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Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Alexis P. Steedman

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

Southeastern South Carolina K-12 Teachers' Perceptions

of the Difficulties in Implementing an Arts-Based Initiatives

by

Alexis P. Steedman

MA, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2016

BS, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2015

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2024

Abstract

A public school district in southeast South Carolina implemented a new arts-based initiative due to the surge in demand for mental health services for students following the pandemic. With more students in the research site requiring intensive mental health support during the 2021-2022 academic year, compared to the 2016-2017 school year, the district is expanding its student mental health efforts to encompass a variety of arts-based initiatives to try to alleviate such concerns. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-12 teachers' experiences implementing arts-based initiatives and the resources they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site. Rogers' diffusion of innovations and Bandura's self-efficacy theories provided the conceptual framework for this study. In this basic qualitative study, semistructured interviews were conducted with 8 teachers within the local research site who were actively employed within the district and were implementing the new arts-based initiative. I conducted a reflexive thematic analysis of the data using pattern coding. The findings identified 5 themes: (1) time and funds inhibit teachers from successful implementation, (2) lack of effective resources for implementation, (3) collaboration as a resource, (4) teacher qualities to overcome complex implementation, and (5) the need for consistent professional development and support. The implications for social change, based on the results of this study and the proposed project, include empowering educators with the tools and resources to create more inclusive and equitable learning environments by leveraging innovative pedagogical strategies.

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Dedication

It brings me immense pleasure to dedicate this project study to my loving parents, Chris and Tammy Keever. They have always been my biggest supporters and have gone above and beyond to help me reach where I am today. Their unconditional love and unwavering support have been the driving force behind my success. I am incredibly grateful for their guidance and inspiration.

To my beloved mother: I cannot thank you enough for being such a hard worker and teaching me the importance of perseverance and a good work ethic. You have always been a beacon of hope, showing me that nothing is impossible if we set our hearts to it. You have been my rock, my confidant, and my support system. I appreciate all the sacrifices you have made for our family, and it has taught me to cherish all the precious moments in life.

To my dear father: Though you are no longer with us, your memory lives on in my heart. You always encouraged me to be selfless in all that I do and to open my heart to others. You were a kind and generous soul who always put others before yourself. I miss your infectious laugh and your wise advice. Thank you for always praying for me and being my biggest cheerleader. I still hear your voice asking me, "Have you prayed about it?" Your unwavering faith and love will continue to inspire me every day.

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I am grateful to my professor and committee chair, whose patience and invaluable feedback were instrumental in helping me complete this journey. Their generosity, knowledge, and expertise were indispensable, and I couldn't have succeeded without them. I also express my heartfelt appreciation to my second chair member, whose helpful feedback and suggestions supported me throughout the project.

The local district and study participants played an essential role in shaping my study, and I cannot thank them enough for their assistance and outstanding contributions. I learned so much from them, and their help was invaluable.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention my family, especially my parents and spouse. They believed in me from the beginning and kept me motivated. Finally, to everyone who listened patiently while I rambled on about "grad school" for the last four years, please know that your unwavering support means everything to me.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

Rising mental health issues among students following the pandemic prompted the state of South Carolina (SC) to enact arts-based initiatives to support mental health. The problem addressed through this study is that K-12 teachers in a local southeastern SC public school district expressed difficulty integrating this arts-based initiative into the curriculum. As a result of rising COVID-19 cases within the state, there was an increased necessity for community mental health treatments and services in SC public schools, one such treatment being the infusion of arts-based initiatives into the curriculum. Consequently, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) received funding for state-level responses to pandemic-related concerns (Alliance, 2021). Alliance (2021) also stated that some recently enacted Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief, or ESSER III, would implement proven, arts-based learning initiatives. SCDE sought and received feedback from the public to help it formulate its proposal for those remaining funds. Results indicated that the arts extensively addressed pandemic-related concerns and would play a role in the state's future strategy (Alliance, 2021).

Teachers need to gain adequate knowledge of how to implement new initiatives. A survey conducted in the local school district showed teachers' concerns about learning and using new curricula postpandemic. To date, there needs to be more research to help fill a gap in local practice regarding teachers' perceptions of the difficulties and resources required to effectively implement those arts-based initiatives to address the increase in

students' mental health postpandemic. Practicing teachers need help with accurately implementing new arts-based initiatives, and this study seeks to improve their ability to implement new initiatives successfully.

Rationale

The local research site held a board meeting that revealed data stating that more students in the school district required intensive mental health support within the 2021-2022 academic year—a rise of more than 300% compared to the 2016-2017 school year (see Bose, 2022). According to the district's website, by expanding its student mental health efforts to encompass a variety of arts-based initiatives, the district is attempting to alleviate such concerns. However, at the local district's school board meetings, teachers have expressed difficulties in implementing the new arts-based initiatives to address the rise in student mental health within the district. Additionally, at a school-wide faculty meeting within the local district, teachers questioned the initiative's validity and how they could effectively implement it (personal communication, September 22, 2022). The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-12 teachers' experiences implementing arts-based initiatives and the resources they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site.

Definition of Terms

For this study, the following terms were used to facilitate the understanding of this study:

Arts-Based: In this study, the term *arts-based* described the style of state-

mandated initiatives the local research site uses to combat students' mental health.

Implementation: Implementation involves the concrete execution of a program and its delivery to the designated users, as elucidated by McLeod et al. (2020).

Mental Health: The dictionary definition of mental health is "a person's condition regarding their psychological and emotional wellbeing" ("Definition of Mental Health," n.d.). In this study, *mental health* is used to talk about the concerns of the students at the local research site.

Significance of the Study

This study's findings may be significant because they help understand the reasons for the local population's difficulties implementing new initiatives. It would also promote positive social change by listening to the concerns of teachers who struggle to implement new initiatives. As a result, teachers would feel heard by the district. For example, a principal in the local school district stated that the needs of teachers must be met so that they can retain them year after year. Huang et al. (2019) supported this notion by stating that an individual's attitude, which refers to their innate tendencies towards responding to a situation, can impact their work ethic and perception and reaction to policies or training programs. Consequently, it is necessary to investigate how teachers view implementing new initiatives in their district.

The district's teacher association has made four recommendations regarding adopting new initiatives based on the teacher curriculum survey conducted over the past three years. To better serve their students, they recommend that teachers avoid heavily

scripted curricula that limit their ability to adapt to individual needs. It is also essential to regularly survey teachers implementing new curricula to ensure proper evaluation. Schools should be able to choose state-approved curricula that best suit their students' requirements. Finally, allowing new curricula enough time to function correctly is essential before considering replacing them. Additionally, a teacher in the district expressed their opinion that the district's goals are generally prioritized over teachers' views (see Baldwin & Baldwin, 2021). By knowing the teachers' difficulties, administration or district officials could better understand how to push new school initiatives.

Research Questions

The overall research goal was to examine K-12 teachers' perceptions of implementing arts-based initiatives and the resources they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site. To achieve the study's objective, the following research questions were formulated and used as a tool to explore the subject more closely:

RQ 1: What are K-12 teachers' perceptions of their difficulties when implementing locally mandated arts-based initiatives?

RQ 2: What resources do K-12 teachers at the local research site perceive are needed to assist them in implementing the locally mandated arts-based initiatives?

Review of the Literature

Conceptual Framework

Addressing how teachers introduce new initiatives into their curricula is key. Teaching new arts-based initiatives represents a change in traditional curricula. Creating effective intervention programs for teachers and children in classrooms can be challenging due to the various needs of both parties. To develop effective and practical teacher led interventions, it is essential to understand the factors that can hinder or assist implementation in a classroom setting. In the following sections, I outline the key components of the conceptual framework used in this study to examine how teachers perceive the introduction of new ideas in education.

I used the diffusion of innovations theory (DOI; Rogers, 2003) to understand how a new curriculum is accepted within a social system. According to this theory, novel concepts, customs, or items are disseminated within a community through designated means of communication among its constituents. People within a social system go through an innovation decision process as they come into contact with innovations. This process entails (a) being aware of and understanding the innovations, (b) the creation of favorable or unfavorable attitudes, (c) the choice to embrace or deny the innovations, (d) the implementation of the innovations, and (e) the verification of the implementation choice (Rogers, 2003).

According to Rogers (2003), for an innovation to be deemed successful, it must exceed the current ideas, practices, or goals, be user friendly, align with existing needs

and standards, and produce visible outcomes to increase adoption rates. The chosen framework for this research study is founded on the innovation element, the first element Rogers mentioned in the DOI theory. This innovation element primarily focuses on perceptions that align with the five factors recognized by Rogers that affect the adoption of innovation: trialability, complexity, compatibility, relative advantage, and observability (Dearing & Cox, 2018). As per the DOI theory, the four factors influencing diffusion in a social system are social system, innovation, communication channels, and time (Rogers, 2003).

Through my extensive research, I delved into the perspectives of K-12 teachers regarding arts-based initiatives and their advantages, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. These crucial factors can significantly impact the adoption rate and implementation success. In conducting my research, I employed the DOI theory by Rogers (2003), which emphasizes the significance of innovation. I conducted a comprehensive evaluation to assess how individuals perceive arts-based projects and their comparative benefits. As per Rogers' definition, this pertains to the extent to which the new invention is regarded as superior to the previous idea.

Moreover, I examined how well the innovation aligns with the adopters' standards, experiences, and needs, referred to as compatibility (see Rogers, 2003). I investigated how the arts-based initiatives matched the values and norms of the district's K-12 teachers. Additionally, I explored the complexity of the innovation, which refers to how easily it can be understood and used (see Rogers, 2003). In doing so, I thoroughly

evaluated the level of understanding and implementation of the arts-based initiatives by the district's K-12 teachers.

The concept of trialability refers to the ability to test innovation before adopting it (Rogers, 2003). In this study, I explored how K-12 teachers in the district perceive the potential benefits of arts-based initiatives and whether they had the opportunity to try them out before deciding to adopt them. During this trial period, Buc and Divjak (2015) stated that the innovation may undergo changes or modifications, and adopters can experience the unique characteristics of the innovation. The term observability pertains to how apparent the outcomes or advantages of a new idea are to those who might consider adopting it (Rogers, 2003). In my research, I examined how K-12 teachers in the district perceived the benefits of implementing arts-based initiatives on student mental health.

It is important to consider educators' beliefs to comprehensively grasp the challenges of implementing novel arts-based initiatives in the local research site. Using the DOI theory as a framework, I investigated these perceptions, centering on the five distinct characteristics that affect the adoption rate. I posed questions based on these characteristics to gain a deep understanding of teacher perceptions.

As a part of this study, I explored Bandura's social-cognitive theory of behavioral change. This theory highlights the importance of self-efficacy, which is that individuals have confidence in their ability to handle the challenges, duties, and difficulties that come with their job. It is vital to recognize that self-efficacy is domain specific, and high levels in one area do not necessarily transfer to others. Therefore, when assessing teachers' self-

efficacy, I considered that they may avoid certain activities, lack confidence, and prioritize tasks they feel confident they can handle.

Review of the Broader Problem

To find recent research on the subjects covered in the literature review, I examined multiple databases including, but not limited to, Google Scholar, ERIC, EBSCOhost, JSTOR, and Proquest Multisearch. Local school district teachers' beliefs, self-efficacy, implementation fidelity, and use of arts-based initiatives to promote positive mental health in students were directly linked to the reviews made. To ensure the validity of our research, I exclusively included articles that met the following criteria: (a) publications written solely in English, (b) peer-reviewed, (c) available in their entirety, and (d) published between 2018 and 2022. In the review, I discuss various components of implementing arts-based initiatives in conjunction with students' mental health, students' mental health postpandemic, and the struggles of teachers in implementing new initiatives. I conducted a thorough literature search using carefully chosen keywords directly related to my interest topics, such as *arts-based initiatives, mental health* and *students, teacher implementation, teacher difficulties, students* and *postpandemic,* and *arts* and *mental health*.

Teacher Beliefs

In this literature review, I identify how educators perceive the challenges of integrating new initiatives into their curriculum and their opinions on available support systems, confirming the issue. Although using arts-based initiatives is a tactic to aid in

students' mental health, it is essential to consider what causes difficulties in teacher implementation of new initiatives, how they are implemented, and who implements them. Insight into the success or failure of new initiative implementation can be gained by understanding the beliefs and concerns of teachers. Patrick and Joshi (2019) stated that educational reforms frequently need to be revised to bring about significant and lasting changes to the daily classroom experiences of teachers and students. Most initiatives necessitate teachers to modify their routines, such as adapting their teaching methods and curriculum to comply with new standards (Yan et al., 2021). Bandura (1991) stated that motivation and positive beliefs are pivotal in shaping an individual's choices and actions concerning goal setting and effort. These determinants facilitate individuals in bridging the gap between their desired objectives and actual performance, commonly referred to as goal outcome discrepancies. Yukamana's (2020) research highlighted that teachers' perception of curriculum reform significantly influences their teaching methods. Yukamana delved into teachers' beliefs and their alignment with the philosophy of the reform. Through interviews with teachers from four public high schools, Yukamana found that their beliefs were crucial in implementing curriculum reform in education. Hill and Uribe-Florez (2020) also stated that internal factors influencing the implementation of new ideas are the teacher’s attitudes and beliefs toward the initiative. Therefore, it is fundamental to consider teachers' perspectives when implementing a curriculum in various teaching settings. Neglecting these viewpoints may have detrimental consequences on any modifications made to the curriculum (Yukamana, 2020).

Additionally, teachers' preexisting beliefs about learning and students can influence their reception of new ideas, leading them to reject educational initiatives that they believe cannot address their students' failures. Osman and Warner (2020) noted that teachers implement ideas in various ways, influencing how they execute ideas in their classrooms. Teachers differ, for instance, in how they view professional development (PD) opportunities, how much they value the concepts offered, and how much they put the program or ideas into practice in their classrooms. Shand and Farrelly (2018) analyzed teaching method courses, focusing on the principles and attributes of course design. Preservice teachers reported positive learning experiences due to the highly effective approach. The researchers identified five essential themes: the capacity to adapt quickly, access to resources and demonstration of abilities, fostering relationships with peers and community, ensuring clear communication and feedback, and managing time and self-discipline when faced with challenges. These themes are essential to success in various areas and should be considered when developing strategies for achieving one's goals. Shand and Farrelly emphasized the importance of teachers understanding and interpreting the initiative for effective implementation, highlighting the significance of their role in ensuring success. Thoroughly comprehending the initiative is essential for teachers to plan, create lessons, and execute them more efficiently (McLachlan et al., 2018). When a teacher is unsure about an initiative, they may choose whether they want to implement it fully (Rodríguez-Triana et al., 2018). Therefore, teachers must invest the time and effort to fully understand the initiative to ensure successful implementation in

the classroom.

Often, schools need to implement initiatives fully but instead adopt only the parts that work for them (Lo, 2021). This may be due to difficulties that arise during implementation, resulting in the initiative needing to be simplified or reduced (Chapman, 2019). Unfortunately, doing this may lead to incomplete achievement of initiative goals, and sometimes, only certain aspects may be passed on to students (Magoma, 2016). Furthermore, implementing new practices can sometimes clash with the established practices of local education systems, resulting in discrepancies between the plan and execution (Soleas, 2020). This situation often leads to initiatives needing to be addressed.

The decisions made by educators about instruction are heavily influenced by their beliefs, as highlighted by Mikeska and Howell (2020). Therefore, it is important to proactively address teachers' concerns, values, and perceptions to enhance the implementation process by gaining a deeper understanding of them. Mikeska and Howell advised that teachers require PD and collaborative opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for their responsibilities. This encompasses a comprehensive grasp of the objectives and sufficient time to experiment with the new curriculum in a classroom setting. The success of implementing a new curriculum heavily relies on the teacher's comprehension and effectiveness, as they have a significant influence on student's academic progress.

