Highline Creative Schools Initiative

Building Academic Mindsets and Deepening Literacy through Collaborative Arts Integration
Project goals

The Creative Schools Initiative will narrow the achievement gap and support students’ long term academic success

• Through in depth artist-teacher collaborations in standards based arts integrated learning
• Through professional development for teachers and teaching artists
• With a focus on fostering academic mindsets for upper elementary students in preparation for their transition to middle school
Core Components: Program Model

• Three-year project working with 5th and 6th graders in four schools in Highline School District
• Two 6 week arts integrated units (one in fall/ one in spring)—one in visual arts and one theatre
• Units are aligned with writing
• Student digital portfolios that focus on goal-setting and growth
• 5 days of professional development for participating LA teachers
At 4 treatment schools all 5th and 6th graders are receiving two 6 week units each year, one in visual art and one in theatre art.

We are evaluating the following data for treatment and comparison schools:

- pre and post surveys that assess academic mindsets
- classroom observations
- grades, attendance, test scores
Collaborative Arts Integration:
Teaching artists and classroom teachers co-teach units of instruction. Together they draw relationships between the arts and academic disciplines, positioning 21st Century Skills and academic mindsets at the center of those relationships.

Fostering Academic Mindsets:
Psychosocial beliefs that underlie academic engagement and performance, including growth mindset, self-efficacy, relevance and feelings of belonging.
Research shows academic mindsets can make a critical difference.

**Academic Mindsets**

- I belong in this academic community.
- I can succeed at this.
- My ability and competence grow with my effort.
- This work has value to me.

**Academic Perseverance**

- I can succeed at this

**Academic Behaviors**

- My ability and competence grow with my effort

**Academic Performance**

- This work has value to me
Key practices:

• Non-evaluative language
• Supporting students to make connections to their lives and interests
• Providing challenging curriculum with the supporting steps they need to learn
• Student collaboration and group work
• Student goal setting, reflection and self-assessment
• Training in race and social justice for teachers and teaching artists
Who is involved?

High level HPS stakeholders:  
- Exec. Director of K-12 Schools, I&I Exec. Director, Chief Accountability Officer, Cultural Arts Specialist

Arts Corps staff:  
- Project Manager, Program Director, Executive Director, Data Coordinator

Site specific staff:  
- principals, language arts teachers, teaching artists, arts specialists

Students preparing for a transition to middle school

National Evaluators:  Dr. Dennie Palmer Wolf & Dr. Steven Holochwost, WolfBrown

Local Evaluator:  Mary Murray, MEM Consultants
Building a National Model: Using Arts-Integrated Learning to Develop Academic Mindsets

- Funded by a highly competitive four-year grant from the US Dept. of Education
- Informed by Arts Corps’ successful pilot of collaborative arts integration in two SPS K-8 middle schools
- Evaluated using a rigorous research design that will support national presenting and publishing of findings about how to expand school success for students preparing for the transition to middle school
- With strong findings, Arts Corps will be able to fundraise for project continuation and expansion for 2018 and beyond.