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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beverley Taylor Sorenson Arts Learning Program
Year 1 Implementation Evaluation
Interim Report
2008-2009

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This Executive Summary is being provided to share the findings from the Year 1 Implementation Formative Evaluation of the Beverley Taylor Sorenson Arts Learning Program (BTSALP). The content for the final technical report has been finalized and is being prepared for distribution.

Program Description

The BTSALP initiative includes four primary areas of focus as illustrated in **Figure 1** below. First, the central mission of the BTSALP initiative, as described in the BTSALP model and outlined in Utah Code 53A-17a-162(2), is arts integration with the core curriculum. The goal of the BTASLP is to integrate arts teaching and learning into core subject areas as a strategy for improving the social, emotional, core academic, and arts learning of students in elementary schools. The focus on arts integration is represented by its placement in the center of the diagram.

Second, to support arts integration, the BTALP model also includes planning time in which arts specialists and classroom teachers collaboratively design lessons that intentionally integrate the art core standards with other core subject matter to enhance understanding and mastery of both the art core curriculum (i.e., visual arts, dance, drama, or music) and the academic subject core curriculum (i.e., reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).

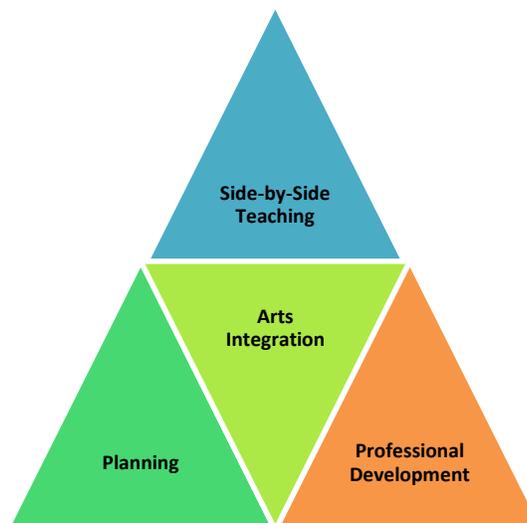


Figure 1

According to the BTSALP, side-by-side teaching is a third component of this model. Side-by-side teaching occurs when the arts specialist and classroom teacher conduct lessons together. In this inclusion model, the arts specialist brings expertise in the art form and the classroom teacher brings expertise in the core subject areas. Together, they lead lessons aimed at improving student engagement and enhance students' access to and mastery of

subject matter—both art subject matter and core subject matter. The BTSALP expectation is that side-by-side teaching happens at all grade levels and in all classrooms so that students have the opportunity to engage in arts integrated lessons weekly.

The fourth component of the BTSALP model is professional development, as provided by Professional Development Partners (PDP). The PDPs are selected and hired by partnering universities. PDPs include previous teachers and administrators, university coordinators and faculty, and artists with expertise in the various art forms. The combined expertise of the four partnering universities—University of Utah, Brigham Young University, Southern Utah University, and Utah State University—in elementary and arts education is a BTSALP program strength. According to the BTSALP model, the PDPs support the arts specialists through mentoring and on-site monthly visits in which they observe classrooms and offer feedback about lessons, attend planning meetings, and provide additional resources related to arts integration. In addition, the four partnering universities host regional and state level professional development meetings that provide additional training and resources to help schools implement the BTSALP model.

Methods

The multi-year evaluation of the BTSALP is focused on the implementation of the program (e.g., are schools implementing the program as intended), the quality of the professional development and mentoring, key school outcomes, and the policy and practice implications generated from the findings. The following evaluation questions guide the evaluation activities over the course of the four-year study:

1. To what extent do schools implement the BTS Elementary Arts Learning Program as intended?
2. To what degree do the statewide professional development workshops and individualized training for specialists prepare teachers to integrate arts into their instructional strategies?
3. In what ways is student learning affected as a result of arts integration?
4. What implications do evaluation findings have for refining the BTS specialist training, program implementation in participating schools, and ongoing monitoring and support?
5. What implications do evaluation findings have for refining and improving arts education policy at the school, district, and state levels?

