

Side x Side: [RE] Imagining Education

Year 1 Research Team Report



ENDICOTT
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**Side x Side: [Re]Imagining Education
Year 1 Research Team Report
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INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the planning year of [Re]Imagining Education, Year 1 of a four-year project funded by the Assistance to Arts Education Development and Dissemination (AAEDD) Program of the US Department of Education. Partners include Side x Side, Inc., the University of Southern Maine, Bates College, Portland and Lewiston (ME) Public Schools and local organizations in both communities. [Re]Imagining Education builds on an earlier successful grant-funded initiative in Portland, sustaining and strengthening the work there and extending into another high-need community.

Side x Side staff, teaching artists and expert community partners collaborate with teachers to incorporate visual arts, dance, digital media and drama into academic core content in order to improve academic outcomes; deeper learning skills, such as collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking and problem solving; and social emotional learning skills (self-awareness and self-management, social awareness and interpersonal skills, and responsible decision making). Arts-integrated curriculum will be aligned with the Maine Learning Results, National Arts Standards and the Common Core. Participating students will improve their academic performance and their ability to create, perform, understand and respond to the arts. Greater connection to community will come from celebrations of learning that will provide students with the opportunity to share their acquired knowledge with authentic audiences that include their families and other community members.

Evaluation/Documentation Research

The PERG team takes a documentation research approach in the evaluation of Side x Side [Re]Imagining Education, working collaboratively with the project leaders and participants with a focus on:

- Understanding whether and how the project meets its goals.
- Understanding the experiences of, and impact on, teachers and their students.
- Providing ongoing feedback from this learning to help inform refinement of the project design and implementation.
- Ensuring that the focus is on the PROJECT, not on individuals.

A research team member took the role of participant-observer at the Summer Institute and talked informally with teachers and teaching artists. Participating teachers obtained consent from families for students to participate in the research study. Teachers and teaching artists will also respond to spring surveys about their experiences and their observations of the impact on students. Site visits and selected interviews/ focus groups will take place during

the school year, with adults and students. Older students (grades 3-6) will be asked to respond to a survey in the spring about their views of themselves as learners, and their experience with and perspective on their class's arts-integrated project.

An additional, larger set of different types of data will also be collected. One part of the research involves comparing participating students' performance scores with those of students in a local comparison school in reading (Fountas and Pinnell), and mathematics (NWEA), as well as attendance data. The participating and comparison schools are piloting a PERG- developed assessment of social emotional skills, in the fall and spring. Additionally, the research team will also be monitoring the project's performance on a set of SMART (Specific, Measureable, Actionable, Relevant, Time-bound) measures, observing project meetings and other activities, and reviewing project documents and artifacts.

Results will be shared with project leaders on an annual basis. The questions that frame the research and evaluation, based on analysis of multiple forms and sources of data include:

PROJECT

- To what extent and how does the project achieve its goals and benchmarks?
- How/ how effectively do project leaders, districts and partner organizations work together?
- How and how successfully does the project develop a network of mentor teachers and partners? Community organizations/ partners/ experts?
- How and to what degree do the ongoing PD activities, provide support for teachers' integration of the arts in their classrooms?
 - Pedagogies supportive of social emotional learning?
 - Teaching artists' knowledge of social emotional learning?
 - Teaching artists' ability to integrate arts with content learning?
 - Collaboration between teachers and teaching artists?

(For the Research Matrix, which aligns above questions with data collection methods/sources, see Appendix A.)

- To what extent does the project develop and publish units of study and other resources online? [APR/GPRA measure]

TEACHERS

- How many teachers are involved from each district? Novice and master teachers?
- How/does SxS PD support teachers' development of knowledge about:
 - arts integration?
 - social emotional learning?

- How and to what extent do teachers develop the knowledge and skills to work with teaching artists in designing and implementing arts-integrated, SEL-embedded curricula?
- How and to what extent do teachers design and implement arts-integrated, SEL-embedded curricula on their own (second year and beyond)?
- To what extent do teachers implement arts integration & pedagogical practices to support social emotional learning with fidelity? (intensity and integrity measures)
- How and to what extent do teachers learn to notice (use formative assessment) and support students who learn differently? (MT CoP Pilot year 1)
- How and to what extent do LPS teachers work with PPS mentor teachers? (also see project and partnerships)
- How and to what extent do teachers work with community experts/partners?
- How and to what extent are celebrations of learning integral to students' learning experiences?
- How and to what extent do interns participate in PD? Classrooms? What do they learn from this experience?

TEACHING ARTISTS

- How many teaching artists are involved in each district? In what ways?
- How/does SxS PD support teaching artists' development of knowledge about:
 - arts integration?
 - social emotional learning?
- How and to what extent do teaching artists develop the skills to work with teachers in designing and implementing curricula:
 - that integrates the arts in teaching of academic content?
 - that incorporates strategies for supporting social-emotional learning?

STUDENTS

- Does participation in learning through arts integration increase students' reading comprehension? If so, how and to what extent? [APR/GPRA measure]
- Does learning through arts integration increase students' mathematical knowledge and skills? If so, how? To what extent? [APR/GPRA]
- Does learning through arts integration increase students' social emotional skills? If so, how and to what extent? [APR]

- Does learning through arts integration contribute to students' development of deep learning skills: collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem solving? If so, how and to what degree?
- Does learning through arts integration enhance students' engagement in learning? If so, how?
- Does engaging with community experts heighten students' interest in possible career paths? If so, how and to what extent?
- Are/ how are members of students' families involved? How many?

SCHOOLS

- How and to what extent do schools develop the capacity to incorporate arts integration and support for SEL in and across classrooms? (Connors)
 - school leadership support
 - PD, routines & resources
 - teacher mentorship/ leadership
 - connections to community
- Does this initiative influence school climate? If so, how?
- LPS- How/does it support the merger of 2 schools?
- In PPS, how do Master teachers see the Impact of this initiative on school climate over time?

ARTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- How are partners/ experts involved in the project?
- To what extent, and how are partners and their resources/ expertise/collections an integral part of PD, curriculum design and implementation?

