



## *SmArts Evaluation: Year One*

Joseph A. Rochford, Ph.D.  
The Stark Education Partnership, Inc.  
December, 2009

***Table of Contents***

Executive Summary.....3

Evaluation Design.....4  
    Data Limitations

Part I. Ohio Achievement Test Data.....5  
    Gorrell Elementary  
    Faircrest Memorial Middle School  
    Jackson School for the Arts; Jackson 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Partners

Part II. Teacher Surveys.....7

Part III. Observations and Teacher Reflections.....10

Part IV. Analysis and Conclusions.....18

## *Executive Summary*

SmArts grants for the 2008-09 academic year were given to three districts, Canton Local, Jackson Local and Massillon City. In Canton Local, grant activities under what is called the *DREAM Reading and Writing Project* were centered at Faircrest Memorial Middle School. In Massillon, grant activities were centered at Gorrell Elementary in a program called *Live Happily Ever After with a Good Book*. In Jackson Local, 9<sup>th</sup> graders from the Jackson School for the Arts were teamed with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in a project called *The Fabric of our Culture*.

The goal of the SmArts program is the integration of the arts as a tool to enhance and improve “regular” classroom curricular instruction.<sup>1</sup>

The Stark Education Partnership, Inc. was asked to assist with the evaluation of the first year’s efforts after Requests for Proposals (RFPs) had been issued and proposals accepted. Consequently, this is an evaluation based on deliverables in the RFPs and proposals and not a full research design as was recommended in an earlier concept paper.<sup>2</sup>

This evaluation uses a mixed method approach. The Arts for Academic Achievement (AAA) effort in Minneapolis<sup>3</sup> has been used as a model for the SmArts Program. AAA used such an approach in their evaluation efforts, relying on teacher surveys and teacher and artist interviews to support testing data.

- Gorrell Elementary experienced substantial growth as measured by the Ohio Achievement Tests (OAT) in the percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> graders proficient and above in reading. There was an increase of 11.3%. The first year goal was 5%.
- Reading scores increased by 3.8% for the sixth grade at Faircrest Memorial Middle School. The goal is for the group to increase 15% over three years.
- There was a statistically significant difference in the OAT reading scores of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in Jackson Local who participated in the SmArts Initiative, compared to those who did not participate. The difference in the scaled score was nearly ten points.
- Half of the project teachers responding to a survey across all three districts indicated that they now have higher expectations for their students learning.
- Teachers believe that art integration has positively increased the effectiveness of their teaching, the quality of curriculum and the engagement of their students. Most believe that this has not increased their workload.
- Results indicate that teachers are almost unanimous in their beliefs that learning is more effective when supplemented by the arts and that they are committed to continuing to integrate the arts into their teaching in the future.
- Teachers show evidence of beginning to integrate the arts into instruction.

---

<sup>1</sup> *SmArts Long-Term Grant Proposal 08-09*

<sup>2</sup> Rochford, J.A. (August, 2008). *An evaluation model for the SmArts educational project*. Canton: Stark Education Partnership, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> ArtsinStark (2008).

## *Evaluation Design*

This evaluation uses a mixed method approach utilizing OAT data, surveys and teacher reflections. Separate sections follow that outline results from each data source.

With permission from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota, SmArts teachers in all three projects were surveyed using the same instrument that CAREI developed for AAA. While this evaluation did not pursue individual teacher and artist interviews, written teacher reflections were obtained from Jackson and Massillon are added.

### OAT Data Limitations

SmArts grants require that performance increase among target populations as measured by OAT scores. This performance criterion has certain specific limitations.