Due to the focus of these questions, the evaluation will shift from a formative evaluation emphasis in the first three years of implementation to a summative evaluation in the final year of implementation.

Based on the nature of the inquiry outlined above, we have designed a longitudinal, multi-method evaluation that includes quantitative, qualitative and survey data collection and analysis to study the implementation and benefits of the BTS Elementary Arts Learning

Program state-wide. Specifically, data collection strategies used in the first year of the program included monthly activity logs, site visit interviews, focus groups, and observations, school surveys, and review of BTSALP grant applications. The response rates and numbers of interviews and activity logs are listed below.

Monthly activity logs:

- Art specialists (7 months; n=299)
- PDPs (7 months; n=353)

Individual interviews:

- District Arts Coordinators (n=15)
- School administrators (n=32)
- BTS Specialists (n=31)
- Professional Development Partners (n=18)
- University Coordinators (n=4)

Focus groups:

- Classroom teachers (including 5-7 teachers representing range of grade levels and involvement levels) (n=139)
- Parents (n=86)

End of Year School Survey

- Total (n=245)
 - Administrators (n=35)
 - Teachers (n=206)
 - (4 respondents did not indicate position)
 - Respondents represented 35 schools

Upon receipt of data from the Utah State Office of Education, the UEPC will conduct an analysis of the impact of the BTSALP program on school performance, including whether the presence of the BTSALP affects student achievement.

For the purposes of this evaluation, data are analyzed across implementation sites and reported at the state level. Individual schools are not identified.

First Year Formative Evaluation Findings

Overall Implementation

The findings below are highlights from the first year evaluation. In Year 1, participants indicated that the BTSALP schools:

- Increased access to arts
- Increased student awareness of arts
- Increased student engagement
- Increased modalities to meet student learning needs
- Experienced high levels of parent satisfaction
- Enhanced current school art programs
- Increased buy-in from core subject area teachers

The BTSALP has resulted in a number of reported benefits for participating schools (e.g., see **Figure 2** showing results from the end of year school survey). Schools reported an increased availability of arts to elementary schools and there were numerous reports of students experiencing greater awareness of the arts, as well as higher levels of student engagement. Indeed, schools reported that the arts integrated lessons are providing more engaging learning opportunities in which students can learn through different modalities that may not always be provided in schools without an arts integrated program. Parents also reported high levels of satisfaction with the increased arts opportunities and the benefits that their students experience as a result of having more access to arts integrated lessons. For example, at one school the arts were seen as the draw to bring parents back to their neighborhood school. Schools also indicated that this grant opportunity has allowed for the expansion of arts across the entire school. A number of participating schools previously had small arts programs but the arts were not reaching all students across grade levels or were not offered throughout the year. The BTSALP has resulted in more consistent access to arts throughout the school and school year. Finally, participants reported that schools increasingly are embracing the BTSALP model (e.g., arts integration, collaborative planning, and side-by-side teaching) in favorable ways.

