active member of the National Association of Elementary School Principals, Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.