



**PYRAMID**  
COMMUNICATIONS

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**ICICLE FUND  
YOUTH ARTS  
OPPORTUNITY  
STUDY**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## BACKGROUND

Located in the town of Leavenworth, the Icicle Fund has for almost two decades funded work to protect the environment of, promote the natural and cultural history of, and advance the arts in North Central Washington state. The Icicle Fund believes:

- Arts are fundamental to a well-rounded education for all students.
- Arts help all students to succeed in school and in life.
- High-quality arts programs are more likely to be a part of children's lives when school and community leaders collaborate with that goal in mind.

The Icicle Fund hired Pyramid Communications to better understand what arts opportunities exist in and out of school for students in grades K-12 in Leavenworth and across the Wenatchee Valley, which stretches east from Leavenworth, through Cashmere, to Wenatchee and the suburb of East Wenatchee.

In addition, we sought to learn more about:

- Challenges and barriers to youth arts opportunities.
- Service gaps in youth arts opportunities.
- Effective strategies and best practices for providing youth arts opportunities.
- Potential funding sources and partners for youth arts opportunities.

We looked deepest at the arts opportunities in the Leavenworth area, but also made a thorough study of the full Wenatchee Valley. After our research was underway, the Icicle Fund requested we also survey in- and out-of-school arts opportunities in Okanogan County, north of the Wenatchee Valley. Findings for Okanogan are included as an addendum to our full report.

*Getting into art has helped me look at problems and figure out how to solve them in a unique way.*

— Cascade High School student

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## METHODOLOGY

For this study, we accessed or developed four bodies of quantitative and qualitative data for analysis.

The most robust information came from secondary school arts **class enrollment data** for the 2016-17 school year from the Cascade, Cashmere, Eastmont, and Wenatchee School Districts. This data encompassed every middle and high school student in each district. This data undergirds our analysis of how many students are taking arts classes, what kind of art they're studying, who (by race and gender) is studying, how much arts education they're receiving, and more.

We also created and fielded **eight distinct surveys** that were distributed in the Wenatchee Valley to elementary, middle, and high school principals, to community arts organizations, and to individual teaching artists in the Wenatchee Valley. (Teaching artists are those who both create and teach art, and is the preferred identifier for this group in arts research.) These surveys were adapted for distribution to similar groups in Okanogan County.

As often as possible in the school principals' surveys we developed questions parallel to the Seattle Public Schools Art Access Survey and Cohort Analysis Results (June 2012) and the Washington State Arts Education Research Initiative (2009). By benchmarking to these communities, the data in this report can be compared to other communities in the state.

Of those who received the surveys, 25 out of 31 school principals participated; 19 out of 42 community arts organizations participated (nine completed fully) and seven out of 21 teaching artists participated.

We supplemented this data with a series of **interviews**. Subjects were selected from 44 candidates chosen with input from the Icicle Fund's arts committee and others. Together, we conducted 22 interviews, most lasting 30 to 60 minutes, and nearly all in person in the Wenatchee Valley.

Finally, to obtain input from young people themselves, we held an hourlong **focus group** with seven students from Cascade High School in Leavenworth.

In addition, we reviewed an array of literature before and during our study, including the three studies mentioned above, as well as a battery of historic arts programming documents from the Icicle Fund. We also paid special attention to [Leveraging Change: Increasing Access to Arts Education in Rural Areas](#) (2017) by Lisa Donovan and Maren Brown, which is particularly relevant given its rural focus—a rarity in arts education research—and its recent publication.

For the Okanogan addendum, we worked with Amanda Jackson Mott of Methow Arts to distribute locally-tailored surveys to 25 community arts organizations and 31 teaching artists. Of those, 11 organizations and seven artists participated in the survey.

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## SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS IN WENATCHEE VALLEY

- 1. Arts providers and community members agree: the region values the arts.** When asked to rank the Valley's top three strengths of arts education in the region, school principals and arts organizations both chose "Community support for the arts" more than any other strength. The top two choices for individual artists were related: "Youth interest and appreciation for arts education" and "Parental involvement in and support for youth arts." Moreover, we heard similar reports from participants in our interviews and focus group. This support across the region is significant. Not every community—and not every rural community—appreciates the arts so explicitly. It suggests supporters here might spend less time defending the value of arts and more time discussing how best to back them.
- 2. Fewer elementary schools in North Central Washington incorporate arts education than the national average—yet the reverse is (usually) true for middle and high schools.** Across the United States, 94% of elementary schools have music programs ([National Center for Education Statistics](#), 2012), but in Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County, it's 89% and 67%, respectively. Nationally, 83% of elementaries provide visual arts; in the Valley it's 72%; and in Okanogan it's just 33%. But all of North Central Washington exceeds the 91% of secondary schools that offer music nationally, and universal visual arts in the region's secondary schools set them well above the national rate of 89%. However, no schools in North Central Washington offer dance, whereas 12% of secondary schools nationally have programs. And the 45% national rate for theater tops the 38% of Wenatchee Valley schools that offer the discipline and the 9% of Okanogan County schools that do.
- 3. Young people are eager to participate in visual arts as well as music.** The Wenatchee Valley is known by its residents to be supportive of music, from universal music in elementary schools, to vibrant mariachi bands in the Wenatchee and Eastmont School Districts, to the renowned classical music programs at Icicle Creek Center for the Arts. Our research, however, found just as much hunger for visual arts. Most of the community arts organizations and teaching artists who participated in the survey provide visual arts education. (Responses in theater and dance were too small for meaningful analysis.) More interesting still, is that by high school, enrollment in visual arts outpaces enrollment in music in all four Wenatchee Valley school districts. In the Eastmont District, one-third of students were enrolled in visual arts this year. The Cascade District has the fewest, at 20%. By contrast the highest enrollment for music (Eastmont) is 22%.
- 4. Latino students are enrolled in less art overall in middle and high school.** The collective student body of the four Wenatchee Valley school districts is 50% white and 45.4% Latino, so our study of arts participation and dosage focused primarily on these two groups. Overall, there are no significant differences in the number of secondary school students enrolled in at least one arts class per year by race; however there are variations in which students enroll in which disciplines and for how many classes.

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Latino students are 10% less likely to take a music class; white students are 7% more likely. By contrast, Latino students are 12% more likely to take visual arts classes; white students are 10% less likely. Across the districts, music students are engaged in arts the longest, at two full semesters. The average visual arts student is taking about half that: 1 to 1.3 semesters.

Because white students are more likely to be enrolled in music, they're more likely to receive more arts schooling. Latino students are more likely to be enrolled in visual arts, and thus more likely to receive less arts schooling. In fact, across the four districts, white students are 12.3% more likely to be enrolled in an extra semester of art than their Latino peers. Extended over the course of a high school career, white students are likely to receive more arts education than their Latino classmates.

**5. More partnerships with schools could boost arts participation, especially for Latino youth.** Community organizations and teaching artists in the Wenatchee Valley are also more likely to serve white students than Latino students, for a variety of reasons, including cost, communication, and transportation. Organizations that want to reach more Latino youth should establish partnerships with schools, which are more likely to be trusted entities for Latino families. As one educator said, "Once you have established the place, the transportation, and parents are comfortable—then you have the opportunity to teach."

**6. More arts teachers in schools are a priority.** Across the board, principals, arts organizations, and teaching artists want to see more full-time, certified arts teachers working in the schools. This was the top funding priority for principals, selected by 68% of principals overall, and 80% of secondary school principals. It was also the top priority for community arts organizations, and chosen by 86% of teaching artists.

Another priority worth noting is funding for transportation. This was the top choice for new investment by organizations, and lack of transportation preventing arts participation was an issue raised in several interviews. It is particularly critical for afterschool programs, especially in areas as far-flung as the Cascade School District. In light of this need, schools become even more valuable as locations for outside-of-school programming, since they're centrally located and already familiar transportation hubs.

**7. More arts integration is needed—and wanted.** No schools in the Wenatchee Valley have adopted and implemented integrated arts programs. Arts integration is an approach to teaching any subject through and with the arts. (For example, a science teacher and a music teacher develop and teach a unit on patterns of movement in astronomy and composition.) Successful arts integration typically requires collaboration among teachers, support from school leadership, and students using higher order thinking skills. Weaving arts into other subjects through integration may address some of the school-day pressure to meet requirements in other subjects, which was cited by principals as the greatest barrier in arts education. Training in arts integration was cited by the highest number of principals as a professional development need for instructors, including by 70% of



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elementary principals. It was also the top vote getter for professional development needs of teaching artists.

While the primary focus of our study is the Wenatchee Valley region, our addendum that reviews arts opportunities in Okanogan County yielded these notable findings:

**Okanogan County’s ecosystem of community-based arts education is strong, but arts education in schools is less robust than in the Wenatchee Valley.** The teaching artists in our survey hold a wealth of experience: more than 71% have been teaching for more than 20 years, and 57% are certified arts educators (compared to zero in our Wenatchee Valley survey). While more than 90% of arts organizations and teaching artists serve the Methow Valley, each of the county’s eight school districts is served by at least two of our participating organizations.

Interestingly, school principals in our surveys cited the quality of community-based arts organizations as the county’s greatest arts assets. Elementary schools in the county provide significantly less arts education. As mentioned above, just 67% of schools have music teachers (compared to 89% in the Wenatchee Valley); only 33% have visual arts teachers (compared to 72% in the Valley). In secondary schools, music and visual arts are on par with Valley peers, but only 9% of Okanogan County schools offer theater (compared to 38% in the Wenatchee Valley). At the elementary level, 63% of elementary arts providers are certified to teach arts, versus 92% in the Valley. Understandably, then, 73% of principals said the greatest barrier to teaching arts is a lack of classroom teachers certified to teach the arts; 80% prioritized training in arts integration as the greatest professional development need.

Several elements of the arts experience in Okanogan County are distinctive. More than 45% of community arts organizations are focused on arts-based youth development (growing social, emotional, cognitive, and physical competencies), compared to just 11% in the Valley. Three-quarters of those organizations reported measuring social-emotional impacts of arts education on the young people they serve, compared to 43% in the Wenatchee Valley. More than 11% of the County population is Native American—most from the nearby Colville Indian Reservation—so arts organizations there serve more Native youth. Two organizations reported that a quarter to a half of their students are Native American. School districts might consider more outreach to Native youth.

## CONCLUSION

The data in this study confirm that there are disparities in arts education in the Wenatchee Valley. Currently, white students receive more semesters of art in high school than Latino students. Different groups of youth have different levels of access. Ultimately, this means uneven

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opportunities for young people that extend well beyond the arts. As one focus group student said, “Getting into art has helped me look at problems and figure out how to solve them in a unique way.”

A clear asset for the region is that people across the Valley believe in the value of young people participating in the arts. Ultimately, it comes down to this: Principals, artists, parents, and others want to get more arts education to more young people—that’s a first victory. There are many community leaders, vibrant community arts organizations, and artists eager to help. The additional data and analysis here can be used to inform decisions on how the region will fulfill its goal by supporting new investments in high-quality, equitable arts opportunities in and out of school. In so doing, the Wenatchee Valley can serve as a model for other regions throughout the state and nation.

# INTRODUCTION

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## STUDY BACKGROUND

Located in the small town of Leavenworth, Wash., the Icicle Fund is a philanthropy that prioritizes investments in three areas: protecting the environment of, promoting the natural and cultural history of, and advancing the arts in North Central Washington state.

In the fall of 2016, the Fund's arts committee commissioned a study to better understand the landscape of arts opportunities for young people in the region. The idea for the study was sparked by an arts supporter with a number of intriguing ideas for reaching students—but without data to know if those ideas would be embraced or achieve the intended impact.

The committee sought answers to the following:

- What arts opportunities are available to students in grades K-12, both in and out of school?
- What challenges and barriers exist to youth arts opportunities?
- What service gaps exist in youth arts opportunities?
- What are effective strategies and best practices for providing youth arts opportunities?
- What are potential funding sources and partners for youth arts opportunities?

Pyramid Communications, a strategy and creative firm in nearby Seattle, Wash., was hired to conduct the study and report findings. We began the study in earnest in February 2017 and delivered this final report to the Icicle Fund board of directors in June.

We looked deepest at the arts opportunities in the Leavenworth area, but also made a thorough study of the full Wenatchee Valley, which includes the towns of Leavenworth, Cashmere, Wenatchee, and East Wenatchee. After our research was underway, the Icicle Fund requested we also survey in- and out-of-school arts opportunities in Okanogan County, north of the Wenatchee Valley. Findings for Okanogan are included as an addendum to the full report.

## BENEFITS OF ARTS EDUCATION

Though the benefits of an arts education are well documented, it's worth noting that value here, briefly.

Arts have the ability to connect students to their own cultures and to others' cultures, deepening students' sense of belonging and relevance. Making art involves cultivating a personal voice, vision, and identity, and often includes collaboration with peers. Mastering arts skills requires dedicated practice and purposeful development of new skills. Perhaps most important, in high-quality arts

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learning environments, there is no single correct answer—allowing students the freedom to set a vision, experiment, fail, and learn—practices central to building creativity, critical thinking, and learning mindsets.

Students, of course, don't need to be shown academic studies to understand art's value. "Art classes are a place for me to express myself," said one Wenatchee Valley high schooler we spoke with. "I get to play my own piece, make my own art, sing my own song. This is so important for all kids."

There is significant correlational evidence that the arts affect student learning and achievement across subjects. Studies by the Arts Education Partnership show increased problem-solving, conditional, and creative thinking among arts-engaged students.

Another Wenatchee Valley student: "Getting into art has helped me look at problems and figure out how to solve them in a unique way."

According to a [major longitudinal study](#) by the University of California, Los Angeles, low-income students who attended arts-rich high schools were twice as likely to go on to receive a bachelor's degree than those at arts-poor high schools. The study shows significant differences in academic achievement (as measured by grades, standardized tests, and high school graduation) between students highly involved in the arts and those with little arts engagement, especially for students from low-income backgrounds.

In addition to the evidence that arts education and arts integration can support academic achievement and 21st century skills like creativity ([Catterall and Peppler](#), 2007; [Dupont](#), 1992; [Keehn et al.](#), 2008), studies also show that instruction in these arts can contribute to fostering socio-emotional well being and positive learning mindsets, as well as to creating positive school environments. [Winner et al.](#) (2006) found that persistence was a skill present in visual arts learning in Boston schools. Stevenson and Deasy (2005) found many practices central to the development of academic mindsets in arts integration programs. In [Third Space: When Learning Matters](#), they found that arts education as a central part of the school curriculum provides conditions for students to take risks, set and monitor goals, explore identity, build students' self-efficacy, and build community.

## **ARTS EDUCATION IN RURAL SETTINGS**

Few studies to date have explored arts education access—and racial or economic disparities in arts education access—in rural areas. A [report by the NCES](#) found that fewer elementary and secondary schools in rural areas and small towns offer music and visual arts than their city and suburban counterparts, with greater disparities in visual arts instruction. (NCES, 2012)

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A 2009 study by the Washington State Arts Commission found that rural schools had more consistent music education programs than urban schools in Washington state, but that visual arts instruction was less common or more sporadic in rural areas. Illinois Creates, a statewide coalition of partners in education, found that “students in rural areas tend to receive the least amount of arts education, [and] arts education levels are lower in rural districts regardless of socioeconomic indicators, level of social problems or dominant race of students.” ([Illinois Arts Alliance](#), 2005)

In [Leveraging Change: Increasing Access to Arts Education in Rural Areas](#), a 2017 working paper published by the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, researchers Lisa Donovan and Maren Brown conducted extensive interviews with heads of state arts agencies in states with high numbers of rural school districts. They identified common challenges and opportunities in providing arts education in rural areas. Some key themes emerged:

- **Poverty.** Rural areas across the country tend to coincide with higher concentrations of poverty. This has implications for young people: poverty affects their physical and socio-emotional well-being, as well as their access to resources and opportunities. It also has implications for schools and school districts, which draw most of their funding from local tax bases, as well as supplemental funding from parent donations and local levies. These conditions often limit the capacity of schools to provide comprehensive arts education, and may affect young people’s access to arts learning opportunities out of school.
- **Geographic distance.** Distance affects arts education access and quality, adding a burden of time and cost for transportation, and reducing professional development opportunities. Transportation is noted as a particularly large barrier for youth participation in out-of-school arts learning opportunities.
- **Recruitment and retention of arts teachers and administrators.**
- **Lack of institutional and policy support for arts education in schools.** This challenge is also cited in urban districts, and is connected to local, state, and national educational policies that prioritize high-stakes testing in subjects such as math and reading. As Annie Calkins notes in her report, *On Thin Ice: Status of Arts Education in Alaska*, “thousands of Alaskan students do not receive any formal arts education.” The reasons teachers cite most frequently are No Child Left Behind mandates, lack of time in the school day, and lack of confidence. (Calkins, 2009)
- **Limited private foundation presence in rural areas.** According to the Forum for Regional Associations of Grantmakers, in a 2004 study by the Southern Rural Development Initiative, only 3% of the total foundation assets in the United States are in rural areas. (as cited in Donovan and Brown, 2017)

# METHODOLOGY

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Between interviews, a youth focus group, school surveys, community-based organization surveys, and teaching artist surveys, we recorded 81 Wenatchee Valley voices in our study.

## AREAS SURVEYED

Our team was charged with gathering information in the following three geographic areas:

- **Cascade School district:** We focused our efforts most heavily here with surveys (school, community-based organizations, and teaching artists), interviews, one youth focus group, and extensive analysis of district secondary (middle and high school) arts enrollment data. We chose this area of focus in response to Icicle Fund's request for information on this area. Icicle Fund also had the strongest relationships in this area, which helped open doors for our team in collecting data.
- **Wenatchee Valley:** We conducted interviews with parents, teachers, and administrators in Wenatchee Valley, and sent school surveys to every elementary and secondary school in the Valley, and conducted extensive analysis of district secondary (middle and high school) arts enrollment data. We also included area organizations and teaching artists in separate surveys of this area. No focus groups were conducted in this area.
- **Okanogan County:** We partnered with Amanda Jackson Mott, Executive Director of Methow Arts, to design and distribute surveys to schools, community-based organizations, and teaching artists in Okanogan County. No interviews or focus groups were conducted in this area, and no enrollment data were analyzed. This area was surveyed as part of an addendum to our initial charge to survey youth arts education opportunities in the Wenatchee Valley. Results are included in the Okanogan County addendum.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior to beginning the study, our team conducted research on current and past art education offerings in the Wenatchee Valley via the following materials:

- Icicle Fund 2015-2017 strategic plan
- ArtIs strategic plan
- ArtIs creative brief
- Icicle Fund youth board description
- Icicle Fund Youth Board funding renewal and report
- North Central Washington Arts Survey, June 2008
- Icicle Fund board of directors responsibilities and structure
- Arts Funding Initiative Report, February 2010

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We reviewed the following surveys and studies for benchmark data and context:

- Seattle Public Schools Art Access Survey and Cohort Analysis Results, June 2012
  - *This study was of particular value because it represented a community with a known thriving arts presence against which we could compare Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County findings*
- Highline Public Schools Arts Capacity Survey, 2014-2015
- Arts Education Resource Initiative: The State of K-12 Arts Education in Washington State, 2008-2009
- Leveraging Change: Increasing Access to Arts Education in Rural Areas, 2017
- National Guild for Community Arts Education Benchmark Survey, 2013
- Teaching Artist Research Project, 2011
- National Center for Educational Statistics, Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999-2000 and 2009-2010.
- Revitalizing Arts Education Through Community-Wide Coordination, 2008
- Re-Investing In Arts Education: Winning America's Future Through Creative Schools, 2011

Information from these studies as well as other best practices literature is woven throughout this report, most frequently in sections labeled “Context and Trends.”

## **INTERVIEWS**

In partnership with Christine Morgan, Terry Porlier, and other members of the Icicle Fund Arts Committee, we created a list of 44 interview candidates in the Wenatchee Valley, with an emphasis on the Upper Valley, based on:

- Affiliation to cultural organizations in the area.
- Role in the community, including parent, teacher, school administrator, artist, cultural leader, school board, and others.
- Ability to speak knowledgeably about the unique history of arts in the Wenatchee Valley.

We contacted participants and conducted 22 interviews. These were mostly conducted in-person in Leavenworth and Wenatchee over three trips in the spring of 2017, but several were conducted over the phone due to scheduling constraints.

These interviews included:

- 12 arts teachers
- Six parents of Wenatchee Valley arts students
- Three artists
- Five Wenatchee Valley community-based arts organization administrators

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- Three principals
  - Three Wenatchee Valley school administrators

Some interviewees spoke from multiple perspectives, particularly educators and others in the school districts who also related their experiences as parents with children in Valley schools.

Appendix A includes a complete list of interview questions.

We conducted one additional interview with Lisa Jaret, Arts in Education Program Manager at ArtsEd Washington to obtain additional information about youth arts education opportunities and professional development available in similar rural communities across Washington.

We quote from the above interviews throughout the report, but have kept attribution anonymous to allow study participants to speak freely.

## **FOCUS GROUP**

The Icicle Fund arts committee expressed a particular interest in reflecting youth voices in the study. In partnership with James Mitsuyasu, Teara Dillon, and Principal Elia Ala'ilima-Daley (Cascade High School), we conducted a lunchtime focus group with seven Cascade High School art students in spring 2017.

The focus group spanned grades and artistic disciplines offered at Cascade High School, including visual art, production art, choir, drama, ceramics, concert band, jazz ensemble, marching band, and others.

Please see appendix A for a complete list of focus group questions.

## **ENROLLMENT DATA**

We solicited and received arts class enrollment data for 2016-17 from the Cascade, Cashmere, Eastmont, and Wenatchee school districts for their secondary schools (middle and high school). This data encompassed every school and student in each district, and we relied heavily on this data in drawing conclusions in the following areas:

- Enrollment in arts classes
- Arts class enrollment by race
- Arts class enrollment by gender
- Arts class enrollment by grade
- Number of arts classes offered by discipline



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Overall district and school enrollment and demographic data was drawn from the [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction](#). The most recent publicly available data was from 2015-16.

These enrollment reports are much more comprehensive than the elective surveys outlined below, so our most reliable data comes from this information. As such, we can draw more conclusions about in-school arts education opportunities than those that are out of school.

## **SURVEYS**

We designed eight distinct surveys to gather information on youth arts education opportunities in Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County:

- Wenatchee Elementary Schools
- Wenatchee Secondary Schools
- Wenatchee Community-Based Organizations
- Wenatchee Teaching Artists
- Okanogan Elementary Schools
- Okanogan Secondary Schools
- Okanogan Community-Based Organizations
- Okanogan Teaching Artists

We focused survey questions on quality and quantity of youth arts education opportunities.

Please see the Okanogan Addendum for information on Okanogan survey design and deployment.

## **SURVEY DESIGN**

Whenever possible, we benchmarked our survey questions to the Seattle Public Schools Art Access Survey and Cohort Analysis Results (June 2012) and the Washington State Arts Education Research Initiative (2009). By emulating questions within these existing surveys, we were able to compare Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County survey results to other communities in Washington.

We also kept questions and answers consistent across surveys to make data as comparable as possible.

The majority of survey questions included a comments box, and many respondents used this space to share additional thoughts on youth arts education opportunities available in the Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County. For the sake of brevity, our narrative focuses

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on qualitative and aggregated data, but full responses are available in Appendix A, and we encourage reviewing them.

Please see Appendix A for a full list of survey questions.

## **SURVEY DEPLOYMENT**

### **Elementary and secondary schools in the Wenatchee Valley**

With consent and encouragement from superintendents of Cascade, Cashmere, Eastmont, and Wenatchee School districts, we emailed elementary and secondary surveys to corresponding principals with an introductory note about our study and background.

Principals were asked to participate over a three-week period, and received up to four reminders via email and phone to encourage participation.

The following schools received the surveys:

#### **Cascade:**

- Beaver Valley School
- Osborn Elementary
- Peshastin-Dryden Elementary
- Cascade High School
- Icicle River Middle School

#### **Cashmere:**

- Vale Elementary
- Cashmere Middle School
- Cashmere High School

#### **Eastmont:**

- Canyon View Group Home
- Cascade Elementary
- Grant Elementary School
- *Kenroy Elementary*
- Robert E Lee Elementary
- *Rock Island Elementary*
- *Clovis Point Intermediate School*
- Eastmont High School/Sterling K-7 School
- *Eastmont Junior High*

#### **Wenatchee:**

- Valley Academy of Learning
- *Wenatchee Valley Tech*
- Columbia Elementary School
- John Newberry Elementary School
- Lewis & Clark Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School

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- Mission View Elementary School
  - Sunnyslope Elementary School
  - Washington Elementary School
  - Foothills Middle School
  - Orchard Middle School
  - Pioneer Middle School
  - Wenatchee High School
  - WestSide High School

Schools in italics did not respond to the survey. With 31 schools invited to participate and 25 respondents, we saw a school return rate of 80%.