Reported Changes that Occurred As a Result of the BTSALP Implementation

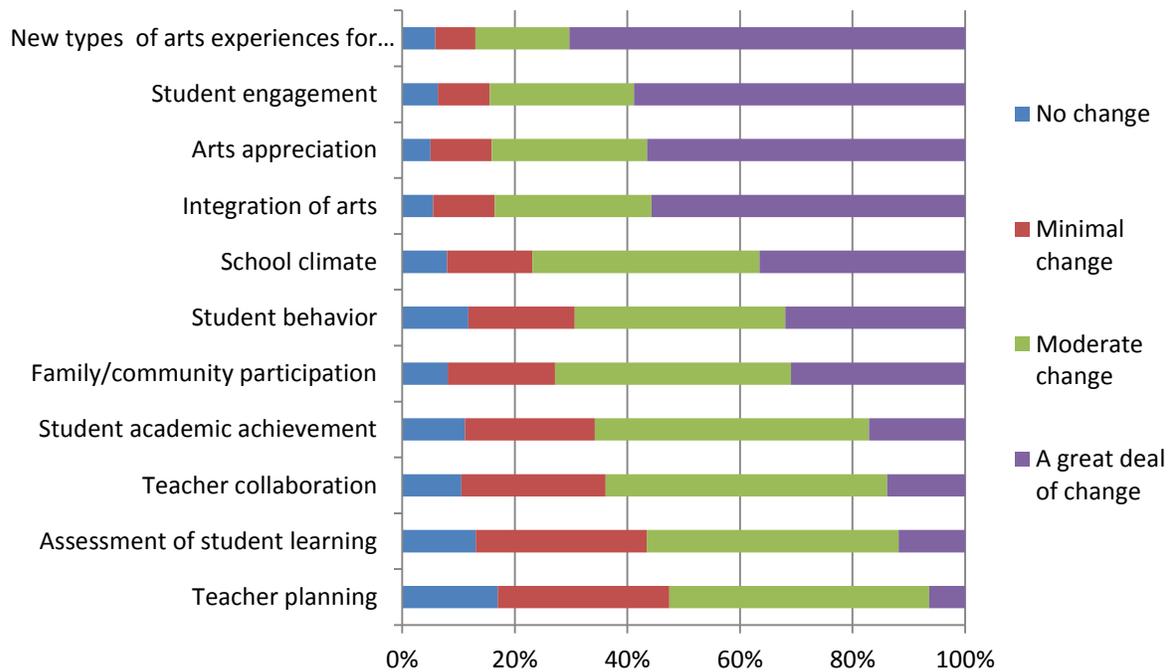


Figure 2

Results from the first year formative evaluation also suggest that the most pressing resources needed to more fully implement the BTSALP components at this time are professional

development and planning time (e.g., see **Figure 3** showing results from the end of year school survey). These issues are described in further detail below.

Adequacy of Resources Available to Implement the BTSALP Model

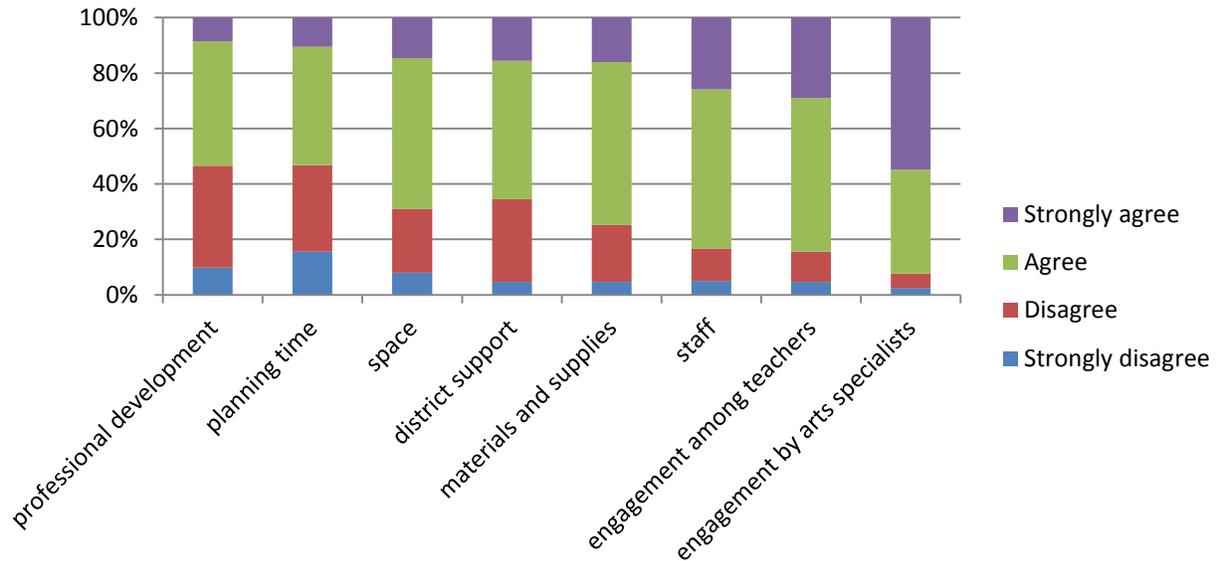


Figure 3

Arts Integration

The findings below are highlights from the first year evaluation related to arts integration. In Year 1, participants indicated that the BTSALP schools:

- Progressed from “art opportunities” to arts integration
- Expanded the collection of arts integrated with core curriculum lessons
- Increased the integration of arts across core subject areas
- Increased recognition of arts integration as “best practice” for learning and instruction

Arts integration is a central tenet of the BTSALP initiative. Indeed, the legislation supporting this initiative states that “*a strategic placement of arts in elementary education can impact the critical thinking of students in other core subject areas, including mathematics, reading, and science.*” Results from the first year of the implementation evaluation suggest that schools are moving from the provision of “art opportunities” for students to a more intentional strategy of integrating arts with the core curriculum in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. As noted above, many of the participating schools already had an arts program in their schools, including *Art Works for Kids* in some schools. The BTSALP has helped to foster attention to arts integration as a

teaching strategy rather than simply providing arts opportunities or “arts for arts’ sake” for students that are not connected to the academic core. Data collected through the first year of implementation show that there are also a growing base of examples of classroom instruction in which arts are integrated with the core curriculum (i.e., reading/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies), as illustrated in **Figure 4**. These were reported in the monthly activity logs and in site visit interviews and observations. Finally, first year evaluation findings suggest that participating schools are developing an increasing recognition of arts integration as exemplifying “best practice” for learning and instruction.

Subjects Covered During Side-by-Side Lessons

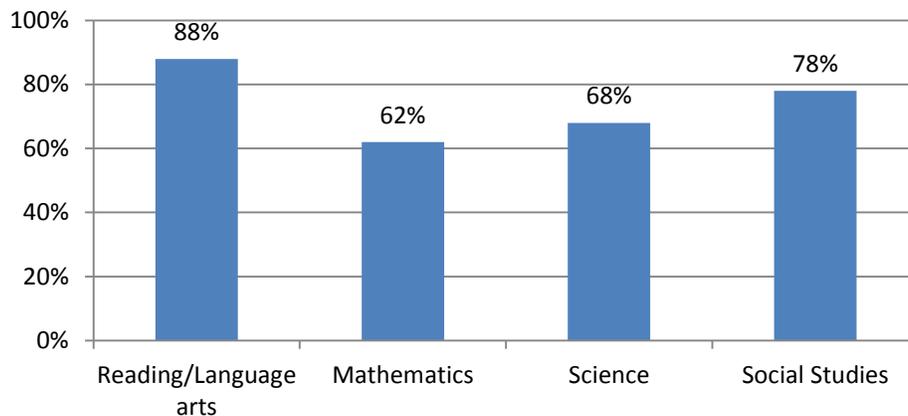


Figure 4

Planning

The findings below are highlights from the first year evaluation related to planning. In Year 1, participants indicated that the BTSALP schools:

- Varied in their use of collaborative planning time for arts integration
- Extended planning for arts integration to other school improvement efforts
- Experienced challenges to finding time for collaborative planning
- Valued collaborative planning despite obstacles to do so

A key component of the BTSALP model is the time that art specialist have for planning with the classroom teachers to design arts integrated lessons that can be taught in a side-by-side lesson. Evaluation findings from the first year of implementation suggest that participating schools are engaging in school-wide planning for arts integration, although specialists varied in their use of collaborative planning time. Many participants reported that arts integration planning was initiated with some individual teachers and school arts teams. In addition, numerous BTSALP schools reported incorporating arts integration into the school improvement plan. However, for a majority of schools there were a number of challenges to

finding adequate time for the art specialists and classroom teachers to plan collaboratively at all grade levels and across all subject areas. Often planning occurred during lunch, on short breaks, or in passing in the halls. A majority of specialists reported planning once a week or once to twice monthly (e.g., see **Figure 5**). Despite the obstacles to scheduling and coordinating time for planning, schools reported that they did indeed value opportunities for specialists and classroom teachers to plan collaboratively for arts integration and reported that they will continue to find more time for planning to happen in the second year of implementation.