1. While year to year comparisons are possible, for example on 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading, these comparisons represent scores obtained by two separate groups of fourth graders on similar, but different, tests. What can be said is simply whether or not more students at that grade level scored proficient this year than the last, not that the same students increased their levels of proficiency.
2. There is a difference between gross outcomes and net outcomes. OAT data, even if disaggregated, is a gross outcome meaning that it indicates that a certain percentage of students have achieved proficiency. What is not known from that data is the net outcome, meaning the case of SmArts grants how many students achieved proficiency due to an arts enhanced curriculum. Hence, OAT data is correlational. Because of the experimental and control groups in Jackson, however, a strong case in this instance can be made for causation on the basis of OAT scores.

### Triangulation

The combined data in used in this report (OAT scores, teacher surveys and reflections) triangulates results and strongly indicates that the SmArts initiative is having an impact on student achievement.

## ***Part I. Ohio Achievement Test Data***

### ***Gorrell Elementary***

Gorrell Elementary in the Massillon City School District has an average daily student enrollment of 338. Six teachers from preschool, kindergarten, and first through fourth grades, were involved in implementing the project at Gorrell Elementary in Massillon this year.

Ohio Achievement Test (OAT) data centers on reading in the 4<sup>th</sup> grades. The goal of the grant is for a 5% increase each year.

Results for all students show Gorrell Elementary exceeding district growth in 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading with an 11.3% increase in proficiency over the previous year.

#### **Percent Proficient and Above Massillon City Schools and Gorrell Elementary**

<b>Percent Proficient and Above</b>	<b>District 07-08</b>	<b>District 08-09</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Gorrell 07-08</b>	<b>Gorrell 08-09</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Reading</b>	<b>74.2%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>	6.5%	<b>71.2%</b>	<b>82.5%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>

While not specific to this evaluation, results for all students show Gorrell Elementary exceeding district growth in all categories with the exception of third grade reading. Gorrell's dramatic growth in 4<sup>th</sup> grade writing should be specifically noted.

#### **Percent Proficient and Above Massillon City Schools and Gorrell Elementary**

<b>Percent Proficient and Above</b>	<b>District 07-08</b>	<b>District 08-09</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Gorrell 07-08</b>	<b>Gorrell 08-09</b>	<b>% Change</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Reading	74.8%	80.4%	<b>5.6%</b>	77.4%	80.2%	<b>2.8%</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Math	79.7%	86.4%	<b>6.7%</b>	75.5%	84.0%	<b>8.5%</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Reading	74.2%	80.7%	<b>6.5%</b>	71.2%	82.5%	<b>11.3%</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Math	68.8%	79.3%	<b>10.5%</b>	65.1%	82.5%	<b>17.4%</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Writing	76.8%	78.5%	<b>1.7%</b>	57.7%	80.7%	<b>23.0%</b>

Fourth grade reading results at Gorrell will continue to be monitored through the second and third year of the grant.

### ***Faircrest Memorial Middle School***

Faircrest Memorial Middle School in the Canton Local Schools has an average daily student enrollment of 509.

The *Dream Reading and Writing Project* is designed to improve performance of middle school students in the areas of reading on the Ohio Achievement Test (OAT) by aligning and implementing high quality integrated arts experiences to student needs. Grade 6 will be followed through the duration of the grant. The overall goal is a 15% increase in proficiency over three years.

**Group Percent Proficient from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Grade in Canton Local**

Percent Proficient and Above	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade 07-08	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade 08-09	% Change
Reading	80.3%	84.1%	3.8%

***Jackson School for the Arts; Jackson 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Partners***

The Jackson Local SmArts grant, the *Fabric of our Culture* partnered Community 6B students and freshmen from the Jackson School for the Arts. The goal of the grant was to improve classroom performance in language arts in grades 6 and 9.

For year one, the Jackson project looked at OAT reading scores for 104 6 B students who comprised an experimental group compared to a control group comprised of Jackson 6<sup>th</sup> graders who did not participate (151 students).

**Jackson 6<sup>th</sup> Grade OAT Reading Scores**

	Number of Students	Mean Scaled Score	Confidence Interval
Experimental Group	104	448.47 +/- 5.44	95%
<b>Control Group</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>438.09 +/-4.52</b>	<b>95%</b>

There was a statistically significant difference in the reading results for students in the experimental group participating in the *Fabric of Our Culture* over the control group. The scaled score was nearly ten points higher for the experimental group.

