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2017—2018 Creative Learning Initiative: Creative Campus Distribution



About the report

This report, which is the first in a series of three reports evaluating CLI for the 2017-2018 school year, shows trends in districtwide distribution of art richness at AISD campuses. Comparisons are made across different types of schools (by school level, CLI status and Title I status), as well as tracking growth over the years. In addition to the full report, an interactive report is available online with additional figures and the arts richness scores for each school:

<https://www.austinisd.org/dre>

Click on **INTERACTIVE REPORTS** and select “Creative Campus Profiles (2017-2018)” from the **Online Reports List** on the top left



Executive Summary

The Creative Learning Initiative (CLI) is a community-wide effort to bring creative learning and the arts to every student in Austin. Led by MINDPOP, the City of Austin, and the Austin Independent School District (AISD), CLI aims to address disparities in access to the arts for young people across the district by eventually supporting every AISD school to be a Creative Campus by 2023. The term Creative Campus is a multifaceted way to summarize a framework of nine components that can come together in multiple ways to measure the concept of the arts richness of a school.

This report, which is the first in a series of three reports evaluating CLI for the 2017–2018 school year, shows trends in districtwide distribution of art richness at AISD campuses. Comparisons are made across different types of schools (by school level, CLI status and Title I status), as well as tracking growth over the years.

Progress towards the 2023 goal of 100% Creative Campuses is still on pace, but showing the first signs of strain: In 2017–2018, the percent of AISD campuses meeting the standard of a Creative Campus decreased from 60% to 59%. For the 6th year of implementation of a program that has shown considerable progress each year, this was the first year to see any decrease. Our research suggests that support is being spread thin due to the gradual increases in the number of schools served by CLI over the years without any increase in resources. This year, like every year before, elementary schools continued to reach higher levels of arts richness than secondary schools across the district. *We recommend resources be increased or the program modify implementation and/or expectations to fit current resources.*

CLI support is critical to arts richness at Title I schools: For the second year in a row, districtwide equity was achieved between the district’s Title I and non-Title I schools in terms of the distribution of schools meeting the Creative Campus standard. This achievement is important because access to the arts is especially advantageous to low-income students, and yet it is often those exact populations who lack equitable access to the arts. In 2017-2018, the majority (73%) of CLI campuses were Title I schools, and of those, 76% met the Creative Campus standard. In contrast, Title I schools that were *not* yet supported by CLI were disproportionately disadvantaged in their level of arts richness. *We recommend that CLI should support the rest of Title I schools to continue improving district-wide equitable access to the arts.*

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Program Description

The Creative Learning Initiative (CLI) is a city-wide collaboration between MINDPOP, the City of Austin, Austin Independent School District (AISD), and more than 100 arts and cultural organizations dedicated to equitable access to creative learning and the arts for every student in Austin. The CLI model is grounded research that shows that arts programs in and out of school have a powerful impact on both student cognition and youth development (Ruppert, 2006). Statewide research also identified a positive relationship between arts participation and academic achievement, attendance, graduation, and enrollment in higher education (Texas Cultural Trust, 2015). The same research revealed access to those arts courses was not equitably distributed across regions, across districts, or within schools, particularly in high-poverty areas.

Initiatives such as CLI in Austin seek to ameliorate these inequities. Using the model of collective impact and fueled by national research, local leaders from across private and public sectors came together to address the disparities in access to the arts for young people within schools, across the district, and in neighborhoods throughout our city.

In 2011, MINDPOP partnered with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to help community leaders conduct an inventory of arts access, assess needs, develop common goals, design a strategic action plan, and commit to the shared measurement of our impact and continuous communication. The current CLI model, designed by MINDPOP through a community process, is comprehensive, providing support at the classroom level, the district level, and the community level to (a) create arts-rich schools; (b) create a community network to support and sustain the arts-rich life of every child; (c) develop leaders and systems to support and sustain quality creative learning for the development of the whole child; and (d) demonstrate measurable impacts on students, families, schools, and our community.