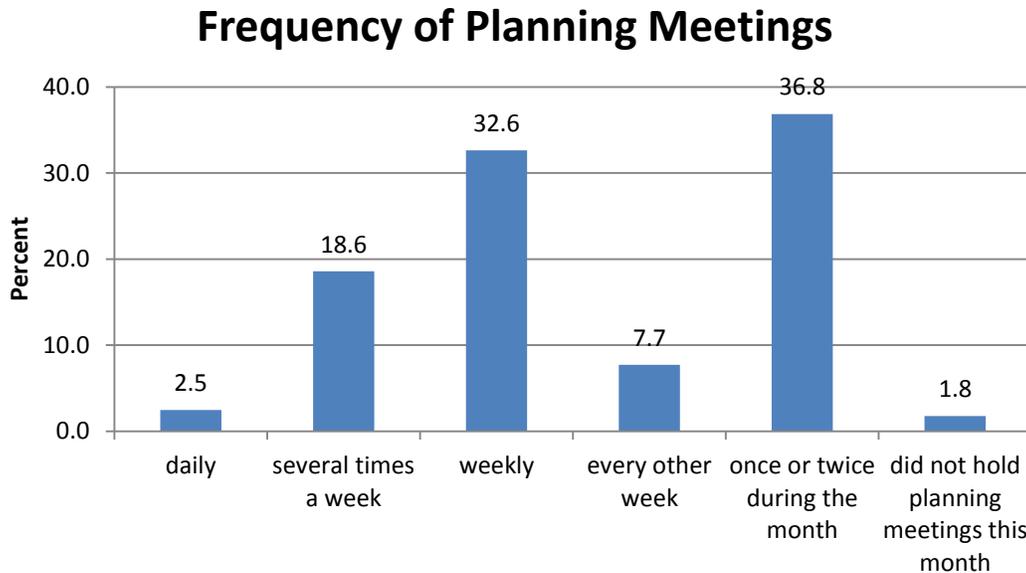


Figure 5

Side-by-Side Teaching

The findings below are highlights from the first year evaluation related to side-by-side teaching. In Year 1, participants indicated that the BTSALP schools:

- Conducted side-by-side lessons typically led by arts specialists with classroom teachers assisting
- Needed further role clarification and support for side-by-side teaching of arts integration
- Varied in the regularity of side-by-side lessons across subjects, grades, and schools

A hallmark of the BTSALP model is the use of side-by-side teaching to support arts integration. First year evaluation results indicated that the side-by-side lessons were largely led by the arts specialist while the classroom teachers assisted, as noted in **Figure 6**. In part, this previous finding was attributed to the remaining confusion about the roles that specialists and classroom teachers play in the side-by-side teaching. For example, is it considered side-by-side teaching when the arts specialist is leading the lesson and the classroom teacher is not actively involved? Both core classroom teachers and art specialists agreed that having the teacher present but only serving as an assistant was not the ideal

arts integration situation. There was also evidence of variation in the regularity of side-by-side lessons and the perceived resistance to this type of collaborative and inclusion model of teaching.

