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Extending the K-12 Art Classroom into the After-School Art Club

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Extending the K-12 Art Classroom into the After-School Art Club

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Dedication

To my mom, for showing me the world of art.

Abstract

Extending the K-12 Classroom into the After-School Art Club

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The purpose of this study was to investigate how teachers are utilizing school sponsored art clubs after the school day ends. The research was comprised of two parts of data collection. The first was an electronic questionnaire that was dispersed to the entire visual art faculty in Round Rock Independent School District, Round Rock, Texas. The second part of the research consisted of semi-structured interviews with selected qualified participants. This research is intended to better prepare current art club sponsors and encourage other art educators to take on the responsibility of art club sponsorship at their school.

Using mixed methodology, an investigation was made into art club purposes, curriculum, programs, activities, benefits and impacts on students, sponsors and schools. Through this research I have gained insight into how art clubs function in one specific suburban school district in Texas. I believe the information gained from this research can be helpful to other districts and art clubs for the benefit of both art club sponsors and art club members.

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Chapter One: Introduction and Overview

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Latch key children became a presence in the United States during the second World War. According to Alston (2013) men went off to war and in turn women were left working the industrial jobs. Women were forced to send their children to school with keys tied around their necks while they went to the factories to make tanks, planes, uniforms and bullets needed at the war front. These extreme war times called for drastic measures when it came to childcare. Many factories responded to the need for childcare and established programs in factories, schools and community centers. In the Twenty First Century, parents still face some of the same struggles of balancing childcare and work. In today's world, both mothers and fathers commonly work outside of the home. It has become increasingly common for women to work full time jobs, leaving children to return from school to an empty home.

“According to the U.S. census, one third of all school-aged children in the United States are, for some part of the week, latch key kids; that is they go home to an empty house or apartment” (Alston, 2013, Latch key children, para. 3). Roughly half of the children in the country between the ages of twelve and fourteen spend an average of seven hours a week at home alone (Alston, 2013). These seven hours without adult supervision leave parents worried and wondering what their children are really doing while they are away. Parents' and schools' concerns for latch key children has led to a demand for after-school activities including school clubs. These clubs are set up to engage students in fun activities that are based around school content. Clubs can usually last anywhere from half an hour to two hours after school. This time period right after the

school day ends is a crucial time, and for adolescents it is the peak time for juvenile crime. School clubs may alleviate both parents and teachers worries for many unsupervised children after school. Therefore, the role of school clubs has become increasingly popular in education. Despite the increasing popularity of clubs, the role art clubs play as an extension of classroom curriculum is a topic that has been inadequately addressed in current research. Hence, this research takes a closer look at how art clubs, in particular, are used by educators and what impact and potential benefits they possess for student participants.

CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

This research focused on the following Central Research Question: What are the factors that restrict or enable art club facilitators to expand content from their art classroom into the after school art club? What types of programs and activities have teachers found to be effective in their own art club?

PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study focused on the expansion of the art classroom into school sponsored after-school art clubs. Public schools sponsor a multitude of clubs, including art clubs, but little is known about how they are utilized or what teachers' goals are for these clubs. Due to this lack of information, it is necessary to explore what factors restrict or enable art club facilitators to expand the content of the classroom into the realm of the afterschool art club.

MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH

Personal Motivation

Art education has deep roots in my life due to the fact that my mom is a public school elementary art educator. This led me to value art early on in my life, but it took me until my fourth year of college to realize the importance of art education. I, like many other teachers, became inspired to teach after experiencing what a great teacher can do for you as a student. That influential teacher and the two years of teacher preparation courses afterwards led me to my current position as a middle school art teacher.

As a novice teacher I encountered many challenges in my first year. Sponsoring my school's art club was one duty I had not anticipated and had not prepared for in my previous year of student teaching. After being appointed to this position, I quickly realized there were no guidelines for the club. This made me excited as well as nervous. School sponsored clubs are popular in secondary schools and have a lot of potential to expand the learning environment. Students love the extra time hanging out with their friends, and parents are relieved knowing that their children are supervised after the school day ends. The challenge of sponsoring an art club became clear for me: as the teacher, I had to grab students' attention and get them involved outside the parameters of the classroom. This challenge proved difficult when I began to encounter obstacles such as students' dependency on parents for transportation, scheduling with other students' extracurricular activities, irregularity in attendance due to varying enthusiasm levels, and finding quality programs or events for the club.

Throughout the year, I experienced many highs and lows with my art club. One significant low, which brought me to this research, was a knitting project. We first investigated a local Austin, Texas artist, Magda Sayeg, who started a movement called Knitta Please. The concept behind her artwork was to knit pieces that were then wrapped

around cold or industrial objects in urban landscapes. She did this to bring a softer, warmer and colorful side to our current cold and rigid feel of cities. It was clear after introducing her artwork and her concept to my students that they were excited about this idea. The first step was for all of us, including me as the sponsor, to learn how to knit and crochet. This initial step was a challenge, but it also proved to be one of my brightest moments in my first year as the art club sponsor. I struggled trying to learn the fundamentals of knitting, while simultaneously attempting to teach twenty or so students basic knitting skills. Luckily, one of my students stepped forward as a leader. She approached me and began teaching me one-on-one how to knit the yarn. She did such an amazing job and was patient while repeatedly demonstrating various steps that I decided to turn on the document camera so that by projecting a large real time video picture she could teach the whole group. It was at that moment that I thought to myself, “This is going to be the coolest knit graffiti project ever; I can’t believe this is actually going to work.”

From that high to my next low occurred when I realized I needed this research study. The knitting project had taken off and students began working on individual knitting projects to install around the school. Weeks passed and nothing was finished, so I decided over the winter break that I would complete my project and install it before the students returned. I thought seeing my knit project installed would be the motivation they needed to get their projects finished and installed as well. Unfortunately, I was wrong; my knit graffiti is still the one and only knit project installed in the school. The knit graffiti project allowed me as an educator to experience some of the most rewarding feelings as well as some of the most disappointing. Questioning myself and my Kintta Please project with my art club has brought me to this research topic.

Professional Motivation

Educators strive to improve their teaching and their students' learning daily, whether through reflections, evaluations, or data collection research. This study created another way for art educators to enhance their teaching and their students' knowledge regarding one specific topic, art clubs. Investigating, through teachers' personal experiences, what factors have enabled as well as inhibited effective use of their art clubs will better equip future art educators faced with these types of challenges. Understanding the multiple factors that create an effective art club may assist other art educators to expand the content of the classroom into the realm of the after-school art club and ultimately create a stronger learning environment.

HYPOTHESIS

Based on my experiences, it is likely that these reasons contribute to the effectiveness of art clubs: a specific structure the teachers have implemented, they have strong parental or administrative support, strong teacher motivation or the activities appeal to students' interests. Challenges that may inhibit the effectiveness of art clubs could include these factors: budget limitations, lack of support, students and teachers busy schedules. However, this study examined a range of art teachers' perspectives regarding the challenges and factors that support the growth of their art clubs.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Magda Sayeg – Textile Artist and founder of Knitta Please.

Knitta Please - “the knit graffiti group credited with spawning the international yarn bombing movement.” (<http://knittaporfavor.wordpress.com>)

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Round Rock Independent School District (ISD) is located north of Austin, Texas. I am a middle school art teacher in Round Rock ISD. Since I know some of the other visual art teachers in the district I hoped that our previous interactions and knowledge of one another would not interfere with the research process or data collection, as I hoped they would be candid about the successes as well as failures pertaining to their art club experiences. This research only examined one suburban school district, so the results cannot be generalized to other art teachers who conduct after-school programs. The location of the school district should also be taken into consideration. The results of this research may not transfer to urban or rural after school art programs since their environments may have factors that were not identified in this study.

BENEFITS TO THE FIELD OF ART EDUCATION

Identifying what factors either restricted or enabled art club sponsors to expand curricular content from the classroom into their after school art club has the potential to benefit many art teachers who are art club sponsors. There are a variety of ways that expanding the curricular content beyond the art classroom can be employed in meaningful ways. For example, some art teachers may decide that such expansion means repetition of content to better reinforce concepts or techniques taught earlier in class. While other teachers may use it as an extension of the classroom to incorporate a bigger idea such as service learning or community involvement, based on the concepts or techniques taught within the classroom. There also may be a potential benefit for art educators who have struggled in the past with their art clubs and are looking for new ways to approach their club.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

INTRODUCTION

The literature presented in this chapter helps to create a clearer understanding for the research that was conducted in this study. Within this chapter is a discussion of selected literature that helps better explain multiple topics that are related to this study. The various topics focused on in this study and examined in this chapter are school clubs, after-school programs, extension of the classroom, and service-learning.

SCHOOL CLUBS

Educational club organizations have been a part of the American education system for many years. According to Polleck (2010), “book clubs are defined as small, collaborative groups whose purpose is to enhance literacy and personal and social growth” (p. 51), so the term club could be loosely defined as a small, organized group of individuals who come together for a similar purpose. According to Shouse (1938) high school clubs began in the 1930s as an extra-curricular period added to the last period of the school day. The extra-curricular program took a couple of years to begin running properly, but in the end Shouse (1938) found that many of the same positive results still exist in contemporary school clubs and extra-curricular activities. Much of the positive belief system around clubs in school settings is based on the following points: creating interest for school credit classes, supplementing the learning and teaching that is taking place within the classroom, connecting with the community (Morris, 2005), academic

(grade) achievement (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006), and personal/social development (Logan & Scarborough, 2008).

Although there is very little literature based on visual art clubs in schools, there is plenty of literature on book clubs, social studies clubs, and even running clubs (Morris, 2005; Polleck, 2010). The Clio Club is an extra-curricular club that focuses on social studies for elementary students. According to Morris (2005), through travel, field experience, reenactment and shared information, the Clio Club created an environment where students could not only enjoy themselves, but also extend their learning beyond the traditional school day hours. This additional time with students enables the educator to teach “content and skills that are not possible during the regular school day” (Morris, 2005, p. 41). A final positive aspect of the Clio Club is the sense of community that is gained both between the club members as well as within the club members and their surrounding community.

Creating a structure or system within a school that helps young adults build self-esteem and explore self-identity will benefit students long term as they approach job and college opportunities. This train of thought has lead many educators to develop club systems within their schools. Logan and Scarborough (2008) describe how a school wide club program that met every other week worked when implemented in their school. According to Logan and Scarborough (2008) the club program created supportive relationships that, “promote personal/social development and academic achievement” (p. 159). Creating a specific club time where all students participate enables everyone to feel included, which in turn helps them build self-esteem and social skills. The second positive aspect Logan and Scarborough describe is academic achievement. General grade improvement because of involvement in organized clubs is also significant. Polleck (2010) mentions the positive impact a girl’s high school book club had on their

“emotional and social issues, but also their academic achievement” (p. 51). Other sources, such as Denault, Poulin and Pedersen (2009), stress the impact of club organizations on students’ grade performance through data-driven research. They found that, “youth clubs were positively associated with school grades, and negatively linked to alcohol use and depressive symptoms” (Denault, Poulin & Pedersen, 2009, p. 74). Similar findings came from a study by Fredricks and Eccles (2006), which focused on how extracurricular participation was associated with beneficial outcomes. Their research found links between regular participation in school clubs and higher academic grades year to year, as well as how many years of schooling students would complete. According to Fredricks and Eccles (2006), “participation in school clubs predicted the number of years of schooling completed” (p. 705). Positive links between more years of schooling as well as better academic grades overall shows many of the positive impacts school clubs have had on students in the past.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Established in 1988, Los Angeles’ BEST After School Enrichment Program quickly became a model for after-school programs around the nation. Sanger (2011) states the mission of LA’s BEST is to:

Provide a safe and supervised after-school education, enrichment and recreation program for children ages five to twelve in the City of Los Angeles. Expected results were that children who lived in communities most vulnerable to gangs, crime and drugs, and who had the fewest resources available to them, would feel (and be) safer on campus than off. It was also expected that engagement in a

range of learning and play activities would better position those children to succeed in school. (p. 36)

Their mission statement encompasses many of the positive attributes found in after-school programs today. First is the desire to help students in after-school programs perform better in school. Sanger (2011), Hirsch (2011), Neuman (2010) and Anderson-Butcher (2010) all agree upon this major characteristic of after-school programs working to better equip students for school and their classrooms. It is a common struggle for educators to teach their students everything they feel they need to learn within the confines of the school schedule and curriculum. Hirsch (2011) found that after-school programs provided teachers the extra time necessary to experiment with new methods for teaching classroom material. This idea is crucial in assisting teachers to reach every learner. Within the classroom, teachers have limited time and sometimes feel unable to reach every learner in the given schedule. But by continuing the learning into the after-school program, teachers are able to create a more holistic learning experience that may reach a wider variety of learners. Anderson-Butcher (2010) found that, “one-third of the teachers/schools staff reported that activities in the afterschool program build upon what teachers are doing in the classroom and the curriculum map” (p. 13). They learned that building upon what was taught on in the classroom led students to higher homework completion, which in turn brought about to higher student comprehension.