### **Community-based organizations and teaching artists**

Through a comprehensive internet search and Icicle Fund stakeholder interviews, we identified 43 programs that included arts education programming for K-12 age youth in the Wenatchee Valley. Of these, 30% were visual arts programs, 26% were music programs, 16% were dance programs, 5% were theatre programs and 23% were programs that included a focus on two or more art forms.

The following community-based arts organizations received the survey:

- Art on the Avenues; Beauty of Bronze program
- Avra Kedavara Kamp
- City of Wenatchee Arts, Recreation and Parks Programs
- Columbia River Music Conservatory
- Dance Creations Studio
- Dancing with Birds
- Eastmont Parks and Recreation
- Edelweis Academy
- Fabulous Feet Dance Studio
- Fiestas Mexicanas
- Fruit Tones Studio
- Grunewald Guild
- Holden Village
- Icicle Creek Center for the Arts
- Julian Patrick Vocal Camp
- Lake Wenatchee YMCA Camp
- Last Tuesday's Artists
- Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery, USFWS, school programs & salmon fest
- Leavenworth Summer Theatre
- Mariachi Huenachi, Wenatchee High School Mariachi
- Mariachi Northwest Festival
- Mountain Sprouts Children's Community
- Musical Instruments To Schools
- Next Step Dance Studio
- Numerica Performing Arts Center
- Saddlerock School of Music
- Stage Kids Washington
- Two Rivers Art Gallery
- Upper Valley Connection
- Village Art in the Park
- Wenatchee Afterschool Arts & Mentoring
- Wenatchee Arts Education Consortium
- Wenatchee Irish Dance
- Wenatchee Jazz Workshop

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- Wenatchee River Bluegrass Festival
  - Wenatchee River Institute, Art Academy
  - Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center
  - Wenatchee Valley Symphony Orchestra
  - Wenatchee Valley YMCA
  - Wenatchee Valley Music Teachers Association
  - Woods House Conservatory of Music

Through a similar comprehensive internet search and Icicle Fund stakeholder interviews, we identified 21 teaching artists who include arts education programming for K-12 age youth in the Wenatchee Valley. Many of these teachers are multidisciplinary in their art instruction.

We contacted community-based organizations and teaching artists four times over three weeks to encourage participation. Nineteen community arts organizations participated in the survey for a response rate of 44%; of those 19, nine completed or nearly completed the full battery of questions in our survey. Seven teaching artists participated in the survey for a response rate of 33%.

Participation was anonymous, but affiliates of the following organizations volunteered their participation in the teaching artist survey:

- City of Wenatchee Arts, Recreation and Parks Programs
- Dancing with Birds
- Grunewald Guild
- Holden Village
- Icicle Creek Center for the Arts
- Last Tuesday's Artists
- Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery, USFWS, school programs & salmon fest
- Mountain Sprouts Children's Community
- Upper Valley Connection
- Village Art in the Park
- Wenatchee Arts Education Consortium
- Wenatchee River Institute, Art Academy
- Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center

## **ABBREVIATIONS USED**

We reference the following abbreviations throughout the report:

- WV: Wenatchee Valley
- OSPI: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- CBPA: Classroom-Based Performance Assessments

# SCHOOL-BASED ARTS EDUCATION

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## **PARTICIPATION: CONTEXT AND TRENDS**

Despite national policy that defines the arts as a core academic subject, and decades of research demonstrating academic, cognitive, and socio-emotional benefits of arts education, arts education is still offered at highly inconsistent and low levels in public schools across our nation. Nationally, school day arts education access rose from the 1930s to around 1980, but began a steep decline in the '80s as the federal government disinvested in public education and districts began to focus on accountability through testing. The decline accelerated with the passage of No Child Left Behind in 2002. In fact, in [a national arts participation survey conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts \(NEA\)](#), the number of 18-year-olds reporting they had any arts education in childhood declined by 15.1% between 1982 and 2008 (to 49.5%). (Rabkin and Hedberg, 2011, p. 15)

[A study by the National Center for Education Statistics \(NCES\)](#) found that elementary music education has remained mostly steady between 1999 and 2009, with 94% of elementary schools reporting music instruction, and only a 4% decline in visual arts instruction to 83% of schools reporting visual arts instruction. In secondary schools (middle and high schools), 91% of secondary schools offered music instruction (a 1% increase over 1999-2000), and 89% offered visual arts instruction (a 4% decline). It should be noted that this study did not report on the number of students who participate in that arts instruction, which can vary considerably even in schools with arts teachers.

### **By race, gender, and income**

While arts education access compared to other core academic subjects is low for everyone, these data show that access for young people of color and students in poverty is considerably worse. In fact, when these declines measured through the NEA national survey are disaggregated by race, it becomes clear that these declines were experienced almost entirely by young people of color. White respondents reported only a 1.3% decline, whereas African American and Latino respondents reporting having had any childhood arts education declined by 24.7% and 19.1% respectively. (Rabkin and Hedberg, 2011, p.16). (It should be noted that since this survey data is based on young adults' childhood memories, specific percentages are likely to be less accurate than the relative differences in responses over time and by race.)

Arts access surveys also consistently find that girls are over-represented in music and visual arts classes in secondary schools, though there has been little investigation into the causes of this gender gap.

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The NCES report also found differences between low- and high-poverty schools, as measured by the percentages of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), an indicator of family poverty. In 2008-09, fewer schools that served a majority of FRPL-eligible students provided music and visual arts instruction than in 1999-2000. There were as many as 15% fewer high-poverty schools (76%+ FRPL-eligible students) providing music and visual arts instruction than low-poverty schools (25% or less FRPL-eligible) in 2008-09.

[A 2012 report from Seattle Public Schools](#) showed that race was the greatest predictor of access to school-day arts education within the district, followed by family income and program status. In 2011-2012, the odds of African American, Latino, and Native American students being enrolled in an arts class were significantly lower—as much as 33% lower—than their white counterparts. Conversely, Advance Placement Program (APP) students in the district (who are majority white) are three times more likely to be enrolled in an arts class than those not enrolled in APP. In Highline Public Schools, a suburban district south of Seattle with a very diverse and high poverty student population, an internal study found overall access low relative to nearby Seattle, with some disparities in access by race.

While there are undoubtedly many factors that contribute to these disparities, there are likely some key contributing forces. Several common factors were echoed by our interview subjects.

Schools facing pressure to improve state tests in math and reading scores may feel pressure to increase instructional time in those tested subjects and reduce time in non-tested subjects including the arts. “Teachers have a lot of pressure on them now to meet goals and objectives for state standards,” one educator told us. “Arts are often jettisoned.” In elementary schools, this factor, along with reduced funding from parent teacher associations, can translate into shorter classes or no arts program, which impacts all students in the school.

*Teachers have a lot of pressure on them now to meet goals and objectives for state standards. Arts are often jettisoned.*

— *Wenatchee Valley educator*

In middle and high school, the arts often become elective subjects, and there are frequent disparities in which students chose to participate that correlate to race and family income. Students in English language learner programs and students struggling academically may be required to participate in language or remedial courses during their elective periods. Some factors may also be cultural, with some students feeling a sense of belonging or connection in arts classes and others perhaps not.

Finally, a young person’s exposure to art forms likely predicts future engagement, especially in music, where a beginner may have trouble joining a more experienced ensemble of students. One parent whose daughter attends a school in the Cascade district worried in our interview that children who don’t get involved in art from a young age later face insurmountable skill barriers.

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## Role of data

Collecting data on arts participation is a recognized strategy for addressing the racial and income gaps in arts education participation. When data was revealed in Seattle, it catalyzed district leaders, administrators, policy makers, and funders into action, as they acknowledged the disparity as unacceptable and began working together to ensure greater opportunities for arts education for all students. They were especially focused on building equitable pathways into arts classes in elementary school. They also sought to boost the cultural relevance of arts education with residencies by artists reflecting the diverse home cultures of Seattle students. As a result, the access gap is beginning to close.

## Innovation in the Valley

Wenatchee Valley is home to its own excellent example of making arts education relevant to the students' home cultures. High schools in both Wenatchee and Eastmont school districts have vibrant mariachi bands in the school day, and Wenatchee also has a popular baile folklórico (traditional Mexican folk dance) program after school. As districts with large Latino populations, these classes primarily draw Latino students, who are otherwise under-represented in district music classes. The Wenatchee mariachi band is a model program that travels and performs throughout the state and has received considerable local and national attention. In our interviews, we heard anecdotal evidence about the strength of these programs and the hopes that they might serve as a cultural bridge and connector between white and Latino students and communities.

## PARTICIPATION: WENATCHEE VALLEY OVERVIEW

**Key finding:** As it does nationally, arts participation decreases as young people progress through the school system. In the WV, nearly all kids receive music classes in elementary schools, and 80% of middle schoolers take art. But less than half—46%—take art in high school. Still, the Valley's combined secondary school arts enrollment of 60% is 10 points higher than the state average.

In the Wenatchee Valley, 97% of elementary school students attend schools where they receive arts education during school hours through weekly music classes. Nearly 40% of elementary school students attend schools where they receive regular visual arts education. The only consistent visual arts education for elementary students is offered in the Wenatchee School District. In other districts, most schools work to provide some arts education through a variety of approaches. For example, in the Eastmont School District, one visual arts specialist works across five elementary schools to provide two units of visual arts instruction to all students per year. In the Cascade School District, children receive one visual art class each month through the

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Leavenworth Elementary Arts Appreciation Program (LEAAP), which is led by a teaching artist and parent volunteers.

Consistent with national patterns, participation rates drop as arts become elective subjects in middle and high school. In middle school, 80% of the 3,822 students across the four districts were enrolled in at least one arts class during the 2016-17 school year. (Note that Cashmere and Eastmont Middle Schools begin at grade 5; Cascade and Wenatchee Middle Schools begin at grade 6.) Of 5,696 high schoolers, fewer than half—46%—were enrolled in one or more arts class this year.

While the trend in the Wenatchee Valley is for fewer students to be involved in school-day art over the course of their educational career (from 100% to 46% participation), that's not unusual. In Seattle Public Schools during the 2014-15 school year, 69% of middle school students enrolled in art (versus WV's 80%), and 54% of high schoolers did (versus 46% in WV). However, Wenatchee Valley's combined middle and high school art enrollment of 60% is 10 points higher than the Washington state's combined average in 2008.

In the Wenatchee Valley, as across the nation, theater and dance are offered more rarely. Nationally, 44% of secondary schools in town locales offered theater class in the 2009-10 survey by the National Center for Education Statistics. In WV, only Eastmont offers theater at the middle school level; in high school, every district *except* Wenatchee offers theater. Nationally, 10% of town locale schools offered dance. No district in the Valley offers it currently, although two elementary schools reported that they include dance instruction in their P.E. classes weekly.

During our interviews, two educators at the *elementary* level said they would like to see dance and movement woven into the curriculum for younger students.

Among the factors in the trend of students engaging less with art as they get older is competition for time. At Cascade High School, band is scheduled during the last period of the school day. Musicians who are also student athletes sometimes miss ensemble rehearsal to participate in games or meets. One educator also noted a number of young people in WV have jobs. While this wouldn't affect the school day, sports and work both impact the amount of time older students can devote to out-of-school responsibilities like practice and performance.

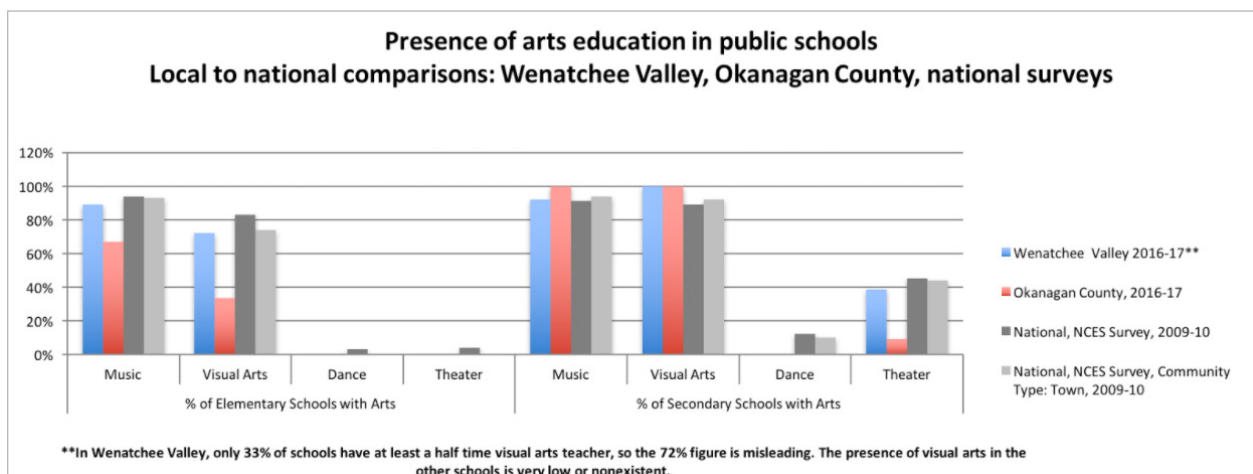
## **PARTICIPATION: WENATCHEE VALLEY, OKANOGAN COUNTY, UNITED STATES**

**Key finding:** Fewer elementary schools in North Central Washington incorporate arts education than the national average—yet the reverse is (usually) true for middle and high schools in the region.



Elementary schools in the Wenatchee Valley and especially Okanogan County are not keeping up with national averages in arts education. Across the United States, 94% of elementary schools have music programs ([National Center for Education Statistics, 2012](#)), but in Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County, it's 89% and 67%, respectively. Nationally, 83% of elementaries provide visual arts; in the Valley, it's 72% and in Okanogan it's just 33%. However, it should be noted that in Wenatchee Valley, a number of schools have visual arts teachers who work in their schools on a very part time/occasional basis. Only 33% of schools in the Valley have a visual arts teacher who works in their school half time (.5 FTE) or greater.

At the secondary level, however, the situation is brighter for the region's students. All of North Central Washington exceeds the 91% of secondary schools that offer music nationally, and universal visual arts in the region's secondary schools set them above the national rate of 89%. That said, no schools in North Central Washington offer dance, whereas 12% of secondary schools nationally have programs. And the 45% national rate for theater tops the 38% of Wenatchee Valley schools that offer the discipline and the 9% of Okanogan County schools that do.

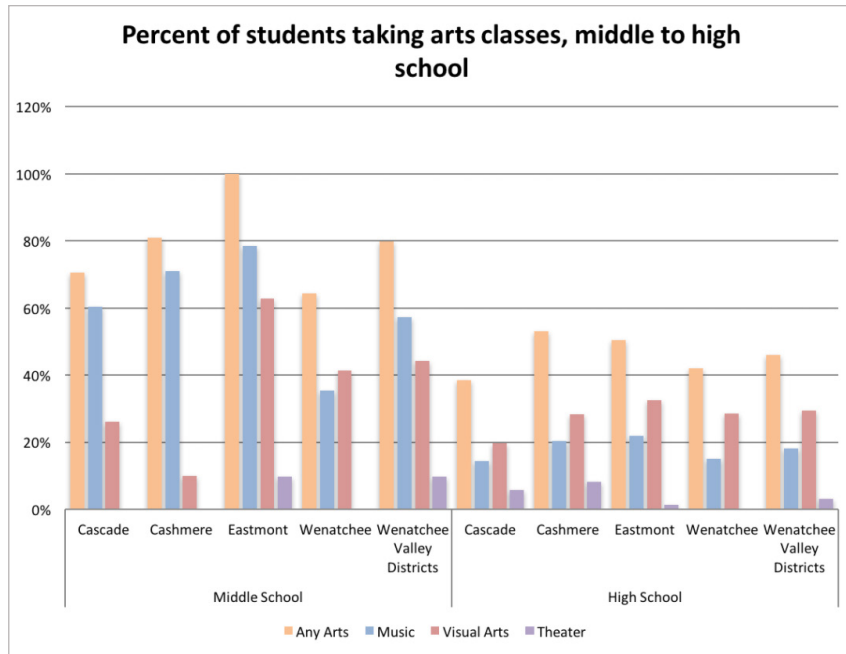


## PARTICIPATION: BY DISTRICT AND DISCIPLINE

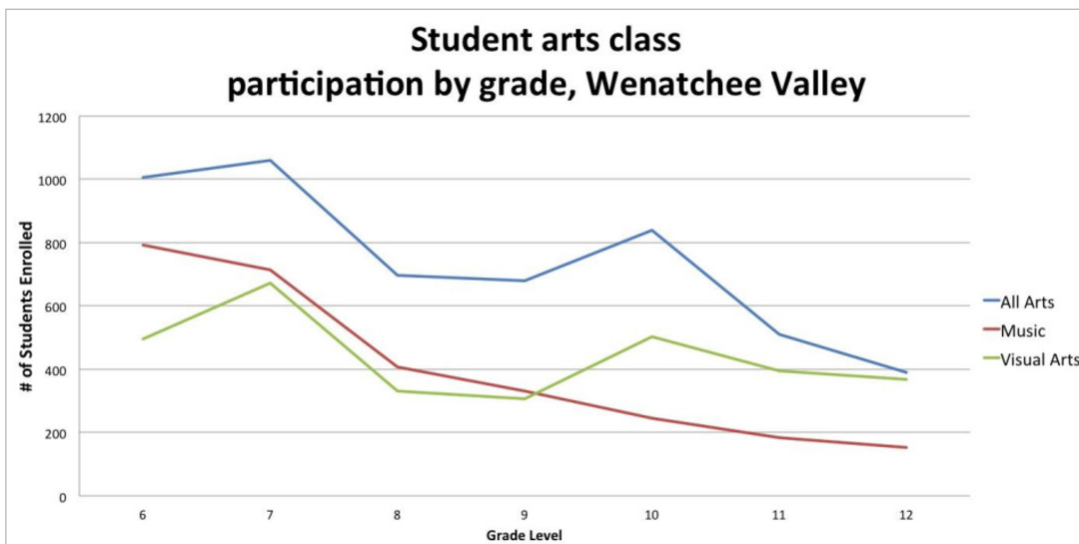
**Key finding:** The district with the most arts enrollment in secondary schools is Eastmont, with 69%. Eastmont includes the only middle school with 100% arts enrollment and the only theater exposure in middle school. Cashmere is second at 67% and has the highest percentage of high school theater students. Across the Valley, music has the greatest participation in middle schools; in high schools, visual arts attracts the most.

The chart below shows the percentages of middle and high school students enrolled in at least one arts class by district and school level. Of note is the Eastmont School District, whose middle schools have 100% arts participation, and the only theater exposure for those grade levels in WV. Eastmont's high school ranks second in arts enrollment, with the highest percentages of

students taking music and visual arts classes. The top high school for arts enrollment, Cashmere, also has the highest percentage of students taking theater. The Cascade School District has the lowest arts enrollment; 38% of students are taking some form of art class.



Music is the discipline with the greatest participation in WV middle schools. Cascade Middle School offers two primary options for art electives for most students: a full-year of band, or a year that splits chorus and visual art, though visual arts is not offered in 8th grade due to inadequate visual arts staffing. Only the Wenatchee School District's three middle schools see music participation below 60% (and it's substantially lower, at 35%).



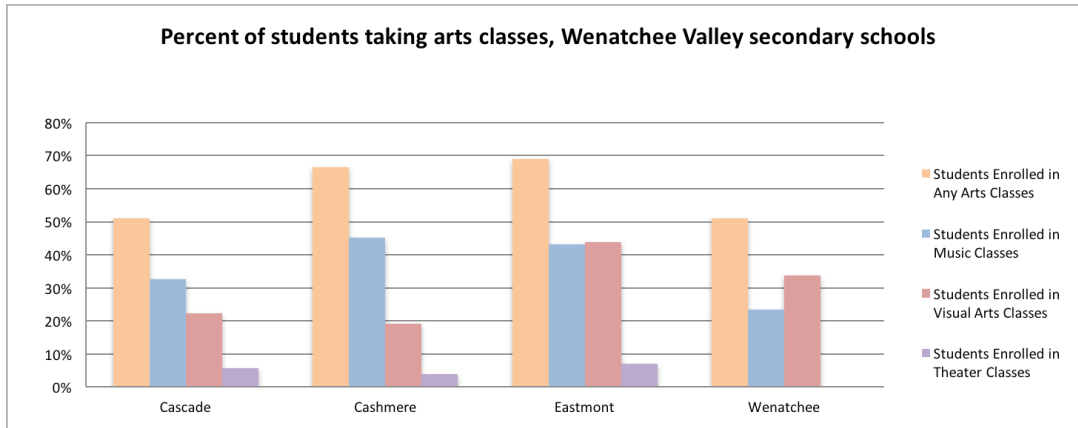
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In high school, however, the percentages shift. In each of the four WV districts, enrollment in high school visual arts classes is greater than music enrollment. Eastmont ranks highest, with one-third of the student body taking visual art. Cascade, at 20%, has the fewest students enrolled in visual art. By contrast, the percentages of students taking music classes in high school ranges from just 14% (Cascade) to 22% (Eastmont).

There can be a number of factors influencing this shift. There is less visual art offered at the middle school level. Young people may also feel more free to jump into visual art as beginners in high school. By contrast, with music it can be difficult for new learners to catch up to peers who have been playing instruments for several years. Music also requires students to obtain their instruments, while visual art supplies are often provided in class. We heard during interviews that while Cascade High School parents' Kodiak Band Boosters program sponsors instruments for students whose families cannot afford them, some parents and students are uncomfortable asking for help. Sometimes, too, there is a language barrier preventing parents from learning about the program or inquiring about it. Determining the size of this need—i.e., how many students would like to participate but are not for financial reasons—might be a line of inquiry for future study.

## **PARTICIPATION: BY RACE AND GENDER**

**Key finding:** The student body of Wenatchee Valley districts is 50% white, 45% Latino. Across the Valley as a whole, there are no differences by race in the numbers of youth enrolled in at least one arts class in secondary schools, though in Cashmere specifically, Latino students are 16% less likely to take arts. Across the four districts, there are differences in the disciplines student groups participate in. Latino students are 10% less likely to take music class; they are 12% more likely to take visual arts. Boys are eight percent less likely than girls to be enrolled in arts.



The combined student population of the four Wenatchee Valley districts (16,787 students) is almost entirely white and Latino. Enrollment during the 2015-16 school year was 50% white, 45.4% Latino. In the Wenatchee School District, Latino students are the majority, surpassing whites 49% to 46.7%.

