

Key Features of the Kennedy Center's Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) Model Schools Program

The key features of the CETA Model Schools program are:

- A. Arts-Integrated Instruction
- B. Ongoing, Multi-Year Commitment
- C. Multiple Professional Development Formats
- D. Focus on both Classroom Teachers and Arts Specialists
- E. Program Improvement and Sustainability
- F. Program Impact: Research and Evaluation

A Arts-Integrated Instruction

There are many approaches to arts-integrated instruction. The CETA program defines arts integration as an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate their understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.

For further information on CETA's approach to arts integration, see the additional PDF file.

B. Ongoing, Multi-Year Commitment

Recognizing that change is a long-term process, the schools in the CETA program, the Kennedy Center, and the school districts commit to an ongoing partnership. Letters of Agreement, signed and renewed annually, outline each organization's roles and responsibilities (such as course planning and supervision, financial requirements, and communication).

C. Multiple Formats of Professional Development

The strength of the program is the teachers' selection of their own learning experiences. Teachers choose their professional development from a variety of options: courses about arts integration, demonstration teaching by artists in the classroom, and coaching in the classroom. In addition, all teachers participate in study groups in which they plan arts-integrated units, share reflections on classroom implementation, and read and discuss articles/books related to arts integration.

1. Courses

Every year teachers participate in courses that focus on integrating dance, drama, music, visual arts, poetry, and/or storytelling with other subject areas, such as English Language Arts, social studies, science, and mathematics. Principals and assistant principals also attend courses to build their understanding of arts integration.

These courses engage teachers in learning through the arts, so they can experience first-hand, active, problem-based learning.

Teachers attend courses in teams from their school. This allows them to continue to work with colleagues who can provide support as they implement arts integration strategies in the classroom.

The majority of courses are offered during the school day with schools providing substitutes to allow teachers to attend. Some courses are offered as a summer institute. The courses include four sessions (3-6 hours each) allowing teachers to study in-depth.

In their first year in CETA, all teachers attend an introductory session which provides a grounding in the CETA program's definition of arts integration, participate in a CETA course, and observe demonstration teaching in classrooms.

In subsequent years, teachers select either courses or participation in a coaching program.

C. Multiple Formats of Professional Development (continued)

Examples of Course Offerings:

- Tableau: A Theatrical Technique for Learning Across the Curriculum (introductory and advanced),
- Integrating Dance and Science (introductory and advanced),
- Integrating Drawing Across the Curriculum
- Integrating the Arts with the Early Childhood Curriculum
- Using Visual Art as a Catalyst for Writing
- Improving Reading Comprehension Through the Arts
- Creative Connection: Writing and Performing Poetry
- Backward Design: A Process for Creating Arts-Integrated Units
- Action Research: Examining the Impact of Arts-Integrated Instruction
- Special Expertise: The Role of the Arts Specialists in the CETA program

In addition, schools participate in a Strategic Planning Course for School Leaders along with a school team (consisting of the principal, arts specialists, classroom teachers, school district administrators, and parents). In this course, each school creates its own vision and mission statements, identifies long-term goals, and a long-range plan.

“Before I started this course, I did not know how to integrate the arts. Now I know not only how, but why.”—CETA teacher

2. Coaching/Mentoring

Teachers are expected to implement the arts integration strategies that are examined, modeled, and discussed during courses. To help teachers do this, they may choose to work with an Arts Coach. The Arts Coach is usually the course instructor, who provides a series of six individualized coaching sessions in the teacher’s classroom. The goal is for the teacher to become more self-reliant and skilled in leading arts-integrated instruction.

C. Multiple Formats of Professional Development (continued)

Coaching Program Structure

The program consists of the following components:

a. Professional Development for Teachers

A professional development workshop or course is attended by a group of teachers.

b. Goal Setting/Planning

The Arts Coach and teacher set goals for the teacher's learning and plan the lessons.

c. Five Classroom Sessions

The Arts Coach and teacher conduct five sessions in the classroom focusing on empowering the teacher to teach arts integrated lessons/units. Strategies to be used in the classroom include:

- **Demonstration Teaching**
The Arts Coach models the arts-integrated instruction in the classroom.
- **Teacher and Arts Coach Share the Instruction**
- **Teacher Independently Provides Instruction**
Teacher takes the entire responsibility for leading an arts-integrated lesson that is observed by the Arts Coach.

d. Reflection Sessions

Each Classroom Session is followed by a Reflection Session during which the Arts Coach and teacher discuss the lesson's implementation, identify areas for teacher improvement, examine student response and progress, and make plans for the next lesson. The Arts Coach is available by e-mail or phone to respond to questions that arise as the teacher implements the arts strategy between sessions.

e. Follow-up Session

A few months after the end of the coaching series, the Arts Coach returns to the classroom for another session to see the teacher's progress in leading the arts-integrated instruction and to provide the necessary support and follow-up. Teachers may be ready to learn the next steps for instruction, see the Arts Coach demonstrate a new or familiar technique, or have the Arts Coach observe their teaching and provide feedback. This follow-up session provides an important incentive for teachers to continue their work after the Arts Coach leaves.