Examples of the support provided through the systemic approach of the CLI model include:

- Policy recommendations at the board level
- Curriculum development support at the district level
- Campus planning support for principals
- Professional development opportunities for teachers including personalized coaching
- Dance and theater instruction for elementary students
- Professional development opportunities for community arts partners and Parks and Recreation instructional staff to increase pedagogical skills and align their programs with school needs

¹ Collective Impact is an innovative approach to tackling complex societal issues, in which philanthropists, businesses, nonprofits, and governmental organizations establish common goals and align diverse efforts toward long-term change (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

The robust program model represents best practices in instructional theory, systems change, and arts education. It operates on a staged implementation schedule that adds one vertical team each year through a competitive process that prioritizes campus readiness and need. Campuses in a vertical team work collectively for 3 foundational years, during which they receive instructional support for every teacher and school leader. Each foundational year, teachers focus on integrating Creative Teaching strategies from a new art form into their teaching practices, while principals and teacher-leaders build capacity toward sustainability. Campuses that are not yet rolled into the program are called non-CLI schools but have access to some of the same district-wide supports and some open professional development opportunities (Table 1). At each campus, regardless of CLI status, the initiative works to ensure equitable access to fine arts learning, Creative Teaching across the curriculum, and community arts organizations and resources. In combination, these three pillars align efforts in schools and across the community to provide an arts-rich experience for every student in Austin.

Table 1.
Summary of CLI implementation

CLI Status	CLI Foundational	CLI Sustaining	Non-CLI
CLI - Foundational: status during 3 years of intense support			
CLI - Sustaining: automatic status after foundational years			
Non-CLI: not yet in the CLI rotation			
# of campuses	27	36	60
# of vertical teams	3	3	6
# of students	15,142	21189	41,292
# of teachers	1180	1633	2869
Creative campus leadership			
Campus leadership completes annual arts inventory	✓	✓	✓
Receive annual Creative Campus profile	✓	✓	✓
Arts richness goal required in campus improvement plan	✓	✓	
Direct principal support	✓	✓	
Support for teacher leaders		✓	
Ad hoc support			
Creative teaching across the curriculum			
Instructional coaches provided	3.5 coaches	1 coach	0
Creative teaching workshops mandatory	✓		
Additional Creative Teaching workshops offered	✓	✓	✓
Arts partnerships			
Assistance with arts partner coordination	✓	✓	✓
\$ for arts partnership (\$4–\$8 per student)	✓	✓	
Sequential fine arts			
Arts specialists provided for elementary dance and theater	3 specialists	2 specialists	0
CLI advocates for pro sequential fine arts policies	✓	✓	✓

Note. Of these 123 schools, the following schools 19 were not included in aggregate analysis due to incomplete or invalid reporting: ALC, Andrews Elementary*, Clifton, Cunningham Elementary*, Dobie Pre-K, Garza Independent School, Hart Elementary, International*, Jordan Elementary*, Lanier Grad Path, Lucy Read Pre-K, Reily Elementary*, Ridgetop Elementary*, Rosedale (both ES and Secondary), Travis Grad Path, Uphaus, Webb Middle, and Webb Primary. Schools marked with an * were served by CLI.



What does it mean to be a Creative Campus?

The visionary objective of CLI is to ensure all AISD schools are Creative Campuses by 2023. The term *Creative Campus* is a multifaceted way to summarize a framework of nine components that can come together in a myriad of ways to ensure an entire school community benefits from the arts. The nine components are (Figure 1):

1. Access to sequential fine arts in multiple art forms (music, dance, visual arts, theater, and digital media)
2. Professional development opportunities in Creative Teaching
3. Creative teaching across the curriculum
4. Community partnerships to enrich students' arts experiences during the school day
5. Community-building arts events hosted by campuses
6. Access to arts learning after school
7. School communication to share the school's value of arts richness with community
8. Campus leadership, including a strategic approach to increasing arts richness
9. Facilities to accommodate arts programming