## Part II. Teacher Surveys

Sixteen teachers responded to a teacher survey based on the survey developed by CAREI for the Arts for Academic Achievement Program. Teacher responses were anonymous.

Strongest responses indicate that teachers agree with the value of the arts in student interaction and student-teacher dialogue. The majority of teachers also believe that students are capable of learning what they teach and that the arts will allow students to display their real abilities more effectively.

**To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark the response that best fits)**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. The interaction among students from different cultures and backgrounds is of a higher quality in an arts-infused curriculum (i.e., more purposeful, positive, reflective).	0	1	12	1
b. The dialogue in an arts-infused curriculum between students and teachers is of a higher quality (i.e., more purposeful, positive, reflective).	0	1	14	0
c. Infusing the arts into my instruction is especially helpful in working with students whose home language is not English.	0	1	5	0
d. Many of the students I teach are not capable of learning the materials I am supposed to teach them.	4	10	0	0
e. Infusing the arts into my instructional practices will allow students to display their real abilities more effectively.	0	3	10	1
f. My expectations about how much students should learn are higher than they used to be.	1	6	5	2

Teachers are beginning to integrate the arts into their instruction. The areas of reading and English are the strongest directly reflecting the intent of two of the three grants to strengthen these performance areas. Focus on History and Social studies may reflect the intent of the third grant, the *Fabric of Our Culture*.

Of particular interest is that half of the teachers responding agree, or strongly agree that their expectation as to how much students should learn is now higher than it used to be.

**To what extent have you integrated the arts into your students' lessons in:**

	Not At All	Very Little	Some	A Lot	Doesn't Apply/ Don't Teach
a. English/Reading	0	0	2	8	3
b. Math	1	0	8	0	4
c. World Language	0	1	3	0	9
d. History/Social Studies	0	0	3	7	3
e. Science	1	5	2	2	3
f. Health/Physical Education	2	2	1	0	8
g. Business/Technical Education	0	2	1	0	10
h. Other (describe)	0	0	1	0	9

Results indicate that teachers are almost unanimous in their beliefs that learning is more effective when supplemented by the arts and that they are committed to continuing to integrate the arts into their teaching in the future.

**Here are some statements about arts education that may or may not be true in your school and classroom. Please indicate whether, in your opinion, the statement is true or false.**

	True	False	Don't Know
a. Learning is more effective for my students when concepts are presented or supplemented with arts activities.	13	1	0
b. In the future, I will continue integrating one or more of the arts in my teaching on a regular basis.	13	1	0
c. My students enjoy using the arts to show what they know.	13	0	1
d. Our School Improvement Plan (SIP) includes the arts.	7	4	3
e. My Personal Development Plan (PDP) reflects our site's arts education initiatives.	5	7	2
f. Our school's staff development plan reflects a commitment to increasing staff skills in arts education.	5	5	4

Teachers believe that art integration has positively increased the effectiveness of their teaching, the quality of curriculum and the engagement of their students. Most believe that this has not increased their workload.

**What overall impact, if any, has increased emphasis on arts integration had on each of the following aspects of your work?**

	<b>Very Negative</b>	<b>Slightly Negative</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Slightly Positive</b>	<b>Very Positive</b>	<b>Does Not Apply</b>
a. The effectiveness of my teaching	0	0	2	5	7	0
b. The quality of the curriculum	0	1	1	7	5	0
c. The engagement of my students in school	0	0	0	2	12	0
d. My school's interest in and support of the arts	0	0	2	3	9	0
e. My workload	2	5	5	1	0	1
f. My students' academic performance	0	0	4	7	3	0
g. My relations with parents	0	0	8	5	1	0
h. My use of the graduation standards as the basis for planning instructional activities	0	0	1	3	2	8
i. My use of arts integration as a core strategy for planning instructional activities	0	0	1	9	4	0
j. My ability to authentically assess student learning	0	0	6	4	3	0

Teachers were positive that arts integration was increasing their effectiveness, student engagement and the quality of the curriculum. Most were also seeing an impact on student academic performance.