EXTENSION OF THE CLASSROOM

Teachers are well aware that learning can take place anywhere and in many different ways. For example, schools regularly incorporate field trips into the classroom curriculum. Field trips into the surrounding community enable students to learn in new

environments other than the classroom. This idea proved important for Fawcett and Shannon-Smith (2008) when they investigated, “community as classroom” (p. 132). The authors examined a learning project called Learning 24/7: Community as Classroom. The main purpose of the project was stated as tapping into, “the unique resources across the county that can extend school learning in engaging and challenging ways” (Fawcett & Shannon-Smith, 2008, p. 133). The project’s focus of using nontraditional settings to support traditional learning is something that author Kwok-bong (2009) utilized in his research on community-based service learning. According to Kwok-bong (2009), “The meaning of classroom should not be limited to the physical settings of schools, and should be extended to all implicit, explicit and hidden learning situations that happen inside and outside the school premises” (p. 45). Education is not something that is restricted to the regular school day schedule; it is something that we experience ubiquitously. The curriculum used to encourage learning in and out of school is something that can be translated in a multitude of ways: “formal, informal and hidden knowledge, tradition and cultural transmission” (Kwok-bong, 2009, p. 45). According to Kwok-bong (2009) the non-linear and fluid nature of curriculum lends itself to a relationship between schools and communities called community education/classroom in community (CIC). Kwok-bong (2009) describes the CIC as having three interlocking parts:

- (1) education about the community, (2) education for the community, and (3) education in/through the community. Education about the community is the course of action the teachers, based on their own concerns in the community, facilitate students to think over their experiences about the community to generate a preliminary understanding of it. Education for the community refers to the

practices that teachers encourage and guide the students to explore different community issues of their interests based on their preliminary understanding. Education in/through the community is the process teachers and students engaging in the direct interaction with the community and its members, as learning resources to validate their understanding of the community, and as community resources to formulate action which is relevant to both the community members and the students. (p. 45)

CIC lends itself to service-learning, which will be explored more fully in the following section, because it is a way to encourage students to implement community services through collective dialogues with their surrounding community. Programs such as CIC create a learning environment that extends outside the classroom and enables learners to understand, explore and connect with community members and community issues in society.

SERVICE-LEARNING

The term “service-learning” is comprised of two words connected by a hyphen. Although the hyphen does not seem important visually, symbolically it represents that each side of the two words are equally important and connected. According to Terry and Bohlenberger (2004) the hyphen in service-learning symbolizes the need for equal weight on both serving the community and having students learn (p. 18). If the weight is too heavily based on one compared to the other, then the service learning can change dramatically into something similar to volunteering. While volunteering can be a valuable

experience for students, it differs from service-learning in that service-learning is reciprocal and mutually beneficial for both the community and the learners.

Defining service-learning varies by individuals and organizations. According to the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2012), “service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities”(n.p.). Adejumo (2010) has a similar definition with a slightly heavier emphasis on the community’s need. He defines service-learning as, “a method of instruction...to involve learners actively in providing their community with needed services while simultaneously facilitating their educational development. As a result, service learning is reciprocal and mutually beneficial for both the community and the learners (p. 23). Belief in a reciprocal relationship between the community and learners is a common thread found in many researchers writings. According to Felten and Clayton (2011), “Reciprocity is essential to the collaboration between community and campus, creating a strong connection between the academic context and public concerns” (p. 77). Felten and Clayton (2011) elaborate that, “service-learning aims to develop academic knowledge/skills/dispositions as well as civic learning and personal growth—either of which may be defined to include such widely valued outcomes as intercultural competence and teamwork” (p. 77). Furco defined service learning with a colorful visual definition as, “ a purple sphere which combines in equal amounts the blue of academic content and the red of community service...spinning freely, balanced on its axis, blending these primary colors to yield one smooth, if symbolic, purple hue” (Jeffers, 2005, p. 16). Despite different definitions the basic theory of service-learning remains based on Dewey’s philosophy of combining knowledge and skills with experience to create learning.

There are many aspects of service learning that researchers have found to be beneficial to learners, one of which is critical thinking and problem solving skills. The ability to think critically comes from one of the most important features of service-learning, reflection. Terry and Bohemberger (2004) explain reflection as, “ the process of looking back on actions taken to determine what has been gained, lost, or achieved and connecting these conclusions to future actions and larger societal contexts” (p. 24). They go on to further explain reflection as, “ the framework through which the students process and synthesize information from their service-learning experiences” (Terry & Bohemberger, 2004, p. 24). There are multiple ways to incorporate reflective activities into service-learning projects, including “written and/or oral forms...individually and/or collaboratively” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 77). Without the reflection process, learners lack the understanding of how their contributions matter within the world. This is a key factor that separates service-learning from volunteering. By incorporating the reflective process into the activities, learners are able to gain a deeper understanding of the effects their contributions have on themselves and their surrounding community.

Through the reflective process in service-learning, participants are able to gain a greater understanding of other people’s struggles and difficulties. According to Felten and Clayton (2011), “service-learning often exposes students to people and experiences that are new to them, potentially leading to openness to diverse perspectives and ways of being as well as enhanced empathy” (p. 81). They further explain that, “in service-learning students often come face-to-face with troubling social realities, making connections between emotion and learning” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81). Many service-learning projects deal with difficult real world issues, such as hunger. These issues provide opportunities for participants to, “understand more fully the true complexity of social problems and thereby cause them to lose previously held, often

naïve, confidence in their individual capacity to effect systematic change” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81). Creating new perspectives for learners can be extremely beneficial, especially for school aged children. As students progress through school it is the goal of many parents and teachers to help students understand other students they encounter each day. Parents and teachers try to teach students how to cooperate with other students, how to become friends with other students and even how to help other students when they are in need. Teaching a person how to empathize with another person is a difficult thing to verbally explain. This is why, according to Terry and Bohlenberger (2004), service-learning can be an excellent tool for “extending student learning into the community and helping to foster a sense of caring for others” (p. 17). The act of caring for another person is something best taught and understood through real life experience and examples. Service-learning enables learners to experience, “transformative learning” and create a, “new set of lenses for seeing the world” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 82). The new perspectives gained through service-learning sets the stage for participants to exist as co-learners and co-beings in a reciprocal relationship where people help one another and in turn everyone involved learns and positively develops. Service-learning in an art club environment produces creativity and mutually beneficial relationships that enrich both the club participant and the community.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

INTRODUCTION

A mixed methods research methodology was utilized for this investigation. There were two forms of tools that were implemented in this mixed methods research to collect data: survey and interview. Details about the survey, semi-structured interview, the research participants, and location, are further explained through this chapter. The final section focuses on the data analysis process. Data analysis is further segmented into two sections, one for the analysis of the questionnaire and one for the analysis of the interview.

MIXED METHODS

This study employed a mixed methodology. Hesse-Biber (2010) defines mixed methods research as, “both quantitative and qualitative data to answer a particular question or set of questions...from a larger-scale study on the same issue, allowing our research results to be generalized for future studies and examinations” (p. 3). While this study did not use a large sample size, a questionnaire provided opportunity for information to be gathered from a group of thirty art teachers. This data then enabled the research to go more in-depth and I selected interviewees from which to gain detailed insight and information regarding the art teachers’ perspectives about their art clubs.

There are five specific reasons why researchers may choose a mixed methods approach to research. The first argument for a mixed methodology is triangulation. According to Hesse-Biber (2010), triangulation “refers to the use of more than one

method while studying the same research question in order to examine the same dimension of a research problem” (p. 3). Multiple methods of data collection allow the researcher to complete a more holistic overview of the particular research topic or questions. Hesse-Biber (2010) stated:

The researcher is looking for a convergence of the data collected by all methods in a study to enhance the credibility of the research findings. Triangulation ultimately fortifies and enriches a study’s conclusions, making them more acceptable to advocates of both qualitative and quantitative methods. (pp. 3-4)

In this study, I compared, or triangulated, data from an online questionnaire and two interviews.

The second reason, according to Hesse-Biber (2010), to consider using a mixed methods design is, “complementarity” (p. 4). Hesse-Biber (2010) explains complementarity as when the researcher tries to,

gain a fuller understanding of the research problem and/or to clarify a given research result. This is accomplished by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data and not just the numerical or narrative explanation alone to understand the social story in its entirety. (p. 4)

Both of the above reasons for mixed methods, triangulation and complementarity, are important because they validate the researchers’ findings through cross-validation. Multiple methods the researcher uses to gather data enable the researcher to compare the findings and make a more conclusive analysis from the multiple sources of information.

For example, in this study the information obtained from one source, the questionnaire, was compared to the data obtained from another source, the interview.

The third reason researchers should consider using mixed methods research is development. According to Hesse-Biber (2010), “mixed methods often aid in the development of a research project by creating a synergistic effect, whereby the results from one method help develop or inform the other method” (p. 5). The final two reasons many researchers use mixed methods methodology are initiation and expansion. Initiation occurs when a, “study’s findings...raise questions or contradictions that will require clarification, thus initiating a new study” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 5). Through the process of initiating a new study researchers may uncover new information, which may lead to the beginning of a entirely new investigation. This process is referred to as expansion, which is the another reason for choosing a mixed methodology approach. Expansion is used by researchers to extend the life of the research, “producing detailed findings...enable future research endeavors and allow researchers to continuously employ different and mixed methods in their pursuit of new or modified research questions” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 5).

This research study utilized a mixed methodology. According to Creswell (2009), “researchers felt that biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods” (p. 14). The data collection tools consisted of interviews and questionnaires, because they provided the best way to unearth the answers to the research questions of this study. The questionnaire was implemented first because it reached a large group of participants in a timely manner. The questionnaire consisted of only sixteen questions and contained mostly multiple choice questions in order to make it more accessible to a larger amount of people. It was important to make the format easy and fast to answer so to increase the possibility that art teachers would participate, and

thus enlarge the amount of data gathered. I first submitted a descriptive questionnaire to ninety-two visual art teachers from the Round Rock Independent School District. Large participant numbers are desirable in order to increase validity. According to Instructional Assessment Resources (2007) online surveys should aim for 30% in order to have a representative sample (www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment). In this study, thirty of the total art teachers surveyed, ninety-two, responded. This is a 32.6% return rate. However, it should be taken into consideration that not all of the ninety-two visual art teachers in the Round Rock district supervise an art club, which made them unable to participate in the survey. By gaining a larger amount of participants during the first data collection, the questionnaire, it provided for a more selective process during the second type of data collection, interviews. Following the questionnaire, two participants met specific criteria and participated in a semi-structured interview. The criteria is discussed later in this chapter. The sequential mixed methods research conducted enabled the researcher to, “elaborate on or expand on the findings of one method with another method” (Creswell, 2009, p. 14).