Implementation Fidelity

In real world settings like schools, evidence based practices often face a challenge

known as the research-to-practice gap (Mallonee et al., 2006). However, the education sector acknowledges the importance of understanding why interventions and practices may fail. Oyserman et al. (2021) defined implementation fidelity as measuring how closely an intervention is executed according to its original plan. For educators in schools to successfully implement evidence-based or innovative practices, they must overcome obstacles that impede their efforts, such as insufficient resources and support. To successfully achieve goals, it is imperative to have a thorough understanding of the diverse factors that affect the implementation of teachers and schools. Various personal and organizational variables, including the attitudes and characteristics of teachers and the overall school climate, influence the fidelity of implementation in K-12 environments. Domitrovich et al. (2019) discovered that the effectiveness of teachers can be influenced by the environment and atmosphere of the school they work in. The researchers analyzed data from a program implemented in grades K through 3 across 28 urban elementary schools in the Midwest. The findings revealed that teachers in schools with a more favorable culture could implement the program more efficiently than those without such a culture (Domitrovich et al., 2019).

To ensure effective teaching, instructional practices must align with the curriculum and address the unique needs of each student (Pandey, 2018). The readiness of teachers to implement the curriculum plays a pivotal role in this process (Mikeska & Howell, 2020). Powell (2018) stated that teachers can maintain fidelity by adapting instructional practices to fit specific classroom contexts. Administrators and parents

expect teachers to deeply understand the initiative's relationship to student learning (Powell, 2018). However, proper teacher training is necessary to support alignment and ensure that educators feel confident in implementing the initiative with fidelity. According to some students, less experienced teachers have demonstrated better implementation fidelity.

In their quantitative study, Herman et al. (2018) found that it is up to teachers to decide how much they want to implement interventions and how they want to do so. Herman et al. conducted a study involving 121 elementary school teachers from nine schools in the Midwest. They aimed to investigate the impact of stress, burnout, coping, and self-efficacy on teachers and then link the outcomes to their students' behavior and academic achievement. Using a latent profile analysis method, the researchers identified patterns of teacher adjustment concerning these factors and examined how these patterns were linked to student academic and behavioral outcomes. The findings showed that students have adverse academic outcomes when their teachers are stressed, burnt out, and lack effective coping strategies. Therefore, the attitudes and beliefs of teachers play a crucial role in the success of implementation, as Merle et al. (2022) also pointed out. Robertson et al. (2020) also observed that interventions aligned with the school's mission and chosen by teachers are more likely to be consistently delivered. Factors such as their level of self-efficacy and enthusiasm can significantly affect the outcome.

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teachers' self-efficacy is among the factors affecting the integration of new

concepts into the classroom. Bandura (1996) suggested that individuals who establish ambitious goals and demonstrate resilience are highly effective and experience fewer negative emotions. Granziera and Perera (2019) discovered that teachers with strong beliefs in their abilities tend to have better relationships with their students, which increases job satisfaction. They aimed to bridge the gap between teacher self-efficacy, teacher engagement, and job satisfaction by analyzing data from almost 600 teachers over a short period. Using a social cognitive reciprocal-effects model, they established a direct and indirect link between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, engagement, and satisfaction. These findings enhance our understanding of the motivational processes that influence teachers' development of self-beliefs, engagement, and satisfaction in their work.

However, Burić and Moe (2020) stated that self-efficacy beliefs could also enhance positive affective experiences by giving people the impression that they can handle difficult circumstances. Per Patrick and Joshi's (2019) research, people prioritize preserving a positive self-image when faced with novel or challenging ideas. They looked into the experiences of educators in three high schools who participated in design-based research through a partnership between researchers and a large urban district in the southwestern United States. To improve schools, the district's leaders, administrators, teacher-leaders, and researchers developed a model that introduced a growth mindset to students, and the high schools were selected to be part of the initial implementation. To collect data, 30 teachers from each school were interviewed regarding growth and fixed mindsets, classroom strategies that encourage growth mindsets, and how the program has

impacted their work as teachers. The findings showed that teachers may hesitate to engage in endeavors that challenge their sense of self and may only retain select aspects of the concept. In contrast, low self-efficacy may cause people to believe that their goals are more improbable, which could enhance negative affective experiences during implementation.

Effective teaching relies on various factors, including pedagogical expertise, teaching objectives, and beliefs and attitudes toward the subject matter (Kong et al., 2020). These factors are all interrelated to teaching approaches. Moreover, teachers might confront unique challenges when teaching a new initiative with a new curriculum. Previous studies have demonstrated that teachers will likely need more preparation time, a lack of subject and pedagogical knowledge, difficulty organizing lessons, and challenges evaluating student learning (Ray et al., 2022). Osman and Warner (2020) stated that school and district policies, curricular limitations, and PD programs significantly influence teachers' implementation of initiative objectives. In 2019, Woodcock and Woolfson conducted a comprehensive qualitative investigation that delved into the perspectives of 120 teachers from primary and secondary schools. They aimed to identify the support systems for inclusion and the challenges that impede its effectiveness at the school and classroom levels. The research findings demonstrate that the effective execution of inclusivity in educational institutions heavily relies on the general ambiance and principles of the school, in addition to the backing given by the administration and governing panel. Woodcock and Woolfson's (2019) research

highlights that the teacher's attitude and practical approach are essential for effectively executing initiatives in the classroom.

Moreover, Dignath et al. (2022) conducted a meta-analytical study to analyze teachers' belief systems, including their attitudes, emotions, and self-efficacy. They examined 102 papers published between 2000 and 2020, which included 101 effect sizes and involved 40,898 teachers from 40 different countries. The researchers used meta-analysis to assess the extent and diversity of teachers' beliefs related to inclusive education and to identify the factors that influence the variations in their beliefs. The findings stated that educators may have positive attitudes toward a fresh approach. Still, they could also experience adverse sentiments toward its execution due to insufficient resources, planning time, expertise, ready-to-use teaching materials, and specialized assistance (Dignath et al., 2022). Therefore, educational institutions must consider these factors to implement their initiatives successfully.

Pogere et al. (2019) stated that feeling anxious or stressed while performing a task can lead to a lack of confidence and a belief that one cannot handle the situation. Conversely, positive emotions can instill confidence and the idea that one can take any challenge, as noted by Bandura (2012). Therefore, feelings can impact how we perceive and interpret information. Similarly, teachers still determining the usefulness of a new lesson may be influenced by their opinions, as highlighted by Patrick and Joshi (2019). They focused their qualitative research on selecting teachers from three high schools to implement a school improvement model. A semistructured approach was used to

interview 30 teachers from each school. The research findings revealed that teachers' pre-existing beliefs about learning and the learners persisted even after being introduced to the concept of growth and fixed mindsets. It was observed that most teachers associated their mindsets with their past experiences or existing practices.

In a qualitative study, Asbury and Kim (2020) examined how the pandemic affected 24 primary and secondary school teachers' perceptions of how others valued their profession. Research findings indicated that teachers experienced discomfort and distress due to the media's portrayal of them as either heroes or villains based on their stance regarding the safety of staff and students returning to school buildings. They were highly dissatisfied with the negative depiction of their profession in the media and were apprehensive about its impact on public perception. In addition, teachers felt aggrieved and unhappy with the government's inadequate communication and lack of consultation with them as a profession. However, teachers did report a noticeable increase in the level of gratitude they receive from the parents of their students. Therefore, teachers' professional judgment may be vital in policymaking to ensure effective instruction for students.

Begeny et al. (2023) conducted a concurrent multiple-baseline-across-participants study exploring the impact of materials and procedures on the adherence and quality of interventions for adult interventionists who require experience implementing structured academic interventions. According to the study results, having enough resources such as money, materials, room, and tools can improve the implementation process. Sustainably

delivering interventions may require administrators to demonstrate commitment and provide staff time for implementation, according to Lyon et al. (2019). Implementing a positive school culture, strong organizational health, and effective multitiered support systems undoubtedly lead to improved student achievement. The correlation between these factors and academic success has been well-documented.

Teachers' Difficulties of Providing Mental Health Supports in Schools

The current mental health systems worldwide are lacking in meeting the demands of the current situation and are expected to struggle with the increasing demands caused by the pandemic. Hamoda et al. (2021) proposed prioritizing the universal and targeted implementation of school mental health interventions, such as arts-based initiatives, to address this challenge effectively. To address this, Martin and Colp (2022) suggested implementing techniques to reduce stress and promote mental wellbeing in the educational system. A group of 104 mental health experts in schools were studied to determine the impact of using art to promote mental wellbeing. The quasi-experimental study revealed that students could acquire the ability to regulate their emotional and mental health through artistic activities. According to Richter et al. (2022), integrating mental health supports into schools effectively promotes positive social, emotional, behavioral, and academic development outcomes. Fostering positive mental health in schools has become increasingly vital to combat the growing occurrence of mental disorders worldwide. As such, schools must prioritize equipping their educators with the necessary training to educate and assist students with mental health support effectively

and without difficulties.

Various obstacles can make implementing mental health initiatives and school resources daunting. Mental health resources can significantly impact students' academic and psychosocial wellbeing (Hoover & Bostic, 2021). Unfortunately, schools sometimes fail to consider essential data and prioritize other matters. Schools often fail to prioritize mental health until a tragedy such as mass violence or a pandemic occurs. Regrettably, the support for mental health initiatives that follow is usually disorganized and short-lived, and interest tends to wane once grant funding is depleted (Hoover et al., 2020). Prioritizing establishing consistent and well organized support for initiatives may promote safe learning environments.

As part of their responsibilities, K-12 educators are now tasked with helping students improve their mental health. The Handbook of School-Based Mental Health Promotion (Leschied et al., 2018) provides an in-depth guide to achieving this goal. Mental Health Literacy (MHL) is crucial for teachers to effectively assist students with mental health issues by understanding their school population's challenges (Weston et al., 2018). By working collaboratively, teachers, parents, and community members can implement new initiatives that promote mental wellness, thereby addressing mental health issues (Short et al., 2018). As shown by the quantitative research of Osagiede et al. (2018), teachers play an essential role in connecting students with the mental health services and resources available within the school. They conducted research with 468 teachers in the Southeast United States to assess their attitudes toward student mental

health. They explored the effectiveness of two school-based mental health service delivery models. The findings showed that teachers with access to in-school therapists were more likely to use the services for students with mental health issues rather than discussing mental health with all students. Gathering teacher perceptions on their ability to support the initiatives is vital for successfully implementing mental health initiatives.

Nygaard et al. (2022) investigated the viewpoints of educators concerning the perceptions of students' mental health that are currently held, in addition to the perceived resources that are thought to be available to address those requirements. They found three themes from the qualitative study: instructors said they supported students' mental health as part of their job, system-level barriers hampered adequate mental health support, and staff wanted more mental health resources. By obtaining teachers ' opinions, it may be possible to understand how arts-based initiatives, support, or resources might help or hinder mental wellbeing after the epidemic.

Shelemy et al. (2019) and Kratt (2018) discussed teachers' needs and preferences regarding mental health education, support, and guidance. The study revealed that teachers desired instruction on spotting problematic students and offering early assistance without appearing to be therapists. Teachers emphasized the need for relevant, hands-on training that is expert led and participatory and provides materials that can be customized for different contexts in new initiatives. Similarly, Kratt (2018) stated that teachers favored adopting new mental health strategies but then showed hesitancy toward the required training and implementation procedures. Teachers need additional information

and robust support mechanisms to boost their confidence in implementing mental health practices.

Before the pandemic, students learned mainly through personal interactions with their mentors and peers. Although mental health education initiatives can be offered in schools, mental health training is not required for teacher training (Byrne et al., 2018). Therefore, many teachers do not understand the correlation between school and mental health difficulties, which does not serve as a roadmap to implementing new initiatives for student mental health (Markkanen et al., 2020). Implementing arts-based programs without professional mental health support and supervision can be difficult for teachers. According to Barrow and Thomas (2022), access to such support often needs to be improved.

Providing customized mental health training for teachers accurately identifies and manages emotional challenges in the classroom (Anderson et al., 2019). Ensuring educators thoroughly understand relevant issues is essential in supporting students' mental health through new school-wide initiatives. Despite the methods used, many teachers need more knowledge in this area (Luthar et al., 2020). Teachers without specialized training in this field often feel unprepared to identify mental health concerns and offer appropriate support, such as arts-based initiatives, leading to self-doubt and uncertainty (Luthar et al., 2020). Because of this, some educators even feel powerless and unable to assist their students (Shelemy et al., 2019).

Research CITE has demonstrated that teacher-led mental health interventions,

such as arts-based initiatives, often adhere poorly to program manuals. Specifically, a study found that only 47% of the core items of the intervention were satisfactorily delivered by teacher facilitators (Gillham et al., 2007). Similarly, in another teacher-led program, secondary school teachers could only fully deliver 70-74% of the 16 planned lessons (Sawyer et al., 2010). The reason behind this phenomenon is undoubtedly the need for more adaptable training and resources that cater to individual teachers' unique needs and time constraints. It is imperative to conduct further research to identify the causes behind poor adherence and develop strategies to enhance teacher training and classroom implementations.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of teenagers was analyzed by Magson et al. (2021) in terms of transformation mediators and the most distressing variables. They identified COVID-19-related concerns, difficulties with remote learning, and conflicts with parents as key factors contributing to these mental health challenges. The quantitative study's findings are concerning, indicating a significant increase in mental health issues among students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While some are worried about the virus and its impact, others are struggling with the challenges of online learning and competing with their parents. Addressing mental health concerns requires urgent action; arts-based initiatives can be powerful in this fight. Future studies should prioritize those responsible for implementing these initiatives, which are crucial to finding viable solutions for this growing issue.

Arts-Based Initiatives

According to Meltzer and Schwencke (2020), arts-based learning methods are not intended to produce art or cultivate new artists. Instead, they aim to revitalize academic fields and develop the fundamental abilities necessary for educational and professional endeavors. By engaging in creative activities, individuals may uncover and confront perceived difficulties and opportunities by exploring unspoken knowledge (Meltzer & Meltzer, 2022). Arts-based initiatives can be a vital intervention for students' mental health needs as they continue to grow and change, according to Berberian-Hutchinson (2021). It is a powerful tool that schools can use to foster an understanding of adversity, leading to collective recovery, resilience, and re-engagement. Art is an invaluable tool for overcoming mental limitations, as Darsø and Meltzer (2020) stated. Through arts-based interventions, various perspectives and solutions can be explored for different topics and challenges (Darsø & Meltzer, 2020). The efficacy of art-based initiatives in education is supported by demonstrating its ability to improve children's wellbeing and meet their needs more effectively (McDonald & Drey, 2018). This makes it a vital school consideration, as it effectively connects health and education.

Art-based learning methods have been successfully integrated into some universities' programs, bringing personal and professional growth opportunities and enabling knowledge transfer from artful exercises to different contexts (Meltzer, 2022). Although they can bring advantages, these approaches must be more familiar in many educational institutions and job settings. This is primarily due to teachers' and facilitators'

need for more expertise and competence.

Art therapy can positively impact mental health and aid in recovery. As per Dewey, art can educate, convey morals, and express emotions related to everyday experiences (Goldblatt, 2006). Art interventions can improve mental, somatic, and psychological conditions, ultimately aiding healing and recovery (Samaritter, 2018; Mastandrea et al., 2019). Scientists are interested in studying the emotional and sensory values that art can elicit. Artistic processes can promote the growth of life skills, personal and PD, and encourage local and global character and citizenship, as outlined by Meltzer (2022). Although systematic reviews by Nissen (2019) and Gaiha et al. (2021) suggested that the impact of different art forms, durations, and stigma conceptualizations on reducing mental health stigma remains uncertain, the positive effects of art therapy on mental health are undeniable.