Figure 1.
Nine Components of a Creative Campus



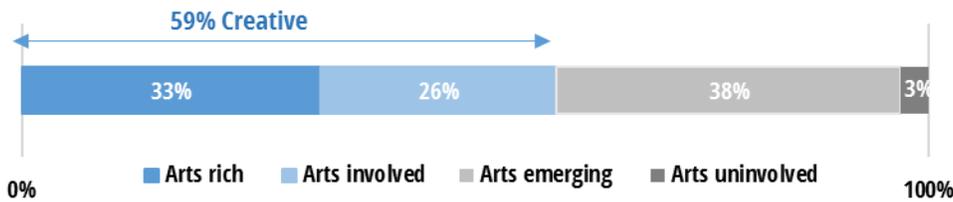
Source. MINDPOP
Note. See Appendices A and B for full rubric

Creative Campus Outcomes

Finding 1: Despite a decline from the previous year, in 2017–2018, 59% of campuses met the Creative-Campus standard, and still keeping on pace toward the goal of 100% Creative Campuses by 2023.

Findings from 2017–2018 indicated that 59% of AISD schools met or exceeded the many criteria to attain the classification of Creative Campus (Figure 2). In 2017–2018 there were a handful of schools that did not submit valid data for their Creative Campus profile. Given that missing information and the 10-year rollout plan of CLI, the 59% rate practically meets the 60% benchmark set for the program in its 6th year of implementation and is expected to move forward on pace.

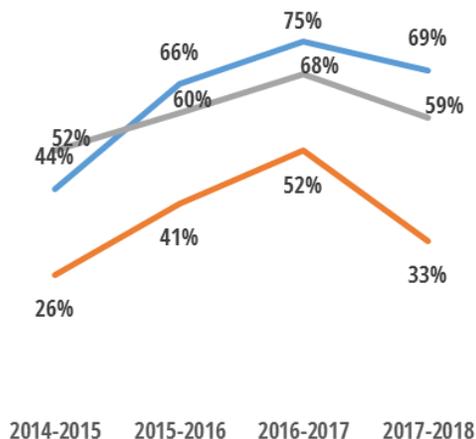
Figure 2.
In 2017–2018, 59% of AISD schools were Creative Campuses.



Source. 2017–2018 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Rubric ($n = 104$)

For the first time, in 2017–2018, there was a decrease in the percentage of campuses that met the standards of Creative Campus. This was not surprising given the gradual increases in the number of schools served by CLI without any increase in resources (See the [Creative Learning Initiative Annual Report 2016-2017](#) for more information about the increased stress on resources CLI has experience over the last several years.) The decrease was evenly spread between CLI and non-CLI schools. However, the decrease was unevenly distributed between elementary and secondary campuses. This school level difference is consistent with previous years' findings, which suggest that the barriers to achieving arts richness at secondary schools are still more challenging than at elementary schools.

Figure 3.
In 2017–2018, there was a first time decrease for all campuses in the percentage of Creative Campuses in AISD since 2014-2015, when the measurement was first made. The decrease was more pronounced at secondary campuses than at elementary campuses.



Source: AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory from 2014-2015 ($n = 106$), 2015-2016 ($n = 95$), 2016-2017 ($n = 106$), and 2017-2018 ($n = 104$)

Calculation of Creative Campus Score

The Creative Campus score is calculated as the average of the primary four components (Sequential Fine Arts Instruction, Creative Teaching across the Curricula, Community Arts Partnerships, and After School) plus points earned (or lost) from the additional five components (Community Building through the Arts, Leadership, Communication, Professional Development, and Facilities).

Description of points earned/lost from additional five components:

- If # "Yes" = 0, then -1 point
- If # "Yes" = 1, then -0.5 points
- If # "Yes" = 2 or 3, then 0 points
- If # "Yes" = 4, then +0.5 points
- If # "Yes" = 5, then +1 point

$$\text{Creative Campus Score} = \text{Avg + earned/lost}$$

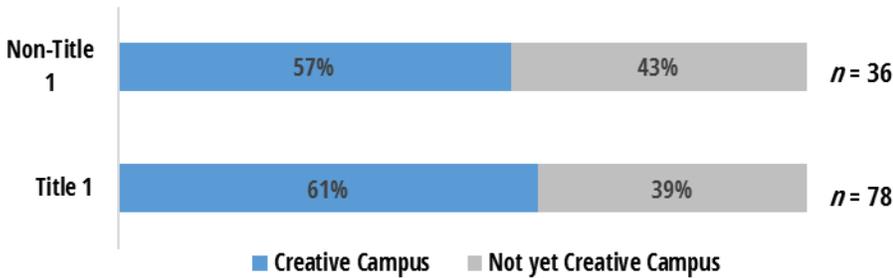
Creative Campus stages by final score:

- > 4 = Arts Rich
- 3-3.99 = Arts Involved
- 2-2.99 = Arts Emerging -2
- 1-1.99 = Arts Emerging -1
- <1 = Arts Uninvolved

Finding 2: CLI support is critical to arts richness, especially at Title I schools.

For the second year in a row, AISD has been shown to support equitable distribution of arts richness across its Title I and non-Title I campuses (Figure 4). This achievement is important because research shows that access to the arts is especially advantageous to low-income students, and yet it is often those exact populations who lack equitable access to the arts (see sidebar).

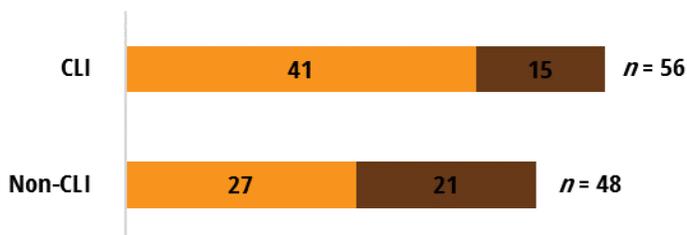
Figure 4. In 2017–2018, the districtwide distribution of Creative Campuses was approximately even between Title I and non-Title I schools.



Source. 2017–2018 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory and AISD campus records

The achievement in equity did not happen by accident. Since its inception, CLI was designed to close the arts-richness gap in AISD schools by weighting its application process to privilege schools with historic disadvantages. In fact, in 2017–2018, the majority of CLI campuses (73%) were actually Title I schools; whereas only 56% of non-CLI campuses were Title I (Figure 5).

Figure 5. CLI serves a disproportional number of Title I campuses, compared to non-Title I campuses percentage of Creative Campuses.



Source. 2017–2018 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory and AISD campus records

The current arts richness rubric has been used for district and campus level evaluation since 2014-2015. Though it has undergone minor modifications during that time, the overall structure and scoring mechanism has remained the same. While the tool is still adequate, program leaders have decided that it is time for improvement. During that time, available data has evolved, but more importantly, program leaders have learned more about what it means for a campus to be arts rich and how arts richness may show up differently based on diverse campus characteristics (i.e. school level, traditional vs alternative pedagogical approach, and high vs low resourced). During the 2018-2019 school year, a team of program leaders and researchers will work to explore, vet, and pilot a revised version of the arts richness rubric to be rolled out in 2019-2020. During this time, drafts of the rubric will be shared with various stakeholders (i.e., principals, fine arts staff, and experts in the field). Goals for the revised rubric include:

- to prioritize the rubric as a reflective tool for campus leadership;

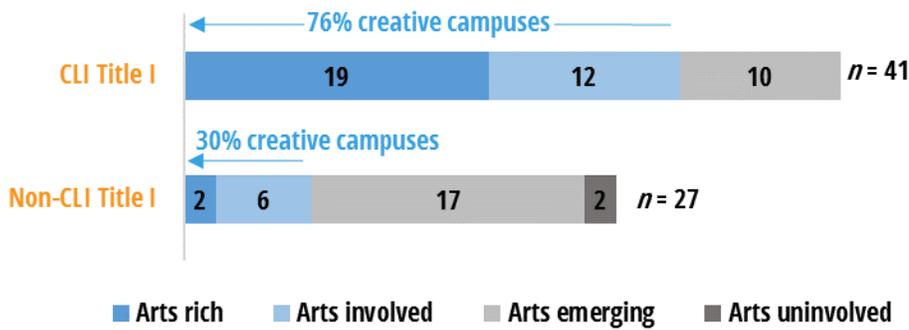
- to be adaptive, allowing for diverse types of schools to reflect on their arts richness in a relevant way;

- to measure access (both in terms of availability and equitability) and quality of the student experience of arts richness on a campus

- to lessen the burden of the current data collection process for school leaders.