### ***Part III. Observations and Teacher Reflections***

Returning to the central focus of the SmArts grants as the “integration of the arts as a tool to enhance and ‘improve’ regular classroom instruction” reflections from teachers should be indicative of whether this is taking place.

#### **SmArts Grant Reflection 2008 – 2009 Massillon City Schools - Gorrell Elementary**

##### **1) Asking ourselves – What is different?**

###### **For teachers**

- Participation in the SmArts grant made me more aware of how important incorporating the arts in my instruction was for my students. As I planned the many cultural activities in my classroom this year, I focused on the arts as well as the standards.
- I believe as a teacher, I was more focused with an end in mind.
- I found as a Kindergarten teacher (using the visual arts) that I looked at picture books differently. I found that by learning more about the visual arts content standards that I could use this valuable information, when using the illustrations in picture books, to teach comprehension. I noticed that more students were more in tune when participating in pictures either whole group or independently.
- I feel that having this grant has helped me to understand that there truly is room for the arts within the curriculum. The opportunities that were made available to my students will stay with them as they move on throughout their school careers. Being in a “high stakes” grade level, I have still been able to see that learning can take place and it can actually make more of an impact as we worked with the curriculum through performing arts. As a teacher, I feel validated that there are still ways for students to enjoy learning (and for me to enjoy teaching) other than paper and pencil test prep!

###### **For students**

- Students were actively involved in the activities. When asked what their 5 most favorite things were this year mostly all of them included dancing with Ms. Nicole on Fridays.
- Students had the opportunity to go more places and experience things we don't usually have money to do.
- I observed that the students were more engaged and could speak to a higher level of the details (and even just general ideas) in illustrations of picture books. These illustrations can be very important when talking about comprehension with kindergarten students.

- I had a student in my class this year who had a lot of discipline issues before coming to third grade. He and his parents were called into the office quite a bit during those first years of school. We were working on our reflection books (depicting everything our class was able to do thanks to the grant). One of his classmates had mentioned that every year she feels sad as it ends. He said that he never felt that way until this year. The title of his reflection book was “A Fun Year of School”. For our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade performance of If the Shoe Fits, he was our sound tech. When I had him wave to the audience after the performance and explained to them that every sound that was heard during the entire play came from him, you could see the pride and greater sense of self-worth beaming through his smile.

### **For parents**

- Parents were able to watch their children perform dances of the cultures studied. They also learned many facts from their children about each culture.
- I do not know any specific differences with the parents that I worked with except perhaps a greater interest in the visual arts because of the interest their child showed to them.
- Parents enjoyed seeing their kids perform, I'm not sure they realize how fortunate their kids were to travel and see the show we saw.
- Parents able to see information written by their Kindergarten child in a book that was jointly created by the class.

### **For artists**

- Our resident artist, Nicole Garlando Berens, was an important piece of this grant for us. Her enthusiasm for dance and music was evident each week when she worked with the students. She taught them dances for the four cultures we studied, she was there for each performance.

### **For community**

- A substitute teacher observed one of our practices before the performance. She made a point of coming over after our 7p.m. performance to let me know that she was so impressed with the practice that she just had to bring her family back to show her husband what these kids could do! We were also able to connect with the WHS Drama Club to work on characterization at the beginning of the year. The WHS Cosmetology Department students were able to offer their services to our little actresses before school on the day of the performances. It was amazing to see how willing those teachers and students were to work with us. I guess before this year it never dawned on me that we have so many resources within the district that are readily available.
- I was told by our artist in residence and some of the workers at the Canton Art Museum that they were impressed with my student's ability to talk about pieces of art and to actually notice art elements.