Being creative can address both the conscious and subconscious mind. Involvement in art therapy and arts-based learning initiatives likewise offer creative detours via the arts to discover aspects of the self. Incorporating art into in-person therapy sessions for young people is a highly effective way to promote self-expression, facilitate conversations about emotions, and improve emotional awareness through a unique mode of communication (Malboeuf-Hurtubise et al., 2021). As a result, individuals can verbally enhance the articulation of complex emotions (Eaton et al., 2007). Research has shown that listening to music can positively affect the body and mind by reducing stress levels (De Witte et al., 2020). Physiologically, experiencing art in its many forms can lower

blood pressure, cortisol levels, and heart rate, impacting one's behavior and abilities (Moeenrad et al., 2023). Emotionally, engaging with art that one finds pleasant can intensify positive emotions and reduce stress, affecting one's attitude and sense of self (Fancourt et al., 2022). Additionally, participating in the arts can increase self-motivation and self-efficacy.

Engagement in the arts within communities is a powerful tool for increasing health awareness and knowledge of available resources. In addition, Rodriguez et al. (2023) stated that it fosters a culture of information sharing, leading to greater individual and communal thriving and wellbeing. Arts-based activities can also facilitate the development of meaningful relationships, which have been shown to impact multiple health outcomes positively (Postlethwait et al., 2020). Arts engagement has a significant and lasting impact on health and wellbeing (Rodriguez et al., 2023).

Fancourt et al. (2019) found that artistic and creative tasks aid in managing emotions and maintaining good mental health. The study used a unique self-reporting tool and theoretical model to measure the impact of artistic activities on mood control. The results highlighted the significance of engaging in artistic tasks for emotional management. Furthermore, Meltzer and Schwencke (2020) asserted that reflecting on the creative process and taking the initiative can shift one's awareness from perceiving challenges as insurmountable to discovering solutions. These approaches have been proven to sharpen individuals' emotional management skills, helping them more effectively navigate daily challenges and enhancing their overall psychological

wellbeing. Engaging in artistic activities and reflecting on the creative process can significantly improve emotional management skills and general psychological wellbeing.

Arts-based initiatives may take a back seat to traditional ways of teaching or discussing one's feelings. To close a knowledge gap concerning the advantages of learning through processing experiences for youths in educational settings, Coholic et al. (2020) and Lindsey et al. (2018) conducted studies with middle school students that included the arts. Coholic et al. (2020) studied youths receiving brief inpatient mental health care and participating in a guided arts-based mindfulness group program. The findings of the qualitative study showed that students learned to recognize and convey their emotions creatively rather than talk to someone about their feelings. The students' abilities to express themselves consequently improved the youths' self-esteem and demonstrated the value of exposing students to the arts. The findings advocate for the arts as mental health support, making it easier for students to interact with people and express themselves positively. The results showed that learning with creativity is at the forefront of student participation and wellbeing in new pedagogical methods to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression.

The quantitative research conducted by Lindsey et al. (2018) demonstrated the effectiveness of an expressive arts group intervention that incorporates mask-making and mindfulness training to help young individuals understand and cope with stress. The study contained six eighth-grade students who had trouble handling stress. The findings revealed a significant decrease in tension and anxiety levels, as indicated by the

participants, between the pre-intervention and the three-week follow-up. Lindsey et al. (2018) stated that students could better understand and manage their stress by using the arts. Both studies found that the arts aided in students being able to express themselves and their emotions positively. Just as Coholic et al. (2020) stated, the findings show how mindfulness and the arts could help adolescents deal with worry, anxiety, and depression.

Research by McKay and McKenzie (2018) also found that an arts-based program helped give children options to express themselves and feel more at ease in their daily lives. A mixed methods research study was conducted on 80 students from four Grades 5 to 7 schools. They used surveys before and after an arts-based program to examine the program's impact on student engagement, knowledge, and attitudes toward mental health. They found that allowing students to express their emotions could positively affect their mental health and that arts-based programs could be a beneficial way to promote well-being in schools.

The pandemic and other tragedies can lead to additional stress for both students and teachers. Hylton et al. (2019) found that creative arts therapy helped reduce symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety in young people affected by the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The qualitative study included 34 high school students engaged in visual art, drama, or music therapy. They used a pre-post design to assess how well a two-week creative arts therapy camp helped adolescents subjected to the high school shooting. The research revealed that most participants enjoyed the therapy, learned more about themselves, and

felt comfortable. This suggests that youth facing terrible situations like the pandemic may benefit from arts-based initiatives.

By prioritizing health equity, initiatives that use art as a form of therapy can help promote better mental health and overall wellbeing. Art effectively enhances functional connectivity and reduces cortisol levels (Mastandrea et al., 2019). Sarasso et al. (2021) stated that the connection between stress and reward systems can explain why art that activates the reward system can positively impact mental health and social integration. Furthermore, it may be beneficial for mental health recovery and building resilience. While using art, individuals can convey intricate emotions or experiences without depending on verbal explanations, even in difficult circumstances like incarceration (Gallo et al., 2021).

During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, Dhami et al. (2020) conducted online surveys in the United Kingdom (n=300) and California (n=450) to compare the effects of confinement and imprisonment on various dependent variables. The findings of this quantitative study were compared with a previous study conducted ten years prior involving prisoners from both locations. Demographic differences between the groups were controlled for in the analysis. They found that art can be a beneficial coping mechanism to counteract the adverse effects of isolation, as there are psychological similarities between imprisonment and lockdown policies.

Implications

In this study, I highlight the challenges and resources teachers require to

effectively introduce new measures for improving students' mental health. The insights gained from this study can be valuable in facilitating discussions among teachers and administrators on efficiently and effectively introducing new initiatives. Schools must take note of these findings and use them in their efforts toward successful implementation. A challenging area for future research would be determining the effectiveness of arts-based initiatives for student mental health and the support teachers need to implement them effectively. Moreover, scholars may obtain further insights from prior research on how and what resources teachers prefer to begin implementing a new initiative.

A possible choice of a project (Appendix A of the final report) that may support teachers in implementing a new initiative would be creating PD sessions that provide multi-tiered information on arts-based initiatives and how each teacher can effectively adopt them. In addition, listening to the teachers' concerns helped organize and present the necessary information the district may need to provide. Teachers' needs for PD vary depending on their age, experience, and background knowledge, as Zhang et al. (2020) reported. However, despite these differences, PD design and practice often follow a one-size-fits-all approach (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). More attention is required in the field to address the unique needs, support, and obstacles teachers face in PD (Zein, 2017). Lauer et al. (2014) observed that when PD activities fail to cater to the varied needs of teachers, it hinders their engagement and learning. The project details can be found in Appendix A.

When choosing a type of project, other options, such as evaluation reports, curriculum plans, and policy recommendations, are needed to fit correctly with the aim of the study. For example, because the study focuses on gaining insight into teachers' perspectives on the new initiative's challenges, conducting an evaluation report would not be beneficial. A report assessing the effectiveness of an initiative is a valuable tool for administrators and district leaders to make informed decisions about its design, implementation, and funding. However, district leaders should participate in the evaluation process rather than teachers for maximum impact. Teachers would greatly benefit from creating a curriculum plan to implement a specific curriculum effectively. However, due to the new initiative being launched in multiple schools with varying versions, producing a plan may pose a challenge. While a policy recommendation is not currently applicable to the study, it may be considered in the future after consulting with teachers, administrators, and district leaders.

Summary

Determining how emerging conceptualizations of student wellbeing relate to and resonate with teachers and the infusion of arts-based curriculum postpandemic is thus an influential research agenda. In addition, the study's results may help schools develop more effective teaching strategies that include arts-based learning initiatives for mental health promotion. This study focuses on three concepts: the mental health of students from a local southeastern SC public school, arts-based initiatives, implementation of new initiatives within a southeastern SC public school, and teachers' perceptions within a local

southeastern SC public school.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine K- 12 teachers' experiences implementing arts-based initiatives and the recourses they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site. I used a project study to investigate the experiences of teachers currently working in the local area who have attempted to implement arts-based initiatives but have run into problems. This information is essential because it examines the relationships between implementing suggested arts-based initiatives and teachers' challenges. In addition, the research included a review of the literature on mental health and teachers' opinions on implementing initiatives in their classrooms in Section 1.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

I used a basic qualitative design, which, according to McCombes (2022), is used to acquire detailed, tangible, contextual knowledge about a particular real-world situation. The research's location, the study's objectives, and the context of the investigated subject are some elements considered while choosing a technique. Each of these aspects will be examined individually.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore K- 12 teachers' experiences implementing arts-based initiatives and the recourses they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site. The investigation consequently centered on how teachers in one school district struggle to implement initiatives designed to support better student mental health in the wake of the pandemic. A qualitative design is used by researchers interested in how individuals comprehend their lived experiences, how people change their surroundings, and the importance of their overall experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated, understanding how people attribute meaning to their experiences and surroundings is the primary goal of this qualitative study.

In the study, I targeted K-12 teachers in a public school district in southeastern SC, implementing particular arts-based initiatives and the presence associated with specific implementation issues. I collected data about the challenges they encountered during the implementation process from the teachers who work in the district. Data were

collected for this study's research through interviews. Though not a source of data collection, field notes were also taken. Field notes were beneficial in giving rich contextual information about the events during the research process (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). The analysis of the interviews revealed patterns that provide answers to the research questions.

Since I examined public school teachers' firsthand perspectives, experiences, and difficulties implementing arts-based initiatives, the qualitative approach is a good fit for this study (see Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). According to Stake (2000), qualitative studies are well-suited for examining a range of phenomena. For the researcher to thoroughly understand the specific topic, qualitative research questions are typically constructed around the degree to which situations occur (Patton, 2002). I developed two research questions that I aimed to answer, as presented in Section 1.

According to Gammelgaard (2017), qualitative investigations are highly beneficial in analyzing real-life phenomena, specifically the public school system. Additionally, Esterberg (2002) highlighted the importance of qualitative research in comprehending social processes within these contexts, such as implementing new practices in schools. Qualitative research studies also actively include the researcher (Creswell, 2013); I collected and examined the data during the study.

For this study, qualitative research was the most appropriate method as it allowed for a thorough comprehension of the emotions and thoughts of teachers as they perform their duties in public schools. Conversely, quantitative research was not feasible in the

school's natural environment and involved a broader population, making it less practical in this scenario. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research includes in-depth data from interviews in the analysis and portrays the individuals' actual experiences. Direct quotations, particular behaviors, and incidents concerning school are all included in my study.

Design of the Study

For this investigation, I chose a basic qualitative approach. In line with Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) recommendations, I focused on comprehending the meaning of a phenomenon for those involved. I must thoroughly understand how teachers interpret their experiences, construct their realities, and assign significance to them.

When deciding which qualitative design to use for the study, other forms did not appropriately fit the needs of this particular study. For instance, as Danford (2023) stated, ethnographic studies examine the patterns of a specific cultural group's actions, attitudes, and language in their natural environment. This qualitative design is not used because I did not strive to understand the interaction of individuals within a specific cultural group but instead a group working in the same district. In addition, grounded theory was not used since my goal is to understand teachers' struggles with a particular program or initiative rather than to develop a substantive theory about the phenomenon of interest (see Danford, 2023). Lastly, narrative analysis was employed to comprehend how people create stories and narratives from their experiences (Limpaecher, 2023). The participants in this style of analysis interpreted their own lives through their narratives, and the

researcher then analyzed how that narrative was put together. Using narrative research to study an individual's behavior in different situations over time would not be suitable for investigating the specific context.

Participants

The research was conducted in a local K–12 public school district. School administrators provided a list of teachers who were implementing arts-based initiatives. I used purposeful sampling to find people capable of offering in-depth and precise details regarding the subject under research. When conducting a qualitative study with purposeful sampling, Huberman and Miles (1994) stated that researchers use a smaller, carefully selected sample to gain a deeper understanding of the topic rather than a broad overview. This sampling technique involves selecting participants likely to provide relevant and valuable information (Thorogood & Green, 2018). By choosing cases that will make the most of limited research resources, researchers can maximize the effectiveness of their study (Palinkas et al., 2015). As Patton (1990) noted, purposeful sampling also involves identifying issues that can provide significant insights into the study's purpose.

Furthermore, Creswell (2013) recommended that researchers explicitly identify the features of the sampled population and the population that will be studied. Failure to do so can compromise the validity and reliability of the research findings. Since they could provide the most significant light on my research issues, I chose the study's participants carefully. By employing purposeful sampling techniques, I ensured that the

teachers' points of view contributed to the data needed to strengthen my conclusions.

To be qualified to participate in the research study, each participant had to meet the following criteria: (a) be an employed K-12 teacher, (b) be employed by the local southeastern SC school district, and (c) be carrying out the arts-based initiatives. Drawing sweeping conclusions about the entire population differs from the objective of qualitative research. Qualitative inquiry is subjective and seeks to comprehend the values and perspectives of individuals (Padgett, 2013). Hence, it was best to opt for a smaller sample for my research to achieve the depth of inquiry.

Access to participants is essential when conducting qualitative fieldwork research (Patton, 1990). It entails gaining entry into a specific organization and ensuring its members, including employees or users, are willing to act as informants and provide the necessary information (Patton, 1990). After applying to the district to conduct my study, I proactively reached out to southeastern SC school district principals who were implementing arts-based initiatives. I made direct contact to gauge their support and interest, first by letter and then by email, if necessary, within two weeks of sending the letter. When the principal contacted me via email and expressed interest, I contacted the school's teachers and extended my invitation via a written letter and an email. Each teacher received a letter and an email summarizing the research objectives, data collection timetable, and ethics guidelines to ensure transparency and clarity.

The success of qualitative research largely depends on the relationship between the researcher and the participant (Creswell, 2013). An essential first step in commencing

a research study is identifying suitable individuals to gather information from and gaining their consent to participate (Algeo, 2013). Establishing and maintaining a robust and trustworthy relationship with these individuals is the key to achieving high-quality results. I used various measures, including formal consent forms, codes of conduct, and informal gestures, to ensure unwavering trust and confidentiality throughout the study. In the interview setting, I showed mutual attentiveness and positivity to help keep participants motivated to continue the study.

During qualitative research, researchers need to be aware of potential ethical issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Researchers must prioritize trust building, maintaining research integrity, preventing unethical behavior, and skillfully managing any unexpected obstacles that may threaten their organization or institution's reputation when researching individuals (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Punch, 2013). It was vital to uphold all ethics and compliance policies set forth by Walden University. This means putting participant safety first, maintaining data integrity standards, and strictly adhering to the institutional review board (IRB) approved procedures for participant recruitment and data collection. My IRB approval number is 08-28-23-1056065. Signed informed consent forms were acquired before a teacher engaged in the study, and efforts were made to safeguard each subject's identification. Alphanumeric codes like "T1," "T2," and so forth were used. It is important to note that teachers had the right to leave the study when they chose, and they deserved a clear explanation about how data are collected and stored. Before conducting an interview, every participant signed a consent form

authorizing the recording and verbatim transcription of the interview for data analysis purposes. All teachers who agreed to participate in the study and submitted the consent form received a follow-up letter and email. The interview's time, date, and setting were all confirmed in this communication.

Data Collection

In this study, I collected information through one primary data collection source: individual semistructured interviews. As a primary data source, the data were not data that had previously been generated. I collected it at the time of research. Using a primary data source provides direct or firsthand evidence about the event or person (Prada-Ramalla et al., 2018). Collecting teachers' perspectives directly has several benefits. Firstly, it allowed me to obtain the necessary data elements to address my research questions. Secondly, it enabled me to oversee the data collection procedure, ensuring data quality and evaluating the dependability of my instrument.

