

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF THE *ARTS DU CIRQUE* PROGRAM:  
A CASE STUDY**

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative study used focus groups to identify the knowledge about the *Arts du Cirque* Program implemented in a primary school and to explore perceptions of its impacts. Data are based on the discourse of school staff members, parents and other members of the community of an elementary school. The impacts on students are illustrated in terms of prioritized values, academic and skill learning, behavior, self-esteem, sense of belonging and child-adult relationship. Impacts are also reported regarding school staff members, parents and other members of the community. Adequacy is shown between the development and deployment of cross-curricular competencies in the *Arts du Cirque* Program and what is prescribed by the *Quebec School Program*. Results show evidence of a rapprochement between parents and teachers and of the support of the community at large mainly as an audience. Work must go in order to develop stronger family-school-community relationships.

## INTRODUCTION

Back in 2001, the Quebec Education Program for the preschool and elementary levels (MEQ, 2001) started implementing a major reform that includes both disciplinary and cross-curricular competencies that transcend disciplines. Cross-curricular competencies are grouped into four categories: intellectual (using information, solving problems, exercising critical judgment; and using creativity); methodological (adopting effective work methods), personal and social (structuring one's identity and cooperating with others) and communication-related (communicating appropriately) (MEQ, 2001).

While implementing this curricular reform, some elementary and secondary schools continued to develop a variety of programs with particular pedagogical projects with the purpose of responding to youth interests by using sports, arts, languages, sciences or international curriculum (Quebec High Council for Education, 2007). These programs require changes in content schedule and must therefore receive a special dispensation from the school boards (QHCE, 2007).

### THE RATIONALE FOR PARTICULAR PEDAGOGICAL PROJECTS

Particular pedagogical projects base their approach, among other things, on the factors highlighted in studies on “school effectiveness and improvement” (Hargreaves, 2001; Harris & Chrispeels, 2006) featuring concepts such as *intellectual and social capital*. They also draw on school dropout prevention programs and school achievement promotion programs (e.g., Deslandes, Royer, Turcotte & Bertrand, 1997; Janosz, Fallu & Deniger, 2000; Rumberger, 2001) that use educational practices characterized by a solid system of support and reinforcement. Some of these programs recommend allowing students to discover their sports and artistic interests and abilities. Schools termed “effective” also aim to support rather than control the child and to create a place for parents and the community. As well, particular pedagogical projects fall within the

current movement favouring community schools recommending a curriculum that involves challenges, a safe place in which to learn, multiple and caring relationships between young people and adults, and high expectations for success (Blank, Melaville & Shah, 2003; Dryfoos, Quinn & Barkin, 2005). Pragmatically speaking, the development of such programs is sometimes intended as a response to the competition among vocational, private and public schools. In sum, particular pedagogical projects seem to spring from the desire to offer students a set of activities that aim to reduce dropout rates, optimize academic success, develop interests and talents, improve health and promote the development of competencies to deal with current life and face competition. Thus, they do not target a sports or artistic elite in the process of development, but rather the mass of students, and often groups of students with difficulties.

What remains to be verified, however, is what the key actors (i.e., school staff and community members) know about the *Arts du Cirque* program and their perceptions of its impacts on students, staff members, and community members. Accordingly, the present study was conducted within the frame of the *Arts du Cirque* program of an elementary school situated in the Center region of the Province of Quebec, Canada. The study is part of a broader research aimed at documenting the development and deployment of cross-curricular competencies. A future article will examine this subject in greater depth taking into account the representations of students registered in the *Arts du Cirque* program.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The elementary school targeted by this study is located in a very underprivileged area of a city (150, 000 inhabitants) situated in the Center region of the Province of Quebec, Canada. Prior to the implementation of the program, the number of students in this school presenting behavioral and learning difficulties was relatively high. In fact, fights in the schoolyard were more common than games and recreational activities. For the past eight years, the school has been offering the

*Arts du Cirque* program. Since the arrival of *Arts du Cirque*, students' – and even parents' – interest and demand have continued to grow. This interest quickly overwhelmed the school's authorities, thus leading them to welcome students from other schools on the territory of the school board. The number of students rose from 127 in 2002-2003, to 165 in 2007-2008.

According to the principal and the leader teacher in *Arts du Cirque*, the school is no longer the same, since students are now motivated to come to school and behavior is easier to manage.