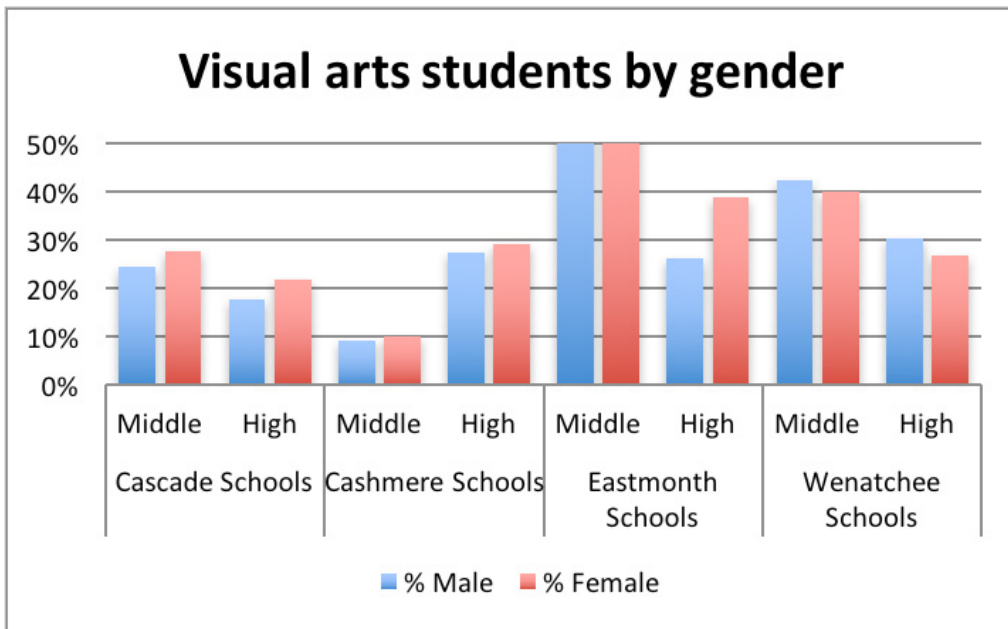
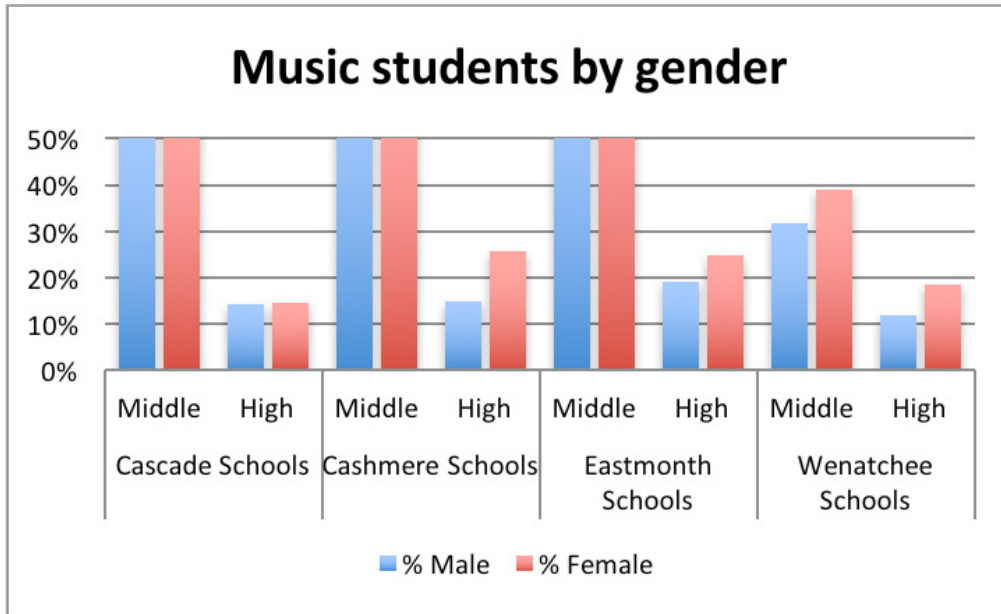
The percentage of other races in the districts is so small as to make meaningful statistical analysis difficult. Native American or Alaska Native students; Asian students; African-American students; and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students—each of these groups comprises less than 1% of the combined districts’ enrollment. Students who identify as two or more races make up 2.5%.

When the four districts of WV are considered as a whole, there are no significant differences by race in overall secondary school (middle and high school) arts enrollment. This is also true for three out of four of the individual districts, with the exception of Cashmere, where Latino students are 16% less likely to be enrolled in an arts classes.

The most consistent difference across districts, however, is significant variations in who is enrolling in music and visual arts classes. (Differences in theater are not significant, as low overall enrollment means the sample size is too low.)

In music, Latino students are 10% less likely to be enrolled, while white students are 7% more likely to be enrolled. By contrast, Latino students are 12% more likely to take visual arts classes, and white students are 10% less likely. These are statistically significant differences ( $p > .99$ ).

Consistent with national trends, boys are 8% less likely than girls to be enrolled in any arts class in Wenatchee Valley secondary schools. The gap is greater in high school music classes, where boys are 29% less likely to be enrolled; in middle schools, boys are 12% less likely than girls to be enrolled in a music class. For visual arts, boys are 13% less likely to be enrolled in high school visual arts classes. However, they are 10% more likely to be enrolled in middle school visual arts. These are statistically significant differences ( $p > .99$ ).



Income and poverty data for individual students was not available for this analysis. Trends based on overall school poverty data did not show a clear relationship to arts enrollments.

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## DOSAGE: CONTEXT AND TRENDS

Washington state has [designated](#) the arts—music, visual arts, theater, and dance—as core subjects (alongside reading and writing; mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in government; geography; and health and fitness). The state definition of arts education includes a standards-based approach to teaching and assessing arts learning.

While schools are required to provide students with an arts education that will allow them to meet state standards in music, visual arts, theatre and dance, there is no enforcement, other than the high school graduation requirement of one fine arts credit.

Given current funding and educational priorities, supporting all students to meet standards in all four disciplines is out of reach for nearly every public school in the state. As such, many schools and districts in Washington tend to focus their instruction on music and visual arts. (This is also true nationwide.)

Even within this narrower focus, there is no clear guidance on the number of hours of standards-based instruction needed to help students meet standards in music and visual arts. Some districts have on their own worked to set goals for arts education dosage and frequency to guide policies and resources.

In Washington state, Seattle Public Schools has established the most comprehensive set of arts education [guidelines](#). It is one of only a few such efforts in the country. Its goals include:

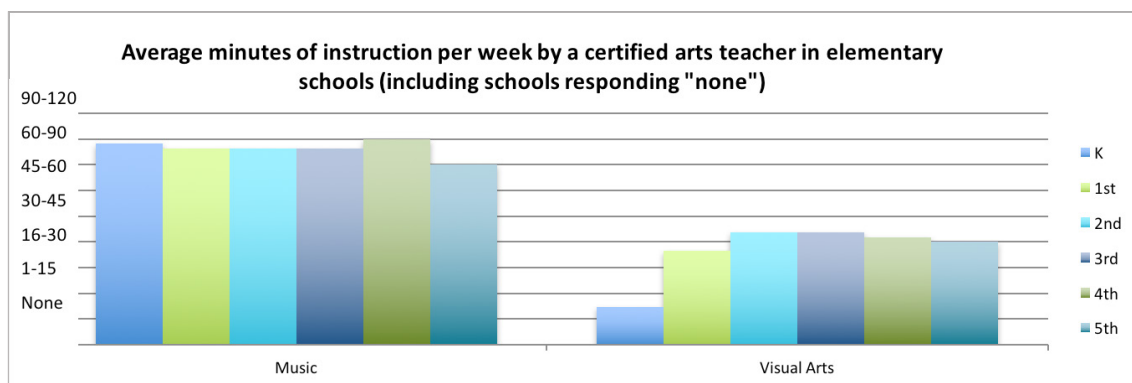
- At the elementary level, minimums of one hour per week each of visual and music taught by certified arts teachers, taught sequentially.
- At the middle school level, a minimum of two semesters of visual, performing, or media arts classes.
- At the high school level, a minimum of four semesters of visual, performing, or media arts classes.

Seattle Public Schools has not yet reached these goals at all schools, but it is progressing toward them thanks to a partnership with the City of Seattle called The Creative Advantage, which is focused on providing equitable and high-quality arts education across the district.

## DOSAGE: WENATCHEE VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

**Key finding:** Principals surveyed reported that most elementary grades across the districts receive about 45 minutes of music and 30 minutes of visual arts weekly. Seattle Public Schools have established guidelines for one hour each of music and visual arts each week at this grade level.

As noted above, nearly all WV elementary students receive weekly music exposure. Of the 18 elementary schools in the four districts, principals from 11 participated in our survey. Dosage of music at the elementary level was largely consistent, with most grades across the four districts receiving between 45 to 60 minutes of music education each week.



In the Cascade District, for example, music teacher Catherine Merrill divides her time between Peshastin-Dryden Elementary (K-2) and Osborn Elementary (3-5). Music is a “pull-out” subject, along with physical education, technology, and library time. Individual classes participate in each of the pull-outs once per week. At P-D Elementary, students have one 40-minute music class per week, with one bonus class every four weeks. At Osborn, students receive one 45-minute class a week. They, too, receive a bonus class monthly, except for third grade, due to high enrollment.

Across Wenatchee Valley elementary schools, visual arts receive less class time than music. Principals in our survey reported an average of about 30 minutes of weekly visual arts instruction from a certified arts teacher beginning in second grade, with less time in first grade and kindergarten.

Schools without certified arts educators also use innovative strategies to provide arts education to their students. At the remote Beaver Valley Elementary, 20 miles north of Leavenworth, a paraeducator spends 25 minutes twice each week with K-1 students, and once each week with grades 2-5. The higher grades are learning ukelele, with the instruments paid for by grants. Also at Beaver Valley, every Wednesday, all students spend two hours on visual art, based on different themes with elements of art and principles of design. During the 2016-17 school year,

outside funding from parents has made possible a three-month weekly dance class and a school play with one month of daily rehearsals.

In the Cascade School District, elementary students also participate in the Leavenworth Elementary Art Appreciation Project (LEAAP), founded by teaching artist Cordi Bradburn, and now completing its sixth year. Parent volunteers conduct LEAAP once a month for 21 elementary school classes. The program exposes students to the work of a different distinguished artist each session, which is used for inspiration in creating their own art. “Mistakes are made and that’s how you learn,” said one LEAAP parent we interviewed. “That’s what’s powerful about art.”

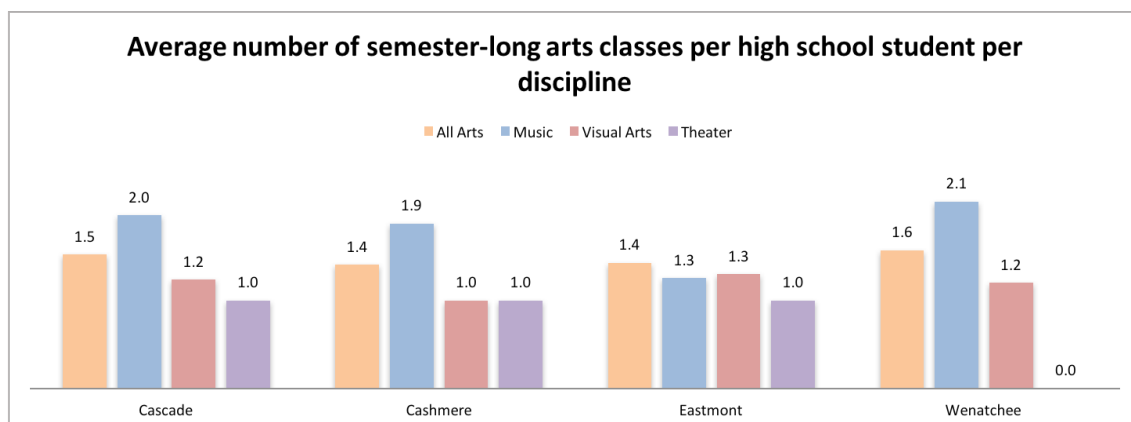
*In LEAAP, mistakes are made—that’s how you learn.*  
— Participating parent

## DOSAGE: WENATCHEE VALLEY HIGH SCHOOLS

**Key finding:** Across the Valley, students enrolled in any type of arts class received an average of 1.5 semesters of instruction in 2016-17. Although the percentage of Wenatchee Valley students taking visual arts classes is nearly double that of music students, the dosage of visual art taken is about half that of music. Across the four districts, white students are 12.3% more likely to be enrolled in an extra semester of art than their Latino peers, meaning white students likely receive significantly more arts education over their high school careers.

We have not included an analysis here on middle school arts dosage because we did not receive consistent class level information from all four districts to run an analysis.

For high school students, we measured the average number of semester-long arts classes participating students are taking, according to school enrollment data for 2016-17. While these semester-long classes may vary in length or frequency of sessions, inconsistent access to this data prevented analysis at a more granular level.





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The chart above shows relative consistency among the districts, with students enrolled in any type of art class receiving an average of 1.5 semesters of instruction in the 2016-17 school year.

Music students are engaged the longest, at an average of a full two semesters—a complete school year—in all districts except Eastmont. This reflects the region's ongoing and strong commitment to music arts.

The story is different for visual arts. At every high school in the region, more students are enrolled in visual arts classes. Across the four districts, the percentage of students taking visual art is nearly double the percentage of students taking music—30% versus 18%. Yet the visual arts dosage, 1.0 to 1.3 semesters, is nearly half that of music dosage. This affects Latino students in particular, who in every district are more likely than their white peers to be enrolled in visual arts classes.

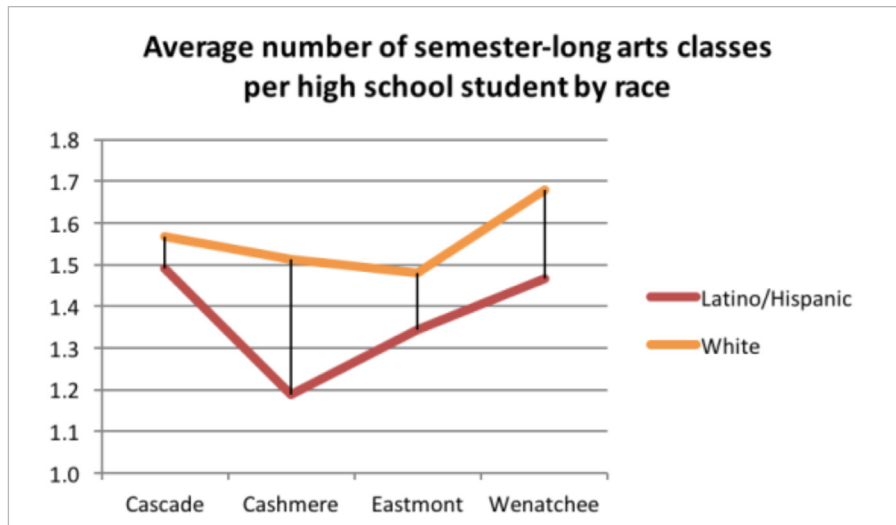
A review of dosage broken out by race also shows these disparities. Across the Wenatchee Valley, white students are 12.3% more likely to be enrolled in an extra semester of arts than Latino students ( $p > .99$ ). So while we do not see overall differences across WV in the percentage of white and Latino students enrolling in at least one arts class (though we do in some districts, as well as by discipline), white students are more likely to enroll in multiple semester-long classes and thus receive significantly more arts education over the course of a school career. This disparity is greatest in Cashmere School District, where white high school students are 27.3% more likely to be enrolled in an extra semester of arts than their Latino peers.

This disparity in the amount of arts education received by white and Latino students is a notable equity issue in the Wenatchee Valley. Undoubtedly, there are many intersecting factors that impact participation. These may include: schedule barriers to participating in arts electives; a sense of belonging in arts classes; a sense of relevance to the students of what is taught in arts classes; early childhood and out-of-school arts access; and cost barriers for instrument rental.

We heard several times during our interviews that Latino parents, having worked hard and sacrificed on behalf of their children, have high ambitions that their children will attend college—and they may not view arts education as important to that goal.

One mother to whom we spoke, who is herself Latina and the mother a music student, felt that communications with Latino parents to help them better understand the benefits of arts education on brain development and learning would likely result in those parents being stronger advocates for their child's participation.

“I went back to college and I studied two years of early childhood education, and I learned about arts and music and how they impact the learning,” this mother said. “And now I'm encouraging [my daughter] to take a dance class or an arts class, and when she asks me why, I say, “You're not just drawing things. You're learning. Your brain is developing....You're expanding your options. And it helps you focus.”



## QUALITY: CONTEXT AND TRENDS

### Arts Learning Standards

In March 2017, Washington state adopted new [Arts K-12 Learning Standards](#), which expand the [National Core Arts Standards](#) with content from Washington state arts educators. By state law, schools are expected to provide students with a standards-based arts education, and arts education providers that partner with schools should work to align their instruction with the state arts standards. Given the recent change in Washington state standards, it is important that schools and arts education providers in Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County take care to align their instruction to the new standards and related assessments.

### Assessments

There are two key types of educational assessment: formative and summative. Formative assessment happens throughout learning, as teachers help students identify strengths and weaknesses and identify places for improvement. Summative assessment is to evaluate what a student has learned after a period of instruction. Summative assessments in arts might include tests, but are as likely to include final projects such as performances or portfolios.

Washington's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has developed [performance-based arts assessments](#) for teachers to use. School districts are required to submit annually to OSPI an implementation report, but scores for those reports are not published. OSPI also allows districts to implement alternative assessment strategies.

Seattle Public Schools chose to expand on the state classroom-based performance assessments to include a baseline and cornerstone (or culminating) evaluation that also includes 21st century skills, such as communications and critical thinking alongside art standards. Many teachers will include portfolios and other formative assessments to support student learning throughout the

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course. Curricular alignment to standards, along with formative and summative assessments and feedback, are important indicators of quality arts instruction. Teachers who are not conducting assessments may need additional professional development or support. Because arts specialists often teach many students, and sometimes for short periods, they may struggle to find time for assessments for every student. In that case, effective strategies may include focusing on specific grade levels for assessments to ensure all students will be evaluated at key points.

### **Arts integration**

Arts integration is most commonly defined as an instructional approach for teaching a subject matter through and with the arts. In most executions, teachers aim to draw solid, standards-based connections between the arts and another area of content. Successful arts integration often requires collaboration on the part of teachers, support from school leadership, and the students' use of higher order thinking skills. Because of the positive impact on student learning, and the cohesion of stakeholders and systems involved, arts integration has gained recognition as an effective model in the last decade (see the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities' 2011 [Reinvesting in Arts Education](#) report). With increased time pressure during the school day to meet state and national requirements, arts integration can also be a strategy to ensure access to arts learning for all students.

Following are examples of arts integration developed by [Arts Corps](#) in 2013:

- **Using Arts to Augment Curriculum:** The arts are used as a tool to enliven learning and engage students. The students might not receive sufficient instruction around the artistic process, but they may learn skills to better understand, appreciate, and critique the arts.  
*Example: A science teacher plans a unit on astronomy and incorporates a lesson where the students listen to Holst's The Planets.*
- **Cross Disciplinary Instruction:** This may include **content connections and/or thematic connections**. If two instructors are delivering lessons in different areas, they both emphasize similar subject matter or similar themes and the emphasis shifts back and forth between the disciplines like a seesaw.  
*Example: A music teacher and a science teacher plan a unit on astronomy and they decide to focus on the planets as content connection. They alternate teaching lessons where the science teacher teaches key concepts, vocabulary, and planet names and positions, while the music teacher teaches songs with relevant lyrics, helping students to memorize facts about planets.*
- **Solo Teacher Integration:** One teacher brings the content and the arts together. She or he makes **conceptual connections** between subjects, which can lead to deeper learning in the content area. However, the teacher often needs training in an art form and the creative process. When executed, the subject matter typically takes priority over the art form, so this approach may not result in high quality arts experiences.  
*Example: A science teacher plans a unit on astronomy. She wants to use music to teach about key concepts, such as planetary movement. She has students pick rhythm instruments and break into groups to develop rhythms to represent each planet's movement.*

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- **Collaborative Integration:** A teacher and a teaching artist plan together and work together closely. This approach often includes **process connections**, where both partners emphasize common processes between their subjects, as well as **conceptual connections**. Because both instructors are proficient in their subject matter/art form, this approach has the potential to create exceptionally rich learning experiences for the students. However, challenges can occur due to the logistics and costs of collaborating.

*Example: A music teacher and a science teacher plan a unit on patterns of movement in astronomy and music. Together they develop a project where students will learn about the planetary movements, as well as different parts and patterns in musical compositions. Students then develop and perform their own musical compositions representing different planets and their patterns of movement.*

While arts integration can enliven and deepen learning opportunities, it can also be challenging to do well and requires an investment in planning, curriculum design, and professional development for teachers and teaching artists (if involved). Partnerships with community-based organizations can be an effective way to embed arts integration practices and teacher training into the classroom when appropriate partners exist.

### **Professional Development for Arts Specialists**

Professional development and professional learning communities for teachers has been an important priority in public education in recent years for the benefits they bring instructors and their students. Professional development opportunities—both courses and events for learning, but also idea-sharing among teacher networks—is how teachers of any subject stay current with research, techniques, tools, innovations, and debates.

Arts specialists often feel isolated, even in populous districts, and their principals may not be familiar enough with instructional strategies in arts education to mentor them effectively. In larger cities, community organizations and culture institutions frequently offer professional development opportunities for arts specialists, and teachers can participate in cross-school professional communities. In smaller districts, however, professional development opportunities are harder to find, as [Donovan and Brown](#) point out. A visual art or music teacher may have no district peer in the discipline. “Professional development,” they write, “was noted repeatedly in the interviews as an opportunity for arts educators to connect and sustain each other, and even lead to higher teacher retention rates.” (62)

As you’ll see below, professional development opportunities for arts teachers in WV are rare. One promising practice in the Valley is that the secondary music teachers from the Cascade and Cashmere School Districts have created a cross-district professional learning community that is supported by their building administrators. This bridging approach could be embraced across the wider region.

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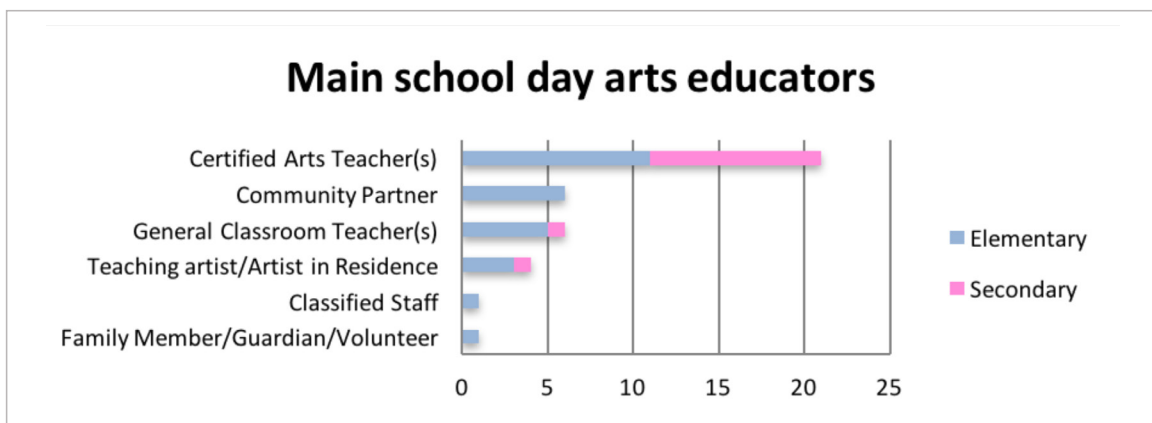
## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY OVERVIEW

**Key finding:** The primary arts educators in all Wenatchee Valley schools are certified arts teachers. At the elementary level, teachers are widely supported by community partners and others. More than 75% of schools in our survey provide other arts experiences, such as field trips, though only rarely.

### Who's teaching

According to responding principals, nearly all elementary and secondary arts education in Wenatchee Valley schools is provided by certified arts teachers: 100% at the secondary level, 92% in elementary. While secondary classrooms receive some help from teaching artists and other school teachers, elementary arts experiences are widely supplemented. Half of elementary schools receive arts help from community partners, 42% from other school teachers, and 25% from teaching artists. Adult volunteers assist as well.

This chart shows who is the primary arts instructor across schools.



### Additional school-based experiences

Wenatchee Valley principals report that their schools offer a wide variety of other arts experiences, but only rarely. More than three-quarters of respondents said their schools provided occasional arts field trips, off-site professional performances, and on-site professional performances.

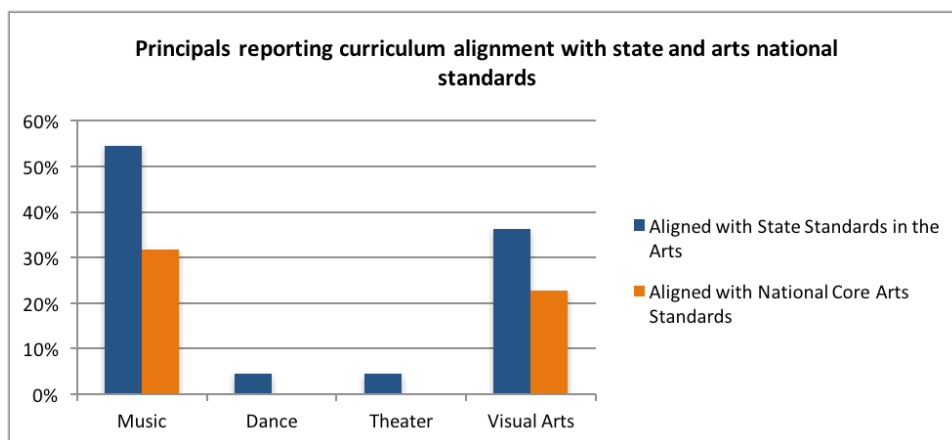
The most frequently cited arts experiences outside of subject specific lessons is arts integrated lessons, with 45% of principals reporting that their school provides this experience at least monthly. In 2012, Seattle schools also reported this as the most frequently offered arts experience outside of subject specific lessons, with 75% of principals reporting that their schools provide this experience at least monthly.

## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY CURRICULUM

**Key finding:** More than 85% of WV schools have a documented music curriculum; 73% have a documented visual arts curriculum. More than half of principals said their music curricula aligned with Washington state’s Arts K-12 Learning Standards; 36% said visual arts curricula aligned with state standards.

Of the participating Wenatchee Valley principals, 86% reported their schools have a documented music curriculum in place. A smaller number—73%—reported having a documented visual arts curriculum, though in secondary schools, where visual arts becomes a consistent, stand-alone class, 90% reported having one.

Just over half—55%—of principals report their music curriculum is aligned with Washington state’s Arts K-12 Learning Standards. Only 36% report alignment with state standards for visual arts. The number is smaller still for aligning with National Core Arts Standards, though 12 of the 22 principals did not know if they aligned.



Elementary principals in Cascade, Eastmont, and Wenatchee reported that their music curriculum had been adopted by district school boards, and principals from Wenatchee reported the same for visual arts. Other principals were unsure if their arts curricula had received board adoption. Middle and high school principals from all four districts reported that their music curriculum had been adopted by their school board, and two (Cascade and Wenatchee) reported the same for visual arts.

One example of teacher-created curriculum is the five-part music instruction teacher Catherine Merrill has created for Osborn and Peshastin-Dryden Elementary. It includes:

- Repertoire: songs that children learn to sing, together, in tune.
- Notation: learning to write and read music.
- Listening: to recordings, as well as watching and listening to instruments being played.

- 
- Playing: third-graders explore xylophones, fifth-graders get recorders.
  - Movement: learning to coordinate body motion with music.

Merrill has developed the curriculum over several years, adapting and building it along the way. She reports that it typically takes a full-year with students to begin seeing their engagement as individuals outside of the larger class.

Several interview subjects who were not in-school educators said they appreciated the Late Start Art program in Cascade's elementary schools. Late Start Art takes place in school gymnasiums twice a month on mornings when schools begin later than usual.

That said, some questioned whether the program could bring more rigor to its young audiences. The district's late-start policy means many parents are looking for child care during those hours. "Often these arts programs are treated as babysitting rather than deep-dive arts programs," reported one parent.

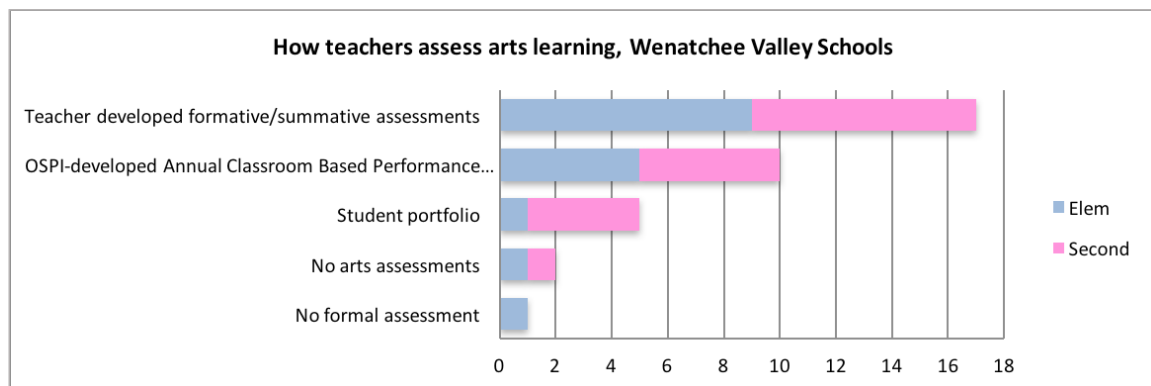
Participants in our youth focus group said they appreciated being able to study multiple disciplines with high-quality instruction year after year. They also praised small class sizes and individualized attention, which they said was good not only for instruction, but for fostering a close-knit arts community.

Some of these students expressed an interest for more open-ended, creative projects in their visual arts classes, especially as skills progress to higher levels. "To start making the art you actually want to make, you have to go through a ton of rigid projects," said one student. "That rigidity is a barrier to some people."

When asked to recall arts at the middle school level, students wished for the opportunity to take visual art in every grade (visual art isn't currently offered in 8th grade in the Cascade District), and for more elective options beyond visual art, choir, and band. "If you don't like one choice, you're forced to do the other one, which means those fill up with people who don't want to be there," said one student.

## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY STUDENT ASSESSMENT

**Key finding:** More than 75% of principals reported educators in their schools use teacher-developed assessments of arts students.



In our survey, 77% of principals in Wenatchee Valley districts reported arts assessment taking place through teacher-developed formative and/or summative assessments. Nearly half also reported using state-developed Classroom-Based Performance Assessments. Two schools said that arts were not assessed.

It's worth noting that teachers need time to conduct assessments, especially summative assessments. To evaluate each of 500 elementary students would require two weeks, according to one educator. Doing that once per quarter would consume eight weeks of class time.

## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY ARTS INTEGRATION

**Key finding:** No Wenatchee Valley schools have purposeful integrated arts programs. Less than half report that any teacher has received training in arts integration.

No principals reported implementing a specific integrated arts program in their schools. That said, 48% reported that some teachers weave arts into lessons in other subjects. Only 42% report that some of their teachers have received training in integrated arts lessons, and none report that all of their teachers have been trained in arts integration.

In 2012, a Seattle Public Schools survey reported that fewer than 25% of schools had integrated arts programs, with a similar rate of teacher training in arts integration.

One parent in the Valley who pioneered an artist-in-residence program in a local school noted that integration will take time to realize its potential. "Teachers haven't been taught to integrate subjects—they're taught instead to compartmentalize," this parent said. Another parent who has worked in elementary classrooms said it's important for non-staff partners to be sensitive to



what’s asked of teachers. “Some teachers are very comfortable bringing art into the curriculum,” this instructor said. “But some resent it. They think people are saying they’re not doing enough, so you have to tiptoe around it.”

*“Teachers haven’t been taught to integrate subjects—they’re taught instead to compartmentalize.”*

— Parent

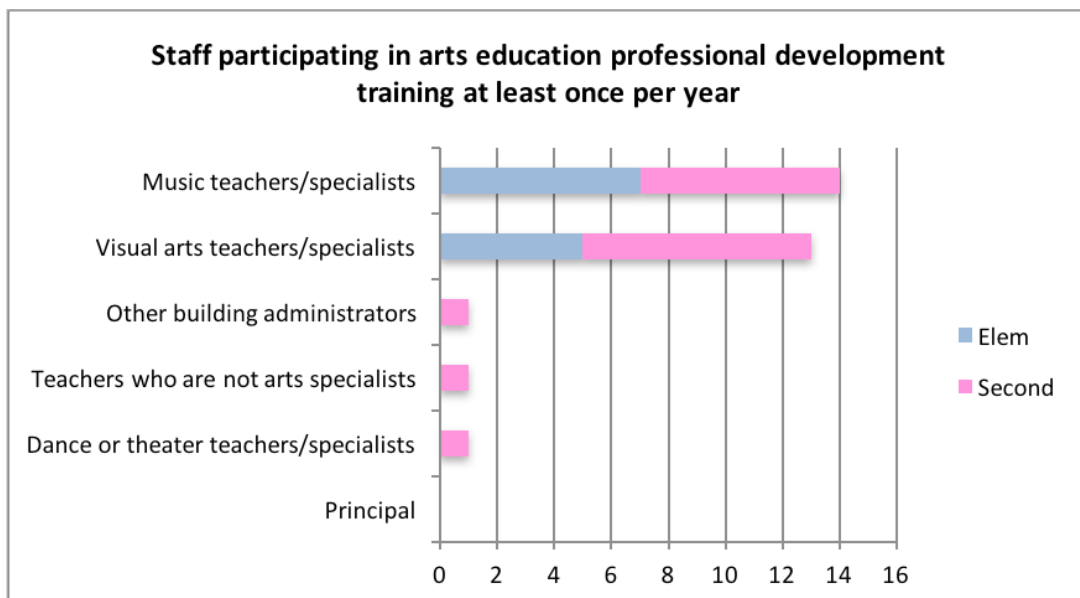
## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Key finding: In secondary schools, 80% of principals reported their visual arts teachers engage in some form of yearly professional development; 70% reported the same for music teachers. The rate was under 60% for elementary music teachers. The greatest need cited by principals is for training in arts integration.

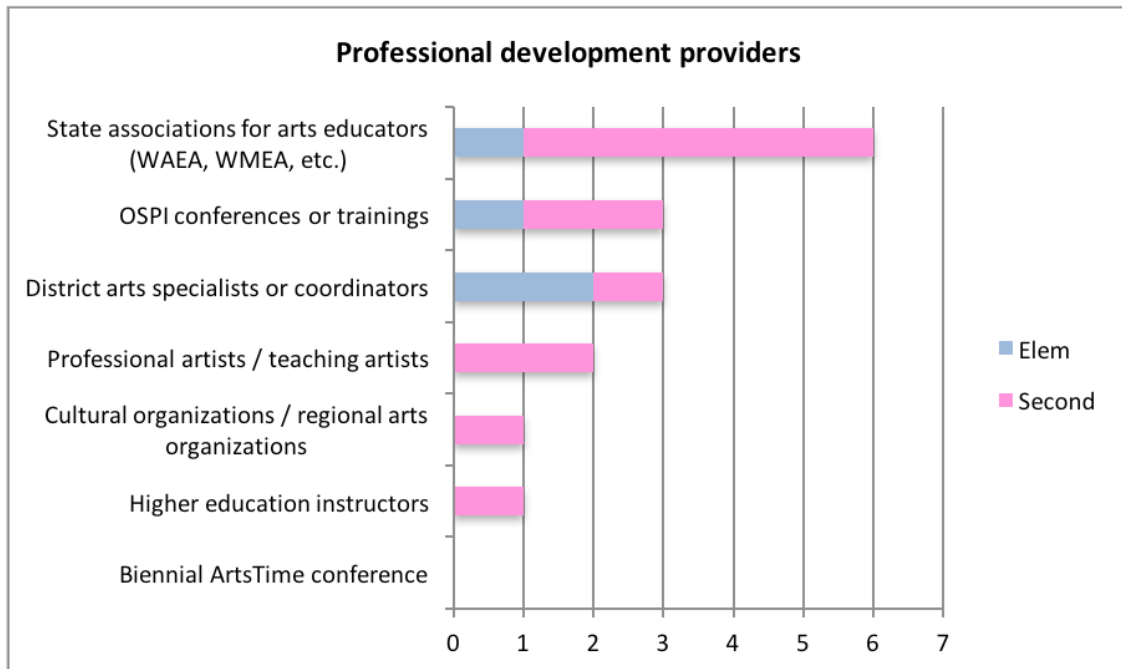
In the Wenatchee Valley, the primary investment in professional development is for visual and music specialists.

While all WV middle and high schools have visual art and music specialists on staff, only 70% of secondary principals reported that music specialists participate in arts education professional development at least once a year; 80% reported the same for visual arts teachers. Nearly 60% of elementary principals reported music teachers participate in professional development at least once a year, though nearly all elementary schools have music specialists in their schools.

Professional development for administrators or non-arts teachers is virtually non-existent in the region.



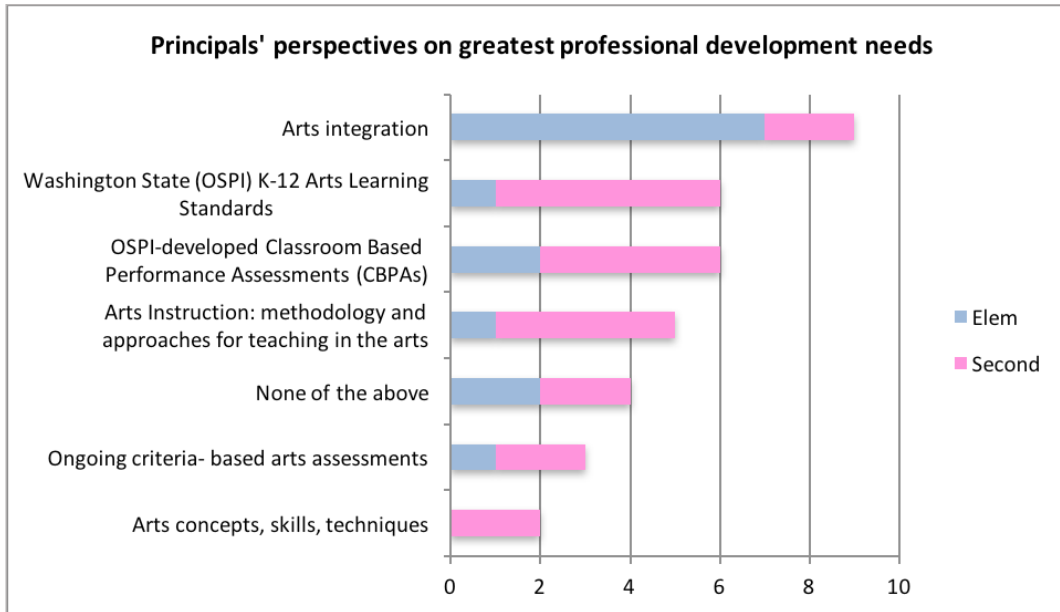
The primary providers of professional development for WV arts instructors are state associations for music and arts educators. Others include the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and district arts specialists/coordinators. (Only 38% of elementary principals who reported that their specialists participate in professional development responded to this question, which suggests that elementary principals may be less informed on the specific professional development activities of their arts specialists.)



Every principal who reported that their arts specialists participated in professional development reported some kind of support for that participation: most often clock or credit hours or release time, but also payment of event fees, substitutes, travel expenses, or registration.

Wenatchee Valley principals in our survey reported the greatest need for professional development in their schools is arts integration—perhaps recognition of the growing consensus around its benefits. Nearly three-quarters—70%—of elementary principal respondents cited it as a need.

The next most important need cited was training on OSPI Classroom Based Performance Assessments, which was prioritized by only 10% of elementary principals but by 71% of secondary principals. Third was training on OSPI K-12 Arts Learning Standards (20% of elementary principals and 57% of secondary principals).



In our interviews, educators in the Cascade School District were eager for professional development opportunities. One with experience in two WV districts reported receiving no professional development about arts instruction. Another reported teachers had to leave the Valley for events, conferences, and other opportunities—requiring time and funding.

One certified arts teacher echoed the isolation of arts educators in rural settings noted by Donovan and Brown: “I don’t have someone I can be part of a community with, to plan with, and to develop a professional practice with.”

*“I don’t have someone I can be part of a community with.”*  
 — WV certified arts teacher

## INFRASTRUCTURE: CONTEXT AND TRENDS

In 2015, [ArtsEd Washington](#), in partnership with King County’s 4Culture, published a research study aimed at identifying the infrastructure needed at the district level to support sustained arts education that meets Washington state arts education policy and law. Through surveys and interviews of district leaders throughout King County, they identified [six key features for school infrastructure to support equity in arts education](#):

1. **Intensity Tracking:** capturing and monitoring data on what all students are receiving in arts education.
2. **District Arts Plan:** intentional, district-level planning sets strategies and expectations for measurable and accountable action.

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3. **Per-Student Budget Formula for the Arts:** a well-defined per-student budget formula helps to ensure clarity and equity. Unlike soft money from sources like PTAs and grants, a budget system is more sustainable and reliable. The formula should include staffing, professional development, supplies, equipment, and facilities.
  4. **Regular Communication:** consistent, efficient communications systems for arts coordinators, specialists, and classroom teachers to report specific, designated data (as is common with reading and math) to keep administrators fully informed.
  5. **Arts Hiring Plan:** a thoughtful arts hiring plan with an eye toward equity is key to identifying highly qualified classroom teachers and arts specialists.
  6. **Professional Learning:** arts instruction and arts integration training for classroom teachers and arts specialists, and professional learning communities for arts specialists.

### **Arts Coordinators**

An influential element to district arts infrastructure is the investment in an arts coordinator. An arts coordinator will often work within the district to advocate for arts programs, serve as a resource for arts specialists, help to coordinate resources, curriculum, and professional development for arts specialists and programs, and often serve as the primary liaison for community-based arts partnerships. In an interview, Lisa Jaret, the Arts in Education Program Manager for the Washington State Arts Commission, noted that districts in Washington with arts coordinators usually have stronger programs. To date, however, coordinators are not common; where they do exist, they are often just a portion of a district position.

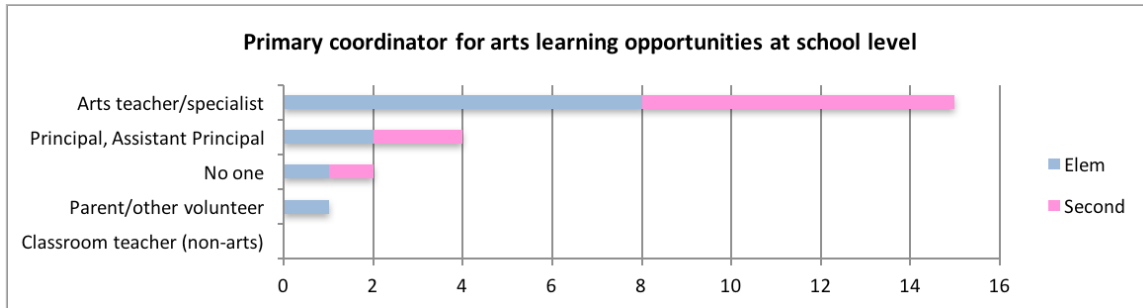
## **INFRASTRUCTURE: WENATCHEE VALLEY POLICIES AND COORDINATORS**

**Key finding:** Only three schools across the Valley reported having a written arts plan for their schools. Principals offered conflicting responses on whether their districts have arts coordinators. Most coordination in schools is done by arts specialists themselves.

Across Wenatchee Valley schools, there is room to grow the prevalence of arts plans and arts coordinators.

The principals of only three schools in Wenatchee Valley reported having any kind of written arts plan, either as a separate plan or integrated into a School Improvement Plan. Of 22 respondents, just two reported having a full-time district arts coordinator; four reported having a part-time district arts coordinator. That said, schools within the same districts did not agree on this question, nor were we referred to any arts coordinators in our interactions with districts. If they do exist within any of these districts, they are at minimum not consistently known by school leaders.

There is a strong reliance on arts specialists to coordinate arts learning in Wenatchee Valley schools, with 68% of principals reporting that their arts specialists serve that function in their schools.



Although research points to the value of district-level coordination, principals in our survey may not yet be aware of that body of work, or may see coordinators as a less-pressing improvement. In our surveys, only two of 22 principals prioritized a district arts coordinator position as a focus for new investment.

## INFRASTRUCTURE: WENATCHEE VALLEY SPACE

**Key finding:** Across the Valley, 86% of principals reported having dedicated music education space; 68% reported having visual arts space (which jumps to 90% at the high school level).

Most principals report that their schools have dedicated classroom space for the two most prevalent disciplines in the region, music and visual arts.

Across K-12, 86% of principals report that they have dedicated space for music, and 68% report the same for visual arts. Among secondary school principals, where visual art is more common, 90% of principals report having space.

During our observations in the Upper Valley, we noted the obstacles presented by spaces. Having dedicated space saves time, assists in planning, and helps students focus. The Cascade District splits K-5 instruction between Peshastin-Dryden Elementary (K-2) and Osborn Elementary (3-5). Unlike classroom teachers of a single grade, arts specialists cover all grades at the elementary level, meaning they have to split their time between the two buildings.

Peshastin-Dryden has no dedicated music room, so music is brought to the general classrooms. That can be difficult for an arts specialist when technology is different from room to room, and specialists are hesitant to interrupt general teachers during this planning time. As one educator said, “If you don’t have a room, you always have to have a Plan B.”

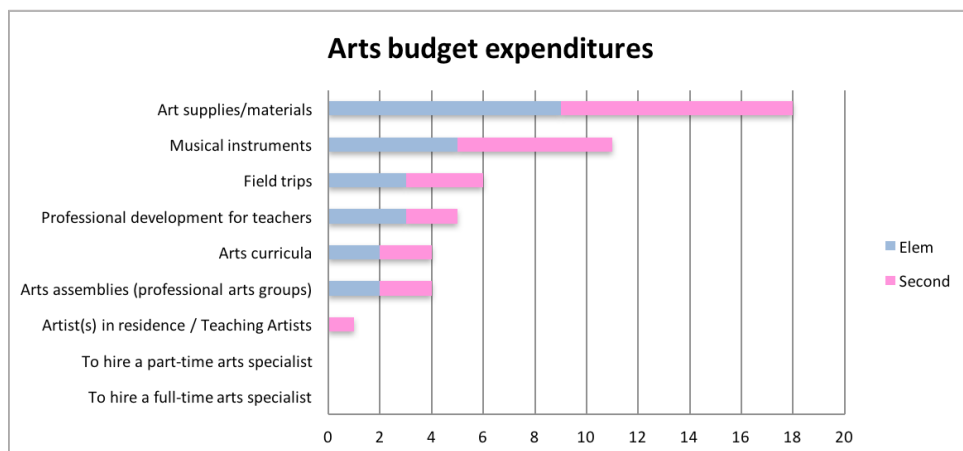
## INFRASTRUCTURE: WENATCHEE VALLEY SCHOOL ARTS FUNDING

**Key finding:** The size of arts budgets across schools varies greatly. Nearly every school puts some of that money toward arts supplies; almost 60% also use it for musical instruments. Additional sources of arts funding include foundation grants, district general funds, and parent donations—the last of which can potentially affect disparities in arts education.

Although 73% of principals reported a line item for arts in their school’s budget, the sizes of their budgets varied greatly. (To be clear, school budgets would not typically include salaries for arts specialists. Those are generally included in a district’s central office budget.) For elementary schools, arts budgets ranged between \$500 and \$1,200; for secondary schools, the range was \$200 to \$3,500.

The responses demonstrate a wide variety in approaches to arts funding, as well as the creativity schools use to fund arts programs. One elementary principal reported his school had no budget, “Because we partner with community services and utilize ASB [Associated Student Body] funding for before-school events.” Another reported funding arts through Career and Technical Education (CTE), likely through technical arts classes that are cross-credited with CTE. Yet another said, “We do not have a line item, but every request for the past two years has been granted, and grants have been sought out to provide thousands of dollars in musical instruments. Materials for arts in class are considered ‘essential supplies’ and incorporated in the general budget.”

The vast majority of schools in the Wenatchee Valley use their arts budgets for arts supplies (95%) and instruments (58%). Only one school reported spending their arts budget on bringing artists into school, and none use arts budgets to hire additional arts specialists.



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Additional arts funding comes from a variety of sources. Foundation grants provided funding for 69% of the schools in our survey. District general funds went to 56% of schools. Parent donations and the PTSA accounted for another 56%.

While parent investment in the arts has been an important tool for addressing the decline of public arts education, it's worth noting that in places like Seattle, it has also contributed to greater inequity in school arts offerings (schools with more affluent families end up providing more school arts than schools with fewer).

At Beaver Valley Elementary in the Cascade District, parents in the 2016-17 school year have helped fund music education, weekly dance instruction for 12 weeks, and an annual school play that requires 30- to 60-minute daily rehearsals for one month. These are excellent opportunities for the children in the school. It is notable that while 44% of students in the Cascade District receive free-or-reduced-price lunch, only 19% of Beaver Valley students do.