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Survey

The first form of data collection that was used in this research study was an electronic survey. See Appendix A for a copy of the survey. Creswell (2009) refers to survey design as a, “quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (p. 145). Survey methodology is further explained by Grove, Fowler, Couper, Lepkowski, Singer and Tourangeau (2009) in the following manner: “Survey methodology seeks to identify principles about the

design, collection, processing, and analysis of surveys” (p. 81). There are four basic components to survey design that Creswell (2009) describes. The first component is to identify the purpose of survey research. This is further explained as the, “ purpose is to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude, or behavior of this population” (Creswell, 2009, p. 146). The second component for designing a survey is to indicate why the survey methodology has been chosen and is best suited for the research. The third component Creswell (2009) explains is that the researcher needs to, “indicate whether the survey will be cross-sectional, with the data collected at one point in time, or whether it will be longitudinal, with data collected over time” (p. 146). The final component when designing a survey is to consider the specific form of data collection. There are at least four types of surveys Creswell (2009) outlines: self-administered questionnaires, interviews, structured record reviews, and structured observations.

The survey methodology used in this research study was an electronically administered questionnaire. Ninety-two individuals from the Round Rock visual art teacher database, which encompasses all visual art teachers in the district, received the survey via district e-mail in October 2012. The survey was a total of sixteen questions with a variety of open and closed questions, see Appendix A. The majority of questions given in the questionnaire were closed, which allowed the participants to respond easily through multiple choice answers. The benefits of closed questions is that they were, “quick to complete and straightforward to code” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 321). Therefore, the closed questions enabled participants to answer without investing too much time in the process. Closed questions also led to fast data analysis after completion of the questionnaire. Some closed questions provided opportunity for the participants to elaborate on their response through an open-ended question. According to

Cohen, Manion, & Manion (2007) open-ended questions allow participants to “write a free account in their own terms” and explain their opinion (p. 321). This is important to the research because this provided space for teachers to offer information that would not have been discovered through scaled responses. Open ended questions enabled teachers to include information that may not have been asked for directly on the original survey.

The questionnaire served as the most important data collection tool for this research because it provided a snapshot of what was currently happening regarding art clubs within the Round Rock ISD. This information created a big picture of how art clubs function in this district, and the information gained may be helpful for other art clubs. The next step, semi-structured interviews, used data from the questionnaire as a starting point, but examined more in-depth questions by having individuals elaborate on their experiences as an art club sponsor.

Interview

The second form of data collection used in this study was the semi-structured interview. See Appendix B for a copy of the interview protocol. According to Gillham (2000) an interview is a basic conversation usually between two people. Gillham (2000) proceeds to explain what makes one interview, such as a doctor taking medical history from a new patient, different from another, such as a market researcher gaining information to help launch a new product, is purpose and structure. Interview purposes can vary case by case, but for this thesis, the purpose of interviewing was to answer the research question. Gillham (2000) defines the purpose of research interviews as the following: “to obtain information and understanding of issues relevant to the general aims and specific questions of a research project” (p. 2). The second characteristic of interview

types is structure. Interviews can vary from structured to non-structured. Each one lends itself to a different type of data. The most structured forms of interviews are common in market research where the interviewer knows exactly what they want from the interviewee and asks only direct questions that have a limited choice of answers. This type of interview enables the interviewer to tally the responses providing percentage to the answers. In a more non-structured interview, the interviewer may start off with an opening question, but where the conversation goes from there may be unpredictable. It is up to the interviewer to follow the conversation and control the direction of the conversation (Gillham, 2000). This form of interview will provide for a more natural flow of conversation since some questions emerge from previous context (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 353). A weakness of this form of interview though is that different information may be collected from various interviews, which may make data analysis more difficult (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 353).

One semi-structured interview was conducted with two participants after the first data collection, the questionnaire, was completed and analyzed. The interviews were semi-structured, which followed a set of preliminary questions, but also allowed for the researcher to ask follow up questions as needed. This type of structure enabled specific topics to be covered as well as a natural flow of conversation to develop. The interview process took between thirty to forty five minutes per interviewee, depending on the interviewee's comfort level and flow of conversation. This form of data collection was best suited for this particular research study because of its strong similarities to storytelling and narration. Although having one elementary and one middle school interview covered a broad spectrum of ages, it would have been beneficial to include a high school interview in addition. The interviews served as documentation of how specific art club sponsors have dealt with challenges and successes. The stories, examples

and details that were shared during the interview process added specific examples regarding best practices, which helped triangulate data from the questionnaire. In addition, these art club sponsors' descriptions of their successes may be helpful for other art teachers interested in overseeing art clubs in their schools.

PARTICIPANTS AND LOCATION

All research participants were employed in one suburban school district in Texas, the Round Rock Independent School District. The district is geographically located about half an hour north of Austin, Texas. The city of Round Rock is known by locals for its large technology corporations such as Dell, near multiple universities including The University of Texas at Austin, and it being in close proximity to the state legislature. Round Rock Independent School District accommodates learning for levels pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. In 2012, Round Rock Independent School District reported having 44,862 students enrolled in grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth. In 2012 Round Rock ISD had a student ethnicity break down as follows: African American 9.8%, White 49.7%, Hispanic 26.2%, American Indian 0.4%, Asian 10.5%, Pacific Islander 0.1%, and two or more races 3.2%. The Round Rock district reported in 2012 that 29.8% of their student population was economically disadvantaged and 25.4% was considered at risk (www.tea.state.tx.us). Round Rock Independent School District received a rating of academically acceptable in 2011 according to Texas accountability ratings. The state of Texas defines academically acceptable as meeting each of the following standards: reading/ela 70% passing, writing 70% passing, social studies 70% passing, math 65% passing, science 60% passing. Although the district received an overall rating of academically acceptable in 2011, 18 out of 46 schools received a campus

rating of exemplary, which is the highest state accountability rating (www.roundrockisd.org).

Questionnaire Participants

All questionnaire participants were employed with the Round Rock Independent School District as a visual art teacher in the 2012-2013 year. The questionnaire was open to all grade level visual art teachers ranging from kindergarten to twelfth grade. All ninety-two visual art teachers in the Round Rock district were given the opportunity to participate in the questionnaire and a total of thirty completed the questionnaire for this research. Therefore, this was a 32.6% return rate. According to Instructional Assessment Resources (2007) online surveys should aim for 30% in order to have a representative sample (www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment).

Interview Participants

After data was collected from the questionnaire, two individuals were identified to be interviewed. The selected individuals met the following criteria: (a) they had to have experience sponsoring their school's art club for more than one year; (b) they had both positive and negative experiences to share about their art club; (c) they were willing to be interviewed and had given their consent; and (d) they were required to be currently working as a visual art teacher in the Round Rock Independent School District. The purposeful sampling strategy used the criteria previously listed to identify two participants, where the most relevant information could be collected. The interview participants were given pseudonyms in order to protect their privacy for this research. For the remainder of this research sponsor A will be referred to as Jane and sponsor B will be

referred to as Anne. The interview participants were both females in their 30s and 50s. They both taught visual art in the Round Rock Independent School District. Jane taught art and was an art club sponsor at the elementary level. Anne taught art and was an art club sponsor at the middle school level. Jane had a total of seven years of experience as a visual art teacher within multiple school districts. Anne was the more experienced art teacher of the two. She had a total of thirty-three years as a visual art teacher within multiple school districts and age levels.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Analysis Questionnaire

The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive percentages and coding. Creswell (2009) describes coding as:

the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of the text before bringing meaning to information. It involves taking text data or pictures gathered during data collection, segmenting sentences (or paragraphs) or images into categories, and labeling those categories with a term, often a term based in the actual language of the participant. (p. 186)

The majority of questions included on the survey were multiple choice, so the final data was easily tabulated using descriptive percentages. A smaller portion of the questions asked were open ended or Likert; they allowed the participant more flexibility with their answers when compared to multiple choice questions. “An open-ended question...establishes the territory to be explored while allowing the participant to take any direction he or she wants” (Siedman, 2006, p. 84). All open ended questions were

analyzed using coding which aided in creating themes for the interviews. The themes were not preset for the questionnaire and instead were discovered through the coding process. The Likert questions were an important tool used because they provided opportunity for a better understanding of how participants ranked multiple items against one another. Piotrowski (2005) states that, “likert scales have been widely used and have resulted in a vast amount of information about human attitudes and behaviors” (p. 874). The Likert technique is easy for participants to comprehend and respond to quickly. The participant chooses from predetermined categories most commonly ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The participant chooses which predetermined statement best fits their attitude about the named topic (Piotrowski, 2005, p. 874). The Likert scale is an effective resource when attempting to determine slight variations in attitude toward a number of topics or issues.

Data Analysis of Interviews

All data collected from the two interviews were processed through the same coding system as previously used during the questionnaire data analysis. The themes that were previously discovered during the questionnaire analysis provided a framework for the interviews. By using two similar factors for both sets of data analysis, themes and coding, the data findings could be triangulated. Creswell (2009) refers to triangulation as bringing together, “different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes” (p. 191). The triangulation of themes between the questionnaire data and the interview data created validity and reliability for the research findings. Identifying the reoccurring themes that

were mentioned first in the questionnaire and then again in the interviews shows a consistent theme throughout the study.

The mixed methods research used in this study was conducted in the Round Rock Independent School District. The two forms of data collection used were written survey and oral interview. This chapter explained information about the survey, semi-structured interview, the research participants, and location where the research took place. The data analysis was divided into two sections, one directed toward the analysis of the questionnaire and one emphasizing the analysis of the interviews that were conducted.

Chapter Four: Research Results

INTRODUCTION

The results presented in this chapter were gathered from an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was open from December 11, 2012 to January 17, 2013 and was accessible to all ninety-two Round Rock Independent School District visual art teachers. Through inductive analysis of the data six major themes emerged: extension of classroom curriculum, service-learning and community connection, self esteem and social skills, funding, time restrictions, and support. As reported through visual charts and participant comments, these six themes illustrate how art clubs are used in one suburban district in Texas. The two forms of data collection, questionnaire and interview, are addressed separately in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. All questionnaire data is addressed in Chapter Four and all interview data became support and triangulated the results and themes discovered through the online questionnaire.