Specialist Report of Side-by-Side Teaching

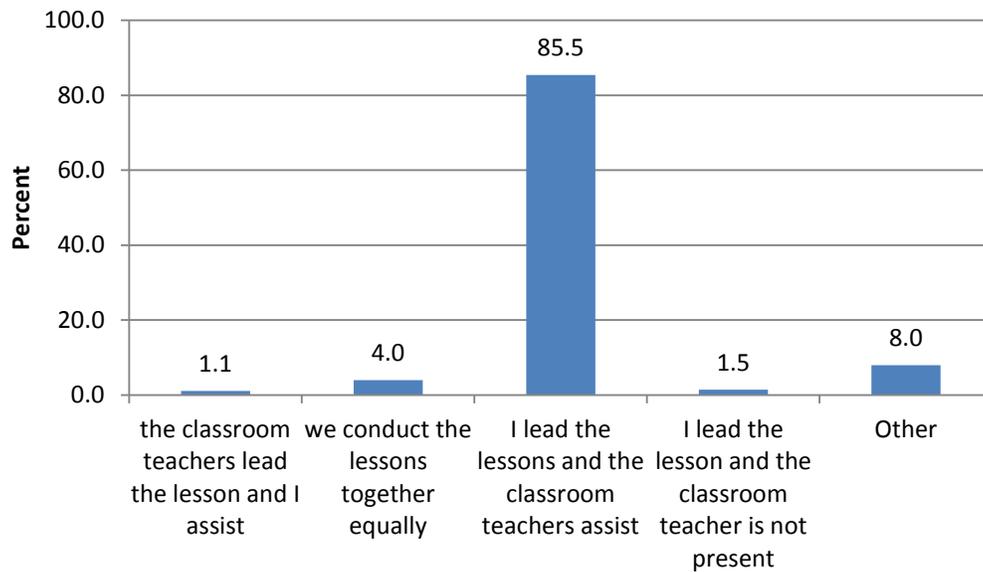


Figure 6

Professional Development

The findings below are highlights from the first year evaluation related to professional development. In Year 1, participants indicated that the specialist at BTSALP schools:

- Worked with university and professional development partners who served as mentors
- Attended eight regional professional development meetings and two state professional development meetings
- Needed additional development, side-by-side integrated lesson models, and support for collaboratively implementing the BTSALP model

Another important aspect of the BTSALP is the professional development opportunities that arts specialists have through their relationships with four universities (BYU, SUU, U of U, and USU) and the Professional Development Partners (PDP). First year evaluation results collected through site visit interviews and monthly activity logs suggest that PDPs supported specialists through mentoring, professional development, and technical assistance in various ways, including meeting in person, by telephone, by email, or through distance learning. Some PDPs reported difficulty in scheduling on-site visits due to the geographic distance between PDPs and the schools/specialists they serve and challenges in coordinating schedules with the specialists. The relationship between specialists and the

PDPs also varied across schools and often from month to month due to schedules and needs. That said, 58% of the specialists reported that the PDP support and feedback was very to extremely useful and another 18% reported that it was moderately useful. (See **Figure 7** below for details.) In addition, specialists attended eight regional professional development meetings and two state professional development meetings over the year. These professional development opportunities provided a much needed venue for networking, sharing ideas and lessons, and other resources related to teaching individual art forms. Importantly, there was increasing recognition as implementation progressed that schools needed models and practice to fully implement side-by-side planning and teaching.

Specialist Report of PDP Support and Feedback

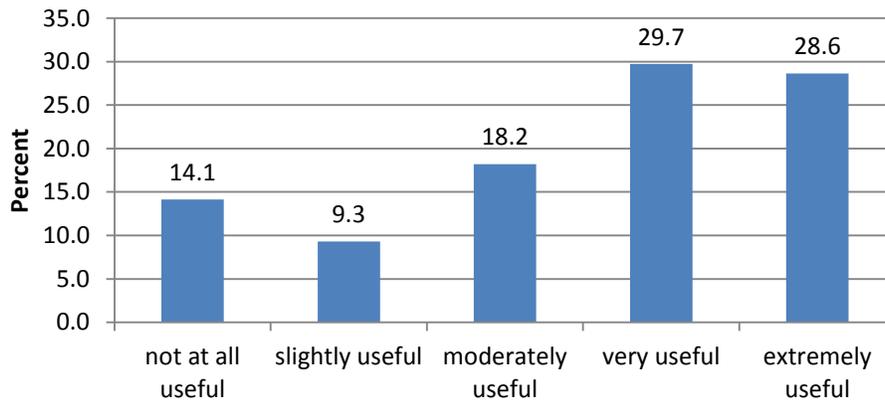


Figure 7

Lessons Learned

The formative evaluation of Year 1 implementation is instructive for documenting notable progress in this statewide initiative and areas for potential program improvement. From our analysis of the various data sources thus far (i.e., specialist and professional development partner logs; individual interviews with specialists, professional development partners, principals, and district arts coordinators; focus groups with parents and teachers; surveys of schools), seven areas of recommendations for program improvement efforts were identified.