## **2) What are the powerful things?**

- The powerful things about this grant that stick out to me are mostly the money that enabled us to travel to events. The sky is the limit and we are only held back by our own creativity. Another powerful thing about this grant is that it is supposed to enhance what we are already doing in the classroom. I found that I'm very active in including the arts within my planning already. The grant money just helped me to fulfill dreams that had once been stifled by lack of funds.
- As I reflect back on this year, there are 4 most powerful things accomplished through this grant.
- The students were able to visit the Canton Museum and see the kimono display.
- Some of the “quieter” students were able to perform with the whole group for audiences.
- The students were able to meet a Pueblo Native American and learn about his culture first hand.
- Each student made their own “costume” for three of the four performances. Indian vests and headbands were made, tie dyed shirts were worn for the African dance, and kimono T shirts were made for the Japanese performance.
- The most powerful thing that I noticed through this project was a genuine interest in visual arts by my students. I observed my students paying more attention to detail when completing any visual art project and showing a greater sense of pride. In the past those students who were more gifted in this area or had a greater interest were usually the only ones who took their time to work....I have seen more students putting forth a greater effort and wanting to be involved.

## **3) What barriers did you encounter?**

- The barriers for me was the lengthy process of getting money when we needed it. I spent much of my own money for "If the Shoe Fits' because we needed items and our purchase order had not been approved at that time.
- The barrier that I encountered was the time element. The demands of standards and everyday schedules limited some of the cultural activities in the classroom.
- Being new to the grant process, I didn't understand all of the procedures that have to occur in order to receive items. After going through this year, I have learned that being ahead of myself and planning and ordering as early as possible may make the financial aspect run a little smoother for me. I am lucky to have a third grade team of great coworkers and friends. Although they weren't able to go on the field trips or work with our resident artist, they were supportive of our performances throughout the year. We were able to share books and resources that gave their students a better understanding of the characters and places in our performances during our fairy tale election process and the performance of If the Shoe Fits. Even though their classes did not have the monetary benefits of the grant, I feel that their students did benefit by learning along with us through their participation as voters and as an audience. They even began writing their own

plays during indoor recess that we were able to come and watch! Acting and performing became contagious!

- The greatest barrier was not being able to purchase supplies where ever I could find the best bargains or greatest inventory.
- Another barrier was that the teacher I was working with originally had to stop working because she was put on bed rest for the duration of her pregnancy...this made it much more challenging to keep up with this project in the way I had envisioned. I also felt at times because it was the visual arts and not something more showy like dance or the performing arts that it was not valued or seen as important by the school. It is much more challenging to showcase the amount of time, effort and work it takes for their visual art creations.

#### **4) How is my classroom different now than last August?**

- My classroom is different because I am more likely to see the importance of the big picture, not just standardized testing. I also realize that each activity should be relevant and that all teaching and activities should have a purpose related to what I should be teaching in 4th grade.
- My class (and my teaching is now more intentional) in focusing on visual arts and the appreciation of it. Before in my class it had been about tying art projects but there was not the specific connections to the visual art standards. In general both myself and my students have a greater appreciation for the arts in general whether because of what we did ourselves or were able to connect to through the other SmArts classrooms presentations (because of what we were learning and the fact that we had a common bond through the theme of Cinderella and fairy tales).
- I feel that there is an air of excitement that has slowly come back to me this year. I have a much better understanding of how the performance arts can directly help students to understand characterization, point of view, and motives for the actions of the characters that we read about. Next year's planning has already begun and we haven't been out of school for even a week yet! I have seen how much my third graders loved performing – whether it was a big part in our culminating production or just a play from a script written and produced during indoor recess. Next year there will be an element of the performing arts that would not have been present had we not been able to experience it through this grant.
- I have seen again that teaching third grade can be so much more than obsessing over two tests. Students can experience the standards and indicators from the state of Ohio through a variety of ways and still be able to perform when it comes to standardized tests. I know that it really is okay to have fun and learn the standards at the same time and that there shouldn't be guilt associated with learning by way of the arts. Thank you!
- By using the SmArts grant in my classroom I was able to provide so much more enrichment for my students. With the help of the grant money, books, CDs, and materials used throughout the year were purchased.