PARTICIPANTS BACKGROUND

Questionnaire participants were selected based on their occupation, art teacher, and school district, Round Rock Independent School District. The questionnaire was available to all visual art teachers in the Round Rock Independent School District from December 11, 2012 to January 17, 2013. In the Round Rock School District there are ninety-two kindergarten through twelfth grade visual art teachers. Out of the ninety-two eligible participants, thirty completed the anonymous electronic questionnaire which inquired about being a school's art club sponsor. Therefore, the total number of

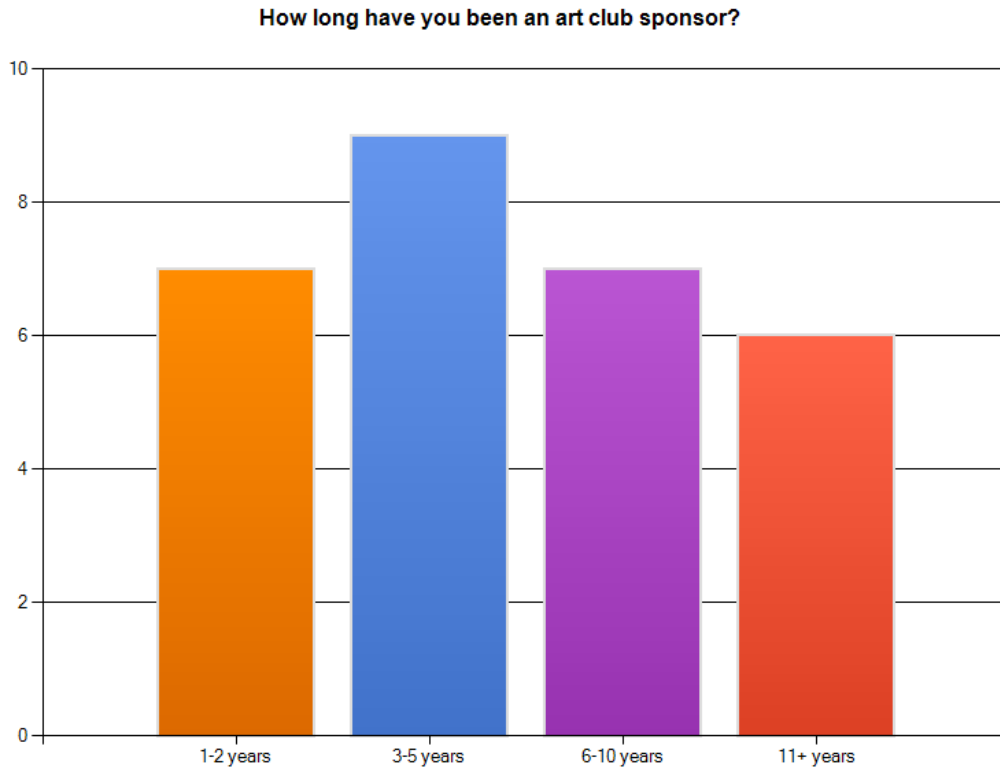


Figure 1: How long have you been an art club sponsor?

participants equals thirty. This is a 32.6% response rate, overall. Of the thirty participants, 20.7% were highly experienced as an art club sponsor, with eleven or more years of club sponsorship. A large portion, 24.1% of participants, were fairly new to sponsoring an art club, with one to two years of experience. The largest majority, 31%, had three to five years of experience. Figure 1 shows a comparison between the various levels of experience had by the questionnaire participants.

The thirty participants that answered the questionnaire all teach visual art in the same school district, but at varying grade levels: elementary school (K-5), middle school

(6-8) and high school (9-12). There was a significant difference in the number of art club sponsors who completed the questionnaire and sponsored an elementary art club, when compared to the amount of respondents who sponsored middle school and high school art clubs. Figure 2 shows that there were 19 elementary school art club sponsors, representing 65.5% of total respondents. 9 middle school art club sponsors representing 31% of responses, and 5 high school art club sponsors at 17.2%. In comparison, there were more elementary art club sponsors, nineteen total, than middle school and high school sponsors combined, fourteen.

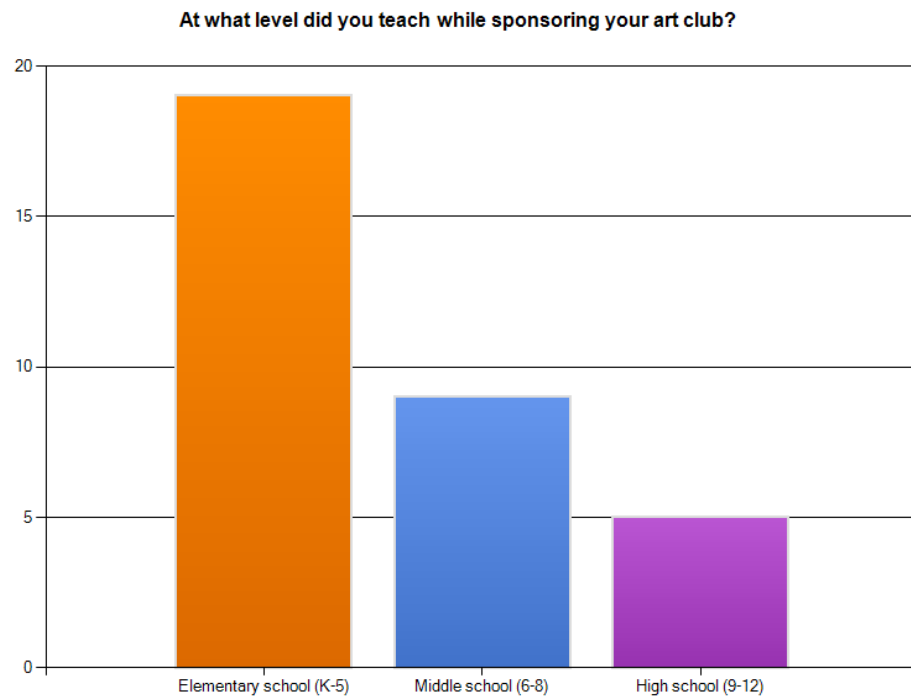


Figure 2: At what level did you teach while sponsoring your art club?

Each questionnaire respondent ran their own unique art club at their school, which allowed for variation in the size of the club and the frequency of meetings. Gathering data on how often a club met gave insight into the dedication to the club for both the sponsor and the student club members. Overall, the data showed that 16 art club sponsors, or 61.5%, were very dedicated and met with their club once a week. Eight art teachers, or 30.8%, met twice a month; 2 teachers, or 7.7%, met with their club once a month. Figure 3 shows that a combined 92.3% of sponsors met between once a week and twice a month. The midrange between these two variables met twice a month, 30.8% or 8 sponsors.

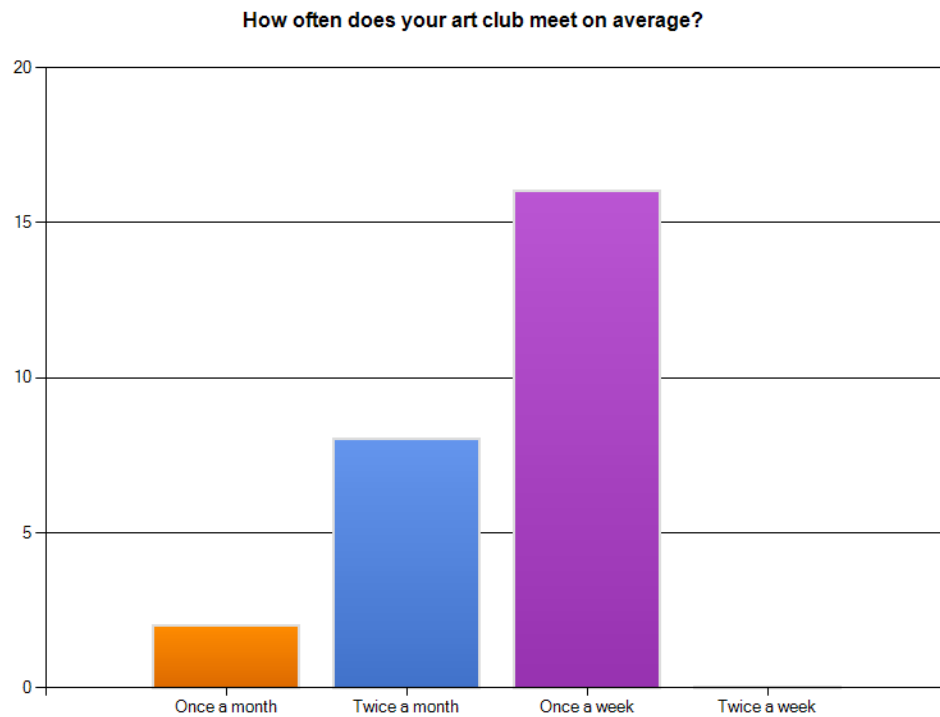


Figure 3: How often does your art club meet, on average?

Figure 4 shows how many students, on average, typically attended art club meetings. Learning the number of students served by an art club helped create a clearer picture of each sponsor’s art club. Balancing a larger group of students, twenty or more, can present different challenges than will occur in a club with only five or less students. According to Figure 4, ten respondents, or 34.5% of art club sponsors, reported that their art club had roughly twenty-one or more students attend meetings on average. Fourteen teachers, or 48.3%, had a more manageable sized group of eleven to twenty members per meeting; five teachers, or 17.2%, had six to ten members attend per meeting. No respondents reported fewer than six members.

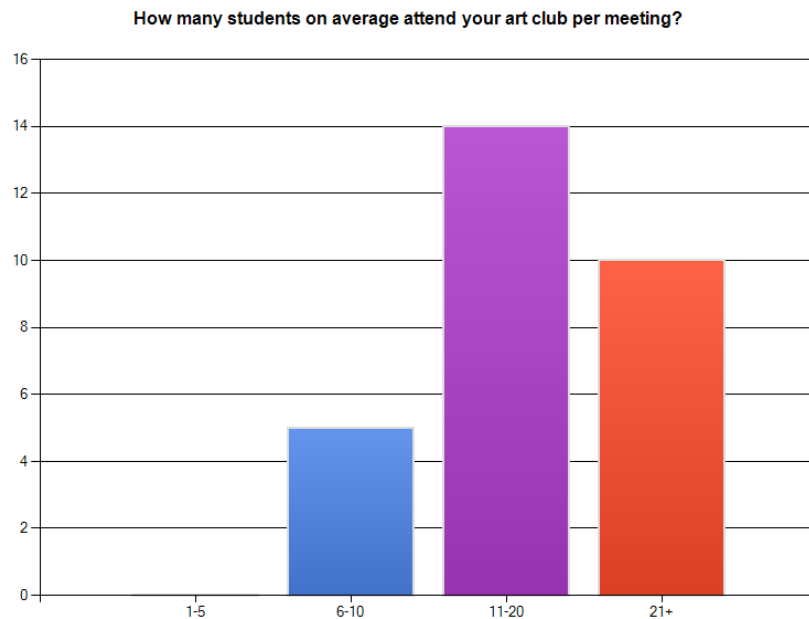


Figure 4: How many students, on average, attend your art club per meeting?

One common thread that existed for a majority of art club sponsor’s who completed the questionnaire was their reason for choosing to lead their art club.

Respondents were given three response options and were allowed to choose more than one answer. The options provided were enjoyment, stipend offered, and administration pressure. Twenty-four art teachers, or 92.3%, selected enjoyment as the most important reason for choosing to lead their school's art club. Administration pressure played a role in ten participants' decision to lead their club, since 38.5% acknowledged it as the reason they became a club sponsor. A small 11.5%, or three art club sponsors, indicated that the reason they led their art club was due to the stipend. This statistic leads to another question for future research, which is how stipends may vary from school to school within the district? Figure 5 shows the large discrepancy in why participants decided to lead their school's art club.

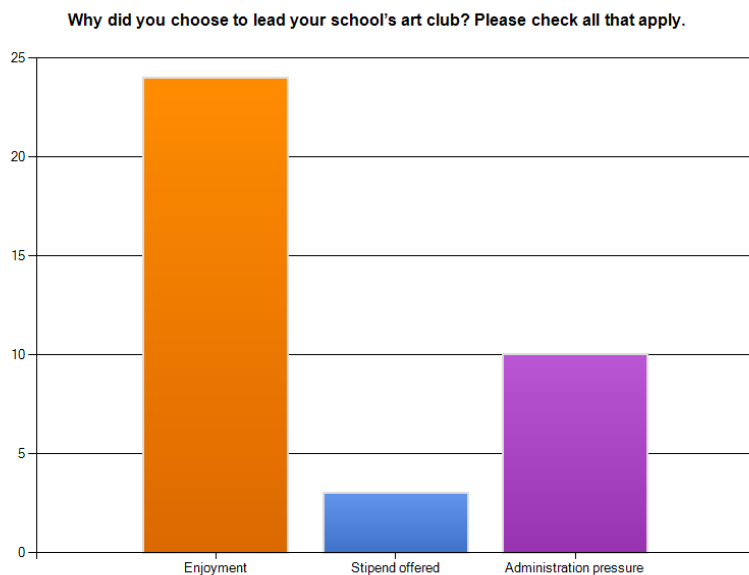


Figure 5: Why did you choose to lead your school's art club?