Research Activities

In the first year of the [Re]Imagining Education project, the research team has:

- Worked with project leaders to refine logic model and develop SMART measures
- Developed/ refined research plan and matrix aligning questions and data collection methods/ sources
- Met with Lewiston district and school leaders about the research plan, data requirements and family consent
- Identified comparison schools for literacy and math assessments
- Attended USDOE arts education meeting
- Developed data collection protocols and instruments

- Obtained IRB approval for teacher data (exempt) and student data (expedited)
- Participated in project team meetings
- Acted as participant/observer at summer institutes in Portland and Lewiston and teaching artists' meetings/ professional development
- Interviewed project staff, partners and participants
- Reviewed project web site, lesson plans, planning sheets and other artifacts
- Partnered with the Co-PI to plan and facilitate a community of practice with Portland Master Teachers to explore a process for documentation/ formative assessment in their classrooms
- Researched Social Emotional Learning assessments and finding none that met project needs, developed an assessment based on the CASEL framework and Minnesota State Standards for SEL
- Assisted in preparation of AAEDD ad hoc and APR reports
- Provided informal feedback to project leaders.
- Analyzed data and began to draft year 1 formative evaluation report, which will be shared with project leaders and finalized based on discussion.

FINDINGS

This report focuses on the planning year, with attention primarily on the development of an organizational structure and processes in support of the project's goals, and establishing a new site and first cohort in Lewiston, ME. (Quantitative performance measures have been reported via the USDOE's Assistance to Arts Education and Dissemination ad hoc and annual performance reports and are not the focus of this report. These measures are included in Appendix B.)

This section presents first year findings in regard to the project and first professional development activities. (Focus on the experiences of and impact on students, teachers and schools/ districts will begin in Year 2.) It is followed by discussion, and finally, by a few recommendations for consideration.

Project Accomplishments

As reported in the Year 1 performance report to the AAEDD program, the project met or exceeded its goals and benchmarks for the year in regard to participation, and others are “in process” as the project transitions into its first implementation year. It is well-positioned to meet its performance measure benchmarks in year 2 and beyond.

In its first year, the [Re]Imagining Education Project set out ambitious goals for planning and hosting two summer teacher institutes in Portland and Lewiston, while establishing relationships with and navigating multiple leadership changes in Lewiston. The principal who was to lead the new Connors Elementary School left the district, the superintendent retired, and the assistant superintendent accepted the superintendency in another district. After establishing communication and cooperation with those administrators, Side x Side leaders were able to build on those relationships and establish clear lines of communication with new administrators and educators, and to recruit a group of Connors Elementary School teachers to participate in the first Summer Arts Institute and implementation year. The two assistant principals were a steady support amidst all the changes. It became clear that there would need to be two summer institutes in two locations the first year, due to the shifts in Lewiston that made it impossible to recruit a cohort of teachers before late summer.

The project also:

- Hired and on-boarded staff for key positions: Director of Organizational Management, Coordinator of Documentation and Research, Lewiston site coordinator; and contracted with new providers for evaluation, accounting, professional development and other services.

- Established performance measures and processes for collecting and tracking data for USDOE reporting; and identified comparison schools for standardized performance measures. Also worked with research team to refine evaluation research matrix and work plan.
- Developed efficient systems and procedures for project management, budgets, digital recordkeeping, communication and scheduling.
- Upgraded software and hardware
- Articulated roles and communications practices, including regular meetings of staff
- Further developed SxS web site to support teachers' and teaching artists' unit design, documentation and collaboration
- Professional photo documentation of each unit for social media, resources and selected units for publication on SxS website
- Recruited master teachers from Portland to continue to implement arts integrated projects in their classrooms and to act as mentors for new teachers in Lewiston
- Recruited teaching artists from Lewiston to work with experienced artists from Portland
- Developed relationships in Lewiston, and as personnel changed, established relationships with new district and school leaders
- With outside funding, a SxS teaching artist worked with 3rd grade teachers and students from two Lewiston schools on a mural project, installed at their new school, Connors Elementary
- Planned with social emotional learning consultants in each community for professional development with teaching artists (Portland) and teachers (Lewiston), and communicated with Portland Schools' Director of Social Emotional Learning to ensure a coherent message/ language was being used. One SxS staff member and Portland SEL consultant to be members of Portland PBIS training.
- Planned, recruited teachers for, and held a summer institute in each city, hosted by one of the museum/ higher education partners and led by Side x Side staff, teaching artists and invited presenters.

All of this took place concurrent with an extension year for Side x Side's first USDOE grant, and multiple other projects.

Project structure and leadership

Despite bumps in the road while building relationships in a new city, along with continuing to cultivate and support those in Portland; developing and refining systems for project management and other administrative processes; and planning for the first two summer

institutes, all proceeded smoothly. The summer institutes were very successful, based on observations and participant feedback. Side x Side's [Re]Imagining Education ended the year strongly positioned for a successful Year 2 and beyond.

The executive director and organizational director are capable organizers and communicators, and both have exceptional passion and relationship-building skills. They have overseen and put into order many moving parts and pieces, ending the year on a highly optimistic note. They have strong working relationships with the PI from the University of Southern Maine and other key partners, from Bates College to the Center for Grieving Children and the Lewiston Schools; and with community organizations as well. The reach to the next generation of arts educators through USM's and Bates' education students is a strong strand of sustainability through developing the skills and experiences of interns.

It's been a huge year... We have systems in place...for things to operate more smoothly...We're in a much better place as a team...people are clearer about their roles.

Having a planning year gave us time to regroup and think about how to apply what we're learning.

I'm excited about the year ahead, I think we're in a really solid place. I'm excited about the adventures ahead for TAs.

[Staff interviews]

The Side x Side culture is highly creative, responsive and "all hands on deck," making sure that whatever is happening is successful. This can be tricky as an organization grows. Defining staff and contractor roles was useful, as the complexity of Side x Side's work has increased with expanding to Lewiston and multiple other funders and projects adding to the mix.

This growth in size and complexity necessitates a change in leadership roles as well. As one person observed:

Side x Side has gotten so big, [the ED] doesn't get to come in and bring the glue sticks anymore... I wish she didn't have to be so amazing.

[Staff interview]

Some people in new positions are uncertain about what their roles actually entail, and how they relate to other team members.

My role is evolving. I need more guidance...

I'm unclear... who is responsible for what, who I should communicate with.

[Staff interviews]

Bi-weekly (PAPS) meetings have largely been focused on logistics, and there are many at the table.