## 5) How am I different?

- I am much more determined to be successful this year. This past year in the grant, I was easily swayed with grandiose ideas and did not fully weigh the outcomes. I plan to be more effective in my planning and will be sure that all activities relate to my 4th grade standards. I need to be in charge of my classroom as a participant in the grant. This year, I agreed to too many activities that did not directly benefit or relate to 4th grade standards. Therefore, I felt that I was doing extra work rather than the grant working for me.

- I feel like I have learned many new things about the cultures I taught. It was a lot of work to research each culture but the most reward came watching the students participate, learn and enjoy the activities.

- I will now be able to use what I learned about the visual arts to be able to connect in another way with students. I have another avenue to give purpose to my lessons. I will also use this experience to encourage me to continue to make connections with other content areas and continue to teach thematically (something the students can really connect to and love).

**SmArts Grant Reflection 2008 – 2009**  
**Jackson Local Schools**

**SmArts Grant Feedback from Participating Teachers**

How has the grant made a difference.....

For Teachers:

- A new way to think about curriculum. I've brought Asian history and art into my classroom at least once a week. I have learned as much as the kids have!
- Approaching the year and my English curriculum differently.
- The project forced me as a middle school teacher to include all facets of the arts into my curriculum. I integrated arts with literature. When our teaching team took the kids to the *Kimono* exhibit we all learned about it and shared our ideas.
- This project reenergized me. Thinking about my subject in a new way makes me a better teacher. I look forward to the next 2 years!
- This gave me a new reason to meet and share ideas with my peers-and to appreciate how creative we could all be when we shared ideas across the curriculum.

For Students:

- My students had opportunities that they would never have had. There is so much for them to learn from the perspective of a visiting artist, lecturer, high school student or performer.
- The kids are very aware of Asian art and Asian influences. They are becoming more aware of textiles when they see them in photos, costumes, or art. They are learning the symbols of fabric such as shiny cloth equals wealth, power or status and they are using this acquired know ledge to interpret images through a social, political, economic and cultural perspective. The continual emphasis of the grant on the curriculum has added another tool in the arsenal my students use in their learning.
- Much broader cultural awareness. The kids are more accepting of each other's diversity
- This has opened my students' eyes to another subject in the world that they had never appreciated.

For Parents:

- This allowed parents to become involved in their child's school career and broadened their outlook as well.
- I think they have been exposed to art they have never seen before. They are more aware of the role the East has played in our history.
- Parents have seen us tie in to a huge cultural event, drawing in the community and its resources.
- It has been great to see the increasing support from parents for the art school. They heard about the grant at the JSA picnic and all the activities that were going

- to happen during the year. They have been great supporters of the arts. I hope we have started a great new trend.
- I loved seeing my students' parents at the 6th grade celebration of the *Kimono*.
  - We have received so many positive responses on our parent surveys.

For the Community:

- The events of the past year have seen our schools work together with the community and share resources. We have utilized community leaders, artists, musicians in our schools, and, in doing so, the community has become more aware of school programs.
- We have the ever growing arts movement in our system with the Jackson School for the Arts and its outreach to community events. This year we have teamed with Lisa Boyer, M. J. Albacete, Breunis Booth, Kathy Jevic, Robb Hankins, Rita Haines, Paula Blangger, Don Irwin, Neil Sapienza, and others.
- Everyone in the arts community has been so great to work with. Not one person has turned us down.
- The Jackson community is really supporting the arts. The JSA Extravaganza celebrated even my middle school students' accomplishments and brought the whole community together. I think it is wonderful that we have elementary and middle school arts kids in our camps, kids can sing in the Elementary Honors Choir, we have a middle school musical-the arts is not just for high school kids anymore.