EXTENSION OF CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

Whether or not sponsors connected their art club to their classroom curriculum was a main focus of this research. Determining whether teachers were extending the

learning day into the after school realm or extending concepts from the classroom for further learning was an important aspect to recognize so it could be better understood how clubs benefited students' learning.

According to Figure 6 the majority of questionnaire participants responded that they considered their art club curriculum linked to their classroom curriculum. 61.5%, or sixteen teachers, responded yes while 38.5%, or ten teachers, responded no. This shows a large majority of participants believed their daily classroom curriculum correlated well with their after school curriculum.

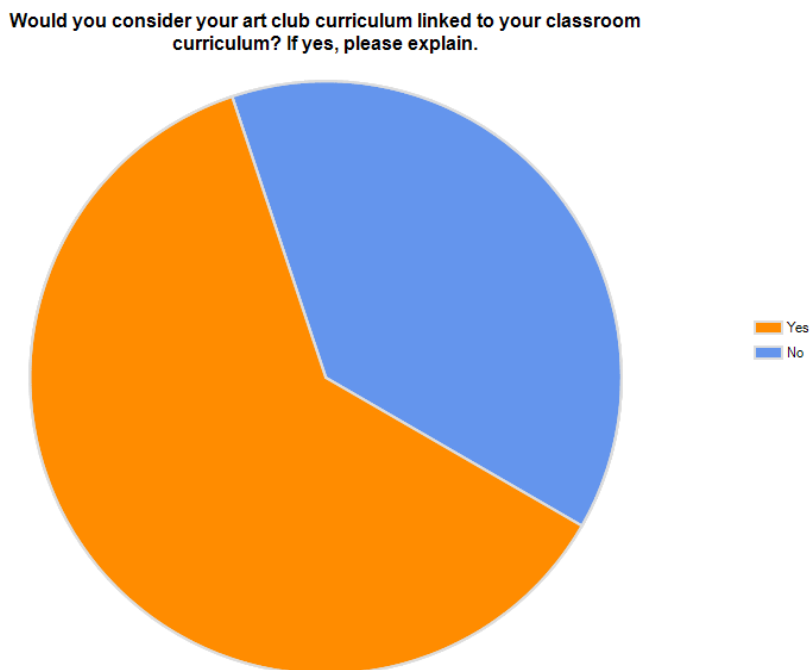


Figure 6: Would you consider your art club curriculum linked to your classroom curriculum?

Participants who believed their art club curriculum was linked to their classroom curriculum provided some specific examples. There were some common threads among

the answers: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), materials, elements and principles of art and design, and technical skills.

Participants made multiple references to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which showed that the TEKS were a significant way that many participants linked their art club and their classroom curriculum. This is significant because the TEKS are the state standard that all visual art teachers in Texas must satisfy in their classroom curriculum. The fact that many questionnaire participants said they used the same TEKS in their art club leads one to believe there was a direct correlation between what was taught in their classroom during the day and what was included in the art club after school. One participant said:

Projects conducted with art club are designed with art elements, principles, and TEKS in mind. All the work produced is of high quality and students learned the history of what it is they were working on and/or looked at real world samples. This is the same structure used to create any project I design for use in my classroom. (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

Another participant responded that the art club curriculum was, “linked but beyond the average lesson-reinforcing the TEKS” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). A third participant said their after school activities taught the, “Same TEKS but more service-learning oriented” when speaking about their art club and classroom curriculum (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013).

The elements and principles of art and design play a large role in the art curriculum and form a basic strand of the TEKS. A few written responses from participants explained that the elements and principles of art were used to link their

classroom curriculum and art club curriculum. One participant said, “In art club we use the elements of art and principles of design while learning new media techniques such as slab, coil, pinch pot, and potter’s wheel” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). The technical practice this participant referenced was cited by many of the questionnaire participants. Figure 7 showed that 61.5% of sponsors, or sixteen, regularly incorporated technical practice into their art club. One participant responded in reference to the elements and principles of art and said, “Art club is an elaboration on

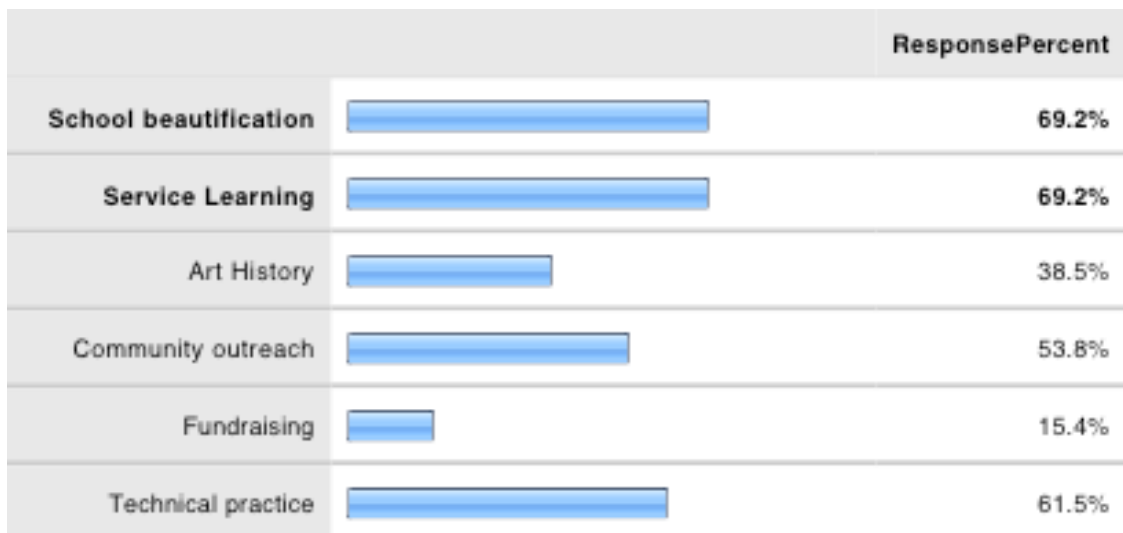


Figure 7: What sorts of programs and/or activities do you do with you art club?

elements and principles. Kids have the chance to go further than in the regular art room” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). Another anonymous questionnaire participant stated:

Students use the same critical thinking and creative process after school as in the regular class, however they are allowed to explore their own media and subject

interests more fully. They use the elements and principles to guide their work and create for a variety of purposes, including community service as well as personal self expression. (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

A participant stated simply, “I always connect the elements of art to the art club projects” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013).

SERVICE-LEARNING AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Adejumo (2010) defined service-learning as, “a method of instruction...to involve learners actively in providing their community with needed services while simultaneously facilitating their educational development. As a result, service learning is reciprocal and mutually beneficial for both the community and the learners” (p. 23). This definition was relevant because it directly correlated with the questionnaire participants’ key points: active learners, community, educational development, and reciprocal relationship.

Questionnaire participants explained what types of programs and/or activities they did with their art club. Figure 7 shows that 69.2%, or eighteen sponsors, utilized service-learning and 53.8%, or fourteen sponsors, utilized community outreach with their art clubs. 69.2 %, or eighteen sponsors, responded to having used school beautification as an activity with their club. Other activities and programs respondents explained using in the past with their art clubs were art history, 38.5 % or ten teachers; fundraising, 15.4% or four teachers; and technical practice, 61.5% or sixteen teachers. Participants were asked

	Not important	Somewhat unimportant	Somewhat important	Very important	Rating Average	Rating Count
Extend classroom concepts and curriculum	8.0% (2)	4.0% (1)	56.0% (14)	32.0% (8)	3.12	25
Create community connections	0.0% (0)	7.7% (2)	19.2% (5)	73.1% (19)	3.65	26
Extra time for work on classroom assignments	84.6% (22)	7.7% (2)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	1.23	26
Program Fundraising	46.2% (12)	19.2% (5)	15.4% (4)	19.2% (5)	2.08	26
Makes art fun for kids	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	15.4% (4)	84.6% (22)	3.85	26
Transfers skills to improve academics	3.8% (1)	11.5% (3)	50.0% (13)	34.6% (9)	3.15	26
Improves self-esteem and socializing skills	0.0% (0)	3.8% (1)	11.5% (3)	84.6% (22)	3.81	26
Stipend	46.2% (12)	11.5% (3)	34.6% (9)	7.7% (2)	2.04	26

Figure 8: Please rate the following items as it pertains to your expectations as an art club sponsor.

specifically about creating community connections and ranked this response on a scale of not important to very important (see Figure 8). 73.1%, or nineteen respondents, said community connections were very important; 19.2%, or five respondents, said somewhat important; 7.7%, or two respondents, said somewhat unimportant; and 0% said it was not important. The chart shows that creating community connections ranks among the top three factors of importance among art club sponsors. The community connection aspect fell shortly below making art fun for kids. 84.6%, or twenty-two sponsors, said making art fun is very important, and improving self-esteem and socializing skills, 84.6% or twenty-two sponsors said very important. The lowest ranked items from Figure 8 were

extra time for work on classroom assignment: 84.6%, or twenty-two sponsors, said not important; program fundraising; 46.2%, or twelve sponsors, said not important; and stipend, 46.2%, or twelve sponsors, said not important. There were two items that ranked as somewhat important in Figure 8. The first item that ranked as somewhat important was transfer skills to improve academics: 50%, or thirteen sponsors, and extend classroom concepts and curriculum, 56%, or fourteen sponsors.

Participants also had a chance to write about their different experiences with making community connections and incorporating service-learning through an open-ended response question asking sponsors to describe their most successful program or activity. One participant described a project from start to finish and how they incorporated the community to help reach the end goal with the project:

At my previous school we had a girls art club. When we met, the girls decided they wanted to learn how to make jewelry and sell it to fund a field trip to the art museum. So, we learned resin casting, worked with wire, plaster casting, weaving. Then we set up an etsy, had a community art show and even got into the local newspapers. By the end of the club we had sold over \$200 worth of jewelry and funded a trip to the museum and the roller rink. It was all about building community, self-esteem and teaching these girls to be creative and have initiative.
(personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

Another questionnaire participant referenced their club's effort in Round Rock Empty Bowls Festival. Empty Bowls was an international grassroots effort to fight hunger. In the fight against hunger handmade bowls were made by artists and then sold to raise money. She went on to say, "It was great to incorporate service learning and allow

students to make functional art to help out. I knew it was successful from the amount of bowls we created, countered with the positive self beliefs and the parent feedback” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). The service-learning aspect of this project taught the sponsor’s students the importance of giving back to their community and how art with purpose can make a difference in the lives of the community. Lastly, an anonymous questionnaire participant gave their explanation of a school appreciation event that the art club was in charge of every year:

Our club sponsors Appreciation events for our campus support staff (custodians and cafeteria workers) every year. The students make hand-made gifts and organize the event dinner/breakfast. The students get to experience the joy of making others smile and feel appreciated. It is a huge success every year. The support staff are always eager to see what kind of gift the students made for them. We have done clay containers, hand-painted canvas bags, tissue-collage votive holders and more. (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

Sponsors have successfully reached out to their surrounding community and beyond through service-learning and many other thoughtful projects like the ones listed above.