### ***ARTS DU CIRQUE PROGRAM***

#### **Description and Objectives**

*Arts du Cirque* is at the heart of the school's educational project guidelines: encourage the acquisition of healthy lifestyles, develop the desire to learn and offer a harmonious and self-fulfilling environment. The school's *Arts du Cirque* program was based on some physical education and health competencies such as “acting in various physical activity contexts”, and other arts-related contexts, such as inventing and appreciating works. Besides competencies in arts, physical education and health, other competencies in French, the language of teaching, and cross-curricular competencies are also mobilized through cultural references taken, for example, in the repertoire of French-language poetry and song. In concrete terms, teachers use authentic learning situations to invite students to become involved in their field of interest (physical performances, poetry, self-expression activities, creation of settings, etc.) while leading them to become more versatile and to develop some cross-curricular competencies (e.g., adopting effective work methods, cooperating with others, communicating appropriately).

The underlying philosophy of the *Arts du Cirque* program is to allow students to explore the world around them playfully and therefore develop their vision of the world. The *Arts du Cirque* program constitutes an extension of childhood activities and allows for a more intensive exploration of certain types of learning. These arts also constitute an excellent complement to the

psychomotor activities offered in low socioeconomic environments. The curriculum, from the first through the sixth grades, offer to students, on a weekly basis, two hours of the *Arts du Cirque*, one hour of dramatic art and one hour of physical and health education. The *Arts du Cirque* program is available to all elementary school students. Students from the school territory are admitted with no selection procedure. For the others, however – some 30 students – selection is based on demonstrated interests. The students are, moreover, called on to participate in about fifteen performances each year. The Public Entertainers Festival and the Youth-Creation show are two examples of the large-scale entertainment events in which students perform for the public. Many teachers, parents, volunteer workers and collaborators join the team for the after-school activities. In short, the program aims to encourage healthy life styles while increasing the proportion of students who practice a weekly physical activity and develop an interest in cultural activities.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The content questions for this study were organized around two research questions:

1. What do school staff members, parents and other community members know about the *Arts du Cirque* program?
2. How do they perceive the impacts of the program on the students, on the school staff, on parents and other community members?

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

Qualitative data were gathered during two focus groups conducted with teaching school staff as well as community members including some students' parents. People were recruited through a letter of invitation sent to parents, members of the school staff and members of the school council. Ten persons participated in the interviews on a voluntary basis. The first group (n

= 5) consisted of four teachers including the leader teacher of the *Arts du Cirque* program and a social worker (F = 4; M = 1), while the second group (n = 6) comprised four parents of students (F = 1; M = 3), and two community members who closely supported the program (total: F = 2; M = 4).

### **Data Collection**

A two-person research team conducted the focus group interviews. The team included a researcher acting as moderator and an observer, who operated the audiocassette recorder and kept track of time. Group interviews were preferred to individual interviews, for in addition to making it possible to obtain the personal viewpoint of participants, they also allow for an examination of how ideas, even perceptions, are expressed and articulated socially (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999). The first component of the group interview framework focused on participants' perceptions regarding the contribution of the *Arts du Cirque* program to children, school staff, parents and other community members, and the second on factors that helped or hindered the development of cross-curricular competencies based on students' perceptions. Only the first component is discussed in the present article.

### **Procedures**

The interviews took place at the school in February 2009 and lasted 60-75 minutes each. The first discussion group was scheduled during the staff's lunch hour, with food provided by the research team; the second discussion group involving parents and other community members took place in the evening. The study had received prior approval from the university research ethical committee.

### **Data Analysis**

The interviews were tape-recorded and verbatim transcripts were made. Coding was done using the Atlas-Ti software. Two types of coding were used; inductive and deductive. First, data were

coded into units of meaning (Patton, 1990). Thus, a first analysis of the corpus of units of meaning allowed us to identify the main emerging categories. A second analysis of units of meaning was conducted employing cross-curricular competencies as presented in the *Quebec Education Program* (MEQ, 2001) as pre-determined categories. Although shorter, this exercise simply aimed to verify whether the comments of the key actors referred to the cross-curricular competencies prescribed by the *Quebec Education Program*.

## RESULTS

First question: *What do you know about the Arts du Cirque Program?*

To this question, both groups of participants responded in terms of the program's general impacts on the students. No one alluded to the elements in the curriculum content. What's more, one parent said: "I don't know what they do in school exactly..." The three categories of units of meaning shared by both groups are: (1) self-esteem, (2) motivation, and (3) skills development. For example, one school staff member stated: "While learning techniques, the child experiences success. This is going to lead to self-esteem and motivation to learn and succeed in class." Another parent added: "It gives the child more opportunities to develop a talent in something, and this creates self-esteem." Another said: "They can all discover the special little something they're good in." However, it was the second question that elicited more comments from the participants.