As Smith (1995) emphasized, conducting interviews helps better understand the participants' experiences. Oakley (1998) stressed that qualitative interviews provide a framework for establishing, challenging, and reinforcing standards and procedures in addition to being documented. Furthermore, interviews offer valuable insight into individuals' perspectives and serve as evidence of their lived experiences, which is appropriate for a basic qualitative design. Because the study involved teachers’ perceptions on a specific topic, using this method as a data collection instrument was essential to answering the posed research questions. Merriam and Tisdale (2016) noted

that interviews yield valuable data to enhance the study and produce generalizable outcomes. Even though not a source of new data, field notes were taken within the interviews to ensure a complete and well-rounded analysis. As Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018) have emphasized, taking meticulous notes aids in conducting effective research.

Instrument Description

According to Crabtree and DiCicco-Bloom's (2006) research, a semistructured interview protocol, which outlines the questions or topics the interviewer will cover, is essential for conducting semistructured interviews. The protocol allowed for a more thorough and systematic examination of interview responses and helped me stay on track with the intended goals. The protocol contained a script I read verbatim to the participant before the interview. After reading the script verbatim, I collected the signed consent forms.

The interview contained 13 open-ended questions, beginning with questions that were easier to answer and then moving to more complex questions. The questions were informed by existing research, such as how they view themselves as professionals, the necessary resources to perform their jobs confidently, and how they view the arts-based initiative. The hope was that by asking questions of this scale, I would adequately answer how the teachers perceive the difficulties when implementing the locally mandated arts-based initiatives and what resources the teachers perceive are needed to assist them in implementing the initiative. The data collection instrument, interview procedure, and list of questions can be found in Appendix B.

Interviews

For this study, participants engaged in detailed, semistructured interviews where they were asked to respond to predetermined open-ended questions. A popular approach to qualitative research involves conducting interviews that take on a conversational tone (Fraenkel et al., 2012). By using this method, I addressed predetermined topics and concerns (Fraenkel et al., 2012). To schedule interviews, I emailed willing participants and offered them a selection of dates within a 6-week timeframe. Available times were before or after school. If I could not make contact using email, I called the participant and spoke directly to the individual. Each interview took approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews took place in the school setting, a place familiar to the teachers. Upon entering the room, I greeted and guided the participants to their seats. I notified the participants that each interview session would be recorded and that I would take field notes during the interview. I explained that these tactics allowed for a better focus on the responses and requested the participant's permission to do so.

Before conducting the interview, I read the interview protocol script verbatim, explaining the research purpose and participant expectations, and ensured I answered all questions the participant had. The participant signed a consent form that permitted the recording and verbatim transcription of the interview for data analysis, so I collected this signed consent form before asking any interview questions. Once participants signed and provided me with the consent form, I began asking questions, starting with interview questions (IQ) 1. After the interview, I thanked the participant for offering their time to

participate in the study and walked them to the door.

To keep track of emerging understandings, I provided meticulous documentation of the interviews, capturing essential details such as the interview setting, the interviewees' behavior, and my reactions to their feedback. These field notes helped in conducting a thorough and accurate qualitative study. They offered a comprehensive and truthful account of events that other means could not obtain. As stated, taking field notes during each interview complemented the audio recording and contained the essentials of the interviewee's answers and information about the interview proceeding. Field notes were taken by hand while in the field, but as Bogdan and Biklen (2016) recommended, I typed an expanded account of the field notes when the interviews were completed.

I created a filing system before collecting information to ensure efficient data management. Audio recordings and transcriptions were electronically stored on a computer, and their confidentiality was maintained by implementing password protection and anonymizing transcriptions during the transcription process. This involved omitting any contextual details that may reveal the identity of the participants. I used an electronic filing system to search for and rearrange files easily. The files were organized into folders based on their data sources, such as interviews, field notes, and consent forms. To safeguard against potential data theft or a computer malfunction, I also created backups of all files on an external storage device.

Data Analysis

I used a reflexive thematic analysis approach to achieve the research objectives.

Thematic analysis is a practical and widely used basic qualitative data analysis technique. It involves rigorous data analysis to identify patterns and themes (Jones, 2022). Data analysis commenced after each interview, where I transcribed the data manually. I analyzed the data by transcribing recorded interviews and field notes and inputting observations into a computer's electronic, password-protected digital files. I checked the transcriptions with the original recordings for accuracy.

After the transcriptions had been stored and organized electronically, I began my coding process by immersing myself in the transcripts and making initial observations before coding the entire dataset. I used coding to assign brief and meaningful terms or phrases to the data that align with my analytic goals (Lester et al., 2020). As Saldana (2011) noted, coding is a cyclical process, meaning the first attempt is rarely perfect. I separated codes into two stages: first cycle and second cycle coding—the first coding cycle used NVivo coding software, where I identified distinct concepts and themes for categorization. As one of the most well-known qualitative coding methods, NVivo uses words or short phrases from the participant's language in the data records as code (Miles et al., 2018). This method allowed the codes to reflect the perspectives and actions of the participants and helped me attain an in-depth understanding of the direct stories, ideas, and meanings that research participants express. I generated initial codes to represent the identified patterns and meanings. This initial coding served as the foundation for a thorough and insightful analysis and interpretation of the report.

I organized the data that had already been coded into different categories, such as

sets, themes, and constructs, after finishing the NVivo coding and moving on to pattern coding. This helped me identify any similarities, commonalities, or recurring patterns in the oral statements made by the study participants (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2016). Per Morse's (2008) definition, I needed to group related data into categories to analyze and define their properties, components, and explanations. Some categories had clusters of coded data that I needed to refine into subcategories (Morse, 2008). By the end of the second cycle, I had fewer codes as I placed existing codes into categories.

I began organizing them into broader themes once the categories and subcategories were defined. This enabled me to select and integrate categories of organized data into cohesive and meaning-filled expressions or themes. A theme is a fundamental subject or essence that encompasses the data. Themes are essential since they cluster similar thoughts and furnish a solution to the research question, as elucidated by Vaismoradi et al. (2016). I developed themes by combining relevant categories and analyzing their connections. I also considered their similarities and differences, ensuring that the themes aligned with my conceptual goals and provided answers to the research questions. These descriptive themes underscored significant data patterns related to the research question. It is essential to note that a code can be linked to more than one theme.

Later, I modified, adjusted, and expanded the preliminary themes to ensure that all relevant data for each theme was captured. First, I reviewed the data related to each theme and evaluated if it supports it. Then, I assessed if the themes aligned with the overall data set. Finally, I defined the themes to identify their core message or "essence"

and any subthemes that connected and related to the central theme. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.92). Then, to fully understand the challenges faced by teachers in the district when implementing new initiatives, I analyzed the connections between different categories and themes. This method provided valuable insights and helped me organize the data effectively for the final report.

Evidence of Quality

As part of my research process, I implemented member checking to ensure my findings were credible and accurate. I contacted participants after data collection to check their findings. Its purpose was to validate, verify, and assess the trustworthiness of the results. To ensure credibility, I provided the participants with the transcripts of their interviews for their review and input. This helped me capture the intended meaning of their responses and guarantee the completeness and accuracy of the interview. I also obtained important feedback from participants regarding the unique circumstances and contextual intricacies that impacted the research outcomes by using member checking. This approach improved the transferability of the findings to comparable scenarios, as participants offered their viewpoints and addressed any possible misconceptions (Slevin & Sines, 2000). Providing step-by-step information on the design and conduct of the study increases dependability and the possibility of replication in similar conditions (Stenfors et al., 2020). By following these steps in their research, any future researcher can ensure their findings are reliable and accurate. It is essential to replicate these steps to guarantee the validity of any subsequent research. Using quotes and excerpts of data

shows confirmability by providing clear links between the data and the findings. The research findings also relate to the broader body of literature and answer the research questions.

Discrepant Cases

When conducting primary research, researchers may encounter cases that do not align with the emerging patterns. To improve the reliability of the qualitative study, I considered alternative explanations and cases that did not fit the expected results, as Maxwell (1996) has noted. By identifying these cases, I evaluated rival explanations and understood the limitations of the findings. For instance, if a case with differing viewpoints from the study's primary evidence was found, explaining that discrepant case can strengthen the study's explanation. I sought out discrepant cases to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and add credibility to the research.

Themes

Using reflexive thematic analysis, I identified five themes in the interview data: (1) time and funds inhibit teachers from successful implementation, (2) lack of effective resources for implementation, (3) collaboration as a resource, (4) teacher qualities to overcome difficult implementation, and (5) need for consistent PD and support. The following delineates them by research question:

Table 1

Overview of Themes

Themes	Outline
Theme 1: Time and funds inhibit teachers from successful implementation	• Participants emphasized that successfully implementing arts-based initiatives requires more time and funds than currently provided, posing a significant challenge.
Theme 2: Lack of effective resources for implementation	• Participants identified a key challenge in gaining knowledge when they needed help accessing the specific and appropriate resources directed toward the initiative
Theme 3: Collaboration as a resource	• Participants stated that collaboration with others is essential when the district needs to provide the necessary resources but some could not collaborate with their peers due to time constraints.
Theme 4: Teacher qualities to overcome difficult implementation	• Participants highlighted the importance of teacher confidence, beliefs, positivity, and knowledge to overcome difficult implementation.
Theme 5: Need for consistent professional development and support	• Participants wanted to ensure that educators receive adequate preparation and resources to implement initiatives effectively.

Theme 1: Time and Funds Inhibit Teachers from Successful Implementation

When looking at teachers' perceptions of why implementation was difficult (Research Question 1), participants in the study pointed out the importance of allocating sufficient time, funds, and resources to overcome any difficulties teachers may face while

incorporating arts-based initiatives into their curriculum. This approach can help achieve the desired outcomes and ensure students get the most out of these initiatives. They also noted that the current level of resources needs to be revised, presenting a challenge that needs to be addressed. Teacher 2 summarized the overall sentiment: *"*Funds and time, something all teachers need. Most arts-based initiatives that I use in my class are personally funded."

Participants emphasized that successfully implementing arts-based initiatives requires more time and funds than currently provided, posing a significant challenge. Teacher 2 stated, "Without funds and time, teachers will be less likely to find ways to make it work. It causes stress and headaches otherwise*".* Teacher 8 expressed the need for more funding to acquire necessary supplies for arts-based initiatives. They also highlighted the importance of finding more time to collaborate with others. Teacher 3 also commented, *"*It's difficult to have extra time to plan and prepare lessons. I'm already struggling to keep up with my lesson plans, but now I have to add another task to it." As per Teacher 5, "Time is the biggest difficulty." However, they still believe that the benefits of the initiative outweigh this difficulty. They said that if something is to be implemented successfully, time and energy must be invested. On the other hand, Teacher 7 has mentioned that a "lack of time to find appropriate art and resources" is a significant obstacle in their efforts to implement arts-based initiatives. This feedback indicates that more time should be allocated to arts-based initiatives to achieve the desired outcomes.

Theme 2: Lack of Effective Resources for Implementation

When asking participants about the resources needed to assist them in implementing the locally mandated arts-based initiatives (Research Question 2), they identified that the key to overcoming implementation challenges is to have more resources at their disposal. They have acknowledged that they rely heavily on online resources and colleagues due to a lack of time and resources. Therefore, addressing this issue and ensuring access to the necessary resources could help them achieve their goals more efficiently and effectively. Teacher 3 mentioned that a significant hindrance to implementation was "not having materials and resources at the ready.*"*

Participants shared their insights on how to improve their learning process. They identified a key challenge in gaining knowledge when they needed help accessing the specific and appropriate resources directed toward the initiative. For instance, Teacher 4 said they would benefit from additional resources "beyond what they could find" themselves. They suggested that readily available resources would help them generate more ideas. Another type of resource Teacher 6 noted that they were facing a shortage of art supplies, which hindered their ability to design lessons that integrated art. To successfully implement the initiatives, teachers require suitable art materials, mainly if they do not teach art or have a partnership with an art instructor.

Teacher 7 raised concerns regarding resources for assessing arts-based initiatives during the discussion. They stated, "It can be difficult to assess or find appropriate arts to include." However, the teachers also brainstormed ways to overcome this challenge and

discussed potential solutions to make the assessment process more efficient. They agreed that although it requires time and effort, the benefits of including arts-based initiatives in their lessons are worth it. Searching for ways to include arts-based initiatives in their lessons consumes their time, which is already difficult. It is essential to locate resources that can aid in effectively executing arts-based initiatives.

Theme 3: Collaboration as a Resource

According to the feedback received from the participants, collaboration with others is essential when the district needs to provide the necessary resources. For example, Teacher 5 enthusiastically shared their approach to creating successful lessons. As a grade-level hallway, they "share ideas and collaborate, which makes for some amazing lessons." Teacher 5 also mentioned how they work together to identify and resolve potential issues. This collaborative effort ensures that the lesson is successful and allows everyone to learn from each other's experiences. This approach also encourages experimentation and innovation, essential for creating engaging and practical lessons. Teacher 8 highlighted the significance of collaborating with their professional learning community (PLC), which consists of teachers of similar grade levels or subjects. Furthermore, Teacher 8 expressed a keen interest in expanding collaboration beyond their grade level to gain valuable insights into effectively implementing arts-based initiatives.

However, a few participants mentioned that they could not collaborate with their peers due to various time constraints. Teacher 2 stated, "I used to collaborate more with other teachers; however, due to time availability, ability levels, and needs of students,

that collaboration has diminished the majority of the time." Teacher 4 found it helpful to team up with other subject-area teachers to tackle challenges and acquire resources. Teacher 4 said that "communicating with the art department is very useful" as art teachers can be a "great resource for sharing materials and sharing creative ideas." Similarly, Teacher 7 mentioned, "I would love to collaborate with colleagues, especially art teachers, but there is no time or place for this."

Theme 4: Teacher Qualities to Overcome Difficult Implementation

When introducing a new initiative in the curriculum, it is important to identify the qualities teachers find effective in tackling implementation challenges. Teachers 2 and 7 highlighted the importance of confidence in the implementation process, ensuring the lesson is delivered accurately and with conviction. However, if teachers need more knowledge about the initiative, their confidence may remain strong. Alongside being confident, positivity was a word that echoed during the interviews. By maintaining a positive attitude and approaching new initiatives with an open mind, teachers can help ensure that their students benefit from these new initiatives. Teacher 3 stated, "If we're not positive, it's not going to be a positive outcome."

When discussing the potential challenges of teachers who are resistant to change, Teacher 3 highlighted the significance of teachers' beliefs and how they can impact their teaching. However, to have a decent belief in the initiative, teachers must also be knowledgeable in the area. According to Teacher 3, implementing the initiative in the classroom can be achieved only when the teachers have sufficient knowledge about it.

Teachers often feel that they need proper knowledge to implement new initiatives. Teacher 4 believes that creativity is the "key quality" required in the case of an arts-based initiative. They acknowledge that they may not always be the most creative. Still, they have found ways to overcome this by "joining art and lessons outside of art," "being open to trying new things," and having "a willingness to adapt" to new situations.

Multiple participants, such as Teacher 6, emphasized the significance of "persistence and a willingness to adapt," highlighting that teachers can overcome challenges with a belief in the initiative and its benefits. Teacher 3 recommended that teachers "keep trying and utilize other support options" if they do not "get it on the first try." Similarly, Teacher 7 suggested that teachers embrace being "comfortable with uncertainty and failing occasionally" as a natural part of learning when implementing something new.

Teacher 1 suggested, "Implementing new initiatives and ideas can be really challenging for any teacher. Patience, strong organizational skills, and negotiation skills are just a few qualities that I think a teacher should have when wanting to do this." Similarly, Teacher 2 emphasized the importance of teachers being "persevering and all in" for a successful implementation. They continued to say:

You will have people that will offer support and then have yet to follow-through. You will have people that you can lean on to help carry you through. You may have funds available to help get your program off the ground, but most likely, you will have to put in work to raise funds or find outside sources for funds.