SELF-ESTEEM AND SOCIAL SKILLS

It was common for art club participants to identify increased positive self-esteem and increased social interaction as outcomes of their involvement in art club. The positive effects were achieved in a multitude of ways including school beautification projects, public displays of art, and positive feedback from viewers. These findings are explained

using Figure 8 and Figure 9, but most of all through sponsor testimony given in short answer questionnaire questions.

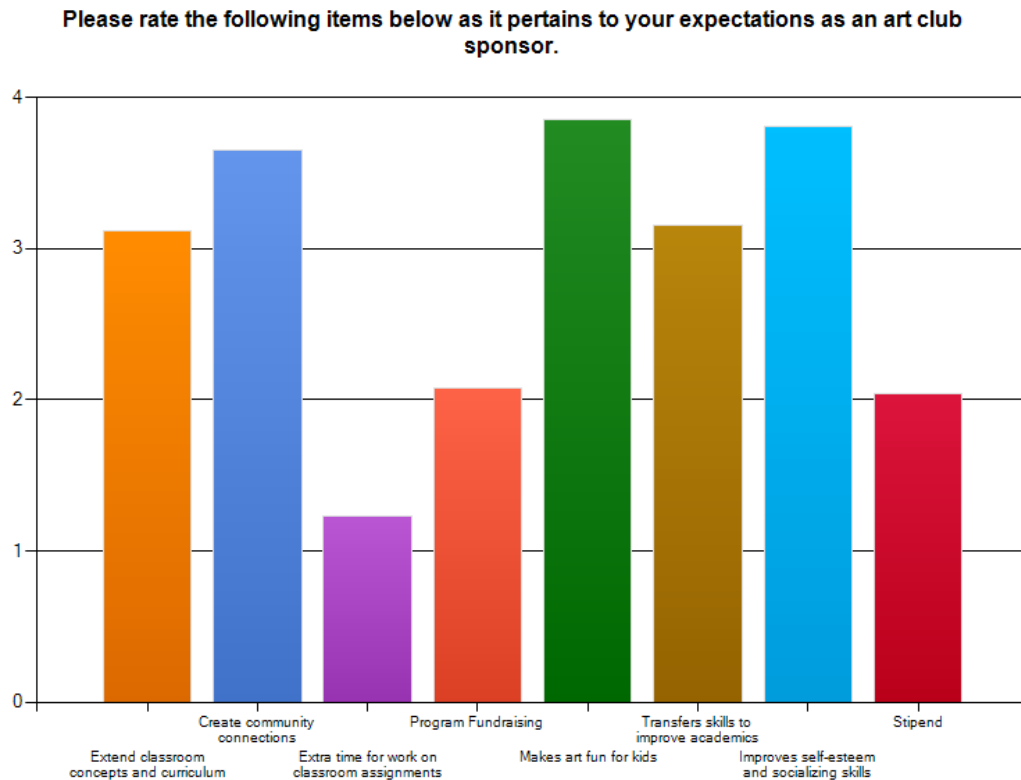


Figure 9: Please rate the following items below as they pertain to your expectations as an art club sponsor.

Questionnaire participants rated different aspects of their club from being not important to very important. Figure 8 showed how the subject of improving self-esteem and socializing skills rated: 84.6%, or twenty two sponsors, said it was very important; 11.5%, or three sponsors, said it was somewhat important; 3.8%, or one sponsor, said it was somewhat unimportant; and 0% said it was not important. See Figure 9 for visual

representation of how improving self-esteem and socializing skills compared to other subjects when sponsors ranked multiple subjects against one another.

When students commit to an activity or a club they invest themselves and take ownership in what they have made or accomplished. This proved true for one anonymous participant who explained a mural project the art club accomplished. They explained:

Art club students painted the courtyard at our school. It was a sad, drab area that students could hang out in after lunch. Art Club voted to liven up the space and painted a series of murals. The students were so surprised and amazed to see the space transformed. The artists were so proud to have their own designs and concepts displayed in a permanent community space. (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

The feeling of pride often accompanies the completion of a large project, such as the one discussed above. This was equally true for another sponsor who said their art club, “Created a quilt to give to the principal, she displayed it in her office. The students were very proud” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). Being able to see an entire project through from beginning to end is an important aspect of building pride in one’s work and overall confidence in one’s self. This became an important factor for one questionnaire participant when trying out a new project. The sponsor explained how the art club attended a local chalk walk festival and created artwork as a collaborative team: “Students who attended felt very rewarded as people would come by and drop their votes for People’s Choice Award. It raised their confidence levels and made new members join our club and attend future meetings” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). Another participant

reflected on similar findings when their art club participated in a local service-learning project where students created clay bowls, which were sold to raise money for local community members in need. The sponsor praised the students for their success with the project and created an atmosphere of positive self-beliefs within the club.

FUNDING

Identifying financial resources and securing funding for school programs can be tricky sometimes. Kraft (1999) discussed inequality in funding for secondary art programs and stated, “one of the most tangible and important resources for a quality education is available funding” (p. 55). When dealing with the art making process, it sometimes requires a bit of creativity to work with existing resources.

All questionnaire participants explained how the art club under their supervision was funded. Figure 10 displays how the majority of participants responded regarding funding for their art club. Art clubs were funded in one of four ways: from the art budget, membership fees, donations, and not funded externally. Figure 10 displayed how 40%, or ten sponsors, reported funding their art club from their art budget; 24%, or six sponsors, reported funding with membership fees; 8%, or two sponsors, reported funding with donations; and 44%, or eleven sponsors, reported no funding for their art club.





		ResponsePercent
From your art budget		40.0%
Membership fees		24.0%
Donations		8.0%
Art club is not funded		44.0%

Figure 10: How is your art club funded?

This statistic highlights one of the major struggles art club sponsors have to deal with, which is the lack of funding for their club. When questionnaire participants were asked to identify the biggest challenge they faced with their art club, 42.3%, or eleven sponsors, responded that it was the lack of funding.

Figure 11 evidenced that lack of funding was not reported as the greatest challenge sponsors had to deal with, but it did rank high. Other challenges sponsors reported in Figure 11 were student's busy schedules 61.5%, or sixteen sponsors; not enough time 50%, or thirteen sponsors; and lack of support (administration, parental or student) 11.5%, or three sponsors. One anonymous sponsor explained how they

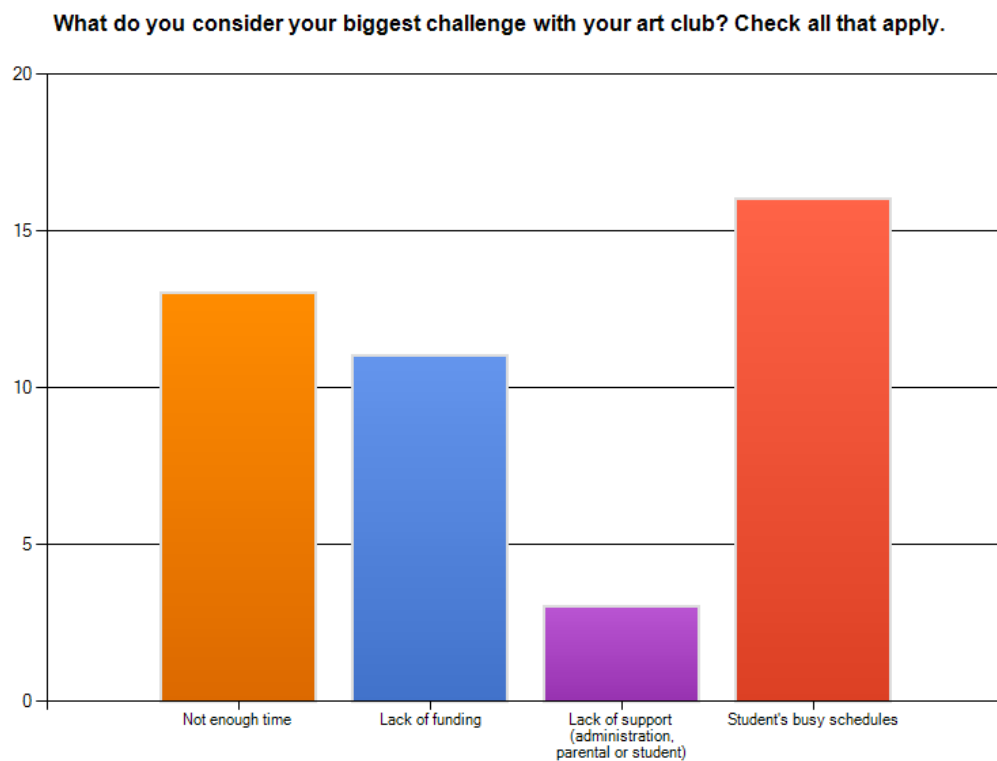


Figure 11: What do you consider your biggest challenge with your art club?

attempted to deal with the lack of funding issue one year: “I charged an admission fee to pay for supplies but after we ran out I didn’t have the heart to ask for more money, so I just kept using my own money” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). A different sponsor wrote about successfully charging a fee for members. Their fee included a t-shirt, so students felt like they were getting more for their money and the sponsor was able to help cover the cost of materials by charging a little extra for the t-shirt. Kraft (1999) found similar situations when investigating art budgets. She stated:

In addition to this somewhat unreliable but invaluable source of funds, many secondary art teachers supplement their budget shortfalls by issuing supply lists to students or assigning lab fees. Many of the instructors at the predominantly minority schools, however, may not have this resource as a viable alternative since many of these students come from poor socioeconomic backgrounds. (Kraft, 1999, p. 57)

Sponsors understand in very direct ways the importance of securing funding for their art clubs, yet overall they do not seem to agree with using the art club’s time for fundraising purposes. When questionnaire participants rated program fundraising on a scale of not important to very important, 46.2%, or twelve sponsors, thought it was not important; 19.2%, or five sponsors, indicated it was somewhat unimportant; 15.4%, or four sponsors, somewhat important; and 19.2%, or five sponsors, very important. When compared with other programs and/or activities possibly incorporated into an art club, fundraising did not come close in comparison. Figure 8 showed how fundraising was only incorporated into 15.4% of art clubs when compared with school beautification

projects, service-learning, art history, community outreach, and technical practice. When asked to describe an experience or activity that could have been improved while they were sponsoring their art club, many sponsors expressed a need for improvement with their funding/fundraising. One anonymous participant stated:

There is a lot of room for improvement when it comes to the funding of art on my campus. The biggest struggle I have is to find projects that can be made with existing materials already in my room or find justifications for asking for the extra money it would cost to do a project with art club. It is always expected that it be very low cost. (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

When funding created limits in what the art club members were able to do or to achieve, sponsors wondered, “I think we could have been able to do more with more funding...but it was too expensive so we were not able to do it” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). It seems, overall, that there were mixed feelings from the participants on how fundraising can benefit art clubs or how fundraising can hinder art clubs and change them into something different than the sponsor originally intended.

TIME RESTRICTIONS

Time is a factor that affected art club sponsors in a multitude of ways. Lack of time restricted the members from completing a lengthy and complicated project. Perhaps there are students who are involved in too many after-school curricular activities. This lack of time makes them unavailable to attend art club regularly. Perhaps it is simply that the sponsor cannot find enough time outside of their classroom teaching to organize club

in the manner they wish. No matter what time factor is restricting the club sponsor, there seemed to be a common frustration with feeling as though there was not enough time to complete the activities planned and undertaken.