Sometimes there are too many players at meetings, it's somewhat confusing.

[Staff interview]

The project proposal included an advisory group, but as yet, this has not been convened, given the fluid situation in Lewiston during the planning year. Side x Side has been focusing on developing their board of directors, which serves this function for the organization as a whole. Convening a group of administrators and teachers in Lewiston will likely take place in the spring of 2020.

Professional development activities

Recruitment, planning and hosting professional development for teachers and for teaching artists was a central focus during the planning year.

Summer Arts Institutes

Due to the changes in Lewiston and the timeline for both districts, SxS hosted two-day Summer Arts Institutes (SAIs) in both cities. In Portland, the SAI was hosted by the Portland Museum of Art at the end of June, and workshops took place in multiple teaching artists' studios and at the University of Southern Maine. A majority of participants were "master teachers:" teachers who have worked with Side x Side teaching artists and who signed on to mentor new teachers in Lewiston. In addition, a number of teaching artists participated, both experienced SxS and prospective artists. Several guest speakers presented to the whole group, as well as some being workshop presenters. Several experienced SxS teaching artists also led workshops, mostly in teams, in which participants immersed themselves in art-making. Two teachers who had participated in a Master Teacher Community of Practice (see below) presented their documentation of impact on students who learn differently. A sharing session at the end of the second day offered an opportunity for all to view the work of each group. Time for teaching artists and teachers to do some initial unit planning together was also built into the schedule.

In a brief participant evaluation at the end of the Portland institute, all agreed that the institute was highly successful (rating 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale). These were reviewed informally by the research team and Side x Side staff, but the data was not formally compiled.

In Lewiston, the changes in personnel and the energy focused on getting the new Connors Elementary School ready and staffed for fall meant that Side x Side didn't have a roster of teachers for Cohort I until right before the institute took place in August. The new principal arrived in July, and amidst preparing to open a new school and hiring for several positions,

she recruited additional classroom teachers and specialists to participate this year. As a result, a group of enthusiastic educators participated in the two-day Lewiston SAI, hosted by Bates College and the University of Southern Maine’s Lewiston-Auburn College. The program was similar to that offered in Portland, with some key differences: there was a presentation by a Portland teacher and teaching artist about an arts-integrated unit of study they did with third graders, a storytelling performance by a Lewiston teaching artist, and a two-hour workshop on social emotional learning. No planning time was built into the schedule as the paring of artists and teaching artists was not yet sorted out.

Through the institute evaluation, feedback was gathered from teachers and teaching artists. (See Appendix C for complete data.)

Lewiston Cohort 1 at the institute included 12 Connors educators: 9 teachers and 3 counselors/ specialists. (There are 2 additional teachers who were not in attendance partnering with these Cohort members.) Teaching artists in attendance included 9 experienced SxS artists, and 4 prospective new teaching artists, one of whom performed and participated throughout the two days.

The majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Arts integration matters.” Teachers’ prior knowledge of and experience with the arts ranged from 1 to 5 on a 5-point agreement scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree), with half in the middle. (The art teacher strongly agreed that she has a strong background in the arts, as did all of the teaching artists.) Fewer teachers said that they had experience in arts integration, the art teacher again being the exception (5) and one other teacher rating their experience as a 4 (agree). Teaching artists responding to this item all rated themselves as a 5.

COHORT 1 TEACHERS’ PERSPECTIVE AND EXPERIENCE

	AI matters	Arts experience	AI experience
Mean	4.82	3.00	2.83
n	12	12	12

Participants were also asked to respond to statements about the institute in terms of their degree of agreement/ disagreement. A majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the institute was well-organized (mean 4.83), speakers were relevant (4.76), the workshops were useful (4.67) and they could see connections to their curriculum (4.40). Two thirds said they’d be interested in including a museum visit in an arts-integrated unit (4.00). Six out of 11 agreed or strongly agreed that the SEL workshop was useful (mean 3.55). All agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the SAI to their colleagues (mean 4.91).

COHORT 1 TEACHERS' FEEDBACK ON SAI

	Organization	Speakers relevant	Workshop learning	Connections to curric	Museum visit interest	SEL session	Recommend to colleagues
Mean	4.83	4.67	4.67	4.40	4.00	3.55	4.91
n	12	12	12	11	12	11	11

Teaching artists were asked to respond to relevant questions on the same survey. The number who responded to each question varied quite a bit, as shown by n's in table below.

TEACHING ARTISTS' FEEDBACK ON SAI

	Organization	Speakers relevant	Workshop learning	Connections to curric	Museum visit interest	SEL session	Recommend to colleagues
Mean	4.78	3.70	4.67	5.00	4.00	2.29	5.00
n	9	10	6	3	3	7	4

Open-ended responses were largely positive. Teachers noted a variety of elements that worked well. For example:

I enjoyed the hands-on projects and getting to try some of the things we could do with our kids. I liked seeing the different artists and their particular strengths. Also loved Antonio's show! The sketching and tableau work helped us to break barriers and get more comfortable which was great.

It was helpful to meet the artists and get an idea of the different projects that can be done in the classroom.

I really enjoyed working in small groups during the workshop times. The first day I think it worked well having a performance and group work.

Getting us moving and creating. The different activities-- didn't feel like too much of one thing.

.... I'd like to try some of the SEL activities in my classroom.

What could have worked better? Teachers noted that they would have liked more time to talk with the artists, and to explore the Bates Art Museum. The majority of teaching artists commented on the SEL workshop. One person's comments pretty well summed this up:

I wish the social emotional workshop had been a deeper dive into one aspect—it felt like they tried to cram too much into too little time. Specifically, I think if we were given the space/ if space had been created to foster safe/r sharing, and there had been more time to talk in small groups. I also think modelling safer spaces would have been a good foundational way to use the limited time we had. I felt comfortable sharing but I heard from others that they didn't.

Both teachers and teaching artists were most inspired by the arts experiences.

Water color pencils! Collaborating with the artists, printmaking. Learning how to make a single page book.

The shadow puppets > to increase student engagement and oral language.

Loved the storyteller, loved the shadow plays.

Finally, both teachers and teaching artists were asked to respond to the prompt, "I used to think..... but now I think.....".