Second question: *How do you perceive the impacts of the program on students, school staff, parents and other community members?*

This question was designed to encourage participants to explain more fully the impacts of the *Arts du Cirque* program. Categories were presented around three organizational themes: impacts on students, impacts on school staff members and impacts on parents and other members of the community.



## **Inductive Analysis**

### *Impacts on students*

Regarding the perceived impacts on the students, six categories emerged from the analysis of the corpus of units: 1) values, 2) academic and skills learning, 3) behavior, 4) self-esteem, 5) sense of belonging, and 6) child-adult relations.

*Values.* The awareness of the importance of making efforts, persevering and developing one's sense of responsibility seems to correspond to the prevailing values expressed by both groups of participants. A school staff member reports his comments to a student: "I'm not making you go into a pyramid. But if you agree to go, I don't want to hear you complain." Another said: "The children are not given a choice about managing their own materials. They have to plan on such and such material..." One parent added: "He finally understood that when he makes an effort, he manages to get something done."

Other values put forward were respect for and acceptance of others as well as a respect for materials. On this issue, school staff members expressed the following: "...accept it when someone makes a mistake" or "they experience success and the others accept them." A community member emphasized: "They'll take care of their material because they know if they break something, it won't be replaced."

Also considered are values associated with resourcefulness and initiative. For example, school staff members recalled that some students made the props they needed for juggling and, owing to this initiative, were nominated in the context of an entrepreneurship competition. They then had to set up a sales committee and an advertising committee. Other examples of initiative and creativity were reported by a teacher who mentioned that "the three girls decided to develop something using a jump rope, something completely new (in circus arts)."

Parent participants, for their part, placed particular emphasis on the mutual aid and cooperation that children are led to develop. One of them explained: “They value performance, but it’s not competitive, each one moves at his/her own pace”. Another described a situation he had observed where the children exchanged strategies for improving their performance.

*Academic and skills learning.* In addition to developing motor skills, students learn to use new technologies and integrate what they do in the *Arts du Cirque* into other subject areas. A teacher relates that he photographed students while they were juggling. He then put the photos on computer. The photos were subsequently used for two other projects in the plastic arts and in French classes. Each student found something of interest, whether it was physical performance, clowning, creating settings and costumes, music, song writing or dancing. Accordingly, one parent specified: “There’s all that physical movement they’ve learned, but when you see the show, you see children reciting poems....and singing French songs. So they end up discovering a whole general culture...” School staff members admitted they were surprised to see that the students managed to learn everything by heart.

*Behavior.* All participants agreed that students’ behavior had improved substantially since the implementation of the program. Some teachers mentioned that students from other schools arriving with major behavioral difficulties emerged transformed thanks to the development of an exclusive expertise. One of them stated: “If you think about John <sup>1</sup> with his rings, he is the only one who does that, so that child distinguishes himself from others. I think, too, of Steve with his three giraffe unicycles.” Two teachers said that they help a child having learning difficulties to identify a strength or talent so that he/she can develop this aspect, experience success and gain the recognition of his/her peers. Even a child who is having difficulties in class feels appreciated

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<sup>1</sup> Fictive names are used in order to preserve confidentiality.

for his/her expertise in circus arts. One parent summed up the improvement in the following way: “There used to be vandalism here. That’s gone down drastically.”

*Self-esteem.* In the words of one teacher, “some children aren’t good in school...and their self-image is that they’re incompetent. Then, they become good at something...they go back with that.” Another one noted: “When children experience success, their self-esteem improves.”

Another one said that one of her students systematically erases what she writes in an exam because she’s convinced it’s not good. So the teacher has to remind her of her successes in the *Arts du Cirque*. As for the parents, they believe that the wealth of possibilities available means there will be something every child can succeed at. For example, one child can juggle with five balls while another is better with the diabolo or unicycle. Smiles and a good mood are signs that children are pleased with themselves.

*Sense of belonging* . A school staff member spoke of a student who completed elementary school in these terms: “Maybe she won’t remember everything she was taught, but she’ll certainly remember her performances.” One parent referred to the unity, even the solidarity that developed among the children during the show presentations:

*...all the children are together during the show. They have to talk to each other. They do so many different things. They all have their space, and everything has to be well coordinated. If someone drops a ball, another will pick it up and give it back to him/her. That really creates something, a unique experience within the group, which inevitably fosters communication...*

Comments from school staff members and parents show that the children developed a liking for school: “She loves coming to school!” “They feel encouraged about going to school, they’re happy.”