These seven recommendations, which apply across the four program domains—arts integration, planning, side-by-side teaching, and professional development—include the following:

1. *Define and refine expectations* across BTSALP program implementation areas
2. *Develop infrastructure* to support the implementation of the BTSALP model

3. *Align subject core and arts core* to maximize use the BTSALP model and provide resources for other schools
4. *Generate coherence* between BTSALP model and other school organization and structures, teaching and learning expectations, reforms/initiatives, and school improvement efforts
5. *Develop leadership* capacity for arts integration across the school, district, and among stakeholders
6. *Ensure and share resources* such as time, physical space, materials, curriculum, training and development, and staff
7. *Cultivate support* among multiple stakeholders, including the school community, the district, the universities, and the state

Taken together, these seven recommendations provide a map for increasing model utilization and implementation fidelity, as well as enhancing opportunities for the program to impact teaching and learning and achieve sustainability. (See **Figure 8** below.) The technical report outlines specific details on how these recommendations may be accomplished within each of the program domains.

These lessons learned have been shared with the Utah Arts Council and university coordinators as part of their August 2009 planning meeting. Under the direction and leadership of the Utah Arts Council and in collaboration with appropriate university and program implementation staff and stakeholders, program improvement efforts to address the specific recommendations began in late August 2009.

**Recommendations for BTS Arts Learning Program
Year 1, 2008-2009**

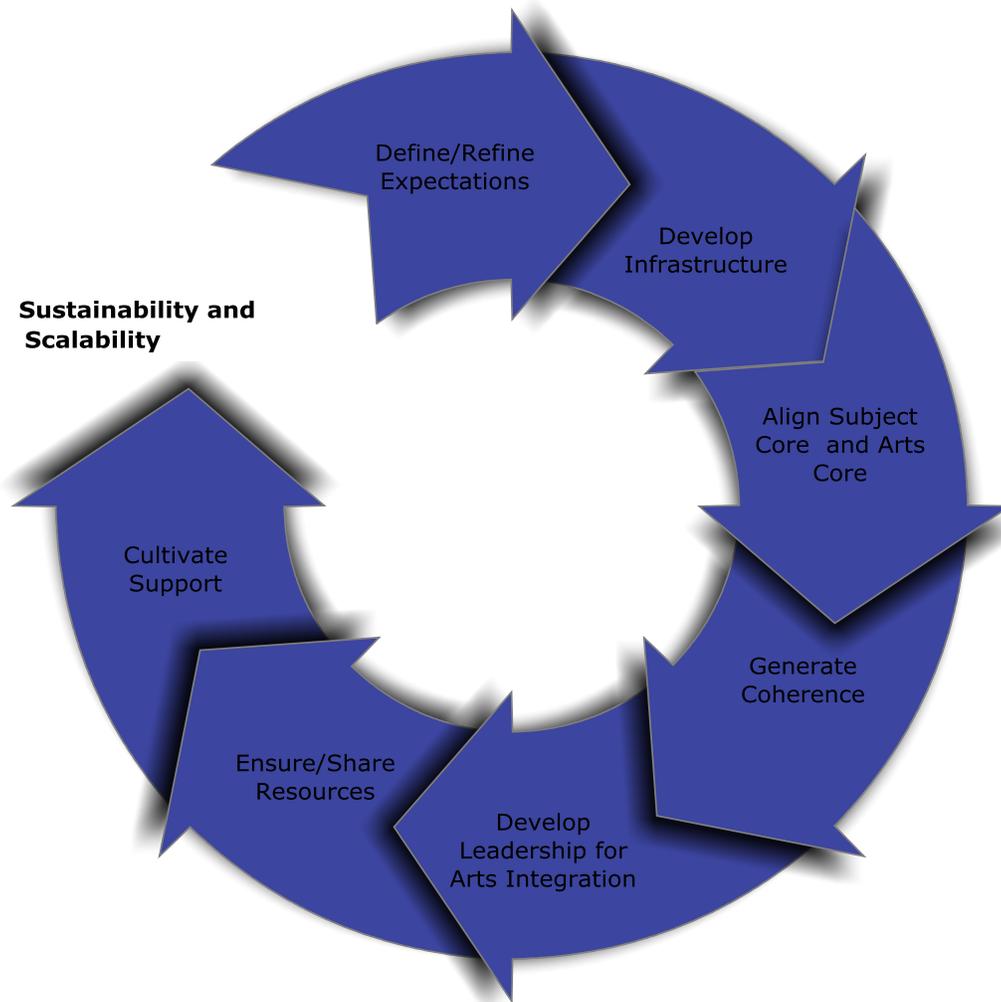


Figure 8

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the Utah Arts Council, the Utah State Office of Education, the four participating Universities, the Professional Development Partners, and the participating BTSALP districts and schools for their time and effort to help document and evaluate the implementation of the Beverley Taylor Sorenson Arts Learning Program.