Theme 5: Need for Consistent Professional Development and Support

Research Question 2 examined the tools the teachers noted they needed. One theme emerged from the responses: the need for consistent PD and support. The district's prioritization of arts-based initiatives is a positive step towards enhancing the learning experience for students. However, ensuring that educators receive adequate preparation and resources to implement these initiatives effectively is equally important. It is important to note that various participants perceive the district's support for implementing arts-based initiatives differently.

While some felt that the support provided was inadequate, others had a more positive experience. Teachers 1 and 3, for instance, shared that they could effectively use the district's resources. They also recommended taking a more proactive approach in seeking out opportunities and resources within the district, which could be helpful. Teacher 6 affirmed that the district provides educators with “opportunities for training and assistance” when “implementing new programs and technologies within the classroom.” This suggests that making the most of the district's support with the right mindset and effort is possible. Teacher 3 also mentioned, "The district will usually provide professional learning opportunities directly to classroom teachers. Sometimes, the professional learning is given to instructional coaches, who then provide the training to teachers.” But, despite the opportunities provided by the district, teacher 3 believed that more could have been done to prepare teachers for implementing arts-based initiatives. They feel the PD days are a “one-day thing that most teachers just see as a

requirement rather than an opportunity to grow and try something new." They proposed exploring additional training opportunities and resources that could better equip teachers and enhance their readiness for the task.

When asked about their experiences within the district regarding provided training and preparation, many participants felt there needed to be more training and support. Teacher 4 even said that it "isn't the first time" the district has not supported them. Teacher 5 suggested, "Teachers need support by giving an outline of what they want the implementation to look like and time to plan and effectively carry out that plan." The district should consider investing more in PD opportunities and training sessions for educators. This can not only help them assimilate these initiatives into their curricula more seamlessly but also cater to the diverse needs of their students in a more meaningful way.

Implementation of new initiatives comes with benefits and challenges. Some may be disseminated from the district level, whereas others come from the individual school. Teacher 4 expressed a desire for more support from the district and suggested that their administration is open to new ideas. However, they also pointed out that there seems to be a disconnect between the district's contributions and what is implemented in the school. For example, Teacher 7 acknowledged the need for more clarity and guidance to contribute effectively. They also mentioned that the district "lacks support in innovative techniques" and does not give much "control" to what they would like for PD. Meanwhile, Teacher 4 suggested that it would be beneficial for a district representative to

speak to the teachers about the advantages of arts-based initiatives. Doing so could help gain their trust in the initiative. They noted:

> Just because I've tried some arts-based initiatives doesn't make me an expert and doesn't mean other teachers are doing the same. If the district wants to see everyone implementing this, they need to work to gain teachers' belief that it would be worth their while.

Another participant, teacher 1, mentioned a lack of district support but felt supported within their school, stating that "resources are always readily available at my school." Teacher 5 also noted that their school is very supportive and "provides funding within reason" when they want to try something. Teacher 5 continued, "I can come up with an idea and pitch it to my principals, who will usually find funding to make it happen. I'm very lucky for that." Teacher 8 shared that despite implementing new standards this year, the "school has been pretty open to supporting our new ideas with supplies." Whereas some participants thought their school supported the implementation, teacher 2 still acknowledged the need for "more support and resources" from the school and the district.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

In this section, I describe the PD project, the goals and rationale of the project, and a relevant literature review. The project is a 3-day PD training program, carefully crafted to support educators who wish to incorporate arts-based initiatives into their curriculum. This program will be conducted in person and open to administrators and local county employees working in schools. It will also provide an immersive learning experience. Throughout the program, participants will stay updated with the latest trends and best practices in arts education, explore various teaching strategies, and engage in practical activities to enhance their abilities to implement arts-based initiatives in their classrooms. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to connect with other educators, exchange experiences and ideas, and receive valuable feedback from experts in the field.

The main objective of this training program is to equip teachers and administrators with the necessary skills and confidence to integrate arts-based initiatives into their curriculum successfully. These initiatives foster creativity, critical thinking, and innovation among students. This program is specifically designed to assist educators in overcoming any challenges they may encounter in implementing these initiatives.

Rationale

I aimed to improve the success of implementing arts-based initiatives into the curriculum by addressing teachers' difficulties while implementing these initiatives within the local research site. Due to their lack of proper implementation, these initiatives

are not effectively aiding student mental health. I also want to bridge the gap in practice by bringing awareness of how arts-based initiatives should be implemented within the class.

After thoroughly analyzing the data collected in Section 2, I determined that the ideal project genre would be a PD session. Continuous learning is essential for teachers to provide high-quality learning experiences for their students. PD is critical in ensuring teachers have the skills to implement arts-based initiatives effectively. The PD session is necessary to provide interactive and engaging activities to better equip teachers with an effective means to implement the arts-based initiatives.

I selected a PD session as the ideal project genre because it effectively addresses the problem experienced within the local research site. Research-based instruction is essential to supporting effective implementation, and PD is a critical avenue to ensure high-quality instruction practices are supported (Barnes et al., 2022). Teacher professional growth is a continuous, recursive, and adaptive process (Hayes et al., 2023).

The data indicated an increase in student mental health concerns. To combat this, the district implemented arts-based initiatives to aid student mental health. The teachers expressed that implementing the initiative came with challenges. The interviews and data collected highlighted the need for a structured and recurring approach to conceptualizing, designing, implementing, and evaluating PD programs for arts-based initiatives. Ultimately, the project aimed to furnish practical measures for enhancing PD opportunities for educators introducing new district initiatives. The project was crafted to

convey the study's results and recommendations in an understandable and implementable manner. This training program is designed to provide constructive support to school administrators implementing arts-based initiatives. By offering growth-based feedback, the program will help them conduct informal and formal evaluations of teacher instructional delivery, enabling them to better support their teachers in achieving their goals.

Review of the Literature

To find recent research on the development of PD programs covered in the literature review, I examined multiple databases including, but not limited to, Google Scholar, ERIC, EBSCOhost, JSTOR, and Proquest Multisearch. To ensure the validity of my research, I exclusively included articles that met the following criteria: (a) publications written solely in English, (b) peer-reviewed, (c) available in their entirety, and (d) published between 2018 and 2023. In the review, I discuss various components of creating, implementing, and assessing PD programs. I conducted a thorough literature search using carefully chosen keywords directly related to my interest topics, such as *professional development programs, project deliverables,* and *teacher development.*

Professional Development

In the ever-changing education landscape worldwide, teachers must engage in ongoing PD. To this end, governmental entities and organizations invest significant time and resources into creating effective programs supporting teacher learning and development, leading to better student educational outcomes (Kippers et al., 2018). These

programs offer teachers opportunities to improve their teaching methods and ensure that teachers and students continue to thrive. Designing these programs to enhance student achievement and teacher effectiveness ensures everyone benefits.

Effective PD programs for teachers offer opportunities for collaboration with other educators and engagement with new concepts, increasing their understanding of novel ideas (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015). Moreover, meaningful PD can promote academic growth and create community within the educational institution (Slavit & McDuffie, 2013). Additionally, such programs offer a secure and confidential space for educators to ask questions they may be hesitant to ask in public due to differing opinions (Bautista et al., 2016).

PD is more productive when teachers are encouraged to contribute to the design elements, mainly when these elements focus on their individual needs as educators. This can lead to improved teaching practices and higher student achievement (Yurtseven & Altun, 2017). It is also beneficial when all participants contribute to the workshop, creating an environment where teachers can collaborate freely, thereby strengthening the overall climate of the educational institution.

Berisha et al. (2024) conducted a study on a PD program designed to address the challenges teachers face when using formative assessment in their classrooms. The program was designed to provide formative assessment training, and 19 teachers participated. Data was collected through open-ended pre- and postquestionnaires, mentoring, and teacher portfolios. The study was aligned with Kennedy's models of

training, mentoring, and the community of practice.

Berisha et al. (2024) used a PD program with three phases. Teachers participated in a two-day on-site active learning training activity in the first phase. This was followed by one-on-one mentoring on formative assessment lesson planning and practices with the research team. The second phase saw teachers given over a month to practice formative assessment in their classrooms, with the research team monitoring each teacher's class and holding pre- and postmonitoring discussions.

Finally, in the third phase, Berisha et al. (2024) had participating teachers showcase their portfolios to a community of teachers. This was done to meet certification requirements and share knowledge with colleagues. The PD formative assessment program enlisted teachers as participants, expecting they would take on the role of facilitators in their schools for the program's subsequent phases. These teachers were carefully chosen from a diverse range of high schools in five distinct municipalities, resulting in a more expansive, credible, and comparable program implementation. To gauge the efficacy of any new pilot PD program, it is advisable to start with a small-scale implementation under controlled conditions (Teresi et al., 2022).

Lindvall et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of a well-designed PD environment for teachers to gain fresh experiences. In a study by Elmali and Kiyici (2022), science teachers were eager to attend technology-based training programs to boost their technological competencies. The researchers considered these findings and developed a technology-based PD program using the ASSURE model. The pilot study of

the program yielded positive results, with participants reporting that it helped them incorporate technology into their classes in various ways. This program is widely applicable to teachers in different fields, as it enhances their technological competencies and aids them in overcoming obstacles in using technology (Elmali & Kiyici, 2022).

Through a rigorous process that included a comprehensive literature review, expert input, and interviews with educators, a PD program centered on technology was developed by Elmali and Kiyici (2022). The researchers conducted interviews to collect data on teachers' utilization of innovative technologies, their challenges while incorporating technology into their lessons, and their strategies for engaging gifted students. They posed technology integration-oriented questions to assess the teachers' proficiency and identify their needs. In addition, the researchers sought the teachers' perspectives on the importance of technology in gifted education and the feasibility of sustaining PD programs for this population of educators. Based on their findings from the literature review and interviews, it was determined that a PD program for teachers of gifted students should prioritize technology integration (Elmali & Kiyici, 2022).

Valiandes and Neophytou (2018) conducted a study that found that a PD program for differentiated instruction (PDD) was highly influential in addressing teachers' concerns, promoting change, and improving their knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward differentiation. They established that differentiation of instruction can significantly enhance student progress, provided that teachers receive appropriate training and support. To overcome the challenges teachers often encounter while attempting to differentiate

their lessons, the PDD was meticulously customized to cater to their specific needs and stretched over two semesters. It also offered ongoing support through various channels such as a dedicated website, online discussion forum, on-site visits, and telephone and email communications. These resources facilitated seamless communication, collaboration, and exchange of ideas between participants and researchers (Valiandes & Neophytou, 2018).

The PDD program provided teachers with training seminars and workshops before and during the intervention, along with support during the implementation of differentiation in their daily practices (Valiandes & Neophytou, 2018). It is worth noting that more than traditional lecture-based seminars are needed to persuade participants to adopt and maintain new instructional practices (Zakrajsek, 2018). As a result, PD programs today emphasize active learning, collective participation, content knowledge, and instructional methods closely aligned with the curriculum and existing teaching realities. Furthermore, such programs should have adequate duration and continuity, according to Sims and Fletcher-Wood (2021).

Professional Learning

Smith and Gillespie (2023) showed that PD using traditional methods like conferences and brief workshops can enhance a teacher's expertise and abilities. However, they may not be enough to change their instructional practices (Sprott, 2019). As a result, PD programs may need to meet their ultimate objective of improving student achievement by developing teachers. In response, Bergmark (2023) proposed a shift from

PD to professional learning. The latter approach involves developing professional skills and expertise, enhancing the capacity for practice, and implementing actual changes in practice. There is a valid argument that PD programs must catch up to their intended purpose of improving teachers' capacity to affect student achievement positively. Bergmark proposed a transition from PD to professional learning as a viable solution. This entails directing PD efforts toward building teachers' proficiency in actual teaching practices and fostering measurable improvements instead of simply sharpening their skills, knowledge, and expertise.

The framework of the professional learning of teachers requires them to become reflective practitioners who can evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices (Valiandes & Neophytou, 2018). To achieve this, traditional courses that focus on lecturing should be replaced with approaches that engage teachers in identifying the impact of their teaching methods. In this way, educators become both learners and instructors (Darling-Hammond, 1996). In these dual roles, they are encouraged to translate their knowledge into instructional practices that are both effective and of high quality.

Teachers must be able to reflect on their teaching practices and assess whether they are achieving their intended goals. This requires a shift from traditional teaching methods that focus on "showing and telling" to more interactive and engaging approaches that enable teachers to assess the effectiveness of their teaching methods (Kloser et al., 2021). In doing so, Kloser et al. noted that teachers become active learners and

instructors who can translate their knowledge into instructional practices that are both qualitative and effective.

In conclusion, the PD process for teachers requires them to become reflective practitioners who can evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices. This can be achieved by replacing traditional lecturing methods with approaches that engage teachers in identifying the impact of their teaching methods. By doing so, teachers can become learners and instructors who can translate their knowledge into practical and high-quality instructional practices.

Project Description

After conducting extensive research, I concluded that a comprehensive PD workshop is essential to equipping educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement arts-based initiatives effectively in their classrooms. The workshop will provide participants with well-researched, evidence-based, and proven strategies for promoting the use of the arts in education.

Teachers can work collaboratively with their peers during the workshop and explore common strategies. They can also exchange ideas and share their experiences. Furthermore, they can develop new techniques that can be used in subject areas more focused on arts-based initiatives. The program will enable teachers to explore innovative teaching methods, experiment with new techniques, and learn how to incorporate arts into their lessons meaningfully and engagingly. Overall, the PD workshop will empower teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to create a more dynamic, engaging,

and creative learning environment for their students.

Throughout the 3-day program, participants will have the invaluable opportunity to engage in collaborative discussions about arts-based initiatives and strategies to implement them. Each session was meticulously designed to include formative assessments, allowing participants to evaluate the session daily. At the end of the program, a summative assessment will be provided to ensure an overall evaluation of the PD program.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

The PD program is an extensive initiative that spans three sessions. It is designed to take place during the summer and early months of the school year, and the administration will inform the participants of the exact dates through various communication channels, such as emails, newsletters, and public service announcements. The program's primary objective is collaborating with participants and creating more effective strategies for implementing arts-based initiatives. The program aims to provide a constructive learning experience that supports the professional growth of all participants.

Participants will engage in various activities in each session, including interactive workshops, presentations, and discussions on developing and implementing successful arts-based initiatives. Table 1 provides a view of the schedule for each session, detailing the time, activities, and presenters for each day. The PD program allows participants to learn, collaborate, and grow professionally. The program's ultimate goal is to equip

participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to enhance their arts-based initiatives' effectiveness and impact.

Table 2

Schedule for Implementing Professional Development

Schedule	Activity	Presenter
Session 1	Overview of the PD and the arts-based initiatives • Purpose of the PD and study findings • Small groups: articles on arts-based initiatives • Video & Discussion • Exit Ticket: Formative Evaluation	Facilitator
Session 2	• Lesson Planning: Small groups discussing arts-based initiative strategies • Individual Planning Time • Exit Ticket: Formative Evaluation	Facilitator Administrator Team Leaders
Session 3	• Simulation of implementing arts-based initiatives • Strategies to use Day 1 • Group discussions • Exit Ticket: Formative Evaluation	Facilitator Administrator Team Leaders

The PD session will be conducted daily from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.. Day 1 will be an overview of arts-based initiatives and setting the stage by the facilitator and myself as the program developer. The teachers will be given a PD agenda to use as a guide. The first hour of the training will discuss the purpose and goal of the training as well as any general housekeeping for the next three days. Teachers will then work in small groups for

discussions and scenarios. Each group will be assigned a different article to read and discuss regarding the benefits of arts-based initiatives. The teachers will return to the main room to share their findings with the group. Next, I will discuss the research-based information that explains how arts-based initiatives may increase student mental health. I will show a brief video of a teacher implementing arts-based initiatives, and we will then discuss what they saw in the video. Day 1 will close with an exit ticket.