When questionnaire participants were faced with considering the biggest challenge faced by their art club, many considered lack of time to be very high ranking. Figure 12 illustrated how 50% of participants considered not having enough time overall to be their biggest challenge. An even larger 61.5% believed student’s busy schedules were their greatest challenge when sponsoring their art club.

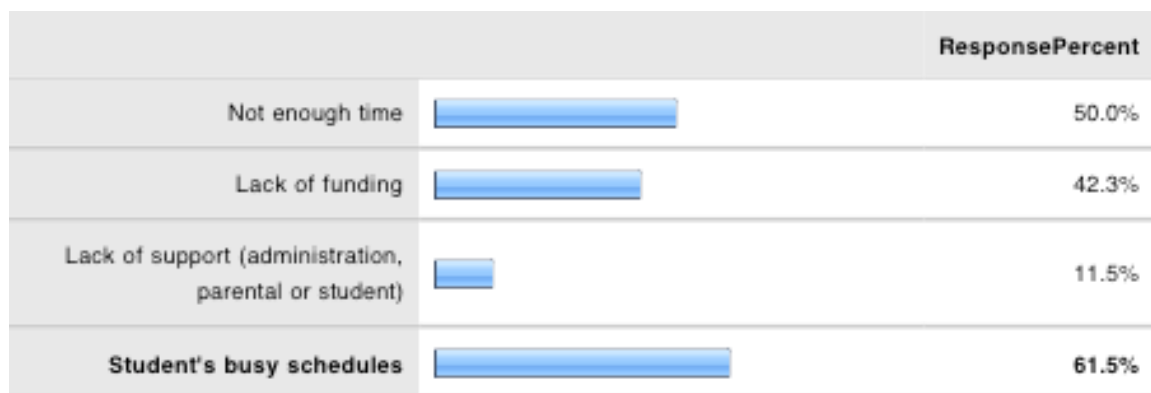


Figure12: What do you consider your biggest challenge with your art club?

There were a variety of factors that caused art club sponsors to feel challenged by their perceived lack of time. One participant referenced the fact that their art project was too involved and took too much time, which caused students to rush through their work. This ultimately sacrificed the integrity of the project. A different anonymous questionnaire participant felt challenged by the time factor because their art club was open for kindergarten through fifth graders, which caused too many overlapping needs and schedules.

SUPPORT

Support for programs, much like the need for more time, can present itself in a multitude of ways. Some club sponsors felt positive support, while others reported no support at all. When support in a club environment is given, it may come from a few different sources: students, parents, co-workers, and administration. Determining where a program is lacking in support and/or full of support can help club sponsors either by enlisting parent volunteers for projects or even just simply receiving gratitude for their hard work.

Questionnaire participants reported upon their biggest challenges with their art club. Participants did not typically find the amount of support they were receiving to be a big challenge. According to Figure 12, 11.5% or 3 teachers saw lack of support as an issue affecting their programs. Open-ended response questions enabled sponsors to explain different factors that have contributed to how their art club is supported, such as parents unwillingness to help out, lack of support within their art department, and having too many students in their club.

Participants stated similar things such as, “more students interested in art club than I can handle” or “too many kids want to join. I cannot support all the students that wish to be in the club” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). Some anonymous participants believed if they could receive extra support from personnel within the department, then they would feel more equipped to deal successfully with the large number of students. Other participants did not know where to find support, but knew it would help after a long day of classroom teaching. When asked what could be improved about the art club, one sponsor responded, “honestly trying to get more

energy when art club comes around. My art club is after school and I am generally so tired” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013).

Parent support seemed to be an overall positive response among most of the sponsors who answered the questionnaire. Only one participant felt the parent support was not all it could be. This sponsor stated, “parents don’t feel comfortable helping in any of our creative clubs; they get shy and unsure of how to encourage others” (personal communication, December 11, 2012 – January 17, 2013). In contrast to this statement, 44%, or eleven sponsors, felt very supported by parents of art club members according to information found in Figure 13. Sponsors felt parents supported the club in many different forms, some of which being verbal, written feedback, volunteering for projects and providing transportation before or after school, and occasionally on weekends.

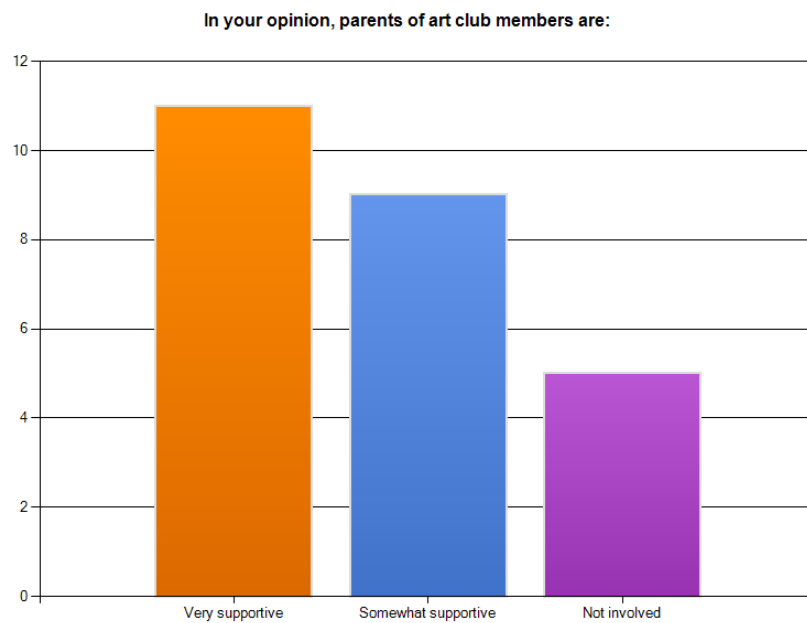


Figure 13: In your opinion, parents of art club members are:

The data presented in this chapter was gathered from an online questionnaire comprised of sixteen questions including some multiple choice and some short answer responses. The questionnaire was accessible to all ninety-two Round Rock Independent School District visual art teachers between December 11, 2012 and January 17, 2013. After an analysis was made of the data that was collected from the questionnaire, six themes emerged: extension of classroom curriculum, service-learning and community connection, self-esteem and social skills, funding, time restrictions and lastly support. Through examination of charted information, percentages, and participant short answer comments, these six themes illustrated a clearer understanding of how art clubs were used in one specific suburban district in Texas. In the following chapter the interview data is presented and used to augment the results found in Chapter Four through the online questionnaire.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

Through this research two questions were addressed: What are the factors that restrict or enable art club facilitators to expand content from their art classroom into the after school art club? What types of programs and activities have teachers found to be effective in their own art club? These questions were addressed using two forms of data collection: an online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

The information presented in this chapter includes the data collected from the two semi-structured interviews. The information gained from the interviews and presented in this chapter helps to triangulate the data collected from the online questionnaire, which was presented in Chapter Four. In this chapter the following will be presented: summary of research, discovery process, future research possibilities and benefits to the field of art education.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to investigate how current art clubs in one school district were utilized within K-12 schools. Through this research I gained a better understanding of how art clubs were funded. The research helped uncover what sorts of programs/activities art club sponsors and students participated in, how, if at all, they used a curriculum for their club, service-learning and community connection, self-esteem and social skills, funding, time restrictions, and lastly support.

This study was open to all art club sponsors kindergarten through twelfth grade in the Round Rock Independent School District. There are three levels of schooling in the Round Rock district: elementary school (kindergarten through fifth), middle school (sixth through eighth), and high school (ninth through twelfth). Out of the thirty participants who answered the questionnaire, 65.5% sponsored their art club at the elementary school level. This seemed surprising since I had originally thought most school clubs originated at the secondary level. According to the findings from this research less than half of the questionnaire participants sponsored a secondary level art club.

Through this research several themes emerged, the first of which was curriculum. Curriculum is the structuring of content for a specific course or study. 65.1% of respondents reported that their art club curriculum was linked to their classroom curriculum. This percentage was an exciting finding because it confirmed my hypothesis. Anne had a different outlook on curriculum in her art club. Anne was a female participant in her 50s who taught middle school in the Round Rock Independent School District and had been an art club sponsor for five years. She said that she did not teach similar concepts in club as she did in class. Anne explained, “I guided it [art club] towards more of a craft and I teach fine arts in my classroom” (personal communication, February 19, 2013). Overall there were mixed feelings about the use of structured curriculum in art clubs, but a majority of the participants in this study believed there was a curriculum in place for their club and there was a natural connection between their art club and their art classroom curriculum.

A second theme that many of the research participants had in common, in regards to their art club, was service-learning and community outreach. It was encouraging to find that 69.2% of questionnaire respondents said they utilized service-learning in their art club. 53.8% of participants indicated that community outreach was an important part

of their art clubs. This high percentage shows that many art club sponsors are going above and beyond the norm and attempting to make real world connections with their students. The large number of sponsors who utilized service-learning and community outreach in their art clubs suggests a large amount of group work is present in these clubs. This is regularly an inherent quality in service-learning and community outreach programs and activities.

This lends itself to the next theme: self-esteem and social skills. Developing social skills is ideal in a group setting such a club. Participants ranked self-esteem and socializing skills in the questionnaire, and 84.6% said such qualities were very important. Jane communicated that she did see friendships grow from students teaming up together, and sometimes she saw friendships develop outside the classroom as a result (personal communication, February 5, 2013). Jane was a female interview participant in her 30s who taught art at the elementary school level in the Round Rock Independent School District. I believe that by connecting service-learning and community to the art club, sponsors created a healthy learning and growing environment for students. Anne understood how significant these connections were to students when she offered, “They [students] need connections. It important for everyone to belong and if it’s only via an art club they need to have some belonging” (personal communication, February 19, 2013). She then continued to say, “That’s why it’s important. For some kids to connect, it might be their only connection” (personal communication, February 19, 2013). Whether it was creating a group connection in the school or a community connection in the surrounding neighborhood, the art club provided a place for students to build their own self-esteem and socialize with their peers in positive ways.

Funding is a critical topic in any school system, especially the art classroom. All supplies take money, and unfortunately money does not come easily in the public school

system. Finding money for a club instead of a regular classroom is an even more difficult task. This was a concern voiced by many participants. Many art club participants believed the lack of funding for their club was amongst one of the biggest struggles they faced. In fact, one participant reported regularly using her own personal money when funds ran empty. There were multiple forms of fundraising that teachers utilized in schools, such as selling school dance tickets or art club T-shirts. Overall, many art club sponsors had mixed feelings on whether fundraising within an art club helps or hinders the students and art making. Fundraising sometimes causes a shift away from the art making process and puts more emphasis on the final product or may just take up too much time that could be better used by engaging in various activities.

Time restrictions and support were the final themes from this research. 50% of participants in this study reported that their biggest struggle as an art club sponsor was not having enough time. This could be explained in two ways. On one hand, teachers reported struggling with projects taking too long and becoming difficult to finish, or sponsors feeling overwhelmed with their classroom obligations and in turn sacrificing certain aspects of their art club. On the other hand, time was an issue due to students' busy schedules. Unlike the classroom, many clubs do not have a required attendance policy. This, along with the busy and full schedules of students, parents, and club sponsors makes accomplishing a club goal quite difficult.