*Child-adult relationships.* *Arts du Cirque* activities allow the children to develop privileged relationships with adults. For example, within the context of the entrepreneurship project, some children, often chosen according to their needs for contact with a significant adult, were called on to work during lunch hour, either with the project's leader teacher or with another teacher. Thus, in addition to learning how to make circus props and sell them in school, they experience success and develop links with adults.

#### *Impacts on school staff members*

Regarding the impacts on school staff members, the analysis of the corpus of units allowed us to pinpoint three categories: 1) child-adult relationships, 2) relationships with other school staff members and 3) sense of belonging and pride.

*Child-adult-relationships.* To start with, school staff members recognize that the *Arts du Cirque* allowed them to view students differently and to forge links with them: "When I have a free period, I go see my class in the gym and they're happy to show me what point they're at, it creates a connection even with my students from last year." Another stated: "It's great to see them evolve. It's impressive!"

*Relationships with other teachers.* This relationship seems to be initiated by the leader teacher especially, who meets with the teachers and invites them to become involved as follows: "I tell the teacher: if you feel like working with the students who are having a harder time...but I don't insist. I propose. Then I look at them exactly like I look at my students: you have singing talent, you have dancing talent, is there somebody who would be able to..."

*Sense of belonging and pride .* Like the parents, teachers are proud of their school and the children's accomplishments. Accordingly, one participant admitted he is proud of saying that he teaches in an *Arts du Cirque* school. Another stated: "As a teacher, you see your students differently. It's very motivating. We gain a feeling of pride from it." Another noted:

*Sometimes you get discouraged, because these are not always easy classes to teach to. But when you see them perform in a circus show, that's something else. I'm thinking in particular of last year's pyramid number, which involved over thirty of my students. I had an entire class making a pyramid, and I had unicycles going through it. These were thirty, thirty-five students who were able to work together for four minutes! It was an enormous victory.*

#### *Impacts on parents and others members of the community*

With respect to the impacts on parents and other members of the community, two categories of units of meaning emerged: parent-child relations and relations with the community.

*Parent-child relations.* All parent participants revealed that the relationship with their child had substantially improved, the more so in that they themselves practiced some circus arts techniques with their child once a week. A single mother recalled that relations with her son had been difficult, but that ever since she began practicing at the same time he did, while leaving him to attend to his own affairs, things between them improved a lot. A father said he began going to the school during practices to encourage his son who tended to give up too easily whenever he encountered a problem. He observed that now his son perseveres even in difficult situations. Another father admitted he learned to use an unicycle at the same time as his son and even bought one to use at home. Another said he had been very impressed the first time he attended a show featuring his daughter. He said he never thought she could be so good at the diabolo. The parents said they were very proud of their children. Furthermore, whenever there's a show, there's a full audience. Members of the school staff, for their part, find that it isn't easy for these parents to come to school, since their own school experiences had been rather negative.

*Relations with the community.* Since children registered in *Arts du Cirque* hold many demonstrations in schools and offer numerous performances (e.g., in senior citizen centers,

shopping centers and parks), including an annual performance in a hall seating over 600 persons, there is reason to believe their renown is increasing in the community at large in the city.

Furthermore, each July, the Public Entertainers Festival, a partner of the school, performs in the city streets and sets aside a special place for *Arts du Cirque* to perform a number on the main stage in front of an audience of some four to five thousand. As well, school staff members directly involved in the *Arts du Cirque* said they do business with stores in the region when they need equipment such as unicycles or juggling balls.

### **Deductive Analysis**

As for the second question of the present study, we wished to examine to what extent comments by the key actors, whether school staff, parents and other members of the community, referred to some of the cross-curricular competencies included in the *Quebec Education Program*. This exercise appeared useful for verifying, based on the participants' perceptions, whether the competencies targeted by the *Arts du Cirque* program made it possible to mobilize the cross-curricular competencies prescribed in the new curriculum.

Examples of units of meaning for each of the categories or cross-curricular competencies are presented in Table 1. We will examine the three key cross-curricular competencies targeted based on the number of comments relative to each. Strikingly enough, both school staff members (20 comments) and parents and other community members (21 comments) focused on the child's construction of an identity. Thus, according to participants, the *Arts du Cirque* program helps children, especially, to get to know themselves and others, identify their strengths, become involved and learn cooperation.