Day 2 will focus on implementing arts-based initiatives into their lessons and developing strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the initiative. Participants are encouraged to bring lessons with them to use during group activities. Participants will focus on their lessons while sharing best practices with peers. Additionally, they will have time to work independently on lesson planning. They will end the day with an exit ticket. Day 3 will focus on sustaining the arts-based initiative and the following steps to implementation. Participants will engage in group activities, role-playing, and an exit ticket.

Potential Resources

Effective planning is essential for the success of any training program, and this three-day training program is no exception. To ensure a productive learning experience, we must consider all necessary resources, such as facilitator expenses, materials, handouts, and refreshments. I have extensive teaching experience and access to a well-equipped facility that will enable us to deliver an efficient training experience for all participants. We have all the essential items required for the training, including paper,

pens, pencils, folders, smartboard or dry erase board, Zip Lock bags, dry erase markers, laptops, textbooks, and a projector. In case of any equipment barriers, I am well-prepared to bring in other portable items such as video players, extra laptops, and a portable dry erase whiteboard to ensure we deliver a seamless training experience.

To ensure a high-quality training experience, I will collaborate with the local county PD department to fund two facilitators for the 3-day event. The training will be free for all participants, and the facilitators will provide handouts and other tangible resources to ensure a productive learning experience. In addition, we will purchase additional materials such as markers, anchor paper, pencils, pens, and construction paper to make the training more interactive and engaging. With all these resources, we can confidently deliver a professional and practical training experience that will equip participants with new knowledge and skills to enhance their PD.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

It is important to note that implementing a 3-day PD training program may face particular challenges. The primary obstacles to implementing this training are the limited time available and the requirement for teachers to attend sessions consecutively. However, there is a potential solution to this problem. Providing in-person training days and allowing participants to choose between a June or July session could be an alternative approach. It could also be available during the school's teacher workdays at the beginning of August. This approach would provide much-needed flexibility and increased

opportunities for participation, thereby ensuring that teachers receive the training they require to thrive in their profession.

To access the documents, stakeholders would need a computer with internet access and a printer. They would also need to be familiar with district resources and have access to relevant district personnel. The district website, email, and interoffice mail are structures that would support implementing the PD program. Existing policy, which outlines state requirements for PD, would also help stakeholders understand how and why PD must be conducted in the district.

Additional barriers to implementing this process include a need for knowledge or skill about various aspects of programming on the part of stakeholders interested in initiative programs and limited access to technology or district personnel. The PD program includes documents and links to additional information about effective arts-based PD to address these barriers. Clear articulation of the roles and responsibilities in the personnel hierarchy for the district in question would also be included to address the second barrier.

Project Evaluation Plan

To improve the project, I have implemented an assessment plan that includes formative and summative evaluations of the PD training. The primary objective is to gather data to help us enhance the project and assess its quality and effectiveness. Three primary stakeholder groups could provide meaningful evaluation of the project: (1) the local research site teachers, (2) district leaders, such as the PD director, and (3) training

facilitators. Gathering feedback from these stakeholder groups will offer insight into the quality and effectiveness of the PD training. To conduct formative assessments, I will provide each participant and facilitator with a QR code after each session. The code will redirect them to a survey they can complete on their mobile devices. These assessments, also known as "exit tickets," will provide valuable feedback on participants' experiences and record their attendance for the day.

Participants must answer four questions, alongside their name and the date, on the exit ticket form. These questions will help us determine the effectiveness of the sessions and identify areas for improvement. Furthermore, I have added a comment box to allow participants to share any additional remarks. Including participants' names on the exit ticket is essential as it helps us identify who understood the lesson and who did not. This information is crucial in advancing PD for arts-based initiatives. Throughout the sessions, the exit ticket questions will be an invaluable tool in assessing the readiness levels of the participants. Participants are encouraged to provide detailed responses to the questions, which helps them carry out daily assessments efficiently. This ultimately leads to the successful implementation of many arts-based initiatives.

The data collected during the study will be highly beneficial for classroom teachers in identifying areas that require improvement. The study will yield the best results when participants feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions freely, which creates a positive and constructive learning environment.

As a conclusion to the study, the participants will be given a ten-question survey (see Appendix A) to complete. The survey was designed to ensure anonymity. It consists of four short answer questions and six questions that require the participants to choose one of the categories: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The following questions will be asked: (1) The PD focusing on arts helped me to offer valuable strategies to my students. (2) The PD successfully provided effective strategies aligned with the standards and curriculum to use the content, teaching process, the product produced, and the learning environment. (3) The arts-based PD taught me the importance and benefits of incorporating art-based strategies with all the students I teach at some point. (4) I learned and practiced art-based strategies through the arts-based initiative PD. (5) The arts-based initiative PD gave me access to valuable resources that I could use to enrich my curriculum. (6) The arts-based initiative PD increased my confidence in implementing the initiative into my curriculum.

Project Implications

Possible Social Change

I am committed to empowering teachers to equip their students with the necessary skills for modern education. This initiative may develop confident and informed teachers who can effectively engage their students using arts-based initiatives. Policymakers, educators, and researchers will benefit immensely from the knowledge gained through this PD program, which will help define PD content for the modern era. While change

may not happen overnight, the community will witness consistent improvements in student outcomes over time.

The proposed project holds significant promise for augmenting the existing body of knowledge within the PD community. Its implications for social change are expansive and far-reaching, extending beyond the confines of this district and state to encompass a wider audience of educators and policy-makers. The proposed project aims to empower educators with the tools and resources to create more inclusive and equitable learning environments by leveraging innovative pedagogical strategies. Overall, this initiative represents a critical step forward in advancing the field of education and is poised to make a meaningful impact on the lives of students and educators alike.

Conclusion

This section of the report focuses on the project and its purpose. I have analyzed the project's objectives, literature review, implementation strategy, social change implications, potential for social change, and the methodology used to evaluate the project. Educators understand the importance of keeping up with the evolving educational landscape and catering to the changing needs of their students. Therefore, they require PD to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet these needs. Based on a site-based qualitative research approach and a literature review, the findings provide evidence that a workshop is required to redirect PD toward supporting the needs of teachers. This report offers constructive insights to help educators improve their PD and teaching practices.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

In Section 4, I delve into the project's strengths and limitations, shedding light on PD programs' positive impact on arts-based initiatives. I emphasize teachers' crucial role in meeting their students' diverse needs. I identify the challenges and resources required to effectively implement arts-based initiatives that promote students' mental health. Based on these findings, it is highly recommended that a comprehensive 3-day arts-inclusive PD training program be established for teachers and support staff to enhance students' mental health outcomes.

I developed the project to positively change teaching practices in the district by incorporating art into education. This will promote students' mental health awareness and provide a platform to develop their creative abilities. The PD program is designed to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to integrate art into their teaching practices and help students grow holistically. The initiative will encourage students to form new connections while learning, leading to greater recognition of the value of arts-based initiatives in meeting the county's professional requirements. By implementing the 3-day PD program, students will benefit from improved mental and academic wellbeing, which will help them achieve their potential in life.

It is important to note that the project has certain limitations that must be addressed for successful implementation. One limitation is that not all teachers and support staff members may require PD. Additionally, time constraints may make it

difficult for some to attend the training sessions, and other mandatory county training programs may need to be prioritized. Therefore, the county should devise a comprehensive PD plan that considers the needs of all instructional staff and teachers and helps them schedule their training sessions effectively, making the most of the available resources. This will ensure that everyone benefits from the project and is equipped to contribute to its success.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Over the last academic year, the school district has observed a significant rise of over 300% in students requiring intensive mental health support compared to the 2016-2017 school year (Bose, 2022). In response to this distressing development, the district is taking proactive measures to enhance its mental health efforts by introducing a range of diverse arts-based initiatives. As a part of this effort, I interviewed eight teachers to gain insight into their challenges and the resources required to incorporate arts-based initiatives into their curriculum.

Despite the PD training provided to teachers in the local county, there still appears to be a need for greater emphasis on implementing arts-based initiatives. One potential solution is to hold teachers and administrators accountable for collaboratively participating in local training sessions focusing on arts-based initiatives. This approach will help administrators better understand how they can support the instructional aspect of the initiative by gaining first-hand knowledge of what teachers are expected to integrate into their daily practices. Overall, introducing arts-based initiatives is a step in

promoting better mental health outcomes for school district students. By working collaboratively and providing necessary resources, administrators and teachers can create a learning environment that is both supportive and nurturing for students' mental health.

An innovative approach to assisting teachers in implementing arts-based initiatives involves establishing a peer learning support group. This support will surpass the conventional mentorship program typically provided to new teachers. Instead, by collaborating with other teachers, they can exchange their experiences, work together to develop lesson plans and engage in real-time conversations with their peers. This approach can foster a sense of community among teachers and provide ongoing peer support and collaboration throughout the school year, extending beyond the usual PD opportunities. By participating in this support group, teachers can receive constructive feedback on their teaching strategies, develop new skills, and build relationships with other teachers with similar goals and interests.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Through conducting a qualitative study, I significantly expanded my knowledge as a researcher and gained a deeper understanding of the basics of qualitative research. This study has provided me with invaluable insight into how to conduct and investigate research, which I highly value in my field. By delving into an area that piqued my curiosity, I have acquired a wealth of information and sharpened my research skills. Despite the rigorous research process and numerous challenges, I was able to analyze my findings and develop a project that has the potential to have a positive impact

on my local community. As a dedicated researcher, I have successfully investigated a local problem and created a solution that can make a difference.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

Upon careful analysis of my research findings on teachers' perceptions regarding the challenges and resources needed for implementing arts-based initiatives, it has become evident that the current strategies need to be revised to equip teachers with the necessary competencies and knowledge required for success. The lack of adequate preparation has led to difficulties in integrating arts-based programs into the curriculum, which can negatively impact the quality of the education delivered to students. As a result, there is an urgent need to establish comprehensive PD programs that support teachers in implementing arts-based initiatives. These programs should provide teachers with various best practices, tools, and resources to seamlessly integrate arts-based activities into their teaching methods. The programs should also offer opportunities for teachers to engage in ongoing PD and collaborative learning to help them stay up to date with the latest strategies and approaches in the field. By establishing PD programs that support teachers in implementing arts-based initiatives, districts can ensure that teachers have the necessary skills, knowledge, and support to deliver high-quality education that includes arts-based activities. This will lead to improved student engagement, achievement, and overall well-being.

I have developed a 3-day PD program to equip teachers with the necessary tools to implement arts-based initiatives effectively. This program was designed based on the

insights and themes that emerged from the study, which provided me with invaluable information on the process of developing such a program and allowed me to apply my knowledge to gather relevant data, analyze the findings, and create a PD program that can have a positive impact on the local community. Moreover, this process provided me with firsthand knowledge of the challenges and resources required to implement arts-based initiatives to improve students' mental health from the perspective of educators. The program is intended to bolster the skill set of educators and enhance their ability to implement effective arts-based initiatives in their classrooms.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

I conducted a qualitative study with a group of eight teachers who were implementing arts-based initiatives in their curriculum. The study could positively impact both the county and school levels. I am proposing a 3-day PD training program to serve as a foundation for further research on the impact of arts-based initiatives on student mental health and academic outcomes. Researchers should replicate the study with another group of teachers who implement arts-based initiatives to benefit student mental health further. Additionally, the study should include elementary, middle, and high school teachers and aim to identify similar findings, challenges, and resources required to implement arts-based initiatives successfully. This proposed qualitative study could provide valuable insights into the benefits of arts-based initiatives and contribute to improving student mental health and academic outcomes.

Conclusion

The study highlighted educators' challenges while implementing art-based programs to improve students' wellbeing. As a result, a 3-day PD course was designed to equip new and prospective teachers with the necessary skills to support student's social and emotional development. The training is expected to enhance the application of practical techniques and guidelines to promote arts-based initiatives in education. This, in turn, will contribute to improving students' mental health on a larger scale.

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Appendix A: The Project

Implementation and Timeline

The PD training session will be scheduled for teachers at the end of June, with another session offered in July, immediately preceding the upcoming academic year. The training will be conducted in person; all participants must attend each day. The first day will commence with an introduction to arts-based initiatives by the facilitator and program developer. Afterward, participants will engage in group discussions and scenarios in breakout rooms. The day will culminate with an exit ticket, preceded by a ten-minute break. The afternoon of Day 1 has been designated for prerequisite readings. Participants will be given a set time from 1:00 to 3:00 pm to complete the session. On the second day, the focus will be on implementing arts-based initiatives and sharing best practices with peers. The day will conclude with an exit ticket. The third day will concentrate on sustaining arts-based initiatives and determining the next steps. Participants will engage in group activities, role-playing, and hands-on lesson delivery. The day will end with an exit ticket. All participants must attend from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, with light refreshments, midday snacks, and water provided. Although participants are welcome to bring their lunch, it is not mandatory.

Program Purpose

After conducting thorough research and analyzing the gathered data, I designed a comprehensive three-day PD training program. The program encourages teachers to incorporate arts-based initiatives into their curriculum, focusing on improving students'

mental health. The basis of this project stems from the feedback given by eight teachers currently implementing arts-based initiatives. Their semi-structured interviews highlighted the challenges and resources required to implement these initiatives effectively.

According to Kalinowski et al. (2019), effective PD programs can improve teacher knowledge, classroom teaching, and student achievement. Thus, the ultimate objective of the three-day PD program is to share best practices with teachers and provide them with the necessary support to implement arts-based initiatives successfully.

Program Goal

PD training can improve teachers' strategies and provide adequate instructional support. It can also help administrators and support staff provide feedback to teachers as they observe their classroom instruction.

Learning Outcomes

The PD training empowers teachers to elevate their instructional practices and foster a positive and supportive environment that promotes student mental health and overall wellbeing.

Target Audience: teachers, administrators, and support staff

Components

These are the components of the project:

- Participants will establish and recognize the most effective practices for arts-based initiatives.

- Participants will acquaint themselves with the arts-based resources suitable for daily instructional planning.
- Participants will create a lesson plan to elevate their arts-based initiative strategies.

Evaluation Plan

To ensure the success of the PD training project, an evaluation plan will be implemented, incorporating both formative and summative assessments to gauge its effectiveness and pinpoint areas for improvement. After each training session, participants will receive a daily exit ticket to offer their thoughts, recommendations, insights on the knowledge and practices gained, and any questions they may have. In addition, the participants will be given a ten-question survey (see Appendix A) to complete. The survey was designed to ensure anonymity. It consisted of four short answer questions and six questions that required the participants to choose one of the categories: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.

A PowerPoint presentation will facilitate the learning process. The agenda is designed to be implemented with the help of a facilitator, a county representative from the PD office, and myself as the program developer. The facilitator's notes will help guide the implementation of the agenda each day, ensuring that everyone gets the most out of the training. A QR code will be used to verify attendance and collect exit tickets to ensure everyone is on track and benefiting from the program.

Day 1: Professional Development Session

To start the 3 day PD sessions, I will facilitate an icebreaker activity for the teachers. Next, I will use PowerPoint to present an overview of what arts-based initiatives are, the purpose of the PD sessions, and the study's findings. After a small break, participants will break off into small groups where they will each read an article on the benefits of arts-based initiatives. Those groups will discuss the benefits of reading the articles and create a poster. After lunch, the groups will each present their posters and explain what benefits they found. To end the day, the groups will watch a video on students participating in arts-based initiatives in their classes. Participants will take notes as the video plays and analyze the findings as a group. The purpose of this is to introduce teachers to the benefits of arts-based initiatives and to help them buy into what they are expected to implement. At the end, we will review what was discussed and answer any questions that may arise. Finally, teachers will scan the QR code to fill out the exit ticket for the day.