Powerful Things:

- One very important and powerful event occurred in my classroom after we visited the Kimono exhibit when many of my sixth graders told me that went back again and took their parents and grandparents.
- When one of my sixth graders said that the exhibit was life-changing!
- Watching the intense thought involved when my Level III dancers choreographed their own compositions after studying Japanese dance.
- Listening to a freshman explain Shibori to an elderly visitor at the exhibit. I almost cried watching their touching interaction.
- Watching high school seniors and freshmen interact and share reactions both at and after the exhibit.

Barriers:

- Time, time, time .....
- So many great ideas to cram into one year!
- Needing better ways to be able to get the middle and high school students together.
- Wishing that the middle school had some of the resources that the JSA has.
- Staff members outside of the JSA program who don't understand the necessity of students need to immerse themselves in the arts and that it is OK to miss a math class to see the symphony-and might be more valuable.

- Planning time . ... time to meet to plan and to process our successes both with middle and high school teachers.
- Sharing facilities within our district

#### Classroom Differences

- Much more focused on arts connections
- I focus more on the arts and not just ODE social studies standards.
- I really feel a sense of accomplishment when I reflect on my year.
- This grant has taken my theatre classes to a whole new level. We look for connections to all the arts as we perform.
- My classes feel a sense of pride that our community was chosen to participate.
- Our reading scores are better! Student read material about cultural differences with a new sense of purpose and understanding.

#### Personal Differences:

- Experiencing the Kimono left me with a far greater appreciation of the arts. Seeing my students respond positively to language arts assignments that centered on the arts was wonderful.
- I have a different perspective on lessons/curriculum. The grant is the vehicle for this. Also, being a SmArts school has given much more status to the arts from our administration and community.
- I realize now that it is difficult to find time to meet with teachers from 2 large schools but when you are together sharing ideas you realize why you teach. They approach curriculum development by looking creatively at the big picture. We sometimes get so bogged down in getting ready for the OAT and making sure that we teach every benchmark and standard.
- This grant has revitalized my teaching. Working with the teachers from JSA shows me a bigger picture.
- As a dance teacher I really feel part of the teaching team of JSA.

## *Part IV. Analysis and Conclusions*

This evaluation has gathered evidence from three sources, OAT scores, teacher surveys and teacher reflections, to illustrate the efficacy of the first year SmArts grants. The most compelling question is whether or not the grants by fostering the inclusion of the arts into the curriculum contributed to increases in OAT scores at the schools in question.

Scores did increase at all schools relative to the previous year. Correlation is indicated; causation is not proved. Schools are busy places and meaningful interventions targeted at increasing test scores are very much on everyone's minds. To isolate a single intervention or program as the causative factor in increasing scores is oftentimes difficult and remains virtually impossible without a controlled experimental study. Here the Jackson project that utilized both experimental and control groups is of additional value in isolating the SmArts project as a causative factor as it does indicate a significant difference between groups.

Caution should be also exercised in interpreting OAT scores alone as definitive indicators.

Yet, from evidence aside from the OAT scores (teacher surveys), we do know that teachers see the arts as very important and that they are working to integrate the arts into their instruction.

The two sets of teacher reflections provide additional information on how teachers perceive these grants and their value to themselves, students, parents and community. These perceptions are overwhelmingly positive and are included in this document in their entirety.

### Recommendations

- Student groups (OAT scores) should continue to be tracked per separate grant agreements.
- Further evaluations may want to look at specific teacher/artist outcomes for units or agreed upon benchmarks that further delineate outcomes and measurements. Teachers and artists might want to use the Ohio Arts Council iTool to facilitate this process.
- Additional teacher/artist information (lesson plans, action research, etc.) that may exist at the classroom level can be of value in further evaluations.
- Continue administration of the CAREI survey.
- Continue to collect teacher reflections; consider expansion to teacher and artists interviews.