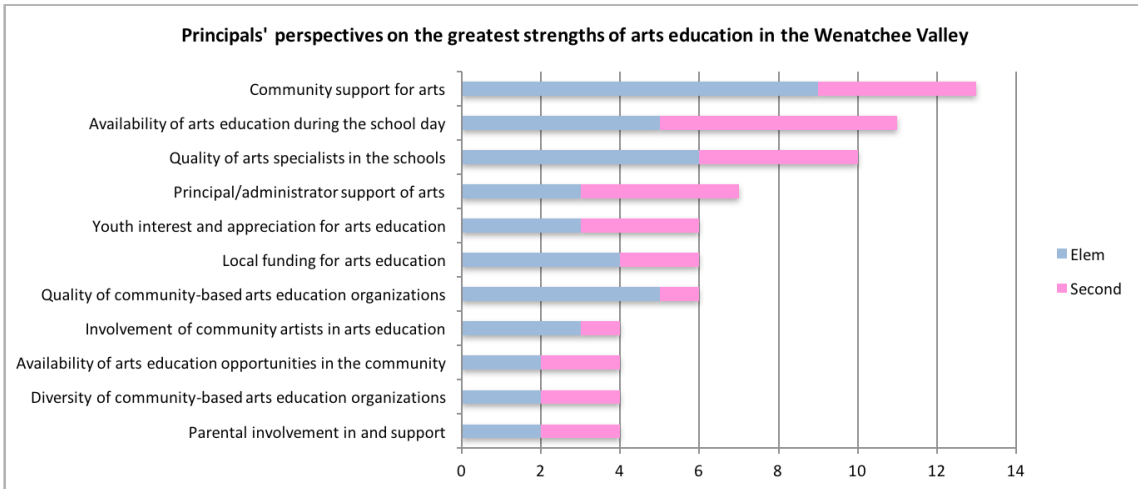
During our focus group with arts students at Cascade High School, several participants expressed a desire for more funding for musical instruments, both to replace aging instruments and to fill in more sections of the band. "There are certain pieces we just can't play because we don't have instruments like a French horn or working timpanis," said one student. Having more and better instruments would attract more students to play, they said.

## **ASSETS, BARRIERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Key finding:** According to principals, the greatest strength of arts education in the region is community support, followed by school offering and providers. Barriers include outside pressure to focus on subjects other than arts, limited staffing, and facility limitations. Principals would target new investment overwhelmingly to more full-time arts teachers, followed by after-school programs and community arts partnerships.

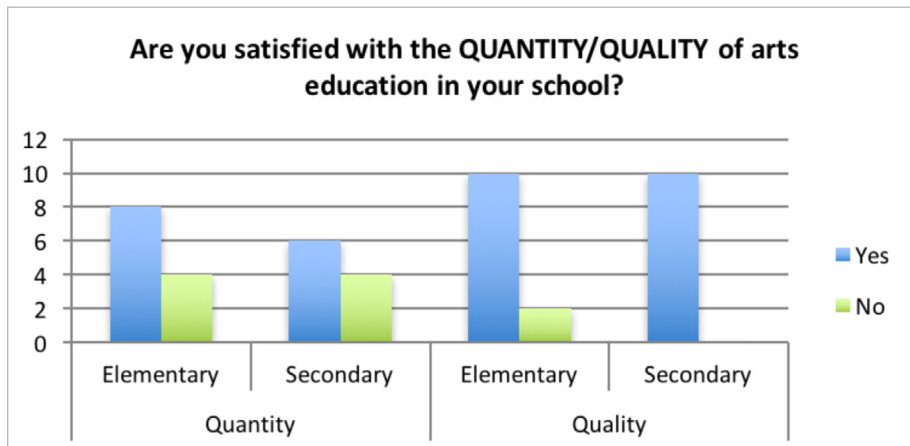
### **Assets**

When 22 principals were asked to rank the three greatest strengths of arts education in the Wenatchee Valley, the top selection was, "Community support for the arts," which nearly 60% selected. As shown in the next chapter, this is similar to the rankings by community arts organizations and teaching artists, who rated community, youth interest, and parental support highly.



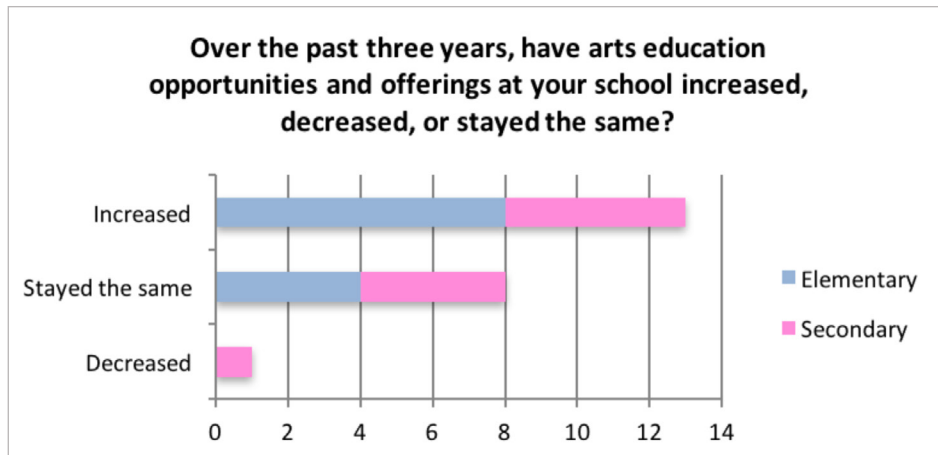
For principals, the second-most-often chosen strength was “Availability of arts education during the school day” (50% selected) followed by “Quality of arts specialists in the schools” (45%).

This jibes with principals’ overall satisfaction with both the quantity and quality of arts education from their staff, as shown in the chart below. Indeed, of the 22 respondents, only two elementary principals said they were not satisfied with the quality of arts instruction in their schools.



In addition, nearly 60% of principals report that arts opportunities and offerings are on the rise. Just one school reported a decrease in the previous three years.





During our interviews, participants consistently voiced support for arts specialists. Some people we talked to, however, voiced concern about whether today’s pressures afford room for arts in school—and noted those same pressures are precisely why arts are so valuable.

“Teachers are doing an amazing job,” said one former educator from the Cascade School District. “But they’re exhausted—both teachers and kids. That’s the culture of what’s going on right now.” She added, “The arts are going to need help to grow inside the school day.”

*“The arts are going to need help to grow inside the school day.”*  
 — Former Cascade District Educator

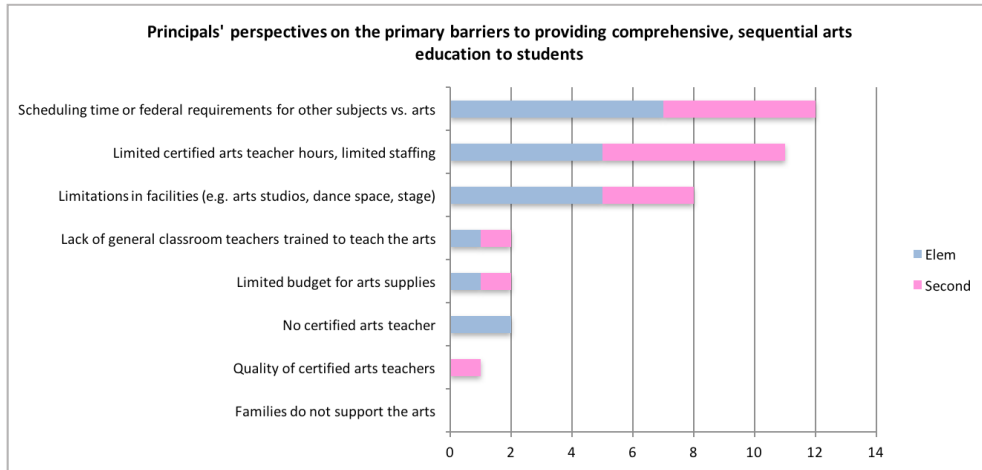
Students in our Cascade High School focus group unanimously noted the strength and support of the Wenatchee Valley community for arts inside and outside of school.

They also expressed appreciation for the way arts were integrated into other creative opportunities in and out of school, such as having visual art students create sets for drama productions, or band and choir performing together in concerts.

### Barriers

The principals in our survey were fairly aligned in their opinions on barriers to providing strong arts education to all students. As were a number of parents we interviewed, principals were concerned about requirements for other subjects competing with time for arts. Just over half named “Scheduling time or federal requirements for other subjects vs. arts” as the main obstacle.

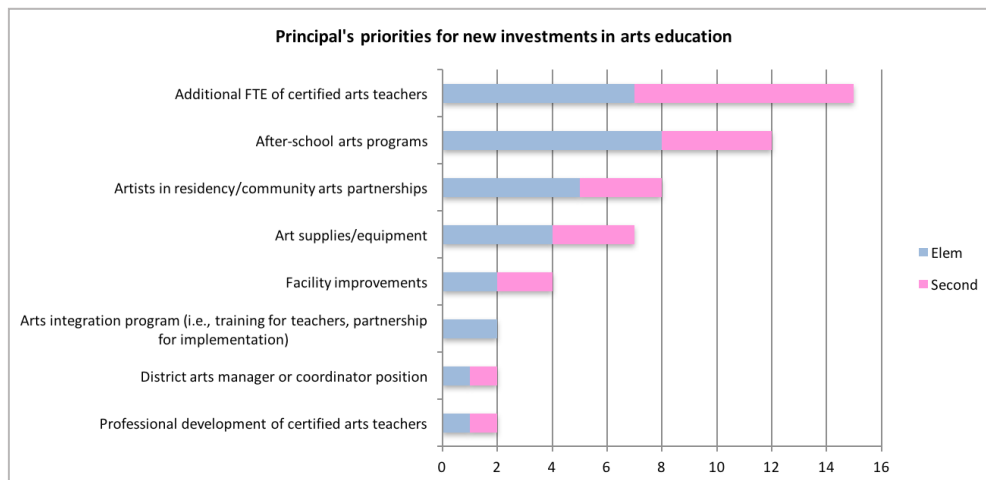
Just behind was limited staffing, identified as a barrier by 50% of principals. In third was limitations in facilities, called out by 36% of principals.



Most principals identified means for providing more arts to students as top priorities. Nearly 70% cited hiring more full-time certified arts teachers as a top choice for investment. Indeed, during an interview for this study, one principal opened the conversation saying, “First of all, I would love for you to tell me we’re getting funding for another visual arts teacher.”

Second and third priorities were more after-school arts programs (chosen by 55% of principals) and more partnerships with community arts organizations or individual artists (36%).

*I would love for you to tell me we're getting funding for another visual arts teacher.*  
 — Wenatchee Valley principal



We heard similar priorities—especially about staffing—during interviews with people familiar with the Cascade School District.

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“I think we’ve stretched to the point of what we can do with what we have,” said one certified arts teacher. “There’s no more I can give as far as access to kids to have art, and I’ve been as flexible as possible. If we want more, there needs to be more help from another instructor.”

As Donovan and Brown note, it can be difficult to find locally or to recruit certified arts teachers in rural settings. Citing a predecessor study, they write, “ ‘social and collegial isolation, low salaries, multiple grade or subject teaching assignments, and lack of familiarity with rural schools and communities’ make it hard to recruit and keep teachers in rural areas.” (22)

A teacher in the Wenatchee Valley shared a similar perspective in our interview. “Even if there’s all the money and space in the world, finding qualified instructors in a small community, especially ones who will stick around for awhile, is tough.”

Even young people recognize the need for more arts staff.

During our focus group, students noted the responsibilities of the choral director at Cascade High School. She “has a really tough, unfair job,” one student said. “She has to teach all the middle and high school choirs, with no breaks.” The student added that if there were more teachers, more students might be enthusiastic about joining choir, rather than taking it simply to fulfill a requirement. “Another music teacher would be helpful.”

*“If we want more, there needs to be more help from another instructor.”*

— Wenatchee Valley educator

# COMMUNITY-BASED ARTS EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS AND TEACHING ARTISTS

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## CONTEXT AND TRENDS

As funding for the arts in schools has declined nationally, both community-based arts education organizations and teaching artists have stepped in to fill the void. They've done this during the school day as well as outside of school settings.

Community-based arts education often takes the form of: 1) community schools for the arts; 2) education or outreach programs by presenting arts organizations; and 3) partnership-based organizations that embed teaching artists in school and community settings.

While the historic roots of community arts organizations lay in programs to impart technical mastery to performing elites, in the last century, programs arose to focus more on broad democratic, cultural, social-emotional, and cognitive benefits of arts learning and artistic processes. In their 2011 report on teaching artists, [Teaching Artists and the Future of Education](#), Rabkin and colleagues show how the modern community-based approach emerged in cities at the turn of the 20th century as part of a settlement movement to help low-income residents.

As school-day arts education began declining in the 1980s, community-based arts education organizations, presenting arts organizations, and teaching artists all began to expand their offerings in and out of school. Teaching artistry began to emerge more formally as a profession in the 1970s, along with organizations to develop and place teaching artists with community partners. That approach has spread, from cities to towns to rural communities.

### Teaching artists

Rabkin defines a teaching artist as “an artist for whom teaching is a part of professional practice.” Lincoln Center, an arts organization with a deep commitment to arts education in New York City, claims to have coined the term. Its use has grown in prominence with efforts to professionalize and recognize the contributions of artists who also teach. Although not every artist who teaches in the Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County identifies as a teaching artist, a majority of survey respondents embraced the term. For this reason, and because of the important national attention being given to teaching artists, we use “teaching artists” throughout this report.

According to the [Teaching Artist Research Project](#) (TARP) (Rabkin, 2011), 96% of teaching artists nationally have been paid for both creative work and teaching. While the majority of

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artists generally nationwide are men, two-thirds of teaching artists are women, and they are more racially diverse than artists generally nationwide. Fewer than one-third teach full time. The average part-time teaching artist teaches fewer than eight hours a week and works for multiple employers. The 2011 TARP study reports the average hourly rate for teaching artists nationally was at the time \$40. However, full-time teaching artists earned an average of \$39,000 annually, while part-time teaching artists averaged only \$9,800 a year from teaching.

It's worth noting that there has at times been tension between professional arts teachers associations and the more informal teaching artist community. Arts specialists have been concerned that bringing teaching artists into schools could undermine the public investment in certified arts specialists. However, there's little evidence that's the case. The gaps in arts education are too great to be closed by arts specialists or teaching artists alone, nor should they hold the same role. While arts specialists should provide important assurances of consistent, standards-based, and sequential instruction, teaching artists can bring additional cultural diversity, innovations in arts disciplines, and a focus on the creative process that complements traditional classroom learning. Increasingly, teaching artists and community-based arts partners are being embraced as important parts of arts-rich school environments. Today, most major arts education initiatives include a commitment to an increased and more equitable deployment of arts specialists, alongside teaching artists and arts partners who can provide professional development, arts integration, before- and after-school programming, and culturally-diverse arts learning opportunities.

The Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County both include organizations that have embraced this role and place teaching artists as key partners with schools. Some key players include [Methow Arts Alliance](#), which provides some of the only visual arts education in many Okanogan County elementary schools through the deployment of teaching artists into those schools; [Wenatchee Arts Education Consortium](#), which arranges artists-in-residence opportunities; and [Icicle Creek Center for the Arts](#), which places regional and national performers in Wenatchee Valley schools through its Visiting Artist Series.

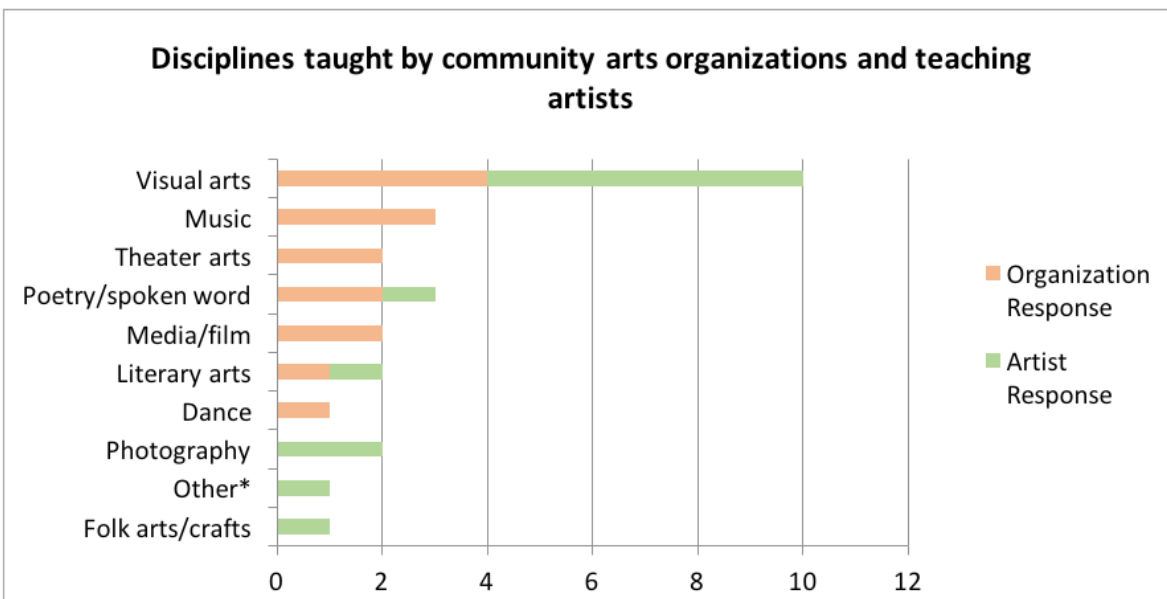
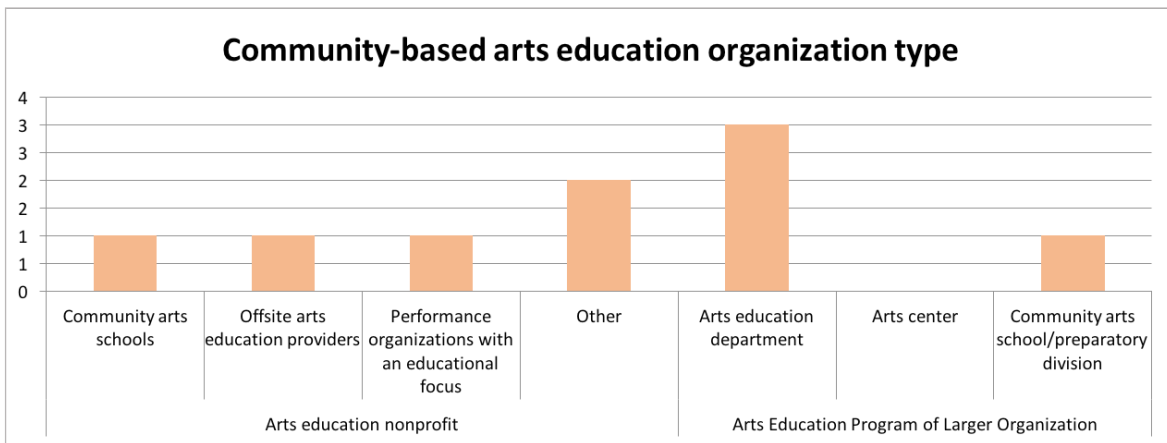
## **DISCIPLINES, GEOGRAPHIES, EXPERIENCE: WENATCHEE VALLEY OVERVIEW**

**Key finding:** Among the community arts organizations and teaching artists who participated in our surveys, most worked in visual arts. Organizations were located throughout the Valley; teaching artists were concentrated in the Upper Valley. Most teaching artists had at least 11 years' experience, or fewer than six.

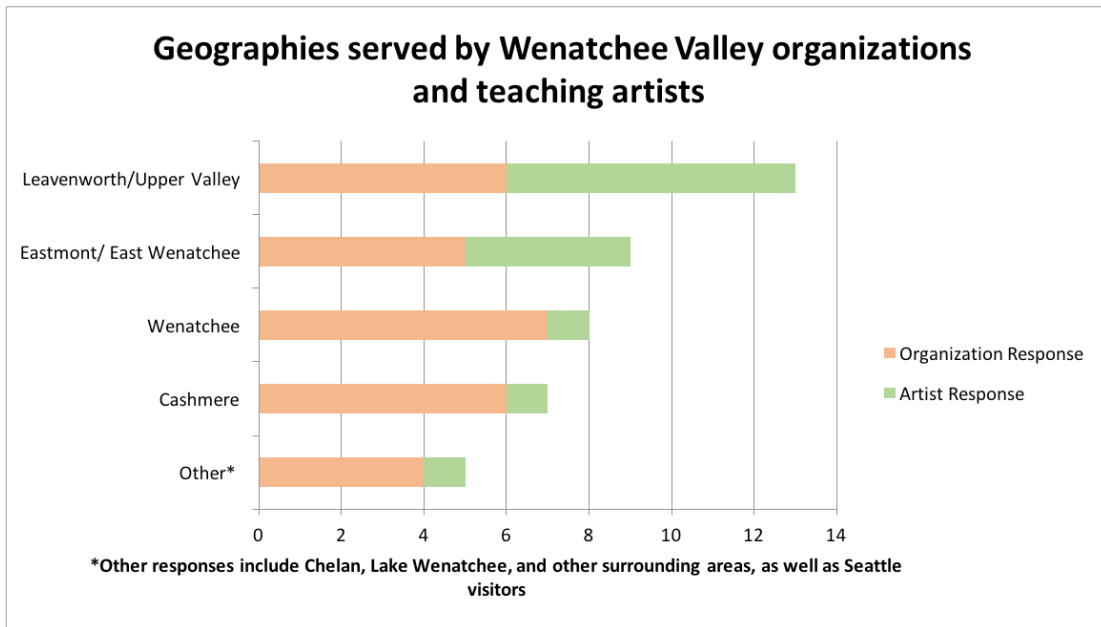
Combining a comprehensive online search and interviews with regional arts stakeholders, we identified 43 programs that included arts education programming for K-12 age youth in the Wenatchee Valley. Of these, 30% were visual arts programs, 26% were music programs, 16%

were dance programs, 5% were theater programs, and 23% were programs that included a focus on two or more disciplines.

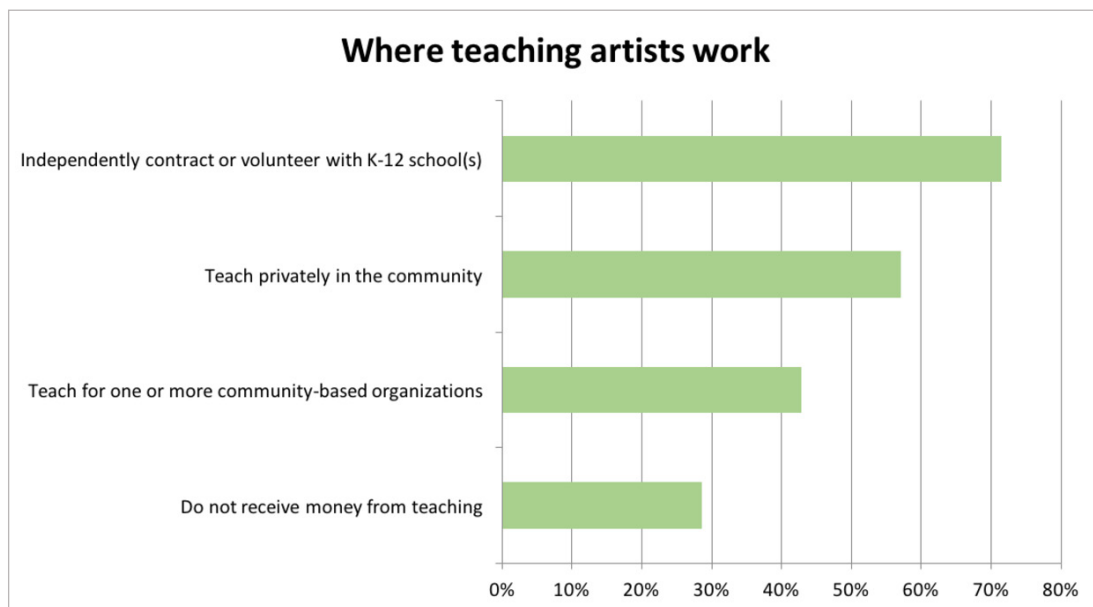
The following charts show the types of community arts organizations that responded to our survey, as well as the disciplines they teach.



Of the nine organizations that completed or nearly completed the full battery of questions in our survey, seven serve young people in Wenatchee; six serve Cashmere; six serve Leavenworth; and five serve East Wenatchee. Of the seven teaching artists who participated in the survey, all worked in the Upper Valley, and more than half in East Wenatchee. One artist reported teaching in Wenatchee and Cashmere.



In our surveys, teaching artists were split between old-timers and newcomers. More than 40% had 11 years' or more teaching experience; the same number had five or fewer years. Fourteen percent had between five and 11 years.



Of the teaching artists who responded to our survey, 71% contract or volunteer with at least one local school. Nearly 60% teach private lessons. All reported earning less than \$10,000 annually from arts teaching.

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## PARTICIPATION: CONTEXT AND TRENDS

Access to out-of-school arts education programs is shaped by many factors, including cost, location, awareness, and cultural or personal connection or appeal. Programs whose values or mission includes serving young people with the least access to arts education (typically low-income youth and youth of color) should think through each of these elements in their program design.