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Table 1, insert here

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The second competency most frequently mentioned by school staff members involves the development of creativity with ten comments, whereas the second competency noted by the parents and other community members concerns the use of effective work methods with nine comments. In the opinion of school staff members, the program allows children to imagine new ways of doing things, new strategies and new techniques that may resemble or differ from those used by their colleagues. Children also learn to express their level of satisfaction about what they're doing. Parents and other community members, for their part, consider that children in the *Arts du Cirque* program learn to reflect before and during an action so as to find the best way to accomplish it. In other words, they learn to analyze their approach, complete their task, manage their time and materials and discover the pleasure and satisfaction of a job well done.

Cooperation with others is the third key cross-curricular competency for everyone concerned: school staff (9 comments) and parents and other community members (6 comments). The perception of the participants remained the same, that is, that children registered in the *Arts du Cirque* program are introduced to collective work, sharing and collaboration. They learn that their actions may impact those of others, especially during shows involving many children in the same circus number.

## **DISCUSSION**

The objective of this study was twofold: first, to see what school staff members, parents and other community members know about the *Arts du Cirque* program and second, to identify their perceptions regarding the program's impacts on students, school staff, parents and other community members. Regarding the first objective, the curriculum content and schedule changes were not mentioned, that is, there were no comments on this subject. This however precludes from concluding that they are not a concern for participants in the focus groups. Conversely,

there was a stronger focus on the overall effects on students, particularly in terms of self-esteem, motivation and skills development.

Furthermore, the inductive analysis of participants' comments about the program's impacts highlights the perceptions of the effects of the *Arts du Cirque* program with respect to (1) the values preached and put forward within the school, (2) students' learning, and (3) the personal and family factors associated with the social network and the school. Now, all these aspects are in fact protective factors related to the risk of school dropout identified by the numerous studies conducted on this issue (e.g., Deslandes, 2001; Janosz et al., 2000; Rumberger, 2001).

Accountability, self-determination and resourcefulness, mutual aid and cooperation, respect for people and material are all values mentioned as emphasized within the *Arts du Cirque* program. These same values had also been mentioned as being put forward in the homes of the parents who participated in a previous study on their perceptions of cross-curricular competencies (Deslandes, Joyal & Rivard, under press). Individual factors to which the program contributes include academic learning in the arts, physical education and health and other disciplines thanks to learning situations that integrate, for example, ICT, French or the plastic arts as well as motor skills, stress management and concentration. An important improvement in students' behavior and self-esteem was also observed. As for the family, comments reveal parents' greater facility in exercising their parental role, in offering their children encouragement, demonstrating pride in them and interest in what they do and in becoming involved in their activities. Parent-child relationships are also improved. Regarding the school, the participants noticed a deeper sense of belonging and stronger interest. Within the *Arts du Cirque* program, students have the opportunity to develop privileged relationships with significant adults, whereas school staff members are called on to view students differently and to discover hitherto unsuspected strengths and talents. The latter say they are proud of their students and of their school. Here, in short, are



all the ingredients that can potentially contribute to a school's effectiveness and prevent school dropout.

Furthermore, the deductive analysis of the participants' comments highlights the program's impacts on children relative to the cross-curricular competencies prescribed by the Ministère de l'Éducation, des Loisirs et du Sport [Ministry of Education]. Except for the exercise of critical judgment, the participants lay claim to the development of all the cross-curricular competencies included in the program. Their comments, however, show clearly that the following competencies are especially developed: construction of one's identity, creativity development, use of effective work methods and cooperation. All in all, the *Arts du Cirque* program complies perfectly with the guidelines and requirements of the *Quebec Education Program*, particularly with respect to cross-cultural competencies.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to highlight the perceptions of two groups of key actors – school staff members on one hand, and parents and other community members on the other – regarding the impacts of the *Arts du Cirque* program. The program appears to emphasize protective factors associated with the risk of school dropout as well as some characteristics of effective schools such as significant learning for the students and privileged child-adult relationships. It also reflects the prescriptions in the *Quebec Education Program* with regard to cross-curricular competencies. In the end, there seems to be a balance between the findings anticipated subsequent to implementing the *Arts du Cirque* program and the findings observed.