*I used to think that teachers didn't want to involve the art.
Now I think they are just not confident in doing so alone.*

*I used to think there wasn't a place for art in all content areas,
but now ... I see with lots of thought it could be incorporated in any content area.*

*I used to think the arts are important and can stand on their own.
But now I think... Arts are important and can stand on their own AND they can be integrated into the curriculum in fun and meaningful ways. And I believe this will really impress the curriculum into the students' memory, because of the weaving of the arts activities into their classroom.*

And this, from a teaching artist:

I used to think that SxS was an inspiring model... and I still do!

Master Teachers Community of Practice

This special project was both professional development experience for a small group of master teachers, and an exploration of a process for supporting teachers in honing their formative assessment and documentation skills to tell the story of learning. Several master teachers were invited to participate in monthly 90-minute sessions between February and June, convened by the PI, research partner and documentation coordinator. Four participated, and two completed the process. Teachers were asked to identify a student or group of students who learning differently, and who pique their curiosity about how this student (or students) learn, particularly when engaged in arts-integrated learning. Then they each documented what happened in the classroom, making observational notes, capturing student responses and work, and other evidence. Teachers then reviewed what they had collected as the basis for telling the story of this student's learning. Two members of the group completed this process, presenting their documentation at the SAI in Portland.

Two other participants did not complete the documentation process, explaining that their teaching artist residency wouldn't take place until the end of the year so they wouldn't be able to focus on arts-integrated learning.

The SxS Model

Teaching artists are central to the SxS model.

The SxS process includes:

- Teacher and teaching artist coming together to co-design an integrated project that includes a kick-off, community expert and celebration of learning, and involvement of teaching interns (if possible).
- Designing a unit using the SxS planning sheets, including a kick off, community experts, involvement of university interns and a celebration of learning. Each takes the lead in their area of expertise (teacher- core content; teaching artist- arts).
- Review of plans by staff.
- Implementation with students (with staff support).
- Wrap up meetings: TA and teacher review successes and challenges, then TA, meets with staff.
- Professional photo documentation of each project.
- Select units are developed by staff for publication on the web site.

In past years, two teaching artists were hired for the work they were doing, but most TAs have implemented projects that had been designed by SxS staff, and teachers have then implemented a second project on their own with the TA's consultation. The process is evolving so that TAs and teachers have more autonomy co-developing integrated units and including more possible media (adding shadow puppets and papier mache, for example). This is exciting to teaching artists, but one of the challenges is that they are largely unfamiliar with curriculum, standards, and assessment. "This means that TA's must be more able," noted an SxS leader.

Key Elements of the Model

Arts Integration

Side x Side's process for planning and review, support and debriefing units of study has been developed and refined over time. Side x Side arts-based lesson plans that were developed prior to the new [Re]Imagining project are graphically beautiful and clearly articulated. One significant change from past-practice is inviting teaching artists and teachers to co-develop new units of study, rather than having teaching artists implement arts project that were designed by Side x Side, based on curriculum in Portland Public Schools. This has meant revising the planning process/ sheets, and the opportunity to expand to new media (shadow puppets, for example) and ideas. Many details are included in the planning sheets, including learning goals, materials, sequencing and timing. Several improvements to the process/ sheets) included putting them online (as Google docs) so they can be easily updated, the inclusion of content and arts standards, and reflections.

These new sheets were introduced to teaching artists in a meeting prior to the Portland Summer Arts Institute, who used them in their initial planning with Portland teachers at that Institute (June). Due to scheduling constraints, there was no planning time during the Lewiston institute, but an initial planning session was scheduled in the fall, after Side x Side staff had the chance to match teachers and teaching artists. Teaching artist- teacher planning sessions observed in Portland were focused primarily on project ideas and logistics.

Defining Arts Integration

In Portland project wrap-up notes (from last spring), one of the questions that TAs responded to was "Was this project truly arts integrated?" All said "yes." When asked if there is a shared definition of arts integration and if so, what is it, SxS leaders responded in different ways. For example:

It's based on the Kennedy Center's definition: learning in and through the arts.

No, [I don't believe there is a shared definition] but I think there's a general consensus... More art in the classroom, yes, but more focus on how the arts are being utilized to teach core content: To teach, learn and understand content vs an add-on.

Arts integration treats both curriculum goals for both core and arts curriculum equally, the goals of both complement each other to teach subjects more deeply. Kids dive into learning in a different way... I presume [that TAs understand]. We worked hard to help them understand the big picture of arts integration. [Among teachers], some do and some don't [understand].

Kids need to be experts in the content when [the teaching artist] comes in.

On the continuum of approaches to incorporating the arts with content curriculum, a review of SxS projects and notes suggest a range, from arts enhancement to arts integration. Core content standards/ learning goals and activities are not spelled out. Teaching artists have different approaches to understanding the academic content of the unit of study in order to make connections to the art project. One gets involved early and often as the unit progresses and weaves in arts experiences along the way. Another introduces sketchbook-journals early in the unit and students use them for drawings and notes as they learn about the content, which are then mined for a group product near the end of the unit. Others depend on students knowing the content that will be shared through an art product, from books to theatre.

Social Emotional Learning

Strengthening students' social emotional skills through learning through the arts, and providing professional development in SEL for teachers and teaching artists is a key element of the project. Tying this back to the project's logic model, there is a recognition (with support from the literature in the field) that learning through the arts scaffolds students' social emotional skills and overlapping deeper learning/ 21st Century skills (collaboration, communication, creative and critical thinking and problem solving). An assessment of students' social emotional skills, developed by the research team, will be piloted by teachers in both the participating and comparison schools in 2019-20.

A team from the Center for Grieving Children will work with **all** teaching artists and SxS staff in several workshops throughout the year. SxS staff are also in communication with the SEL director from Portland Public Schools to ensure that SxS's language and approach in regard to SEL is consistent with that of the school district. One SxS staff member and the Portland SEL consultant will participate in Portland's PBIS training in 2019-20. In Lewiston, a different consultant is working with Connors teachers on a monthly basis, which is supplemental to the district's professional development offerings. She also led a two-hour workshop for Lewiston teachers and SxS teaching artists during the summer institute in August.