The [National Council on Nonprofits](#) highlights several benefits of having boards that reflect the communities they serve, which can apply to staffs as well:

- Better access to resources in the community through connections with potential partners, donors, and/or policymakers.
- Better ability to respond to external influences changing the environment for communities served.
- Better decision-making from diverse perspectives that can identify full ranges of opportunities and risks.
- More dynamic groups and organizations, that can recruit talent from wider and different circles.

Some programs offer free programs rather than scholarships. Scholarships sometimes create psychological barriers to diverse participation. Free programs, however, clearly present funding challenges. Another effective strategy has been connecting arts opportunities to out-of-school programs that already engage underserved populations. Organizations such as Seattle's [Arts Corps](#) not only place teaching artists in schools, but also in low-income housing communities, community centers, and after-school programs at schools. These partnerships allow organizations to share the cost of the instruction while ensuring programs are free for youth.

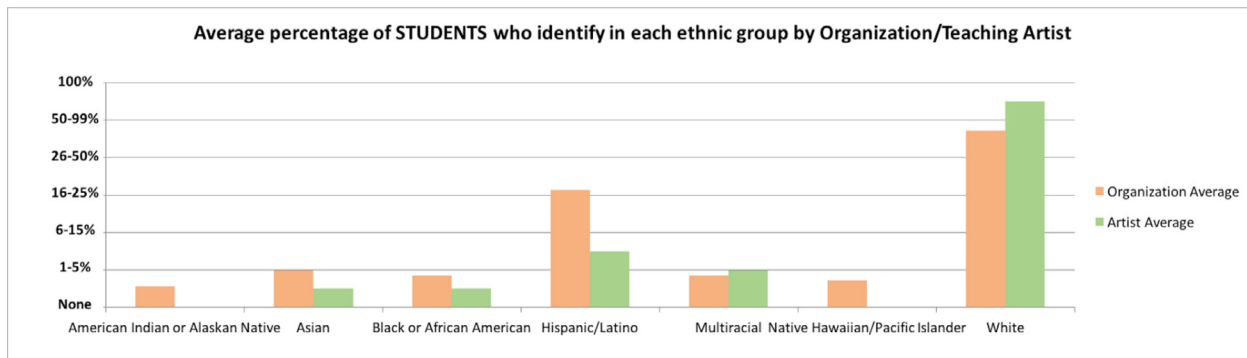
## PARTICIPATION: BY RACE

**Key finding:** Most of the students served by community arts organizations and teaching artists are white. Only one organization in our survey reported the majority of its students are Latino. While the Latino population of Chelan and Douglas Counties is 29%—and Latino population across all four Wenatchee Valley school districts is 45.4%—more than half of organizations said they served 25% or fewer Latino students. Staffs and boards are also more white than the students they serve.

In 2015, the [populations of Chelan and Douglas Counties](#) were 69% white, almost 29% Latino, just over 1% two or more races, and just under 1% (combined) Black, Asian, Native American, or other.



Nearly 60% of the community arts organizations that responded to our surveys' demographic questions reported that the majority of the students they served are white; one organization reported the majority of their students are Latino. The number of individual teaching artists serving mostly white students was even higher.

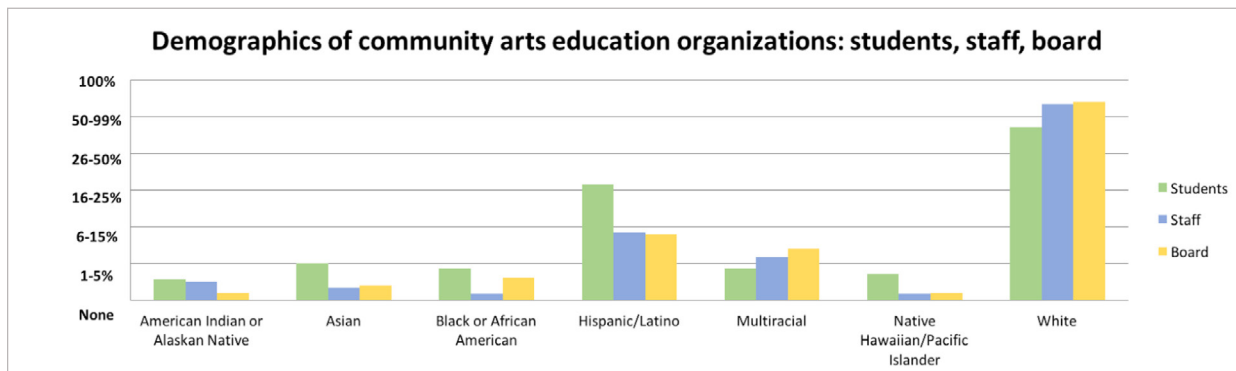


During our interviews, many participants noted that in the Upper Valley white children are more likely to participate in out-of-school arts opportunities. “It’s this little group of privileged white kids [whose families] either have the money or are making it work becomes it feels like it’s worth it,” said one teaching artist who has worked in Leavenworth.

Another teacher expressed similar experiences. “What I’ve seen is more kids that have been exposed to art already at an earlier age, like in a preschool class. Their parents are already conscious of giving opportunities, or they have the means.”

Interviewees mentioned several factors that could be contributing to lesser participation from Latino students, including cost, communication, and transportation, all of which are explored in greater detail below.

A parent who is Latina also felt that Latino families do not feel comfortable in the environments of many of the community arts opportunities being offered in the Upper Valley, and that



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## **PARTICIPATION: PROGRAM FEES**

**Key finding:** Not quite half of the organizations in our survey reported that all programming was free to students. Of those that offer tuition-based programs, two-thirds offered some level of financial assistance.

Of the community arts organizations that participated in our survey, 44% reported that all programming is free. One-third reported all programs are solely tuition-based. Just over 20% offer a mix of free and fee-based programs

Among organizations that offer tuition-based programs, two-thirds offer need-based financial aid to a range between under 15% to 26-50% of students.

The number of teaching artists who responded to the program fees question was too small to draw conclusions.

Free programming and scholarships might help community arts organizations reach more Latino youth. One veteran educator told us during an interview that there aren't many scholarships available overall, but those that do exist are accessed less frequently by Latino families.

## **QUALITY: CONTEXT AND TRENDS**

To ensure high-quality instruction and learning, community-based arts education providers should conduct some form of assessment of student learning. What they assess and how they do it will depend on the goals of the program. Common and effective assessment practices include student portfolios that include student reflection, student self- and peer-assessment, student-informed assessment rubrics and performance-based assessments.

Community-based arts education organizations should also be engaged in evaluating the impacts of their work in light of organizational goals. High quality programs also conduct formative, ongoing assessments of their practices to identify areas for improvement. The rewards of rigorous evaluation can be great: as organizations learn and improve the impact of their work, they are also able to communicate the impact to families, schools, partners, and funders. In doing so, they will be better able to increase demand and funding for their services.

In the Wenatchee Valley, nearly all organizations are tracking outputs such as the number of students they serve. Most are also measuring student and family satisfaction with their programs.

Fewer are engaged in measuring program outcomes on student learning. There are a number of proven ways to approach this. Performance-based assessments and portfolios can be useful

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tools for measuring artistic learning and 21st century skills, such as creativity, critical thinking, and communication. Well-designed and tested student surveys can be used to measure social-emotional indicators. Classroom observations based on research-based and tested rubrics can be used to measure and document high-quality teaching practices and student behaviors that demonstrate 21st century skills and social-emotional wellbeing. Finally, data sharing agreements with school partners can reveal academic performance, attendance, and school behavior data for program participants.

For many programs, however, the cost and expertise of building comprehensive program evaluation is prohibitive. In major cities, consultants often work with organizations to develop evaluation plans and tools. That option may be less available in smaller towns and rural areas. In that case, programs should begin with articulating clear goals, their intended impacts, and the ways their programs are designed to meet those goals. In addition, there are many existing evaluation tools that organizations can use or adapt for their programs. Useful resources include The National Association of State Arts Assemblies' [Getting Started with Program Evaluation: A Guide for Arts Organizations](#), and the National Endowment for the Arts' [Resources on Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement](#).

[School's Out Washington](#)—a statewide organization dedicated to strengthening programs that serve Washington's children and youth outside the traditional school day—offers important resources on evaluation and assessment of high-quality learning opportunities. They include the [Washington State Quality Standards for Afterschool and Youth Development Programs](#), the [Washington State Core Competencies for Child and Youth Development](#), and a highly regarded, validated, and reliable observational assessment tool called the [Program Quality Assessment](#). Nearly 250 after-school and youth development programs across Washington state are currently using this tool, and the tool has been widely embraced by arts education programs in King County.

Given their growing role in arts learning, professional development for teaching artists is an important investment for ensuring high-quality learning experiences for young people. Historically, most teaching artists learned to teach through mentorship. Today, most professional development for teaching artists is provided by the organizations that hire them, although stand-alone opportunities do exist in Washington state and nationally. [The Kennedy Center](#) in Washington, D.C., offers a series of training seminars for teaching artists that can be sponsored by and for community arts organizations. [The Washington State Teaching Artist Training Lab](#) also offers a seven-month training program for teaching artists.

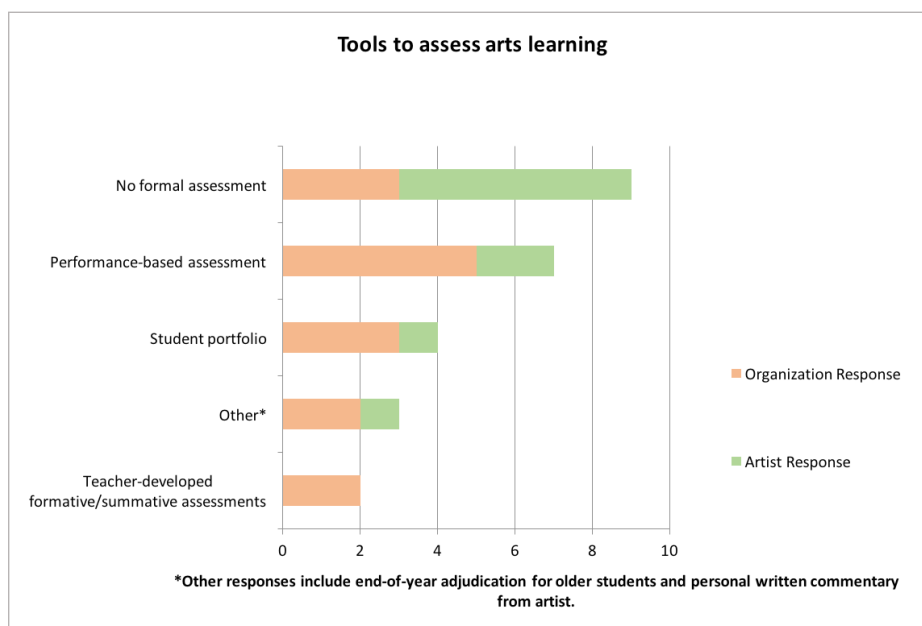
Common threads for most teaching artist training include developing curriculum, lessons, and units; strategies to engage and support students; collaborations with classroom teachers and other partnerships; emerging curriculum approaches; and assessment and documentation of student learning. (Rabkin et al., 17) For teaching artists involved in arts integration and teacher training, advanced experience and professional development support is especially important, given the added complexity of those approaches.

## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

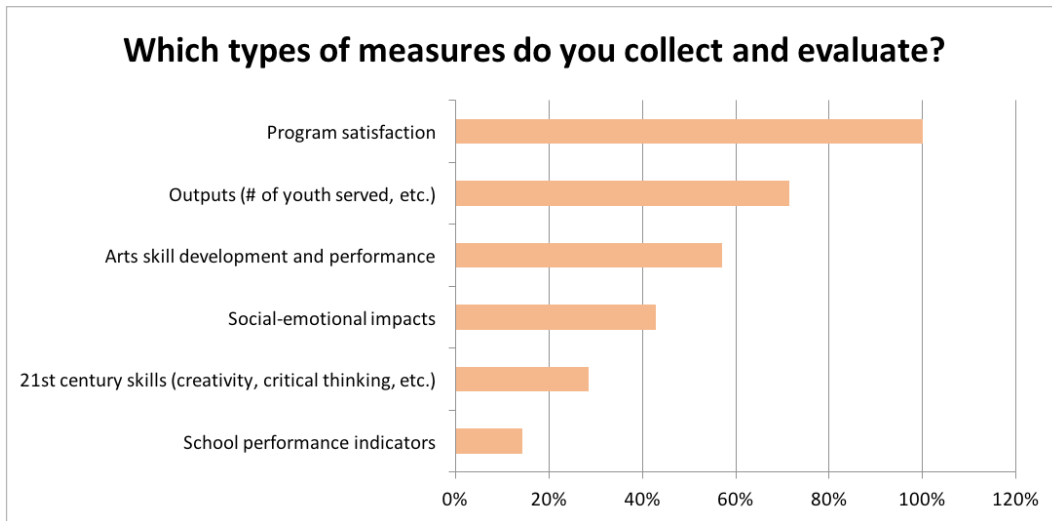
Key finding: More than 60% of organizations practice performance-based assessments with their students. The large majority of surveyed teaching artists do not formally assess their students. Nearly all organizations measure satisfaction with their programs, but few monitor more difficult program metrics.

In our survey, organizations reported using several types of assessments (and some organizations use more than one). More than 60% of organizations reported they use performance-based assessments. Just under 40% said they evaluate student portfolios. However, more than 37% reported conducting no assessments.

Among individual teaching artists, 86% reported conducting no formal assessment. Of those that did assess, most used performance-based assessment.



Nearly 80% of organizations report evaluating the impact of their program. All of those that do say they measure program satisfaction. Of those that evaluate, 71% track metrics such as numbers of students or hours of instruction. Less than half report measuring program outcomes that are more difficult to capture, such as development of 21st century skills, like critical thinking and problem-solving, or social-emotional impacts. Only one respondent reported measuring school performance indicators such as grades or test scores.



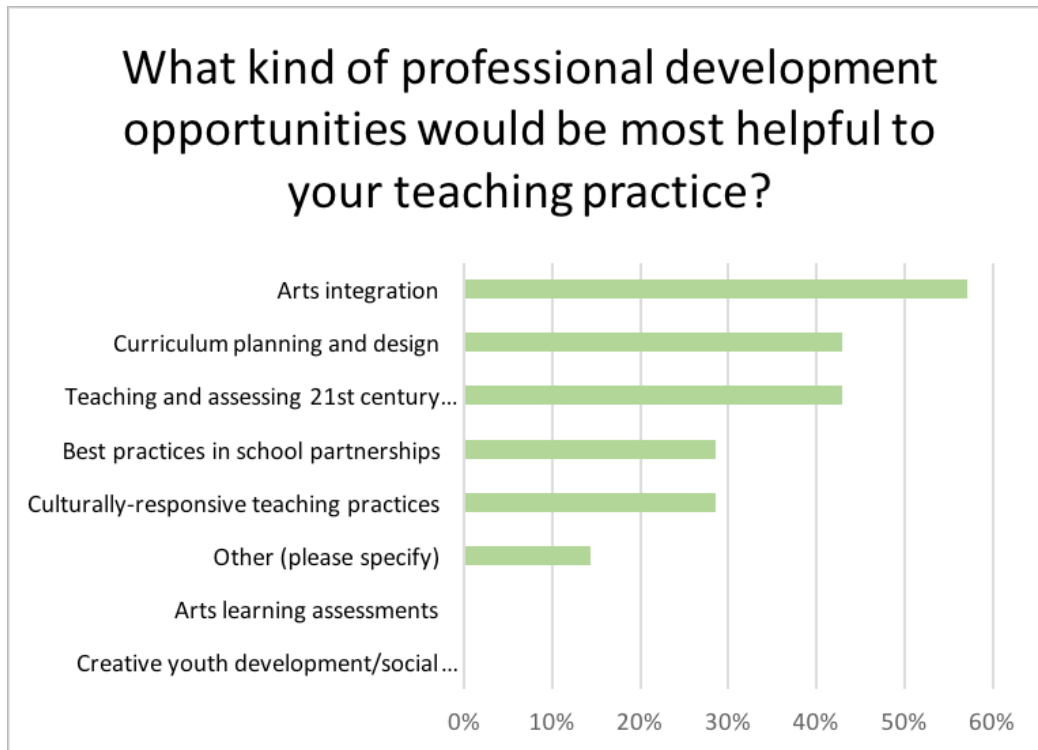
## QUALITY: WENATCHEE VALLEY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Key finding:** Most community arts organizations do not provide professional development for their teaching artists. More than 70% of our teaching artist respondents reported having no formal instruction in arts education, though some of those have participated in various trainings.

Fewer than half of community arts organizations that responded in our survey reported that they provide or sponsor any professional development for their teaching artists. Of those that do, 75% sponsor teaching artists' participation in outside professional development opportunities. Only one organization reported providing professional development directly to teaching artists.

Over 70% of teaching artist respondents reported having no formal training in arts education, though some of those same artists did report having participated in trainings provided by community-based organizations, and one teaching artist also participated in the Washington State Teaching Artist Training Lab.

Over 50% of teaching artist respondents also expressed an interest in professional development around arts integration, and nearly that many expressed interest in curriculum planning and design, and teaching and assessing for 21st century skills.



## INFRASTRUCTURE: WENATCHEE VALLEY OVERVIEW

**Key finding:** There is a wide variety among the Valley’s community arts organizations in the numbers they serve, budget, and staff and volunteer rosters. Three-quarters of respondents serve fewer than 1,000 students. Almost 90% report paying teaching artists; of those, 63% report an hourly rate of \$20 or more.

The programs run by community arts organizations in the Valley range from small to sizable.

- The median number of students served by organizations in our survey is 373; because two organizations reported serving high numbers, the average number of students served per organization is 1,249. The number of students served annually ranged from 6 to 5,500, with 75% of respondents serving fewer than 1,000.
- The median operational expenditure for respondents’ arts education programs or organizations is around \$50,000, ranging widely from \$500 to \$600,000. Just under 40% of the programs reported an expenditure budget over \$100,000.
- The average number of teaching artists at organizations in our survey was three to five. Responses ranged from fewer than one teaching artist (11%) to more than 10 (33%).
- The average number of volunteers per respondent was between four and six. Responses ranged from zero volunteers (22%) to more than 11 (44%).
- Almost 90% of organizations responding to our survey reported they pay their teaching artists. Only one respondent reported that their teaching artists are volunteers. Of those that pay, 63% reported that they pay an hourly rate of \$20 or more.

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- The average annual amounts paid to artists ranged between \$5,001 and \$10,000, although half of respondents reported their teaching artists typically earn between \$1,001 and \$5,000 from their organizations annually.

We heard from several people during interviews that artists feel called on by the Wenatchee Valley community to do an unsustainable amount of their work pro bono or at reduced rates.

“It’s a huge challenge,” said one person who’s lived in the Valley for decades and has experience with several arts education programs. “Every artist wants to get paid. And every artist gives of their time and efforts for free. Because they’re happy to. But there comes a time when you can’t always do that.”

“Just like probably everywhere, this town requests artists to volunteer a lot of their time and they don’t want to pay them,” said another parent and arts instructor. Pay rates are low, this person said, and artists can be expected to use their own pay for supplies. “A lot of people are burned-out.”

## **ASSETS, BARRIERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Key finding:** Community support for the arts was selected by the most organizations as a top strength in the region, followed by the quality and availability of community arts education. Teaching artists cited youth interest and parent support as the most valuable assets. While there was no broad agreement among organizations on barriers, nearly half agreed that transportation was a problem, a point we heard often in interviews; increasing transportation access was chosen a top funding priority. Teaching artists said inadequate and inequitable arts access during the school day was the greatest hurdle, and prioritized funding for more arts teachers in schools.

### **Assets**

In the School-Based Arts Education chapter, we noted that principals named “community support for the arts” as the Valley’s greatest arts asset.

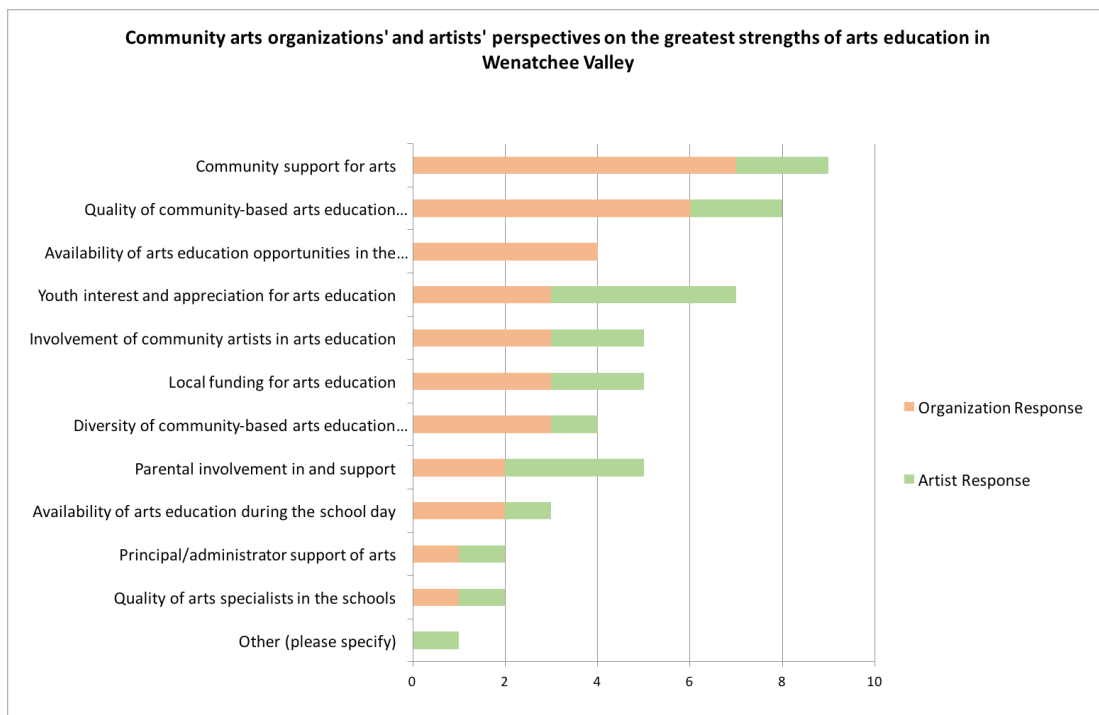
Community organizations also cited “community support for the arts” more than any other strength as the Wenatchee Valley’s top asset. Nearly 78% named it as one of their top three choices.

The second-most-often selected asset to organizations—cited by two-thirds of respondents—was the “quality of community arts education.” The third most cited was “availability of arts education in the Valley,” meaning the number of programs and teachers that exist.

While teaching artists did not select community support for the arts broadly as their top choice, their top two choices are clearly connected to that idea: “Youth interest and support

for arts education “(which 57% of respondents put in their top three strengths) and “parental involvement and support” (chosen by 43%). Additional choices were wide ranging.

Across the board—from principals, community arts organizations, and teaching artists—we heard that the region values the arts, and the role it plays in the development of young people. This appreciation is a good fortune for the Valley, as it suggests that supporters here might spend less time defending the necessity of arts and more time discussing how best to back them.