For questions or comments about this evaluation study, please contact the UEPC.

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Appendix A: 2008-09 Participating BTSALP Schools by District

Alpine School District

Alpine-AWFKS
Cedar Ridge

Beaver School District

Belknap

Box Elder School District

Foothill Elementary

Davis School District

Creek side
Knowlton-AWFKS
Mountain View
Muir
Snow Horse

Duchesne School District

East
Altamont

Garfield School District

Panguitch
Bryce Valley
Escalante
Antimony
Boulder

Grand School District

Red Rock
Moab (Charter)

Granite School District

Oakridge-AWFKS
Oakwood-AWFKS
Redwood
William Penn
Woodrow Wilson-
AWFKS

Monroe-AWFKS

Iron School District

Iron Springs-AWFKS
Cedar North
Escalante Valley

Jordan School District

Granite
Oakdale
Midas Creek
Copper Canyon
Summit Peak Academy
(Charter)

Millard School District

Delta North

Murray School District

Grant

Nebo School District

Rees
Hobble Creek

Ogden School District

James Madison

Provo School District

Lakeview
Edgemont

Salt Lake School District

Beacon Heights-AWFKS
Bonneville
Dilworth
Highland Park-AWFKS
Jackson-AWFKS

Lincoln-AWFKS

Wasatch-AWFKS

Sevier School District

Pahvant

Uintah School District

Maeser
Davis
Ashley
Eagle View-AWFKS

Wasatch School District

Midway
Jr. Smith

Washington School District

Coral Canyon
Santa Clara
Sunset
Panorama-AWFKS
Dixie Downs-AWF

Appendix B: 2008-09 Participating BTSALP Schools by Art Form

Schools with Visual Arts

Alpine-AWFKS
Foothill
East
Panguitch
Bryce Valley
Escalante
Antimony
Boulder
Red Rock
Moab (Charter)
Monroe
Woodrow Wilson
Iron Springs-AWFKS
Escalante Valley
Granite
Summit Peak Academy (Charter)
Grant
James Madison
Lakeview
Edgemont
Beacon Heights-AWFKS
Bonneville
Dilworth
Highland Park-AWFKS
Lincoln-AWFKS
Cedar North
Midas Creek
Delta North
Davis
Ashley

Maeser
Eagle View-AWFKS
Midway
Jr. Smith

Schools with Music

Belknap
Knowlton
Mountain View
Altamont
Oakridge
Oakdale
Jackson-AWFKS
Pahvant
Santa Clara
Sunset
Panorama-AWFKS
Dixie Downs-AWFKS

Schools with Dance

Cedar Ridge
Muir
Snow Horse
Oakwood-AWFKS
Redwood
William Penn

Schools with Drama

Creek side
Copper Canyon
Rees
Hobble Creek
Wasatch-AWFKS
Coral Canyon