Teacher Notes: The teacher facilitator will welcome the teachers and discuss an icebreaker activity.

Day 1: Session Agenda

Learning objective: To develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing arts-based initiatives

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.: Meet and greet/breakfast

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Icebreaker activity

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.: Overview of arts-based initiatives and purpose of PD with study findings

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.: Break

10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Small groups: articles on benefits of arts-based initiatives with discussion

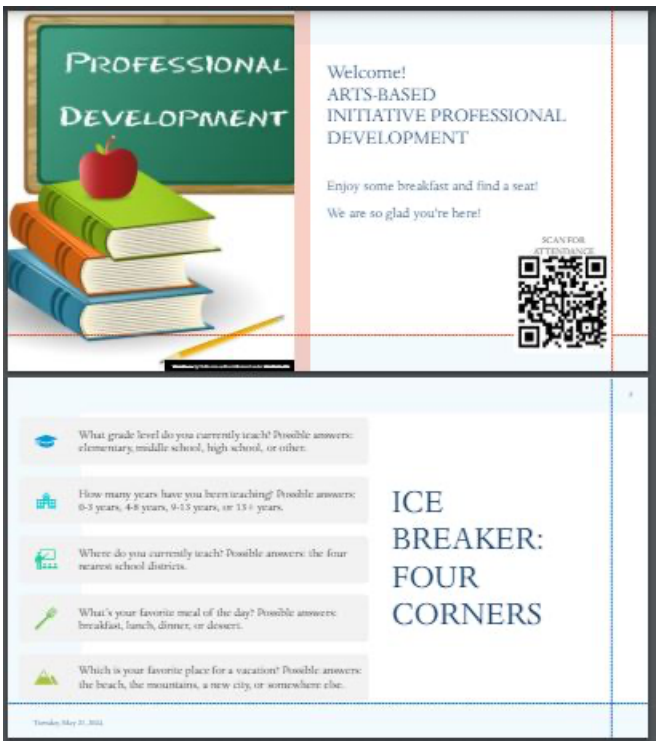
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.: Discuss and share article as a big group

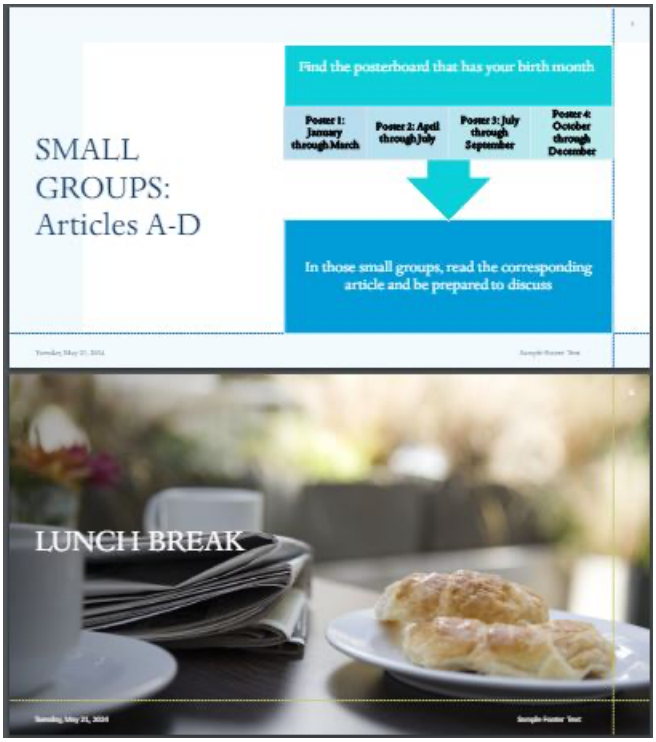
2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.: Video and discussion

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Review of the day/Questions and answers/Exit ticket

Day 1: PowerPoint Slides


PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
Welcome!
ARTS-BASED
INITIATIVE PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
Enjoy some breakfast and find a seat!
We are so glad you're here!
SCAN FOR
ATTENDANCE
What grade level do you currently teach? Possible answers: elementary, middle school, high school, or other.
How many years have you been teaching? Possible answers: 0-3 years, 4-8 years, 9-13 years, or 13+ years.
Where do you currently teach? Possible answers: the four nearest school districts.
What's your favorite meal of the day? Possible answers: breakfast, lunch, dinner, or dessert.
Which is your favorite place for a vacation? Possible answers: the beach, the mountains, a new city, or somewhere else.
ICE
BREAKER:
FOUR
CORNERS

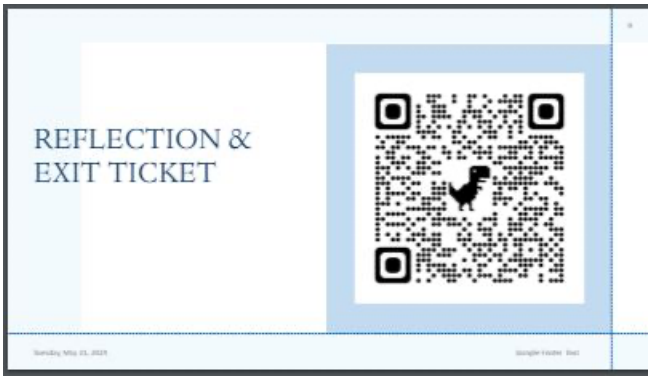
What are arts-based initiatives?
Arts-based initiatives provide a new model for teaching twenty-first century job skills by leveraging an emerging arts-based pedagogy as a fundamentally different approach to teaching, training and equipping a new generation of worker, uniquely qualified to function in this new environment (Ruiz, 2020).
My Study: Purpose & Findings
The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine K-12 teachers' experiences implementing arts-based initiatives and the resources they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site.
TIME AND FUNDS INHIBIT TEACHERS FROM SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION
LACK OF EFFECTIVE RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION
COLLABORATION AS A RESOURCE
TEACHER QUALITIES TO OVERCOME DIFFICULT IMPLEMENTATION
NEED FOR CONSISTENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT


SMALL GROUPS: Articles A-D
Find the posterboard that has your birth month
Poster 1: January through March
Poster 2: April through July
Poster 3: July through September
Poster 4: October through December
In those small groups, read the corresponding article and be prepared to discuss

LUNCH BREAK

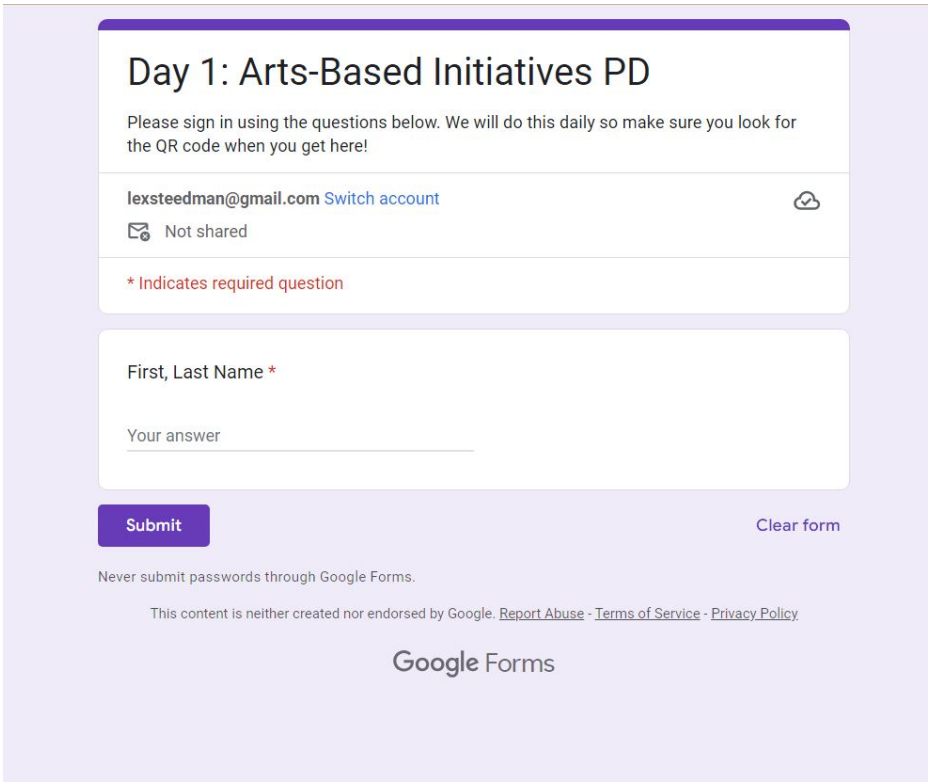
Spotlight Sessions
What is
Arts Integration?
A Guide for K-12 Schools
WATCH NOW

TED

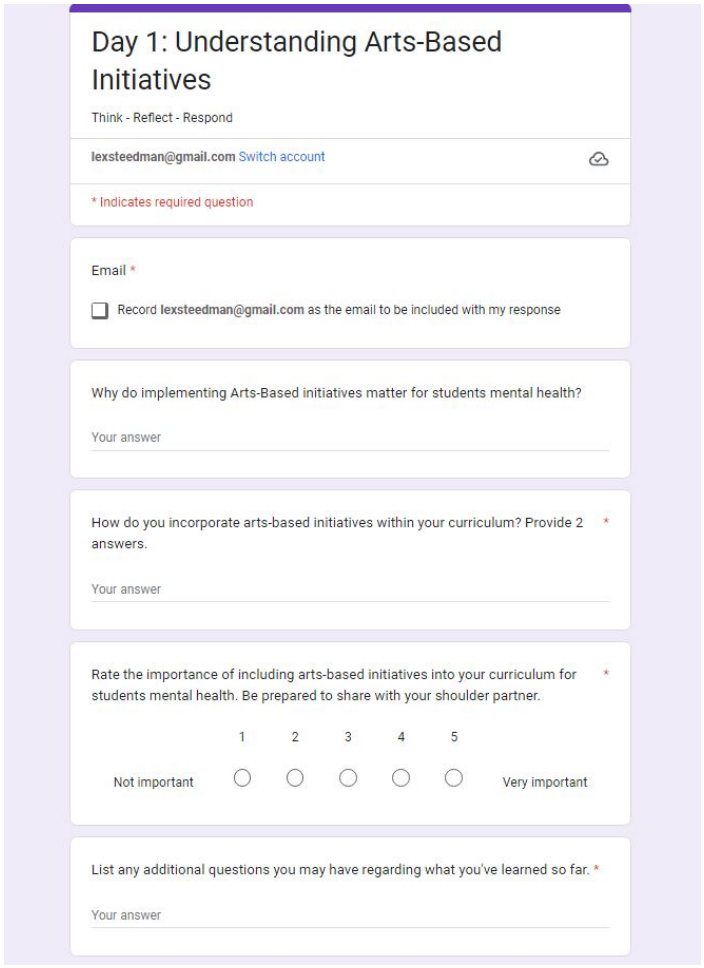


Day 1: Online Forms and QR Codes

Attendance:



Day 1: Exit Ticket



Day 1: Understanding Arts-Based Initiatives

Think - Reflect - Respond

lexsteedman@gmail.com Switch account

* Indicates required question

Email *

Record lexsteedman@gmail.com as the email to be included with my response

Why do implementing Arts-Based initiatives matter for students mental health?

Your answer

How do you incorporate arts-based initiatives within your curriculum? Provide 2 answers. *

Your answer

Rate the importance of including arts-based initiatives into your curriculum for students mental health. Be prepared to share with your shoulder partner. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Very important

List any additional questions you may have regarding what you've learned so far. *

Your answer

Day 2: Professional Development

Day 2 of the PD session will consist of an analysis of the instructional routine and procedures. Teachers will participate in small group discussions and develop lesson plans to present to the group, including arts-based initiatives. Before lunch, the teachers will have some time to work by themselves on lesson plans that include arts-based initiatives. After lunch, teachers will watch videos and role play scenarios that include arts-based initiatives. From 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., teachers will participate in a gallery walk of lesson plans where they view other teachers' lessons and note their strategies to include the initiative. Finally, we will review what was discussed for the day, answer any questions, and complete their exit ticket.

Day 2: Session Agenda

Learning objective: To develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing arts-based initiatives

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.: Meet and greet/breakfast

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.: Small group stations: examples of arts-based lessons

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Group discussion: examples of arts-based lessons

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.: Break

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Individual lesson plan time

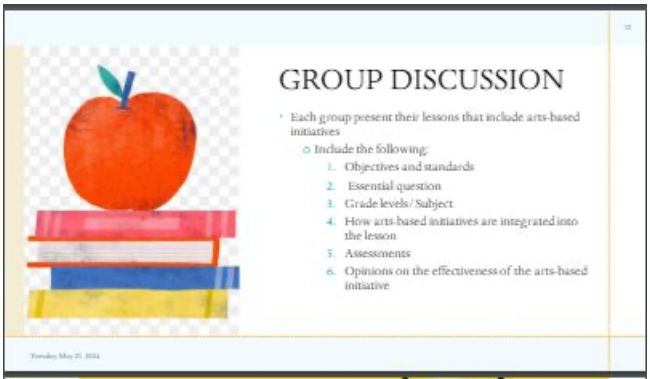
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.: Video and role play scenarios

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.: Gallery walk of lesson plans

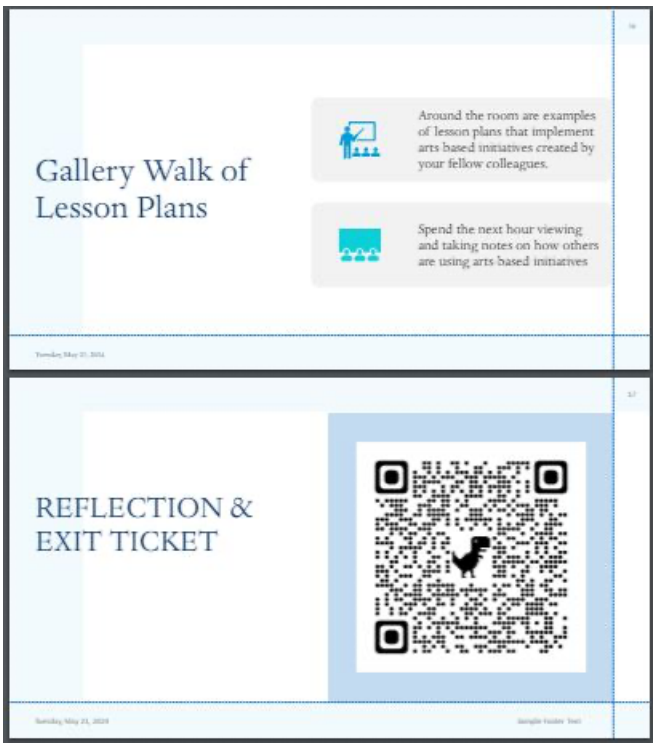
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Review of the day/Questions and answers/Exit ticket

Day 2: PowerPoint Slides


GROUP DISCUSSION
Each group present their lessons that include arts-based initiatives
Include the following:
1. Objectives and standards
2. Essential question
3. Grade levels/ Subject
4. How arts-based initiatives are integrated into the lesson
5. Assessments
6. Opinions on the effectiveness of the arts-based initiative