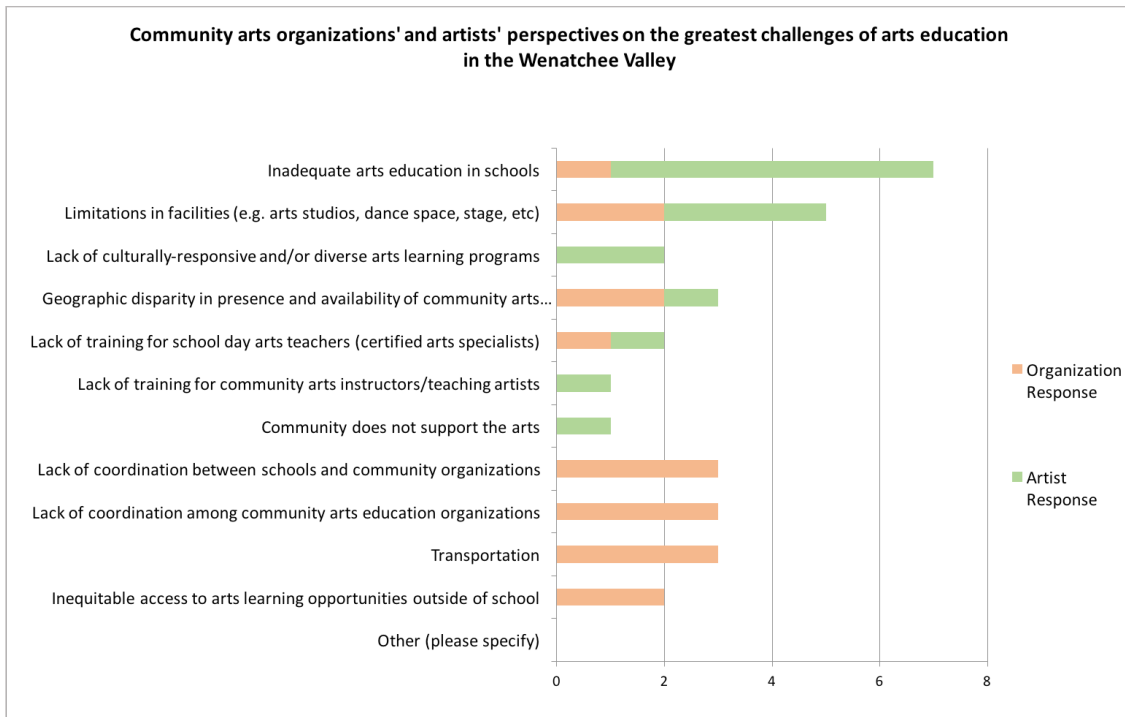


### Barriers and opportunities

Organizations reported a wide variety of barriers to providing the level of high-quality, accessible arts education to which they aspire in their organizations. The only barrier on which a majority agreed was inadequate funding, although 44% also agreed that transportation costs and infrastructure, as well as support and infrastructure for school partnerships were barriers.

Teaching artists' perspectives were focused squarely on the school day. More than 86% said that inadequate arts education in schools was a primary barrier. An equal number selected inequitable access to arts education in schools. In other words, from teaching artists' perspectives, no one is getting enough, and some groups of students are getting less than others.





We should note that the pool of responding teaching artists was small. Still, their perception is confirmed by the disparities we saw in school enrollment data. Recall, for example, that in the Cashmere School District, white high school students are 27.3% more likely to be enrolled in an extra semester of arts than their Latino peers.

It's consistent then that teaching artists overwhelmingly—86%—selected additional school-day arts teachers as a top priority for new investment. Nearly 43% of organizations voiced support for more arts teachers, as well as more coordination with schools for before- and after-school programming. Teaching artists' second choice was for more professional development for school-day teachers.

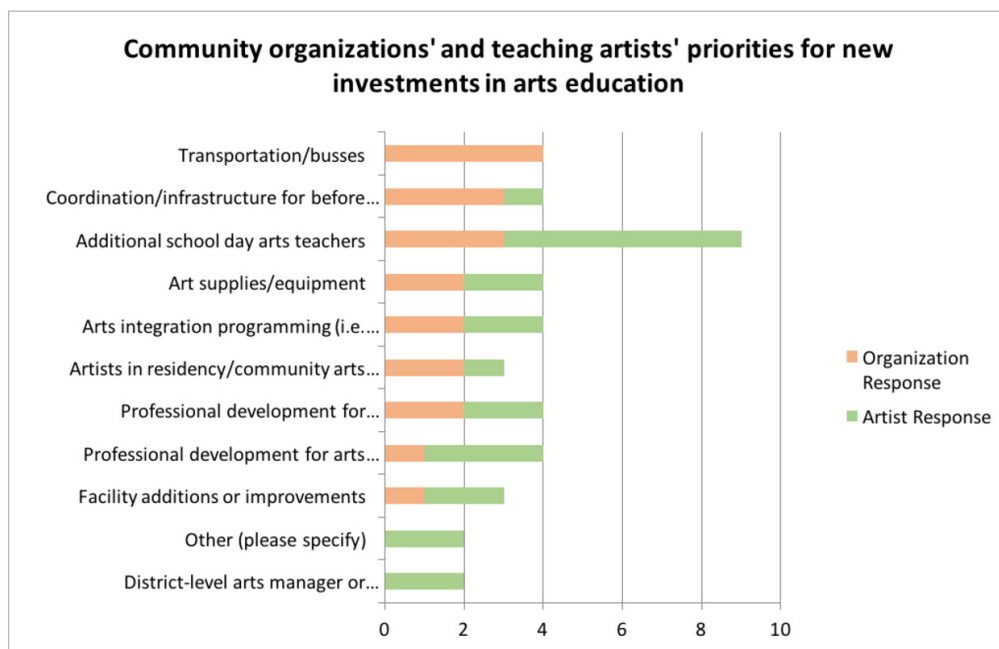
### Geography and Transportation

It's not surprising in a widely-dispersed region like the Wenatchee Valley to hear that transportation prevents young people from taking part in arts opportunities. Donovan and Black highlight geography—distances and the transportation required to travel them—along with weather complications as factors that affect rural areas particularly acutely. The Cascade School District—the state's largest—is three-quarters the size of Rhode Island, covering 1,176 square miles. The combined area of all four districts is 1,667.5 square miles.

One educator told us that transportation logistics are the biggest hurdle for young people to overcome, even more than cost. Another said securing transportation was the first place funds were allocated when that instructor launched a new program. Even when people can find their way to and from community programs, distance puts constraints on the time for practice and

performance. One instructor holds performances for student families at 6 p.m. and limits the length to 35 minutes.

Not surprisingly, transportation and busses were selected by community organizations as a top priority for new investment, with 57% of responding organizations choosing it.



### Space

A number of our interview subjects brought up the topic of space. One teacher noted that renting space in Wenatchee Valley can be as expensive as it is in Bellevue, an affluent city near Seattle. Another said that event and class space is difficult to reserve in Leavenworth because of competition from other popular programs and organizations.

“It’s a small town that’s doing a large volume of business,” said the interviewee. “It’s really hard to get on the calendar.”

At the same time, we heard from principals in the Cascade School District that school space was available for community groups to use at very low cost. As several of the schools in that district will be moving to new buildings, several interviewees mentioned the hope that one of the old school buildings might be converted into a community center that would include the arts.

### Skill levels

A handful of interviewees expressed concerns that the high skill level required to engage in some out-of-school programs acted as a barrier for some young people.

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Icicle Creek Center for the Arts is one of the region's leading teaching arts organizations. Though it was founded with a focus on music, in recent years it has added substantial classes and camps on theater and film for young people.

Icicle Creek is especially well-known for its music programs, including the Icicle Creek Youth Orchestra. There is a perception, one interviewee said, that the organization is only for those who've already spent years playing an instrument.

"Icicle Creek requires a level of proficiency," said another. "It needs to be offering classes and opportunities to get involved from the beginning."

We also heard considerable pride for Icicle Creek and its dedication to developing highly-skilled young players.

As one parent said, summing up the region's support for cultural education, "Art can be learned. You don't have to be born doing it."

*Art can be learned. You don't have to be born doing it.*  
— Parent and teacher

# PARTNERSHIPS

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## PARTNERSHIPS: CONTEXT AND TRENDS

Collaborations between schools and community arts organizations can contribute to vibrant, arts-rich schools as well as greater arts education access for young people. There are a number of practices that schools and community-based arts organizations can deploy together to strengthen and sustain these partnerships. The [National Guild for Community Arts Education](#), in a 2014 study of key lessons from its Partners in Arts Education program, identified the following characteristics and processes as necessary for high-impact and sustainable school-community arts partnerships:

- Clear communications and partnership structure.
- Shared responsibility for program funding.
- Cultural and community responsiveness.
- Evaluation of the partnership process in addition to the programmatic delivery of services.

Coordinated efforts (also known as collective impact efforts) to improve arts education access and quality involving broad arrays of school and community stakeholders have now taken hold in many major cities, including Dallas ([Big Thought](#)), Boston ([BPS Arts Expansion](#)), Chicago ([Ingenuity](#)), and Seattle ([Creative Advantage](#)), among others. While the approaches vary, they have all succeeded in bringing together community and school partners—as well as private and public funders—to increase access to arts education.

A 2008 study by the [Wallace Foundation](#), an early investor in arts education collective impact efforts, found several common strategies:

- Benchmarking the current state of arts education in their schools. In all cases, the profound inequities surfaced helped to galvanize support.
- Setting a goal of access for all.
- Strategic planning.
- Constructing a case and communicating the benefits of arts education.
- Attracting, pooling, and leveraging resources.
- Hiring an arts education coordinator placed highly within the school district administration.
- Building individual and organizational capacity for teachers, teaching artists, school administrators, and arts organizations.
- Advocating locally with key stakeholders and leaders, as well as with local and state policymakers.

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In *Leveraging Change: Increasing Access to Arts Education in Rural Areas*, Donovan and Brown posit that the most promising theme for strengthening arts education in rural areas is the creation of rural networks to support arts education initiatives. Networks allow schools and organizations “to stay connected, to share information, and to provide professional development across geographic distance.” These networks seem to take a similar shape and function to the collective impact initiatives in major cities mentioned above.

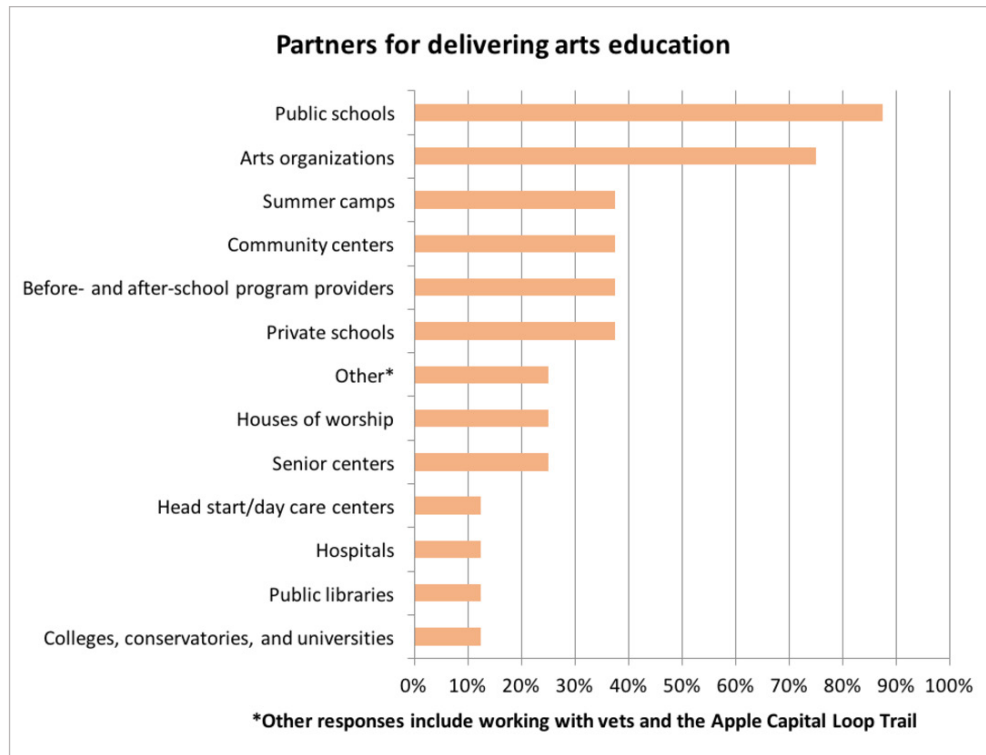
According to Donovan and Brown, the key to successful networks and initiatives is a backbone organization that serves as a convener and coordinator of arts education partners for a particular initiative. In the 11 states they studied, they found the most common conveners were state and local arts agencies, but school districts, universities, and regional community-based organizations have also served in that role. Successful networks support frequent communications, coordinate and align partners to implement best practices, and collect, analyze, and use data to inform strategies.

## **PARTNERSHIPS: WENATCHEE VALLEY OVERVIEW**

**Key finding:** Nearly 90% of community arts organization respondents report they collaborate with schools, and 64% of principals report having a partnership with an arts organization or teaching artists. About one-third of those partnerships are happening outside the school day. Most partnerships focus on visual arts.

Partnerships among schools and community arts organizations are a natural fit. Logistically, they usually have available space for creating, and they’re centralized to facilitate transportation. More important, they’re familiar, trusted, and accountable partners in the community for young people’s activities.

Although the community arts organizations in the Wenatchee Valley work with a wide array of partners, they most frequently collaborate with public schools. Nearly 90 percent of organizations reported they collaborate with public schools; 75 percent team up with other arts organizations, and it would not be surprising if some of that joint programming also took place at school facilities.

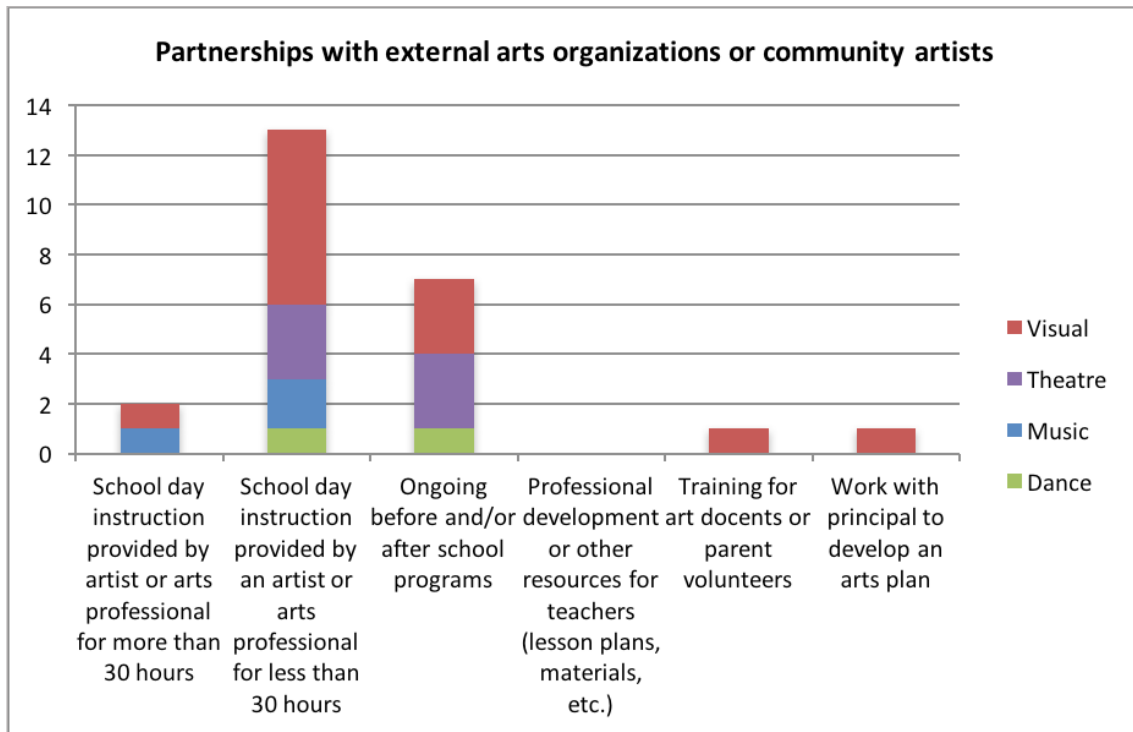


Of the 14 principals who responded to survey questions about partnerships, 64% said they had some kind of partnership with a community arts organization or individual artist.

Shorter term arts instruction during the school day provided by artists is the most commonly reported partnership activity. Nearly 60% of elementary schools and 10% of secondary schools report short-term artist residencies for one or more art form. Two elementary schools also reported longer term (30+ hours) artist residencies at their schools.

Only 27% of principals reported having arts partners involved in ongoing before- and after-school programs. That number may be higher. Elsewhere in our surveying, 35% of principals reported community partners provide before- and after-school arts instruction at their schools (in this case, they would likely have included short-term or occasional arts instruction in their reporting, in addition to ongoing programs). Nonetheless, it would appear that most partnerships between schools and community partners are happening during the school day rather than before or after.

Visual arts are the most commonly reported discipline in partnerships with schools, with more than half of all partnership instances focused on visual arts.



No principals reported that arts partners support professional development for teachers.

There is interest among principals in developing or growing new and existing partnership programs. As noted in the previous chapters' sections on assets, barriers, and opportunities, twelve of 22 principals—55%—ranked after-school arts programs in their top three priorities for new investment. Just over one-third prioritized partnerships with artist-in-residence or community arts organizations.

Surveys of community arts organizations and teaching artists did not reflect the same priorities. Among community organizations, investing in coordination and infrastructure for before- and after-school programs was the second-most-often chosen priority, with 43% support. Artist-in-residence and community organization partnerships received 29%.

Notably, the small sample of teaching artists who participated in the survey ranked both of these choices at the bottom of their priorities.

These responses, however, should not be assumed to mean that principals, organizations, and artists do not value collaborations. It could reflect a feeling that partnerships are already robust and plentiful, so new investment is not required. It could also reflect the opinion that there are more pressing needs. Indeed, hiring new school arts teachers was the #1 priority for both principals and teaching artists, and the #3 priority for community arts organizations.

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## **PARTNERSHIPS: REACHING DIVERSE POPULATIONS**

**Key finding:** During our interviews, several subjects suggested that communities will have the best success reaching Latino youth by hosting programs at school—during the day, or before and after school.

In the Wenatchee Valley, providing arts learning opportunities in school buildings after the school day could be an effective strategy for reaching a more diverse population. While community-based organizations in the Upper Valley noted struggles recruiting Latino students to their programs, principals reported that they would welcome community arts groups using school buildings for after-school programs.

Interviews with school administrators, a Latino parent, and an out-of-school arts provider suggested that Latino families will be much more likely to attend and participate in out-of-school arts programs if they are offered in the school building where trust and relationships are established, and especially if transportation home was included.

This can be particularly helpful in areas that are home to migrant families for portions of the year. One educator who works with Latino youth said that migrant families simply do not participate in out-of-school opportunities. Hosting programs at schools is one way to make parents comfortable with their children taking part.

“Once you have established the place, the transportation, and parents are comfortable—then you have the opportunity to teach,” one educator said.

Latino families participate when programs are established at schools, said one administrator. “You need to provide opportunities in every school, where parents can trust what’s happening. When we hold events here, we have a full house. A lot of parents come.”



# ADDENDUM: OKANOGAN COUNTY

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After this study was underway, the Icicle Fund requested an addendum to survey Okanogan County. We partnered with Amanda Jackson Mott, executive director of Methow Arts, to adapt and distribute study tools in the Okanogan area. Due to time and budget constraints, we relied heavily on her relationships in and knowledge of the area. No focus groups or interviews were conducted.

We received responses from 18 Okanogan County community-based organizations and teaching artists. We gleaned additional anecdotal information about youth arts education opportunities in Okanogan County from Amanda Jackson Mott and Christine Morgan at the Icicle Fund.

## SURVEYS

We designed four distinct surveys to gather information on youth arts education opportunities in Okanogan County:

- Okanogan Elementary Schools
- Okanogan Secondary Schools
- Okanogan Community-Based Organizations
- Okanogan Teaching Artists

We focused survey questions on quality and quantity of youth arts education opportunities. The surveys are included here as digital appendices.

Because collecting enrollment data directly from schools was not part of the project scope, we included questions in the school surveys to gather information about gender, race, disparities in enrollment, and other data about arts participation in schools. Because we collected enrollment data directly from schools for our study of the Wenatchee Valley, the inclusion of these questions is a variation between the Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County surveys.

### Survey design

Whenever possible, we benchmarked our survey questions to the Seattle Public Schools Art Access Survey and Cohort Analysis Results (June 2012), Washington State Arts Education Research Initiative (2009), Highline Public Schools Arts Capacity Survey (2014-2015), and the surveys we designed for the Wenatchee Valley portion of the study. By emulating questions within these existing surveys, we were able to compare Wenatchee Valley and Okanogan County survey results to other communities in Washington.

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We adapted and expanded several questions from the Wenatchee Valley to make up for the lack of direct school enrollment data at hand. We partnered with Amanda Jackson Mott to ensure questions were pertinent to Okanogan County recipients.

We also kept questions and answer choices consistent across surveys to make data as comparable as possible.

The majority of survey questions included a comments option, and many respondents used this space to share additional thoughts on youth arts education opportunities available in Okanogan County.

## Survey deployment

### Elementary and secondary schools in Okanogan County

Amanda Jackson Mott emailed elementary and secondary surveys to corresponding principals with an introductory note about our study and background.

Principals were asked to participate over a two-week period, and received up to four reminders via email and phone to encourage participation.

The following schools were invited to participate:

- Brewster Elementary School
- *Brewster High School*
- *Brewster Middle School*
- Liberty Bell Jr./Sr. High School (Methow Valley)
- *Little Star Montessori School*
- Methow Valley Elementary School
- *Okanogan High School*
- *Okanogan Middle School*
- Omak East Elementary School
- Omak Middle School
- *Omak North Elementary School*
- Oroville Elementary School
- *Oroville Middle-High School*
- Paschal Sherman Indian School
- Pateros Elementary School
- Pateros High School
- Pateros Middle School
- *The Methow Valley Community School*
- *Tonasket Elementary School*
- *Tonasket High School*
- *Tonasket Middle School*
- Virginia Grainger Elementary School

Schools in italics did not respond to the survey. With 22 schools invited to participate, and 11 respondents, there was a school return rate of 50%.

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### Community-based organizations and teaching artists

Based on her experience working in Okanogan County, Amanda Jackson Mott identified 25 programs that included arts education programming for K-12 grade youth in Wenatchee Valley:

- Apple Hill Art Camp/Omak
- Art in the Park/Omak
- Cascadia Art and Pipestone Music
- Confluence Gallery and Art Center
- Culler Studio/Sara Ashford
- Door No. 3 and Spartan Art Summer Camp
- Door No. 3 Print Studio
- Jim Neupert Studio/Pottery Classes
- Lorrie Fraley Wilson School of Dance
- Lucid Glassworks/Sam Carlin
- Matt Armbrust/Pottery Studio
- Methow Arts Alliance
- Methow Arts Festival
- Methow Valley Community Theater
- Methow Valley Interpretive Center
- Methow Valley Songwriting Camp
- Okanogan Family Faire/Barter Faire in Tonasket
- Okanogan Valley Orcherstra and Chorus (OVOC)
- Omak Library
- Omak Performing Arts Center
- The Merc Playhouse
- Twisp Library
- TwispWorks
- Winthrop Library
- Wenatchee Valley College at Omak

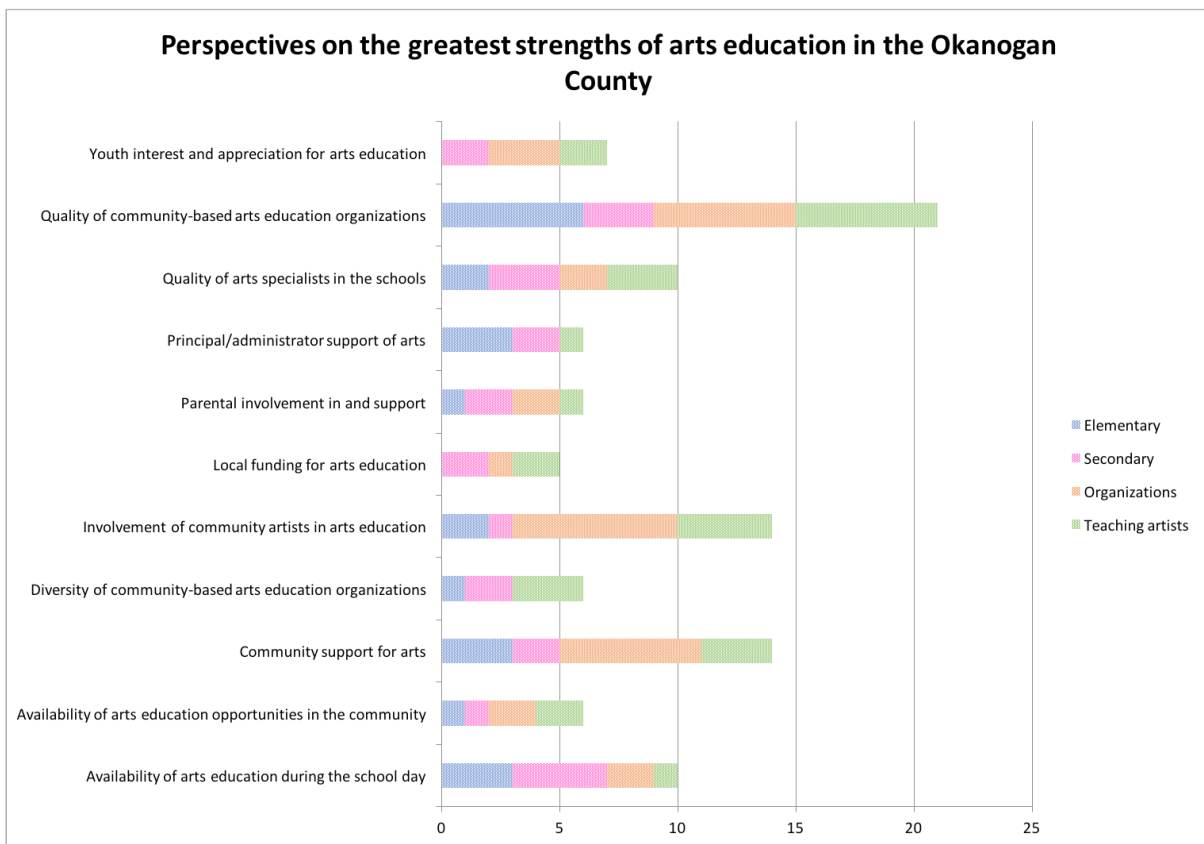
Amanda Jackson Mott also identified 31 teaching artists who include arts education programming for K-12 grade youth in the Wenatchee Valley.