Mentorship

Several Portland master teachers have signed up to mentor Lewiston teachers this year, starting with Lewiston teacher visits to Portland while classroom projects are underway. Project leaders hope that there will be at minimum, two contacts between the mentors and mentees during the year, in addition to these visits. Lewiston teachers found the presentation at the SAI by a Portland teacher and collaborating teaching artist to be both illuminating and inspiring.

New teaching artists recruited from Lewiston are being mentored by experienced SxS teaching artists working with the first cohort of Connors teachers, from co-designing a project through the entire process. These new TAs are excited about this opportunity to, as one noted, “do exactly what I want to be doing.”

Partnerships

Partnership is woven throughout the Side x Side approach; in fact, the very name represents partnership: between teachers and teaching artists, SxS and schools/ districts, with official partners (University of Southern Maine, Bates College, Lewiston Schools), and organizations in the community (Portland Museum of Art, for example) and individuals who play the “community expert” role in classroom projects. Side x Side’s ED and other project leaders are highly skilled in communication and relationship building, and have developed a highly positive working relationship with all with whom they work “side by side”. Connors teachers and administrators are enthusiastic about this partnership. As one teacher noted, “We are so lucky to have this in our school!”

Sustainability

Side x Side has been highly successful in raising funds to deepen and sustain their work in Portland, and with this grant, to extend it to Lewiston. The relationships that Side x Side has cultivated, and the development of its board are important elements to sustaining and growing its work. But as the ED/ project leaders are aware, there are other elements that must be part of a sustainability plan.

How would you ever keep the funding alive?... It’s clear [original district] isn’t going to take the ball... Sustainability is also about teachers who really take hold and will keep it going. In some schools, teachers and PTOs have funded teaching artists year after year... Connections between Bates and Lewiston Schools is strong... Maybe the scope gets smaller and stronger.

Sustaining teacher PD, not relying on TA’s... We need to be thinking about ways that could happen.

[Staff interviews]

The involvement of teaching interns in the classroom benefits all, and provides another avenue of sustainability through “portability” of what they learn in working with SxS that they will take with them when they graduate and start teaching in their own classrooms. In addition, the partnership with SxS has influenced the design of the University of Southern Maine’s teacher education program.

Another element of SxS’s approach is the engagement of community partners and experts with the schools, and with families who attend and support their children’s celebrations of learning. The Side x Side staff and board are working on strengthening connections with community organizations and supporters in both Portland and Lewiston.

DISCUSSION

The [Re]Imagining Education project has had a highly successful planning year, under challenging circumstances. SxS deepened their work with teachers in the existing district, built relationship with the new school and district leaders, recruited a cohort of enthusiastic educators and local teaching artists, and planned and hosted two summer arts institutes, and planned for the school year. All of this was achieved while developing and streamlining administrative systems and practices, bringing in new staff and contractors and maintaining a focus on core values. This has taken passion, thoughtfulness, creativity and hard work.

This project is but one of several now led by Side x Side. The new systems in place make coordinating these much more manageable, but there are shifts that can't be managed in the same ways. Roles necessarily evolve, new roles articulated and how all the parts and people work together refined over time. All of these tasks are happening, so that the work of the planning year will provide a firm foundation for continuing to learn and refine roles, structures and processes. It may be useful to return to the role descriptions and take that process a step further, mapping the relationships between the roles and where/ how communication and decision-making take place.

As a brand-new school, bringing together students from two old schools that represent the old Lewiston (largely students of Franco-American heritage) and the new Lewiston, (recent refugees), in a very large school (over 750 students started in the fall of 2019, with a total school capacity of 900) makes the challenges of creating a learning community at Connors Elementary School even more complex. Having an experienced principal, who is herself an artist and arts educator, is a strong advantage for the school and the project. The attention to relationship building and hands-on support of Side x Side staff have demonstrated is appreciated by the teachers.

Professional development

The summer arts institutes were a great success, and plans to host one summer institute for next year make sense, both in terms of the work involved, and the potential benefits of bringing together Portland Master Teachers with Connors teachers (some of whom will become Master teachers themselves as the project unfolds.) More time is needed for teachers and teaching artists to learn and plan together. Summer is prime time, but there will continue to be a need for sustained professional development and support during the school year as well.

These research questions from the AAEDD proposal may provide a useful focus for planning:

How and to what degree do the ongoing PD activities provide support for:

- teachers' integration of the arts in their classrooms?
- pedagogies supportive of social emotional learning?
- teaching artists' knowledge of social emotional learning?
- teaching artists' ability to integrate arts with content learning?
- collaboration between teachers and teaching artists?

Arts Integration

As the project's approach evolves, it's essential that project leaders clarify their definition of arts integration and develop ways to integrate that into their approach, from unit design to implementation and documentation. Professional development is critical for teaching artists and teachers to be able to co-develop units of study that align with this definition. What do teachers need to know? What do teaching artists need to know, and how can they best work together? The National Arts Standards creative processes and core standards may provide a useful bridge to core content standards for AI unit design. Making this explicit through the design of planning sheets and perhaps a checklist for facilitated review of units would be helpful.

In considering what pedagogical strategies might be easy for teachers to integrate into their practice to engage students in arts-integrated learning on a regular basis, sketchbook-journals (a guide is already in the works) and theater-based activities for both community building, social emotional skills and embodied learning are two possibilities.

Social emotional learning

It will also be important over the next year to focus on what social emotional learning means in the context of this project, and how it links with AI (these conversations are taking place at the time of this report). It's unclear what the SEL sessions with Connors teachers involve, but anti-bias training appears to be one emphasis. The first session for TAs took a personal leadership approach, with links to work with children, particularly those who have experienced trauma.

Arts integrated learning contributes to social emotional learning and the development of deep learning/ 21st Century skills. How are these connected in the Side x Side model? Are there ways in which these connections can be strengthened?

Mentoring

As with arts integration and social emotional learning, this is a key element of the project. The mentoring relationship includes Connors teachers matched with Portland Master Teachers and visiting their classrooms during a SxS project, as well as communication via email or other means during the year. It will be helpful to see what happens; there may need to be more structure and clarity about roles/ expectations. It would be useful to explore examples of mentoring models that could inform this.