Support, both physical and emotional, came from many different places: coworkers, students, parents, and administration. Through this research I found a variety of responses when it came to the subject of support for an art club. Some sponsors felt frustration due to a lack of support within their school's art department. Some art teachers may have believed they were doing more than their fair share because colleagues were not helping. Others participants felt a lack of support from parents in regards to

volunteering to assist the club in work with large and involved projects. On the other hand, there were many club sponsors who had only positive comments with regards to outside and school support. Support from parents of club members was especially prevalent. Many sponsors commented on how they received support from parents in multiple forms such as: verbal, written, volunteering for large projects and providing transportation to and from school as well as helping on weekends occasionally. Jane spoke about how at the conclusion of her art club there was a lot of positive support vocalized from parents of club members. She explained that her club spent the entire semester learning about and creating stop-motion videos. Then, at the end of the semester they held a grand movie premier and parents were invited to come and watch the art club members' creations. She explained the event as a room filled with club members, parents, videos, positivity, and popcorn. Jane explained this event as a great time for "building relationships with students and parents," because it was a showcase for all of their hard work that semester (personal communication, February 5, 2013). In general, the support for different art club sponsors came from different places, but overall it seemed to be parent and student support that impacted art club sponsors most of all.

DISCOVERY PROCESS

When beginning this research I planned a two-part approach to data collection: a questionnaire and interviews. I was going to use the questionnaire as the first preliminary form of data collection because it would be a faster and less cumbersome way to reach a larger audience of participants. The plan was to disperse the questionnaire via email to all visual art teachers in the Round Rock Independent School District. Since I am a current visual art teacher in the same district I assumed sending the email to all potential

participants would be a task I could accomplish myself. I quickly realized that I would need assistance from the district's curriculum coordinator to gain access to the visual art teacher email database. Due to this unforeseen obstacle I was unable to send the questionnaire myself. Instead I had to contact the curriculum coordinator and ask for assistance with my research questionnaire. This obstacle did not prove to be too difficult to overcome, but was an unforeseen addition to the timeline.

The second part of the data collection was two semi-structured interviews with participants who filled out the questionnaire that met the following criteria: they had to have sponsored their school's art club for at least one year, they had both positive and negative experiences to share about their art club, they were willing to be interviewed and had given their consent, and lastly they were currently working as a visual art teacher in the Round Rock Independent School District. I anticipated the interviews becoming the larger portion of data collected. I believed the questionnaire would attract a small amount of participants and overall not give me very much data to work with. Because of the first assumption, I believed the second data collection, the interviews, would lead to the majority of the data for this research. It was surprising when I sent out the questionnaire how many people volunteered to participate. I was skeptical whether or not teachers would take the time out of their busy schedules to answer questions. Out of a total of ninety-two visual art teachers who were given the questionnaire thirty completed it by my deadline, which is a total of 32.6%. This percentage was much higher than I expected. I speculated whether or not the large number of participants was due to my position as a fellow art teacher in the district. I believe it would have been more difficult to get the amount of results I did had I not been an art teacher and colleague in the district. Another aspect that was unexpected was how many questionnaire participants completed the short answer questions. I was able to utilize a great deal of data from the short answers that

participants provided. All of this led to the unforeseen change in importance when it came to data collection. Originally, I had thought the interview data would rank as the most important data collection feature, but this changed once I received the data from the questionnaire. The large amount of information and great detail of description received in the questionnaire enabled me to use it as my main data source. This shift caused the two interviews to become secondary to the questionnaire. In the end the interviews were used mostly to triangulate the data presented in Chapter Four as well as give specific examples for the themes laid out and discussed in Chapter Four.

FUTURE RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES

This research provided the opportunity to explore how art club sponsors utilized their art clubs within a school setting. The structure of the research provided insight into a small aspect of each sponsor's art club. If the research were taken further and developed more thoroughly I believe there are some aspects that could be expanded upon to create a more holistic view of how art clubs are utilized.

First, an additional component to the research would be to include interview data from a high school art club sponsor. Having interviews with one elementary and one middle school teacher covered a wide range of student ages and grade levels, it would have benefited the research to have the upper ages in high school included as well. This information would then give a more full representation of art club activities and cover all grade levels of public schooling.

A second component I would like to add as the researcher would be observations. If observations of actual art club meetings and the interviews with the art club sponsors were presented together it would create a stronger picture regarding data collection.

Adding to the observations could then be interaction with the students involved in the art club meetings. I believe it would be beneficial to conduct a student survey after observing a couple of art club meetings. This would enable the research to be viewed from another perspective besides the teacher/art club sponsor.

A consideration of alternative perspectives of art clubs may also be important for further research. Perhaps expanding the research to include parent feedback via survey or short interviews could be beneficial. Parent feedback may prove to be valuable because they are likely to reflect any changes that may happen to their child over time. Parents or guardians may notice the impact service-learning, community connections, or even socialization with peers may have on their student. Another perspective that could become helpful in further research would be to conduct interviews with the school's administration. Some school's have strong support from their administration while other's may feel constantly at odds with their administration, whether it is about funding, project ideas, or even the structuring of the art club.

A final consideration for further research on this topic would be to consider expanding outside the one suburban district. Enlarging the area included in the research would allow a more universal view of how art clubs are utilized. Ideally, I would like to include an urban district and a rural district in the research so that both types of school districts are represented.

BENEFITS TO THE FIELD OF ART EDUCATION

There is a growing amount of research in the field of art education, but not much has been developed regarding art clubs. This research provided opportunity for me to gain insight into how art clubs are being utilized in one suburban district within Texas.

Although I only investigated one specific district, I believe the data collected may be applicable to many more districts and art clubs.

Information gathered through this research can help bring awareness to the multiple benefits art clubs have on both students and teachers. Students can benefit from after school art club time by further developing and reinforcing their art skills and techniques learned within the art classroom. Many research participants stated using such things as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, or TEKS, which are the state standards employed by classroom teachers in Texas. By using the TEKS taught in class also in the after school art club students are getting re-taught skills and knowledge, which as a strategy helps to increase their understanding of complex concepts. A second way students benefited from the after school art club time was through social development. Club time enabled students to meet new peers and interact with them in a positive social environment. Many sponsors who participated in the research also commented on their club's involvement in service-learning and/or community outreach programs. These types of activities enable students to gain a sense of social awareness and experience through giving back to their community in a multitude of ways.

Sponsoring an art club can be a daunting task for teachers. It is my hope that with this research more teachers will become aware of the benefits that sponsoring their school's art club can have on their students as well as themselves as educators. All of the research gathered was from sponsors only. I examined their point of view in regards to funding, support, structure, and positive and negative aspects overall. By creating a voice for art club sponsors, I hope this research will encourage other art teachers to take on the extra yet rewarding role as an art club sponsor at their own school.

CONCLUSION

Art clubs have the ability and the power to challenge students and help them grow in ways that will benefit them inside and outside the classroom. Art club sponsors have the opportunity to create an environment within their art club that facilitates learning and encourages students on a social or even civic level. Art clubs in schools provide educators with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to expand their classroom curriculum and ultimately encourage students to be and think creatively.

When conducting this research I interviewed two art club sponsors who challenged themselves and created art clubs that did more than just provide a space for students after the school day ends. Instead they created warm and welcoming environments that encouraged all students to think, create, share, help and explore. When interviewing Anne she stated:

I can't imagine a group without an art club. It's educating the whole child.

Catching the child who will never be able to take art and exposing them to something, whether it's a craft like I did or maybe a fine art like other people do, it's important (personal communication, February 19, 2013).

Club sponsors have and will continue to structure their clubs in many different ways, but in the end what matters most is creating the club and encouraging students to think, create, and build relationships. It is important for art teachers to realize the opportunity they have to become an art club sponsor and enrich the lives of all children-latch key child or not. Sponsors have the ability to lead an art club and challenge themselves and club members, a process from which both students and the surrounding community can benefit.

Appendix A: Sample Questionnaire- Extending the K-12 Art Classroom into the After-School Art Club

1. How long have you been an art club sponsor for a school?
 - a. A: 1-2 years
 - b. B: 3-5 years
 - c. C: 6-10 years
 - d. D: 11+ years

2. At what level did you teach while sponsoring your art club?
 - a. Elementary school (grades K-5)
 - b. Middle school (grades 6-8)
 - c. High school (grades 9-12)

3. How many students on average attend your art club?
 - a. 1-5
 - b. 6-10
 - c. 11-20
 - d. 21+

4. How often does your art club meet on average?
 - a. Once a month
 - b. Twice a month
 - c. Once a week
 - d. Twice a week
 - e. Other (please specify)

5. Would you consider your art club curriculum linked to your regular classroom curriculum? If yes, please explain.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

6. As a teacher what do you consider the most important purpose of your art club? Please rate the following items below on a scale of 1-4, 4 being very important and 1 being not important.
- Extent classroom concepts and curriculum
 - Create community connections
 - Extra time for work on classroom assignments
 - Program Fundraising
 - Makes art fun for kids
 - Transfers skills to improve academics
 - Improves self-esteem and socializing skills
 - Stipend
 - Other (please specify)
7. What sorts of programs and/or activities do you do with your art club? Check all that apply.
- School beautification
 - Service learning
 - Art History
 - Community outreach
 - Fundraising
 - Technical practice
 - Other (please specify)
8. What other activities, not mentioned above, have you done? Please explain.
9. Why did you choose to lead your school's art club? Please check all that apply.
- Enjoyment
 - Stipend offered
 - Administration pressure
 - Other (please specify)
10. What do you consider your biggest challenge with your art club?
- Not enough time
 - Lack of funding
 - Lack of support (administration, parental or student)
 - Student's busy schedules

11. How is your art club funded?
 - a. From your art budget
 - b. Membership fees
 - c. Donation
 - d. Other (please specify)

12. In your opinion were parents of club members:
 - a. Very supportive
 - b. Somewhat supportive
 - c. Not involved

13. In your opinion was your administration:
 - a. Very supportive
 - b. Somewhat supportive
 - c. Not involved

14. Describe one program or activity you have done with your art club that you thought was the most successful. How did you know it was successful?

15. Describe one project or activity that could have been more successful while sponsoring your art club?

16. Would you be willing to talk more about this topic in a thirty or forty minute follow up interview? If yes, please provide your email and contact information.

Appendix B: Sample Interview Questions- Extending the K-12 Art Classroom into the After-School Art Club

Teacher Background

- What is your educational background? How did you get into education?
- How many years have you been an art teacher?
- What are the grade levels of students involved in your art club?
- How did you come to be your school's art club sponsor? (Was it assigned to you or did you form the club yourself?)

Curriculum

- Are there any key elements that you believe must be in place in order for an art club to be successful?
- Do you create a curriculum for your art club? (Is there something you do in the beginning of the year compared to the end?)
- Have you ever used your art club to reinforce what you teach in the classroom?
- Do you teach similar concepts in your art club and your classroom?
 - If yes, what?
 - If no, why not?
- Do you spend time teaching new information or skills before a new project or activity?
- How, if at all is your teaching different in your classroom compared to your art club?

Community Connection and Service-learning

- As an art club sponsor, how do you reach out to the community and build relationships?
- Do you ever take your students out into the community? (field trips?)

- How if at all does service-learning factor into your art club?

Support

- What kind of support or response do you get from the administration when it comes to your art club?
- How have parents responded, if at all, to their student's interaction in the art club?
- How do students communicate their like or dislike for a project to you?

Self-esteem/Social skills

- Do you think sponsoring your school's art club has benefited your school's art program? If so, how?
- How do you think art club benefits your students socially? (emotionally, developmentally)
- In your opinion does being involved in art club benefit students in other academic classes?

Strengths/Struggles

- What is one project/activity you did with your art club that was successful? Why do you think it was successful?
- What is one project/activity you did with your art club that could be improved? Why do you think it needed improvement or what were some problems you found afterward?
- What was your favorite activity/project you have ever done with your art club?
- What do you enjoy about sponsoring your art club?
- What do you consider some of your biggest struggles with your art club?
- What is your most memorable moment with you art club?

Art Education Benefits

- How if at all do you feel art clubs benefit the field of art education?
- What do you enjoy about teaching art?

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