Despite the disproportional number of Title I campuses currently supported by CLI and the important achievement in the equitable distribution of arts richness districtwide, there is still an existing art richness gap for schools not yet supported by CLI. Title I campuses not yet in CLI were less than half as likely to be Creative Campuses than Title I schools already supported by CLI (Figure 6). These schools will hopefully be rolled into the initiative in the coming years so that every child has the equal opportunity to attend an arts rich school. (see Appendices C and D for Creative Campus ratings for all individual schools).

Figure 6.
Title I schools were more than twice as likely as to be Creative Campuses when they were part of CLI.



Source. 2017–2018 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory

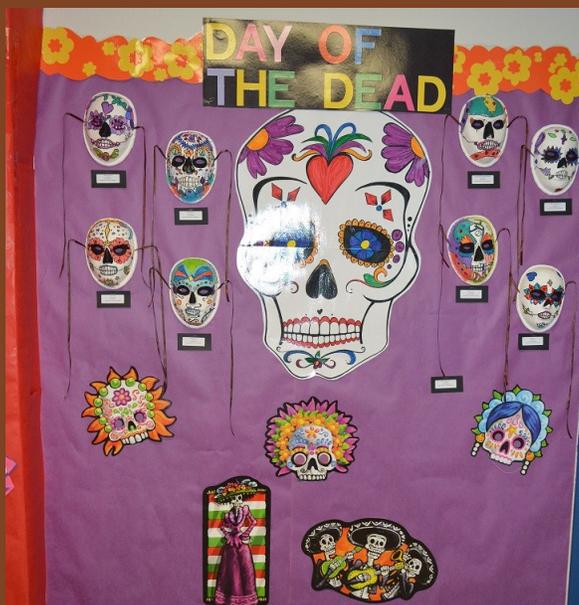
CLI Addressing the Equity Issue in AISD

Research has shown that disadvantaged students who are engaged in the arts benefit both academically and nonacademically. For example:

- Arts-engaged low-income students were four times more likely than low-income students not involved in the arts to have high academic achievement (Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1998).
- AIMS Arts integration schools reduced the reading gap by 14 percentage points and the math gap by 26 percentage points over a 3-year period (RealVisions, 2007).
- Low SES secondary students attending an arts-rich school were twice as likely as those attending an arts-poor school to attend college (Catterall, 2009).

In reaction to this research, a committee of Austin stakeholders conducted a study of the arts landscape in AISD in 2011–2012. That analysis supported this body of research. They found that among AISD students in high-poverty schools, those who were engaged in the arts had better state test passing rates (8 to 29 percentage points) in every subject, higher rates of attendance (up to 5.2 percentage points), and better graduation rates (20 percentage points) than did similar students not engaged in the arts. Unfortunately, that initial inventory of arts offerings also revealed that **AISD students' access to the arts was inconsistent across the district**. In too many cases, those who could most benefit from arts participation had less access to arts instruction and had fewer art forms and community arts partnerships at their schools.

Upon discovering AISD's disparities in access to the arts, knowing the benefits of arts-rich education for disadvantaged students, **CLI was designed to create arts-rich schools FOR ALL STUDENTS**. Although the initiative is not exclusively for Title I schools, CLI does aim to close the gap of arts access that has historically been present in AISD, by weighting program applications for selection in favor of historically underserved schools with a high percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch.



Conclusions and Recommendations

In terms of campus-level arts richness 59% of campuses met the Creative Campus standard. Despite a small decrease in this percentage from the previous year and an increasingly stretched budget, CLI is still on track to meet the goal of 100% arts rich campuses by 2023. In 2017-2018, the initiative maintained an equitable distribution of arts richness between Title I and non-Title I campuses, but continued to show more challenges to implementation in secondary schools than elementary schools. In order to support attainment of the visionary objective that all AISD schools are arts rich by 2022 –2023, we can use this analysis to support the following recommendations to program implementation:

Recommendation #1: Increase resources or modify implementation to support an increased number of campuses. Implementation in 2017–2018 was burdened by increased pressure from the scale of the initiative now supporting over half the district’s schools, with no increase in funding since it supported only one vertical team. Based on the continued challenges for secondary schools to meet the creative-campus standards, and the districtwide budget shortfall, we recommend strategically rethinking the district wide roll out.