Sustainability

The project's sustainability involves three strands of a braided approach: fundraising to sustain and broaden the work; art teacher education and interns who learn how to work with teachers on AI units of study; and building capacity for teachers to incorporate AI into their curriculum and teaching. Another essential element undergirding everything that SxS does is cultivating partnerships with community organizations and experts, families, schools, teachers and artists. SxS has been highly successful in building partnerships. In the fundraising arena, SxS has also been very successful, but this can't just keep expanding over time. Grants are an unreliable source of resources long term, and local districts, as much as they'd like to, are unlikely to commit a significant portion of their limited budgets to sustaining this work. Building the capacity of teachers and schools is critical to growing and sustaining arts integration. In Lewiston, if Connors is to truly become the arts-centered school, the partnership with Side x Side and Bates College can enhance that. The other strand of the project's design, the involvement of teaching interns from the University of Southern Maine and Bates College, is an asset to the project, and will naturally lead to these interns, once they graduate and find teaching jobs, to use what they have learned in their own classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Roles, organization and decision making

- Refine roles in terms of an organizational chart. Map who works with whom on various areas.
- Consider who needs to make what decisions, and how/ how they are communicated. RAPID decision making is one approach that may be useful to consider.
- Build in time for reflection, possibly meetings that focus more on larger questions/ processes.
- Is an advisory group that includes members from Lewiston and Portland needed? How might it be beneficial?

Key elements and professional development

- Build on success of summer institutes. Extend PD and support throughout the year, for both TA's and teachers.
- Explore mentorship models that are a good fit for SxS's peer collaborations.
- Arts integration: consider examining examples of unit plans through lens of Kennedy Center's definition and checklist of AI elements. This may be useful to building consensus on SxS's definition, and provide clarity about unit design, planning sheets and professional development needed. How can SxS support teaching artists and teachers in developing AI units that speak to both the arts standards and content standards, and in which the arts are integrated *in support of learning* content, in addition to showing content knowledge through making/ responding/ performing?
- Social emotional learning. How does social emotional learning map onto arts integration in the SxS approach?

Sustainability

- Consider what sustainability would look like if there were not a subsequent grant to keep this work going. What knowledge, skills and dispositions are needed for a school to sustain AI teaching and learning? For teachers? For TAs? How are, and how can board and community partners be part of sustaining this work?

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH MATRIX

Side x Side [Re]-Imagining Education Evaluation/ Research Matrix	DATA SOURCES/ METHODS												
QUESTIONS	Observations- project activities	Observations- classrooms (sample)	Interviews/ focus groups- participants	Interviews/focus groups-leaders /partners	Focus groups- students	Surveys- participants	Surveys- students	Review of curriculum units & student work/ documentation	Review web site resources	Review project documentation/ products	Assessment data- ELA/ math -comp school	SEL data-with comp school	Review other data-attendance, etc.
PROJECT													
• To what extent and how does the project achieve its goals and benchmarks?	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
• How/ how effectively do project leaders, districts and partner organizations work together? - How and how successfully does the project develop a network of mentor teachers and partners? Community organizations/ partners/ experts?	√		√	√		√							
• How and to what degree do the ongoing PD activities, provide support for - teachers' integration of the arts in their classrooms? - Pedagogies supportive of social emotional learning? - Teaching artists' knowledge of social emotional learning? - Teaching artists' ability to integrate arts with content learning? - Collaboration between teachers and teaching artists?	√	√	√			√							
• To what extent does the project develop and publish units of study and other resources online?				√					√	√			

[APR/GPRA measure]														
TEACHERS														
• How many teachers are involved from each district? Novice and master teachers?														√
• How/does SxS PD support teachers' development of knowledge about: - arts integration? - social emotional learning?	√		√	√		√								
• How and to what extent do teachers develop the knowledge and skills to work with teaching artists in designing and implementing arts-integrated, SEL-embedded curricula?	√		√	√	√	√								
• How and to what extent do teachers design and implement arts-integrated, SEL-embedded curricula on their own (second year and beyond)?		√	√	√		√	√	√						
• To what extent do teachers implement arts integration & pedagogical practices to support social emotional learning with fidelity? (<i>intensity and integrity measures</i>)			√	√		√	√							
• How and to what extent do teachers learn to notice (use formative assessment) and support students who learn differently? (MT CoP Pilot year 1)	√		√									√		
• How and to what extent do LPS teachers work with PPS mentor teachers? (also see project and partnerships)			√	√		√						√		√
• How and to what extent do teachers work with community experts/ partners?		√	√	√		√		√				√		
• How and to what extent are celebrations of learning integral to students' learning experiences?		√	√	√		√						√		
• How and to what extent do interns participate in PD? Classrooms? What do they learn from this experience? (<i>Note: K. Hrenko assesses students</i>)		√	√			√								
TEACHING ARTISTS														

• How many teaching artists are involved in each district? In what ways?		√	√	√		√				√			√
• How/does SxS PD support teaching artists' development of knowledge about: - arts integration? - social emotional learning?	√	√		√		√							
• How and to what extent do teaching artists develop the skills to work with teachers in designing and implementing curricula - that integrates the arts in teaching of academic content? - that incorporates strategies for supporting social-emotional learning?	√		√			√							
STUDENTS													
• Does participation in learning through arts integration increase students' reading comprehension? If so, how and to what extent? [APR/GPRA measure]						√	√	√				√	
• Does learning through arts integration increase students' mathematical knowledge and skills? If so, how? To what extent? [APR/GPRA]						√	√	√				√	
• Does learning through arts integration increase students' social emotional skills? If so, how and to what extent? [APR]		√				√	√	√					√
• Does learning through arts integration contribute to students' development of deep learning skills: collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem solving? If so, how and to what degree?		√	√			√	√	√					
• Does learning through arts integration enhance students' engagement in learning? If so, how?		√				√	√	√					
• Does engaging with community experts heighten students' interest in possible career paths? If so, how and to what extent?			√			√	√	√					
• Are/ how are members of students' families involved? How many?		√		√		√							√
SCHOOLS													

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and to what extent do schools develop the capacity to incorporate arts integration and support for SEL in and across classrooms? (Connors) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - school leadership support - PD, routines & resources - teacher mentorship/ leadership - connections to community 			√	√	√	√							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this initiative influence school climate? If so, how? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS- How/does it support the merger of 2 schools? - <i>In PPS, how do Master teachers see the Impact of this initiative on school climate over time?</i> 			√	√		√							
ARTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are partners/ experts involved in the project? 	√		√	√		√					√		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent, and how are partners and their resources/ expertise/collections an integral part of PD, curriculum design and implementation? 				√		√							