C. Multiple Formats of Professional Development (continued)

f. Annual Evaluation Meeting

An annual evaluation meeting is attended by the Arts Coaches and teachers from all the schools participating in the program. Discussions are guided by a series of questions targeted at eliciting in-depth responses about program design and implementation. To allow for a variety of points of view to be expressed frankly, the Arts Coaches meet alone, then Arts Coaches and teachers meet together, and finally, the teachers meet alone to discuss their experiences and make suggestions to Kennedy Center staff members. This feedback helps program staff evaluate the needs of the coaching program and make needed adjustments.

“Working with an Arts Coach for these past two years has truly changed the way I teach. I have learned first hand the power of using drama in the classroom and there is no turning back!”—CETA teacher

3. Study Groups

In-school study groups provide opportunities for teachers to extend and guide their own learning. The power of the study group is enhanced by the participation of the principal and assistant principal.

Teams of teachers and their administrators, who together attend professional development courses, meet monthly in their schools as study groups. At the beginning of the school year, study groups complete an Action Plan that describes the process and content for their meetings. During study group meetings, the group members complete a Study Group Log to document their work.

“The study group meeting is a time when we meet to read and reflect on books or articles provided by the Kennedy Center. It is also a time to share how we have implemented what we have learned in courses and discuss what worked, what hasn't, and get help from each other.” -- CETA teacher

D. Focus on both Classroom Teachers and Arts Specialists

In order to create a cohesive faculty, take advantage of the expertise in the school, and impact a school's culture, both classroom teachers and arts specialists are involved in the CETA program.

Students spend the majority of their time with classroom teachers who make daily decisions about how to provide arts-integrated instruction. In schools where arts specialists (visual arts, music, dance, and drama) are employed, they play a critical role. Their art-form expertise gives them a central, and often a leadership, role in supporting the work of classroom teachers as they learn how to integrate the arts with other subjects.

Arts specialists understand that arts-integrated instruction complements discipline-based instruction in the arts (provided by arts specialists).

Each year, professional development sessions are offered for the arts specialists to further examine their roles in the schools and identify ways they can support classroom teachers as they learn how to integrate the arts with other subjects. Arts specialists also share ideas about how they have connected their art forms with other parts of the curriculum and with other art forms.

“Now, I see myself as a teacher, not just as an arts teacher. I look at myself differently. Teachers look at me differently. They treat me as an expert. Before CETA, I felt like I was just a person who taught music.”—Music Specialist

E. Program Improvement and Sustainability

Because the CETA program is responsive to the needs of students, teachers, and administrators, it is revised and improved on an ongoing basis. As a result, it is, and will always be, a “work-in-progress.”

Each year program evaluation results are used formatively. Evaluation is not the end of the process, but part of a feedback system that is crucial to the CETA program's ongoing development.

Program sustainability is a key concern. It is addressed on a continuing basis by offering orientations for new principals; using strategies to maintain program visibility; maintaining ongoing communication with the school district-level administrators; empowering teachers, arts specialists, and principals to play leadership roles within the program; and developing parent and community support.

E. Program Improvement and Sustainability (continued)

1. CETA Principals

CETA school principals benefit from learning from other principals about their experiences with the program. CETA principals meet four times each year to get information about new program initiatives, share successes, discuss challenges, find solutions, and offer feedback to guide improvements in the overall program.

2. CETA School Coordinators

Each school has a CETA School Coordinator, who is responsible for maintaining ongoing communication between the school and the Kennedy Center, providing updates to the principal about the program's progress, coordinating CETA events at the school, and serving on the CETA Steering Committee.

3. CETA Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee, consisting of three representatives from each school, meets four times a year to facilitate ongoing communication, provide feedback to the program director, and to serve as a working committee to address needs as they arise.

4. Strategic Planning Course

During a 3-session Strategic Planning Course, school teams create a school vision statement about the arts and arts integration and develop a long-range plan to ensure the sustainability of the program within their schools. The school team members include the principal, CETA School Coordinator, arts specialist(s), classroom teacher(s), a parent representative (president of the PTA/PTO), and a supervisor from the school district. The course also provides an opportunity for schools to share successes and discuss challenges.

5. Developing School District Support

School district support is key to developing and maintaining a healthy program. In the CETA program, key school district administrators provide the official approval and endorsement, are involved in the program planning process, provide funding for substitutes, pay membership fees, and have communication responsibilities both inside and outside the school district.

6. Ongoing Communication and Networking

Keeping everyone knowledgeable and informed about the program is a critical goal. Key players—teachers, principals, and administrators-- have opportunities to network both within the school and across schools and school districts through meetings and attendance at courses. In addition, quarterly newsletters provide an opportunity for CETA schools to share successes and information about special events.

F. Program Impact: Research and Evaluation

In 2005, a three-year agreement was initiated with George Mason University to implement a program evaluation. The work is being led by Jennifer McCreadie, Director, Assessment and Program Evaluation, College of Education and Human Development, and Dr. Joan Isenberg, Associate Dean for Outreach and Program Development, Graduate School of Education.

The program evaluation focuses on the following areas: impact on student achievement, impact of the professional development on teachers' instructional practice, support by arts specialists and coaches, role of administrators, and effect on school culture.

See Research Evaluation document for more information.