Recommendation #2: Maintain CLI supports for Title I campuses to continue improving district-wide equity. The support provided to Title I campuses closed and maintained the arts-richness gap that historically existed between Title I and non-Title I schools in AISD. While this finding should be celebrated, there continue to be pockets of inequity between individual schools. For these reasons, we strongly recommend the continued prioritization of support to Title I schools toward the goal of art richness.

Appendices

Appendix A. Elementary Creative Campus Rubric

	Primary component score				
	4	3	2	1	0
Sequential fine arts instruction					
Number of grade levels (K-6) where most students receive regular music and visual arts instruction	5-6	3-4	2	1	0
Number of grade levels (K-6) where most students receive regular theatre, dance or media arts instruction (at least six meetings with a certified teacher in the area)	3	2	1	Offered < 6 meetings	Not offered
Creative teaching across the curricula					
Percentage of general classroom teachers who use Creative Teaching strategies or arts integrated instruction at least once a week	75-100%	50-74%	25-49%	10-24%	<10%
Community arts partnerships					
Percentage of grade levels with at least two community arts partners during school time	71-100%	41-70%	21-40%	10-20%	<10%
Average number of hours of arts exposure per student during school time	≥15 hrs	10-14.9 hrs	5-9.9 hrs	1-4.9 hrs	<1 hr
After school					
Number of grade levels (pre-K-6) with after school arts opportunities in at least two art forms	5-6	3-4	2	1	0

	Additional components	
	Met (Yes = +1)	Not yet met (No = +0)
Community building through the arts Number of campus created arts experiences this year to engage families, faculty, and community	≥8	<8
Leadership Arts goals and strategies are included in the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP)	Yes	No
Communication Frequency of school communication to families about the value of creative learning in person or through print or social media	At least monthly or at least once a semester	At least once a year or Rarely/Never
Professional Development Percentage of teachers who participate in Creative Teaching or arts integration professional development opportunities	50-100%	<49%
Facilities Campus facilities meet the 2008 Fine Arts Education Specifications or sufficiently accommodate arts programming	Meets standard or makes accommodations	