APPENDIX B: AAEDD PERFORMANCE MEASURES

GPRA MEASURES

1. Improvement in mathematics proficiency (5%)
2. Improvement in reading proficiency (1%)
3. Number of resources published on web site (no target)

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Project Objective 1a: Provide teachers with PD and mentoring to integrate arts with the core curriculum			Data source
PM 1a.1	76 % of Connors teachers participating in the project will attend the Summer Institute in 2019 (target 15 in year 1(anticipate 3 (12%) may experience illness, conflicts)	76 %	SxS
PM 1a.2	76 % of participating Connors teachers will collaborate with a teaching artist to develop an arts-integrated unit	76 %	SxS
PM 1a.3	76 % of participating Connors teachers will collaborate with a teaching artist to implement an arts-integrated unit	76%	SxS
PM 1a.4	76 % of participating Connors teachers will be matched with a mentor during the 2019-20 school year	76%	SxS
PM 1a.5	In spring 2020, 50 % of participating Connors teachers will report an increase in their comfort with arts integration	50%	PERG-Teacher survey
PM 1a.6	In spring 2020, 50 % of participating Connors teachers will report an increase in their comfort knowledge of arts integration	50%	PERG-Teacher survey
Project Objective 1b: Students in Connors participating classrooms will improve their art and academic knowledge			
PM 1b.1	In the spring of 2020, 76% of participating Connors teachers will report that their students are more engaged in learning during their arts integrated experiences	76%	PERG-Teacher survey
PM 1b.2	In the spring of 2020, 76% of participating Connors Teachers will report that of their students improve their content knowledge through arts integrated learning	76%	PERG-Teacher survey
PM.1b.3	In the spring of 2020, 76 % of participating Connors Teachers will report that of their students improve their arts knowledge through arts integrated learning	76%	PERG-Teacher survey

Project Objective 2a: Strengthen teachers' knowledge in supporting students' social emotional learning			
PM 2a.1	76% of participating Connors teachers will participate in school-based SEL professional development sessions during the 2019-20 school year	76%	SxS
PM 2a.2	50 % of participating Connors teachers will report an increase in knowledge to support students' social emotional learning	50%	PERG-Teacher survey
Project Objective 2b: Strengthen students' social emotional learning			
PM 2b.1	During the 2019-20 school year 2% more participating students will demonstrate proficiency on an assessment of SEL skills than students in the comparison group.	2%	PERG-SEL assessment
PM 2b.2	Students participating in the project during the 2019-20 school year will have 2% higher attendance rates than students in the comparison group	2%	District data
Project Objective 3: Establish a sustainable model for embedding arts integration into schools			
PM 3.1	50% of Master teachers will mentor novice teachers in planning and implementing AI projects in 2019-20.	50 %	SxS
PM 3.2	50% of teaching interns will learn about best practices in AI through working in SxS classrooms during the 2019-20 school year	50 %	USM
PM 3.3	In the spring of 2020, 50 % of Connors teachers will report that arts integration is an important element in their school	50%	PERG-Teacher Survey
PM 3.4	In the spring of 2020, 50% of participating teachers will report that teaching artists have a positive impact on their classroom	50%	PERG-Teacher Survey
PM 3.5	In the spring of 2020, 50% of participating teachers will report that their school's administration is supportive of arts integration	50%	PERG-Teacher Survey
Project Objective 4: Provide teaching artists with PD to integrate the arts with core curriculum			
PM 4.1	In the spring of 2020, Participating teaching artists in the spring of 2020, 50 % of teaching artists will report an increase in their knowledge of arts integration	50%	PERG-TA Survey
PM 4.2	In the spring of 2020, 50% of teaching artists will collaborate with a teacher to design an arts-integrated unit	50%	SxS
PM 4.3	In the spring of 2020, 50% of teaching artists will collaborate with a teacher to implement an arts-integrated project	50%	SxS

PM 4.4	In the spring of 2020, participating teaching artists 50% of teaching artists will report an increase in their knowledge of social-emotional learning	50%	PERG-TA Survey
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APPENDIX C: LEWISTON SUMMER ARTS INSTITUTE FEEDBACK

Participants were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with the following statements, using a scale of 1 to 5: strongly disagree to strongly agree, with the following statements. Teaching artists were asked to respond to questions they saw as relevant to them.

- The institute was well organized
- The speakers were relevant
- The workshop I attended helped me learn something new that I can use in my teaching
- Experience in making art myself results in my being able to make connections between art and content in my curriculum
- Integrating the arts matters
- I'd like to incorporate a museum visit in my arts integrated curriculum
- I'd recommend this institute to my colleagues

Teacher Feedback							
	org	spkrs relevant	workshop lrng	connections to curric	interest-museum visit	SEL session	rec inst to colleagues
	5	4	5	5	5	4	5
	5	4	5	5	5	2	5
	5	5	4	5	3	5	5
	5	5	5	5	4	2	5
	5	5	4	3	3	4	5
	4	4	5		5	3	5
	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	5	4	5	5	4	3	5
	5	5	4		3	4	
	4	5	4	1	2		5
	5	5	5	5	5	3	5
mean	4.83	4.67	4.67	4.40	4.00	3.55	4.91
n	12	12	12	11	12	11	11
Teaching artist feedback							
	5	4			5		5
	5	4	5	5		3	
	5	4		5	2		

	5	3	5	5	5		5
	4	3	3			1	
		3				2	
	5	5	5			4	5
	4	3				1	5
	5	3	5			1	
	5	5	5			4	
mean	4.78	3.70	4.67	5.00	4.00	2.29	5.00
n	9	10	6	3	3	7	4

Open-response questions

Worked well- teachers

I enjoyed the hands-on projects and getting to try some of the things we could do with our kids. I liked seeing the different artists and their particular strengths. Also loved Antonio's show! The sketching and tableau work helped us to break barriers and get more comfortable which was great

It was helpful to meet the artists and get an idea of the different projects that can be done in the classroom.

I really enjoyed working in small groups during the workshop times. The first day I think it worked well having a performance and group work.