This study, however, is not without its limits. To be sure, the comments gathered come from small samples, since we did not intent to generalize the findings. It must be kept in mind, moreover, that the elementary school examined had a small student population as well. Although the present study does not include the students, their comments will form the subject of a future

article on the deployment of cross-cultural competencies. In addition, it was not possible to collect raw data on school grades, since the competency-based approach implemented by the Ministry of Education (MEQ) in 2001 required descriptive assessments until quite recently (Deslandes, Rivard & Joyal, 2009). The presence of parents in school during rehearsals and performances, moreover, testifies to certain advances regarding the engagement of parents from low SES environments whose own experiences of schooling have often been negative or who were contacted only when their child was having problems (Deslandes et al., 1997; Epstein, 1995, 2001). It is still too soon to conclude that there is a broader engagement on the part of the parent participants in our study regarding academic monitoring and, therefore, too soon to observe a genuine collaboration between parents and teachers. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe in a stronger rapprochement between parents and teachers and to hope that it will facilitate harmonious and fruitful exchanges in the school.

We're forced to admit that the community relationship aspect remains underdeveloped in the *Arts du Cirque* program. In the coming years, the community's role in supporting the school's educational project will, hopefully, be better defined and much more visible. In light of some comments, we understand that children must "sell" the idea of performances when these involve presentations in public parks. Once the impacts of the *Arts du Cirque* are better known, it will in all likelihood be easier to obtain the support of the community, not only as an audience for large-scale entertainment in the town concert hall, but also as a support for a program aimed at reducing the dropout rate and thereby promoting educational success.

Although official writings call on both parents and community members to establish a partnership with schools and to do so within the frame of a broader vision of children's education (Beaudoin, Rivard, Grenier & Caty, 2008; Deslandes, 2006), this is no simple matter (Boutin & Le Cren, 2004; Deslandes, 2001, 2009; Epstein, 1995, 2001). Further research will thus be

necessary to document the new family-school-community partnership culture currently observed in the Quebec school network.

What also emerges is the importance of the leadership exercised by the leader-teacher as designer, initiator, visionary and unifier within the *Arts du Cirque* program. All participants in the study acknowledge it to be the “masterpiece” of the program, which obviously enjoys the strong support of the current principal. Although we’re very pleased to see this, there is some reason for concern given that he (she) will be retiring in a few years’ time. Who will replace him/her? Who will agree to roll up their sleeves and continue the work begun? How can we ensure that these individuals receive adequate training and demonstrate the same passionate enthusiasm? On this issue, Crampette (2005) reports the concern shown by the *Federation française des écoles de cirque* [ French Federation of Circus Schools] to emphasize the quality of school interventions and the willingness of the *Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports* [Ministry of Youth and Sports] of France to issue a technical certificate to approve the required competencies.

Another potential worry concerns the absence of continuity between the *Arts du Cirque* program in elementary school and every other program offered at the secondary level. What’s going to happen to these elementary school graduates who have developed knowledge of circus arts along with a self-esteem based on their expertise and interest in school thanks to this program? It is therefore urgent that the local school board examine this issue so as not to lose the benefits of the efforts deployed in elementary school to combat school dropout. At the same time, there is reason to continue the study of the impacts of the *Arts du Cirque* program in secondary school.

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Table 1. Relationship of Staff Members, Parents' and Other Community Members' Comments with Cross-Curricular Competencies

Cross-Curricular Competencies	Units of Meaning	Staff Comments (examples)	Units of Meaning	Parents and Other Community Members' Comments (examples)
<b>Intellectual</b>				
Using information	6	I tell them: Throw your ball, juggle, count them. You're able to juggle three balls, let's go.	2	They end up discovering a whole general culture...
Problem-solving	3	There's a content that's going to help them mature and get through certain difficulties	3	After that, you come to an obstacle in life, you approach it the same way you approached your acrobatics.
Using creativity	10	The three girls decided to invent something using a jump rope, something completely new.	4	We give them ideas, and sometimes ideas come from them.
<b>Methodological</b>				
Adopting effective work methods	3	There are procedures in juggling.	9	Instead of stopping because it's too hard, they start over and then, they try doing it differently.
Using information and communication technologies	1	The children were juggling. We took a picture of them and put it on the computer. They used it in a plastic arts project.	0	X
<b>Personal and Social</b>				
Constructing his/her identity	20	Each one moves at their own pace, each with their own strengths, each in his/her own place.	21	My son has more skills than others. That gives him the chance to develop talent in something, and that gives him self-esteem.
Cooperating with others	9	...accepting that others make mistakes.	6	...when we look at the children using a unicycle, sometimes we see two boys 12 or 13 years old holding each other by the shoulder to do their number.
Communicating appropriately	1	We used it for a project in French.	4	There's a lot of physical learning, but when the show is on, we see children reciting poetry.