We emailed community-based organizations and teaching artists four times over three weeks to encourage participation. Eleven community arts organizations participated in the survey for a response rate of 44%, though it should be noted that not every organization answered every question. Seven teaching artists participated in the survey for a response rate of 22%.

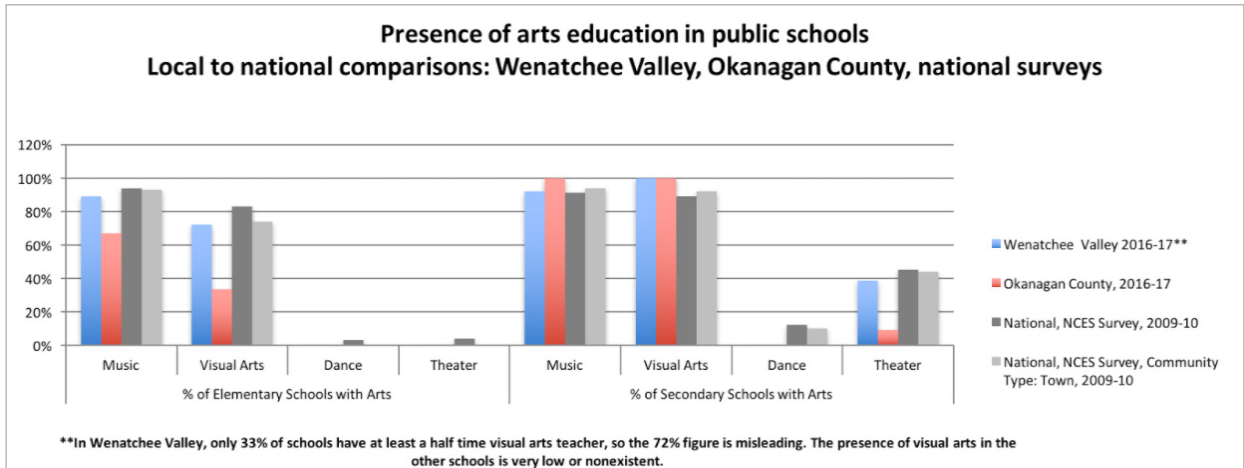
Participation was anonymous, but we received surveys from teaching artist affiliates of the following organizations:

- Cascadia Art and Pipestone Music
- Confluence Gallery and Art Center
- Culler Studio/Sara Ashford
- Jim Neupert Studio/Pottery Classes
- Methow Arts Alliance
- Methow Arts Festival
- Methow Valley Interpretive Center
- TwispWorks
- Wenatchee Valley College at Omak

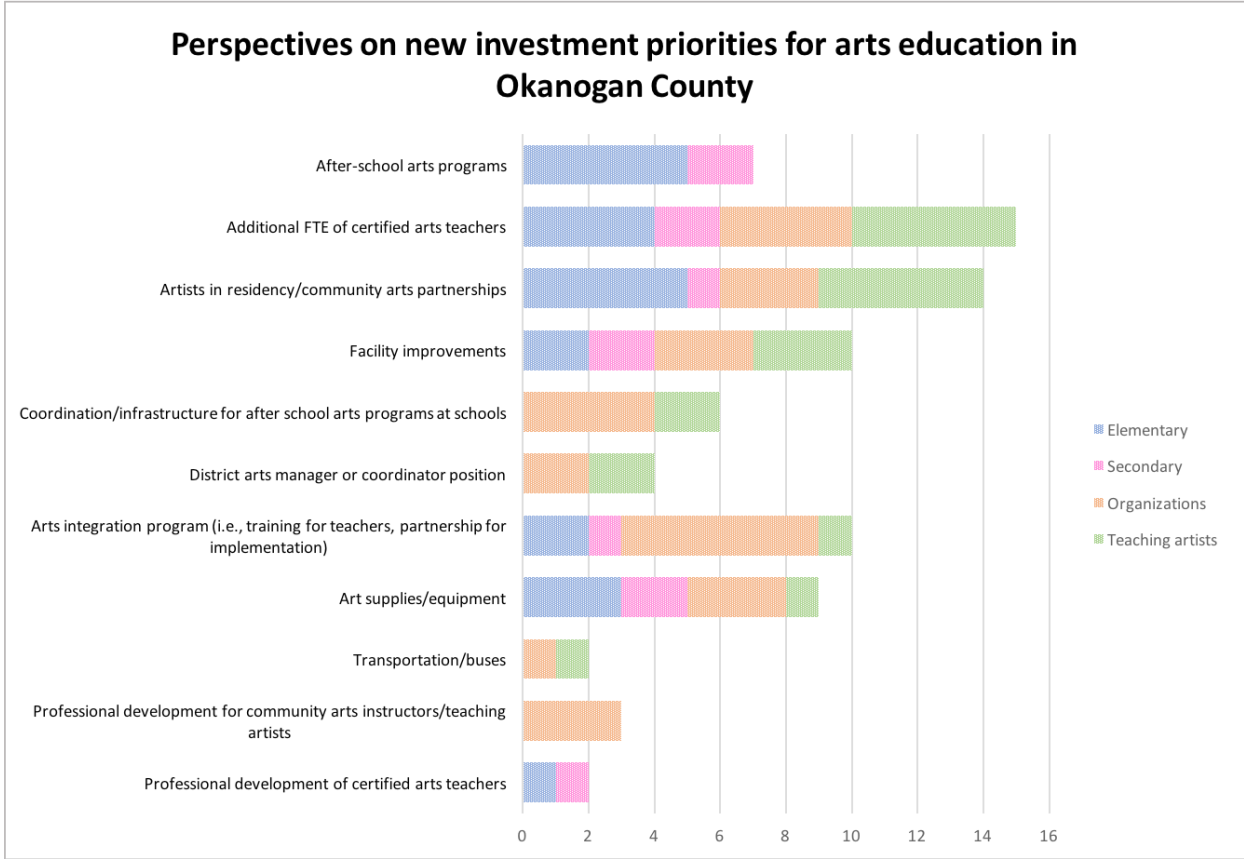
**Key Okanogan findings:** Okanogan County’s ecosystem of community-based arts education is strong, but arts education in schools is less robust than in the Wenatchee Valley. The teaching artists in our survey hold a wealth of experience: more than 71% have been teaching for more than 20 years, and 57% are certified arts educators (compared to zero in our Wenatchee Valley survey). While more than 90% of arts organizations and teaching artists serve the Methow Valley, each of the county’s eight school districts is served by at least two of our participating organizations.



Interestingly, school principals in our surveys cited the quality of community-based arts organizations as the county’s greatest arts assets. Elementary schools in the county provide significantly less arts education. As mentioned above, just 67% of schools have music teachers (compared to 89% in the Wenatchee Valley); only 33% have visual arts teachers (compared to 72% in the Valley).



In secondary schools, music and visual arts are on par with Valley peers, but only 9% of Okanogan County schools offer theater (compared to 38% in the Wenatchee Valley). At the elementary level, 63% of elementary arts providers are certified to teach arts, versus 92% in the Valley. Understandably, then, 73% of principals said the greatest barrier to teaching arts is a lack of general classroom teachers certified to teach art; 80% prioritized training in arts integration as the greatest professional development need.



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Several elements of the arts experience in Okanogan County are distinctive. More than 45% of community arts organizations are focused on arts-based youth development (growing social, emotional, cognitive, and physical competencies), compared to just 11% in the Valley. Three-quarters of those organizations reported measuring social-emotional impacts of arts education on the young people they serve, compared to 43% in the Wenatchee Valley. Finally, because more than 11% of the County population is Native American—the Colville Indian Reservation is in its borders—arts organizations there serve more Native youth. Two organizations reported that a quarter to a half of their students are Native American. School districts might consider more outreach to Native youth. Of the principals whose schools service significant Native populations, half reported Native students were not proportionally represented in arts classes.

**For a complete set of Okanogan findings, please refer to Appendix C.**

# APPENDIX A: DATA COLLECTION GUIDES

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## SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE

Tell us about your connection to arts education in the Wenatchee Valley. Please describe all the ways you've been involved in arts education, in and out of the school day.

Tell us about arts education in the school day in the Wenatchee Valley:

- Describe the current state of arts education in Cascade Public Schools.
- From your point of view, what is working well?
- What are the greatest gaps or challenges to arts education in the school day?
- Describe your wishes and hopes for arts education in the Cascade School District in the future.

Describe the current state of arts learning opportunities outside of the regular school day for school age youth (K-12) in the Wenatchee Valley.

- From your point of view, what is working well?
- What are the greatest gaps or challenges in out-of-school arts learning opportunities?
- Describe your wishes and hopes for community-based arts learning opportunities for youth in the Wenatchee Valley.

If you could address one thing to strengthen arts education (in or out of school) in the Wenatchee Valley, what would that be?

Other questions:

- How did you learn how to teach?
- Is space a problem you face?
- What makes a really successful in-school or after-school arts program?

For teachers:

- What's your teaching schedule like?
- Do you have planning time?
- Describe your professional development opportunities.
- Do you have access to professional learning communities (PLCs)?
- How do you assess your students' learning?

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## **SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

- Introductions:
  - What's your name?
  - What arts classes are you taking now?
- Tell us about your middle school arts experience.
- What do you like about your arts classes?
- What would you like to be different?
- What might keep some kids from participating in arts classes?
- Is arts education important for all kids to have? Why?
- Is anyone else involved in programs out of school?



# APPENDIX D: POTENTIAL FUNDING PARTNERS

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Just as networking with peers benefits artists and teachers, it's a good practice for philanthropies. Together, funding bodies can share data, best practices, investments, and more.

**Funder Name: Artist Trust**

**Website:** <http://artisttrust.org/index.php>

**Mission:** Artist Trust is a nonprofit dedicated to helping Washington state artists of all disciplines thrive. Founded in 1986, we were formed by a group of artists and arts lovers who came together to create support for art at its source: the artist. Since then, Artist Trust has invested over \$10 million in Washington state artists through funding, trainings, and resources and has provided programs that meet the changing needs of artists. Artist Trust helps artists establish and maintain careers through direct support, connections, and advocacy.

**Issue area:** Arts

**Geographic area:** Washington state

**Funder name: ArtsFund**

**Website:** <http://www.artsfund.org/>

**Mission:** ArtsFund strengthens the community by supporting the arts through leadership, advocacy, and grant making. Vision: A community with a dynamic and world-class arts and cultural sector where the arts are accessible to all and valued as a central and critical component of a healthy society.

**Issue area:** Arts

**Geographic area:** Washington state, primarily King and Pierce counties

**Funder Name: Beim Foundation**

**Website:** <http://www.beimfoundation.org/>

**Mission:** The Beim Foundation, a multi-generational family foundation, honors the past while embracing the future. Founded over 70 years ago by Nels Christian Beim, an immigrant from Norway, the Foundation has both a Minnesota-focused granting component and a program that serves other regions of interest to the directors. The Foundation's philanthropic priorities favor small, community-based, and developing organizations.

**Issue area:** Arts, environment, human services, and education.

**Geographic area:** Minnesota and other regions of interest to the directors

**Funder Name: Charlotte Martin Foundation**

**Website:** <http://www.charlottesmartin.org/>

**Mission:** To support young people and their education.

**Issue area:** Youth focused: athletics, culture, education, and wildlife and habitat preservation

**Geographic area:** Primarily the Pacific Northwest

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**Funder name: City of Wenatchee Community Arts Support Program**

**Website:** <http://www.wenatcheewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=15540>

**Mission:** Art organizations include those groups offering visual, performance, children's, and adult art education programs, as well as events related to the arts. The goal of the fund is to provide small yet meaningful amounts of money to help promote art programming within the city limits of Wenatchee.

**Issue area:** Community arts

**Geographic area:** City of Wenatchee, Chelan County, Washington

**Funder Name: The Clowes Fund**

**Website:** <http://www.clowesfund.org/>

**Mission:** A family foundation, seeks to enhance the common good by encouraging organizations and projects that help to build a just and equitable society, create opportunities for initiative, foster creativity and the growth of knowledge, and promote appreciation of the natural environment. We pursue these goals by awarding grants in three areas: arts, education, and social services. We also recognize the special value of efforts that create links among these areas. The Fund has a special interest in supporting projects that strengthen the communities in which Clowes family members and the foundation's directors live and work.

**Issue Area:** Social Services: immigrants, refugees, and asylees. Arts & education

**Geographic Area:** Indianapolis, New England, Seattle

**Funder Name: Columbia Basin Foundation**

**Website:** <http://www.columbiabasinfoundation.org/>

**Mission:** Improve quality of life and shape the future of the Columbia Basin through philanthropy; we help individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofits fulfill their dreams for better communities.

**Issue area:** Humanitarian, Educational, and Cultural

**Geographic Area:** Columbia basin of Washington state, specifically Grant and Adams counties and Western Lincoln County

**Funder Name: Community Foundation of North Central Washington**

**Website:** <https://cfncw.org/about/>

**Mission:** To grow, protect, and connect charitable gifts in support of strong communities.

**Issue Area:** Supports local non-profits

**Geographic Area:** Chelan, Douglas, and Okanogan Counties, Washington state

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**Funder Name: Doris Duke Foundation**

**Website:** <http://www.ddcf.org/>

**Mission:** The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research, and child well-being; and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties.

**Issue area:** Performing arts, medical research, environment, child well-being, building bridges, african health

**Geographic area:** Headquarters in New York, International Service

**Funder Name:** Evalyn O. Flory Foundation

**Website:** No official website - <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/911978571>

**Mission:** Not available

**Issue area:** Religious, educational, charitable, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition (as long as it doesn't provide athletic facilities or equipment), and the prevention of cruelty to children or animals

**Geographic Area:** Wenatchee, Washington

**Funder Name:** The Foster Foundation

**Website:** <http://www.thefosterfoundation.org/Home.htm>

**Mission:** Building strong communities benefits us all. Improving community life encompasses not only meeting critical needs, such as food, housing, health care, education, and employment, but also enriching community spirit and well-being through the support of artistic expression, cultural programs, and sports/recreational opportunities.

**Issue area:** Social services/human welfare, education, medical research, treatment and care

**Geographic area:** Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska

**Funder Name:** Inland Northwest Community Foundation

**Website:** <http://www.inwcf.org/>

**Mission:** Inland Northwest Community Foundation enriches communities by connecting people who care with causes that matter. The deeply ingrained values that guide our actions are: integrity, service, collaboration, inclusiveness

**Issue area:** Arts and culture, economic and community development, education, environment, health care, and human services

**Geographic area:** Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho

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**Funder Name: Murdock Charitable Trust**

**Website:** <http://murdocktrust.org>

**Mission:** We stand with those who serve others, funding nonprofit projects and programs that enrich life in communities across Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Our enrichment programs benefit science education, develop stronger leaders, and help nonprofit organizations meet their development goals and sustain their mission.

**Issue area:** Enrichment programs pertaining to: conferences and events supporting science education and research, women in leadership and Christian leadership, convenings, small group training sessions to help nonprofits grow/sustain their organizations.

**Geographic area:** Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington

**Funder Name: National Endowment for the Arts**

**Website:** <https://www.arts.gov/>

**Mission:** Independent federal agency that funds, promotes, and strengthens the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation.

**Issue area:** Arts

**Geographic area:** National

**Funder Name: North Central Education Foundation**

**Website:** <http://www.ncesd.org/about-us/north-central-education-foundation/>

**Mission:** We develop community partnerships to develop resources and grants to inspire, ignite, and expand opportunities for our teachers and students.

**Issue area:** Education

**Geographic Area:** North Central Washington

**Funder Name: Paul G. Allen Foundation**

**Website:** <http://www.pgafamilyfoundation.org/>

**Mission:** Our purpose is to light up the world with meaningful change, starting close to home and moving around the globe. We want our work to fund field-changing research. To give first-time entrepreneurs the tools to rewrite their futures. To enable artists to make sense of the complexities of our world.

**Issue area:** Science and Technology, Education, Arts & Culture, Libraries

**Geographic area:** PNW focus, International

**Funder Name: Robert B. McMillen Foundation**

**Website:** [http://mcmillenfoundation.org/?page\\_id=1208](http://mcmillenfoundation.org/?page_id=1208)

**Mission:** To promote research in the areas of cardiology, lipid and organ transplant; support education at the university and college level in the states of Washington and Alaska; and provide funding for social service organizations.

**Issue Area:** Medical (50%), Education (25%), social enhancement (25%)

**Geographic Area:** Washington, Alaska

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**Funder Name: Satterberg Foundation**

**Website:** <http://satterberg.org/>

**Mission:** Satterberg Foundation strengthens our communities by promoting a just society and a sustainable environment. Doing this work deepens the interconnections of our family.

**Issue area:** Just society and a sustainable environment. Fund a number of arts/arts education groups that are focused on equity. Latino/migrant/special education/equity-focused arts education groups or projects may be eligible.

**Geographic area:** Washington, California

**Funder Name: Vulcan Philanthropy**

**Website:** <http://www.vulcan.com/areas-of-practice/museums-culture>

**Mission:** Vulcan is working to tackle our planet's hard problems by exploring innovative ideas and implementing creative solutions. We are driven by Paul Allen's desire to make a measurable impact.

**Issue area:** Investments, Technology and Science, Space, Philanthropy, Arts and Culture, Media and Entertainment, "Local Commitment"

**Geographic area:** International

**Funder Name: Washington State Arts Alliance Foundation (ArtsWA)**

**Website:** <http://www.arts.wa.gov/>

**Mission:** The ArtsWA is a catalyst for the arts, advancing the role of the arts in the lives of individuals and communities throughout the state.

The arts thrive and are celebrated throughout Washington state, and are woven into the fabric of vital and vibrant communities.

**Issue area:** Arts

**Geographic area:** Washington state

**Funder Name: Washington State Education Art Education Association**

**Website:** <http://waea.net/>

**Mission:** To promote excellence in visual arts education, advocacy, leadership, professional development, and scholarship in Washington state.

**Issue area:** Visual arts education

**Geographic Area:** Washington state

**Funder Name: Wenatchee Arts Commission**

**Website:** <http://www.wenatcheewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=11537>

**Mission:** To promote and encourage public programs to further the development and public awareness of and interest in the visual and performing arts, and to act in an advisory capacity to the city in connection with the artistic and cultural development of the City of Wenatchee.

**Issue area:** Visual and performing arts

**Geographic Area:** City of Wenatchee, Washington

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**Funder Name: Woods Family Music & Arts Grants**

**Website:** <https://cfncw.org/woodsfamily/>

**Mission:** enhance the music and arts culture of the North Central Washington region.

**Issue Area:** Music and Arts

**Geographic Area:** North Central region of Washington: Potential Funding Partners

# APPENDIX E: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **Arts Education Partnership**

A national organization dedicated to advancing the arts in education through research, policy, and practice, the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) hosts semi-annual arts education forums for arts education providers, funders, and policy makers, and maintains a robust database of arts education research called ArtsED Search.

- ArtsEdSearch, [www.artsedsearch.org](http://www.artsedsearch.org)
- Created by the Arts Education Partnership, ArtsEdSearch is a comprehensive hub for research on the impact of arts education, both in and out of school.

<http://www.aep-arts.org/>

### **ArtsED Washington**

An organization that focuses on arts education advocacy and systems-level training around arts education leadership and infrastructure, including their Principal Arts Leadership program and their support of Washington state school districts to develop arts plans.

<http://www.artsedwashington.org>

### **Association of Teaching Artists**

ATA is the oldest, independent organization and movement serving Teaching Artists in the country. ATA provides a national forum, a knowledge commons, a practitioner led network, and a community of practice to support the professional practice of Teaching Artists and increase the impact of their work. Teaching Artists (theater artists, visual artists, writers, filmmakers, poets, video artists, photographers, media artists, dancers, storytellers, musicians, puppeteers) work alone and in isolation from a national community of practice to bring them together to



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share the excitement and challenges of their work, ideas, concerns, their history, and resources. Teaching Artists work as employees of arts organizations, on rosters of arts organizations, and as independent contractors. They work in schools, libraries, prisons, jails, juvenile detention facilities, hospitals, museums, homeless shelters, cultural organizations, senior citizen centers, settlement houses, and community agencies in urban, suburban, and rural areas in densely populated and sparsely populated states. ATA brings these diverse Teaching Artists together into a practitioner led national community through its listserv, Facebook page, and website. <http://www.teachingartists.com>

### **The Creative Advantage**

The Creative Advantage is an initiative of Seattle Public Schools and the City of Seattle to restore arts education to all Seattle Public School students through increased and equitable deployment of visual arts and music specialists, as well as coordinated arts partnerships to support teacher training and school-day programming around arts integration and culturally responsive arts education.

- Creative Advantage Toolkit, <http://www.creativeadvantageseattle.org/toolkit>
- Examples of planning tools and resources used by schools within the Creative Advantage Initiative. Includes school and partnership assessment tools, planning documents, and sample communication tools. <http://www.creativeadvantageseattle.org>

### **Grantmakers in the Arts**

GIA offers many services for grantmakers that may be helpful and relevant to the Icicle Fund and its peers in North Central Washington. The following may be the most relevant to the Icicle Fund:

- [Recommended articles on arts education funding](#) and a [Searchable database with research and articles on arts education](#)
  - This is a useful and comprehensive set of readings around arts education, although as of the publication of this report, there were few articles included that specifically covered arts education in rural communities.
- [Arts Education Funders Coalition](#)
  - Icicle Fund might consider joining this coalition of arts and education grantmakers “to research and identify federal policy opportunities that promote equitable access to arts education in all public schools.”
- [Annual GIA Conference](#)
  - These annual conferences bring together arts grantmakers from across the country to learn together. The upcoming 2017 conference will be October 28-31 in Detroit, Michigan.

<http://www.giarts.org>

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### **National Assembly of State Arts Agencies**

This NASAA website provides a comprehensive compendium of arts education research and resources.

<http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Research/Key-Topics/Arts-Education/>

### **National Guild for Community Arts Education**

The National Guild for Community Arts Education supports and advances lifelong learning opportunities in the arts. They foster the creation and development of community arts education organizations by providing research and information resources, professional development, networking opportunities, funding, and advocacy on behalf of the field. They offer many resources for members, including access to research, webinars, networks, and trainings, as well as host the largest national conference focused on community arts education annually.

<http://www.nationalguild.org>

### **School's Out Washington, Youth Program Quality**

School's Out Washington is dedicated to strengthening programs that serve Washington's children and youth outside the traditional school day, including community-based arts education programs. They offer a range of resources for Out of School (OST) providers, including quality standards, coaching and training, and assessment around program quality.

<https://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/pages/quality-improvement-system>

### **Washington State Teaching Artist Training Lab**

The Washington State Teaching Artist Training (TAT) Lab is a seven-month professional development program with a focus on supporting arts education as part of basic education in K-12 schools. Participants benefit from ongoing learning, individualized coaching from master Teaching Artists, connections to state and national organizations, and peer learning and reflection. The TAT Lab cohort will include up to 32 Teaching Artists, working in all artistic disciplines and all regions of Washington state.

<https://www.sct.org/For-Educators/TAT-Lab/>

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