2 breakout sessions on second day, feelings musical chairs, hearing from the 2nd grade teacher and Bates staff

Everything went well

Being able to participate in each activity and discuss ideas with the SxS team

The breakout sessions with examples really helped me envision the work in a classroom

Getting us moving and creating. The different activities-- didn't feel like too much of one thing.

The variation of speakers and activities

That we were involved/ engaged the entire time. Really enjoyed that we weren't just listening/ sitting.

Guidance, ideas, modelling, collaboration between educators as well as the teaching artists

Physically participating in each type of art-- great experience!

Worked well- teaching artists

Hands on artmaking. Bringing teachers and artists together, Great ideas for teachers to utilize in the future

As always, hands-on learning.

Great meeting teachers-- working alongside them. Also meeting new teaching artists. Liked museum work with Gretchen and Laurie.

So appreciate the invite to participate and meet other teaching artists and Connors classroom teachers. Loved seeing the group comradery as the second day unfolded. Felt so much creativity and inspiration surface from the teachers.

The location, the numbers, the art making

Shorter sessions, flipping groups

The museum activities at Bates and all the hands-on art activities. I also enjoyed the performance by Antonio Rocha and the talk by Pamela Moulton and the classroom teacher she worked with.

Showing the Lewiston teachers what SxS can provide for them. Showing teachers how art can be part of the classroom in all areas of learning.

LOVED the sequence Tue-- workshops, then teacher/ TA team describing a real project, then showcase.

The arts workshops, everyone creating together

Could have worked better- teachers

I wanted more time to talk with the teaching artists we'll be working with and to plan and brainstorm

Having more time to talk with teaching artists to brainstorm

As one of the school counselors most all of my units and content focus on SEL: bullying, coping skills, relationship building, diversity/ inclusion

Having time to look around the galleries at Bates

Not sure everything worked for me

Watching prior examples, more visual instruction

Not sure. It was all good.

More time to explore possible units with SxS people

Not sure, I had a blast-- thank you!

Could have worked better- teaching artists
I personally did not align with some of the paths that were offered. Mixed feelings on the social emotional piece... I know this is a required component that may have a “new” name but teachers have been aware of this critical aspect of teaching and learning for a long time.
I would like to learn more about social emotional topics. Classroom teachers may already have some knowledge of this but I do not. Not so sure about some of the learning exercises and concepts that were presented.
More art making. Clearer connection between gallery games and uses with students. More time in Bates Art Museum.
Did not like the SEL workshop. Didn’t feel relevant or instructional or even helpful with the needs of my students.
Having SEL training that provided real tools for us in the classroom. Didn’t really feel it was productive use of time. Was hoping for something more useful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No social emotional session (or a different one.) • More time for questions and reflections, possibly for structured conversations between teachers and TAs. • A resource list/ bibliography, including articles and studies related to integrated arts.
Social emotional piece could have left us with better tools
I really felt I learned from everything you brought to us! I found the social emotional segment challenging, but I found myself reflecting on it later, and how I could use it in my awareness as a teaching artist.
I wish the social emotional workshop had been a deeper dive into one aspect—it felt like they tried to cram too much into too little time. Specifically, I think if we were given the space/ if space had been created to foster safe/r sharing, and there had been more time to talk in small groups. I also think modelling safer spaces would have been a good foundational way to use the limited time we had. I felt comfortable sharing but I heard from others that they didn’t.
Excited or inspired- teachers

Bookmaking was really fun and some of the social-emotional exercises I would like to bring to my class. Also want to do collaboration with the university. I LOVE project-based learning in general and I'm excited to be able to incorporate the arts.
I liked getting to try different mediums
Being able to incorporate art into the counseling I do with students
Water color pencils! Collaborating with the artists, printmaking. Learning how to make a single page book
I enjoyed all that was presented. Some brought me out of my comfort zone but it was an awesome experience
Have kids feel more excited about learning and feeling inspired by integrating the arts, field trips
Creating collages was relaxing and made my artwork feel meaningful
Ideas to bring into the art room. Hopefully being involved with classes and classroom teachers in this process.
Hands on activities.
Ability to try out different types of art
The shadow puppets > to increase student engagement and oral language
Antonio Rocha, leaving with a text book, watching the shadow puppet shows
Excited or inspired—teaching artists
Loved the storyteller, loved the shadow plays
Antonio was amazing, brought me to tears. I immediately wished my summer program kids could have seen him. Totally inspired, as always, by the teachers. I also think SxS branching out to Lewiston is such a positive move.
Loved the art making sessions and saw lots of inspiration and creativity among the teachers, which increased as the workshop progressed.
Meeting a new crew of teachers, seeing their excitement.
As always, the quality of the SxS staff, and teachers.
Antonio's presentation, bookmaking workshop
The second workshop (shadow) was better, when the teachers took initiative and were allowed to experiment a little. Freer.
I was most inspired by the projects the second day making things (Books and gel prints! Yay!)
And especially liked the collaboration on the shadow puppet plays.
I was excited to do the shadow puppets. Also to have the space to play in print/ book arts was really great.

I Used to think... (teachers)	Now I think...
--------------------------------------	-----------------------

I looked at art and observed it	I can look deeper and see the details within things and how it connects to me personally
Integrating the arts would not correlate with our curriculum	
That it was all my responsibility to integrate the arts	There are many people and resources to help me
Teachers didn't want to involve the arts	They are just not confident in doing so alone
There wasn't always a place for art in all content areas	I see with lots of thought it could be incorporated in any content area
Integrating art was too challenging	It's fun, exciting and POSSIBLE!
Integrating art into the curriculum would be challenging	Possibilities are endless.
Art had to be perfect	The process is just as important as the final project and does not have to be perfect
teaching artists	
I had heard really discouraging things about teachers in the L/A public school systems and their attitudes about difference.	Now I know that there are kind/compassionate teachers who I look forward to continue working with.
The arts are important and could stand on their own	Arts are important and can stand on their own AND they can be integrated into the curriculum in fun and meaningful ways. And I believe this will really impress the curriculum into the students' memory, because of the weaving of the arts activities into their classroom.
SxS was an inspiring model	I still do!

Other comments

- Thanks for including me in this program!
- I wish LAC hadn't skimmed on the AC!
- Thanks so much for the invite and the organization and care that you put into the program.
-



PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESEARCH GROUP