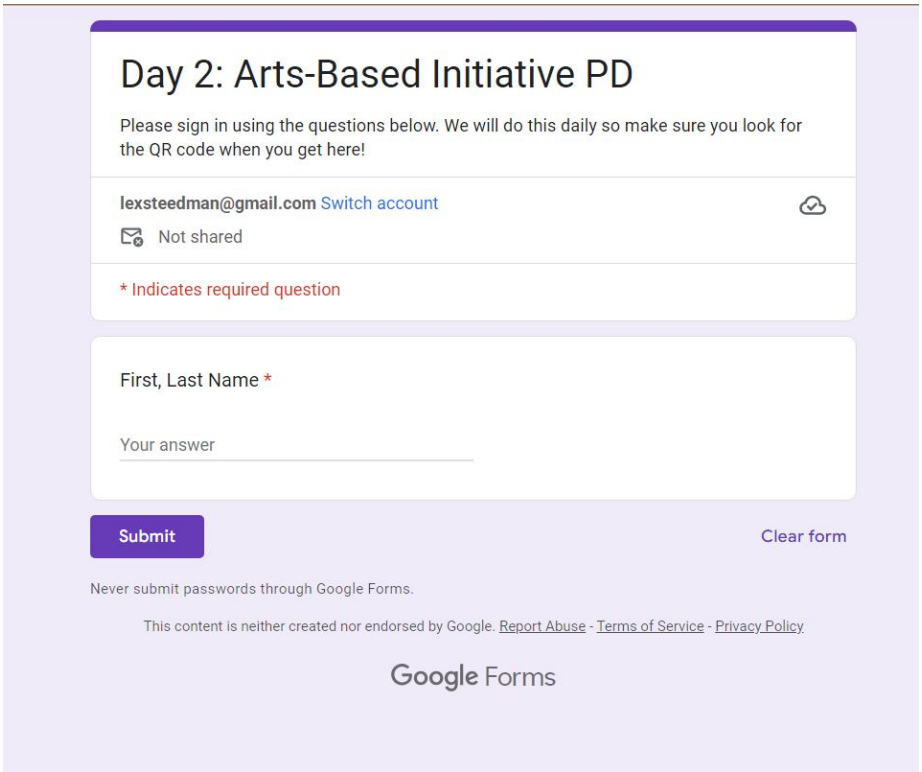
Individual Lesson Planning
Use this time and the knowledge learned from the previous group activity to work on your lesson plans. Make sure you find a way to integrate arts-based initiatives into them

LUNCH BREAK



Day 2: Online Forms and QR Codes

Attendance:



Day 2: Exit Ticket

Day 2: Implementing Arts-Based Initiatives

Think - Reflect - Respond

lexsteedman@gmail.com Switch account

* Indicates required question

Email *

Record lexsteedman@gmail.com as the email to be included with my response

Write and reflect the learned practices from your reading on arts-based initiatives. * List at least 2 practices and briefly explain why

Your answer

How can we modify our current curriculum to implement arts-based initiatives? *

Your answer

Based on the morning session, how do you create an arts-based curriculum for your students to be successful? *

Your answer

List any additional questions you may have regarding what you've learned so far. *

Your answer

Submit

Clear form

Day 3: Professional Development Session

On the last day of PD, I will recap what was discussed in the previous sessions. I will present information about the following: strategies for implementation, lesson planning, resources, data findings, and recommendations. After reviewing, the teachers will view and partake in various scenarios of implementing arts-based initiatives. Teachers will take a break before discussing successful implementation strategies for day 1. Teachers will use large paper pads to write down different methods for different subjects. The purpose of this activity is for teachers to get a better understanding of not only their content area but others as well. After lunch, various stations will be set up with different resources, such as lessons, materials, and handouts for teachers to rotate through and collect. Teachers will then get into small groups (content area) and discuss how they want to implement arts-based initiatives into their curriculum.

In conclusion, before ending the session, the teachers will be asked to complete an evaluation of the sessions. The feedback from the assessment will allow me to refine some areas and set new goals. The feedback will also provide documentation, which the district and stakeholders may use to continue offering PD sessions in the future.

Day 3: Session Agenda

Learning objective: To evaluate teacher and school learning needs through a review of data related to arts-based initiatives; define a clear set of learning goals for teachers based on analysis of the data

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.: Meet and greet/breakfast

8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Review of day 2

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.: Simulation of implementing arts-based initiatives

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.: Break

10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.: Strategies for Day 1

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.: Lunch

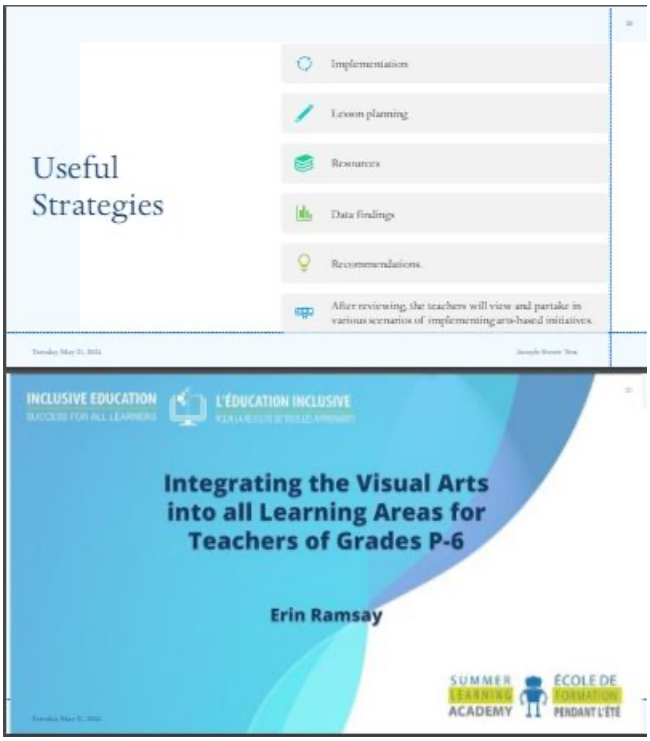
12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Stations: implementation resources

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.: Small group lesson planning

2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.: Group discussion

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Review of the day/Questions and answers/Exit ticket

Day 3: PowerPoint Slides



SMALL GROUP:
Poster Board Strategies

- Around the room are posterboards with certain subjects/grade levels on them
- Use this time to find the posterboard(s) that best fit your area and write down 2-3 strategies for implementing arts-based initiatives

KEEP CALM

I'M

OUT TO LUNCH

LUNCH BREAK
11:15am – 12:15am

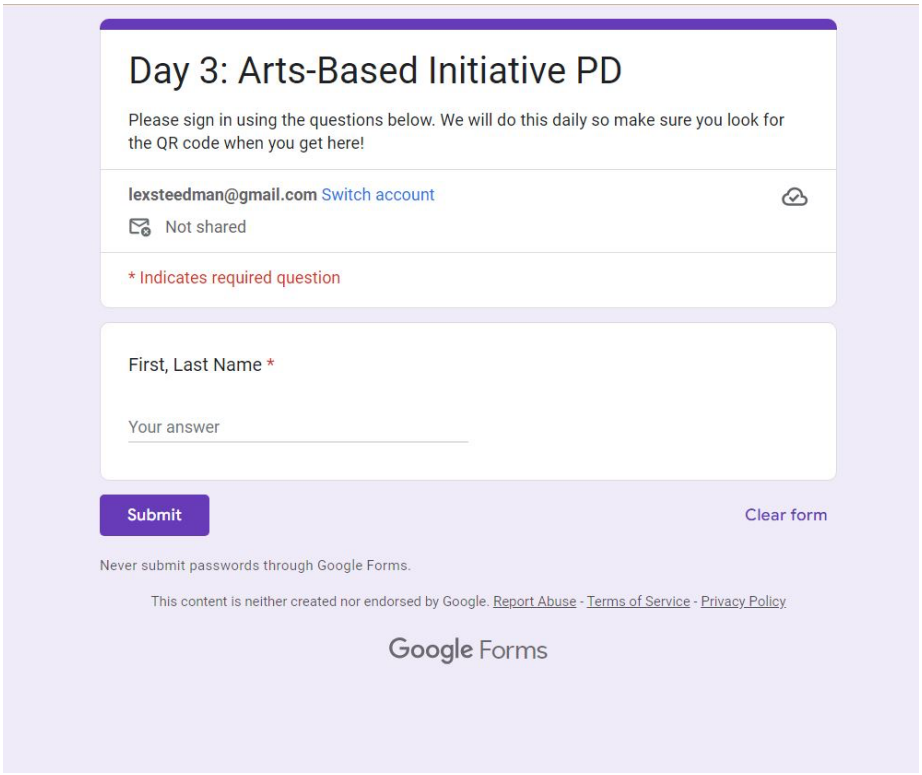
RESOURCE STATIONS

- various stations are set up with different resources like example lessons, materials, handouts for you to rotate through and collect.
- Teachers will then get into small groups (content area) and discuss how they want to implement arts-based initiatives into their curriculum with found resources

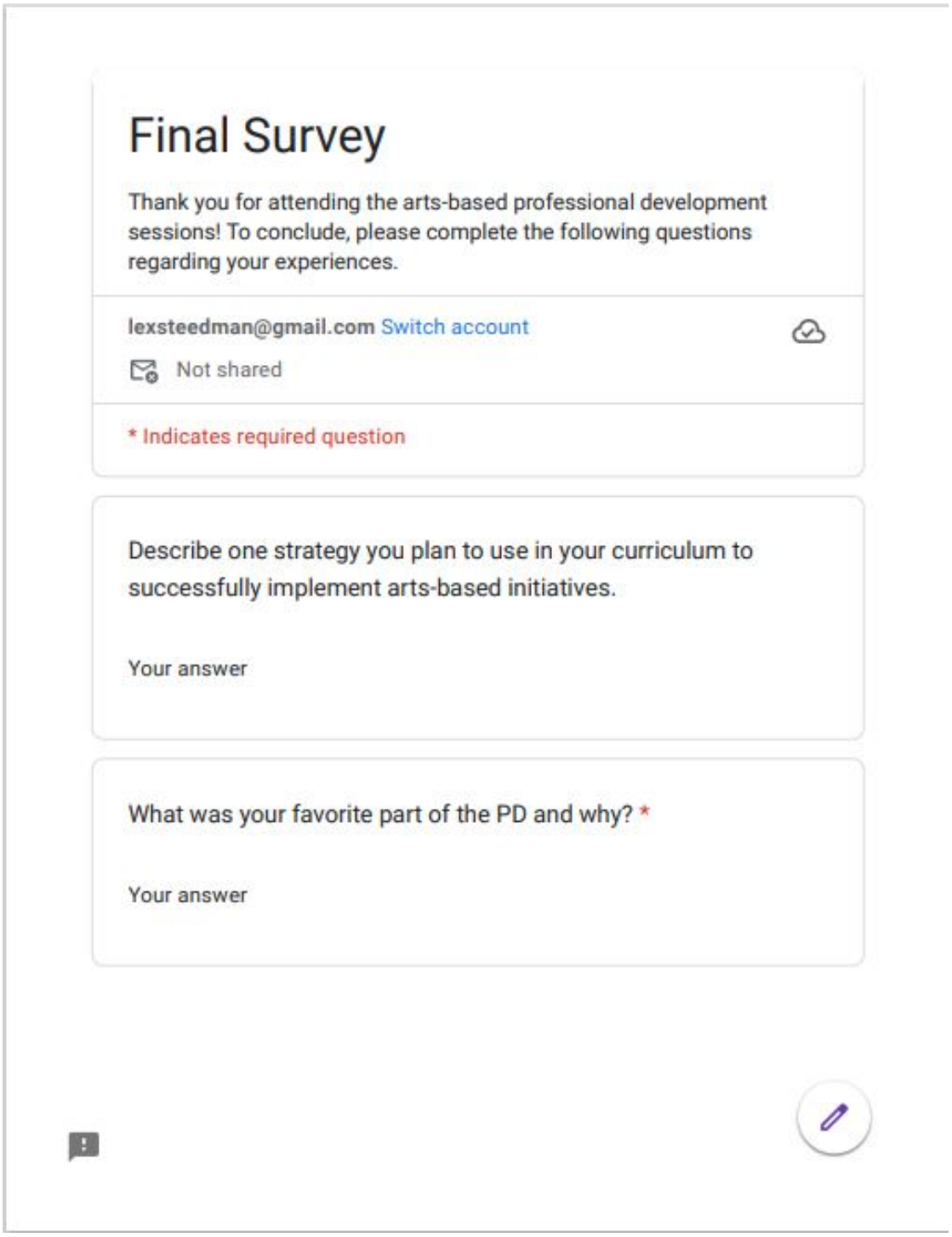
REFLECTION &
EXIT TICKET

Day 3: Online Forms and QR Codes

Attendance:



Final Survey:



Final Survey

Thank you for attending the arts-based professional development sessions! To conclude, please complete the following questions regarding your experiences.

lexsteedman@gmail.com Switch account

Not shared

* Indicates required question

Describe one strategy you plan to use in your curriculum to successfully implement arts-based initiatives.

Your answer

What was your favorite part of the PD and why? *

Your answer

What part of the PD could have been done differently and why? *

Your answer

What do you perceive as the most challenging aspect of incorporating arts-based initiatives into your lessons? *

Your answer

The PD focusing on arts helped me to offer valuable strategies to my students *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

The PD was successful in providing effective strategies that aligned with the standards and curriculum to use the content, the process of teaching, the product produced, and the learning environment. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

The arts-based PD taught me the importance and benefits of incorporating art-based strategies with all the students I teach at some point. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

I gained knowledge and practice of art-based strategies through the arts-based initiative PD. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

The arts-based initiative PD gave me access to valuable resources that I could use to enrich my curriculum. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

The arts-based initiative PD increased my confidence in implementing the initiative into my curriculum. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

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Appendix B: Interview Protocol and Questions

Data Source	
Participants	Teachers
Study Activity	Semistructured interviews
Consent Form	Consent form for "Teachers"
Instrument	Teacher interview protocol
Data Source	Teacher semistructured interview

Interview Protocol

Script

Hello and welcome! Thank you for joining me today. My name is Alexis Steedman, and I am a graduate student at Walden University working on my for the Education Doctorate in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment degree. I will be asking you 13 questions about your experience implementing the arts-based initiatives in your curriculum. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. Before we begin, may I have your permission to record our conversation? This will allow me to accurately document the information you provide. If at any point during the interview you wish to stop recording or the interview itself, please let me know. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to gain a better understanding of how you and your peers view the implementation of arts-based initiatives and what factors may influence it. Thank you for your time and participation. The purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of teachers' experiences implementing arts-based initiatives and the recourses they need when implementing arts-based initiatives in the local research site.

At this time, I want to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. I am the responsible investigator, specifying your participation in the research

project. You and I have signed and dated each copy, certifying that we agree to continue this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other under lock and key, separate from your reported responses.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. Please let me know if you need to stop, take a break, or return to a question. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission, we will begin the interview.

Interview Questions:

IQ1: What are the benefits of incorporating arts-based programs into your educational curriculum?

IQ2: Can you provide some examples of the benefits you've observed while incorporating arts-based initiatives into your curriculum if you believe they have value?

IQ3: What difficulties do you face when adding arts-based initiatives to your curriculum?

IQ4: If you have experienced challenges while implementing arts-based initiatives into your curricula, can you give me some examples of the challenges you have experienced?

IQ5: As a teacher in the district, what interactions with colleagues affect your experience with the arts-based initiative? Could you please provide a further explanation?

IQ6: What effects have you encountered on your experience as a teacher within the district due to the training provided, or lack thereof, by your employer? Kindly elaborate.

IQ7: Do you view yourself as a professional educator in the district?

IQ8: If you consider yourself a professional in your field, what thought process

influences your decision?

IQ9: How would you evaluate your professional classification and role after implementing the arts-based initiative?

IQ10: Did the district adequately prepare educators to implement the arts-based initiatives? If not, what steps could have been taken to improve their preparation? If yes, what steps were provided to adequately prepare educators for the implementation?

IQ11: What factors support or hinder your efforts as a teacher to implement the arts-based initiative?

IQ12: What qualities do you think a teacher needs to successfully implement new initiatives within the district despite any challenges they may face?

IQ13: Before we close this interview, how would you describe your overall experience implementing arts-based initiatives within your curricula?