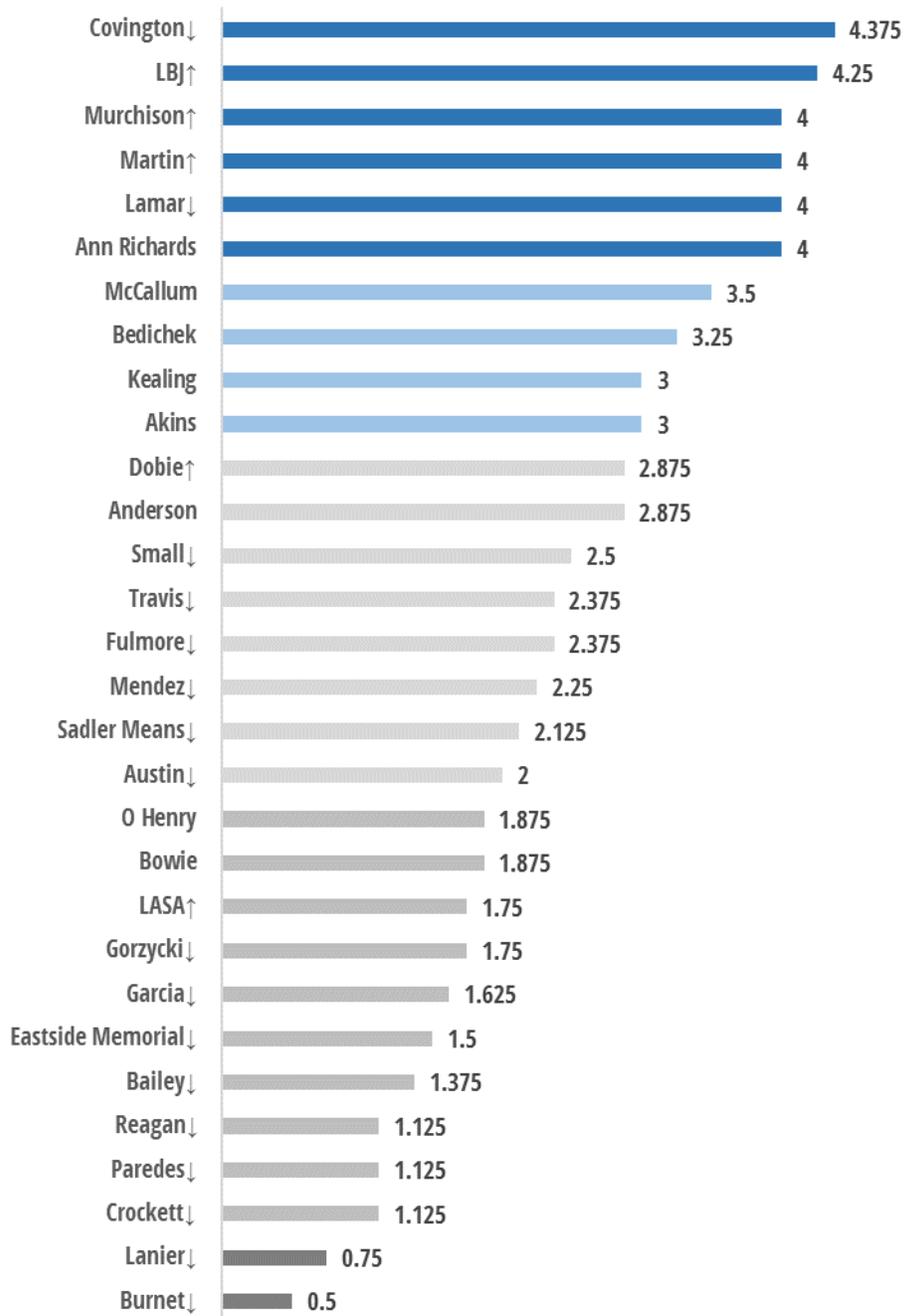
Appendix B. Secondary Creative Campus Rubric

	Primary component score				
	4	3	2	1	0
Sequential fine arts instruction Percentage of students taking the prescribed amount of fine arts classes during their tenure at your school	90-100%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	<60%
Percentage of students exceeding the prescribed amount of fine arts classes during their tenure at your school	90-100%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	<60%
Creative teaching across the curricula Percentage of general classroom teachers who use Creative Teaching strategies or arts integrated instruction at least once a week	75-100%	50-74%	25-49%	10-24%	<10%
Community arts partnerships Departments coordinating arts partnerships during school time	≥2 non-FA departments	1 non-FA department	≥2 FA departments	1 FA department	0
Average number of hours of arts exposure per student during school time	≥15 hrs	10-14.9 hrs	5-9.9 hrs	1-4.9 hrs	<1 hr
After school Number of art forms in which after-school opportunities are offered for more than one ability level (e.g., beginning, intermediate, advanced)	4-5	3	2	1	0

	Additional components	
	Met (Yes = +1)	Not yet met (No = +0)
Community building through the arts Number of campus created arts experiences this year to engage families, faculty, and community	≥10	<10
Leadership Arts goals and strategies are included in the CIP	Yes	No
Communication Frequency of school communication to families about the value of creative learning in person or through print or social media	At least monthly or at least once a semester	At least once a year or Rarely/Never
Professional Development Opportunities Percentage of teachers who participate in Creative Teaching or arts integration professional development opportunities	50-100%	<49%
Facilities Campus facilities meet the 2008 Fine Arts Education Specifications or sufficiently accommodate arts programming	Meets standard or makes accommodations	

Appendix C. Overview of Secondary Creative Campus Scores

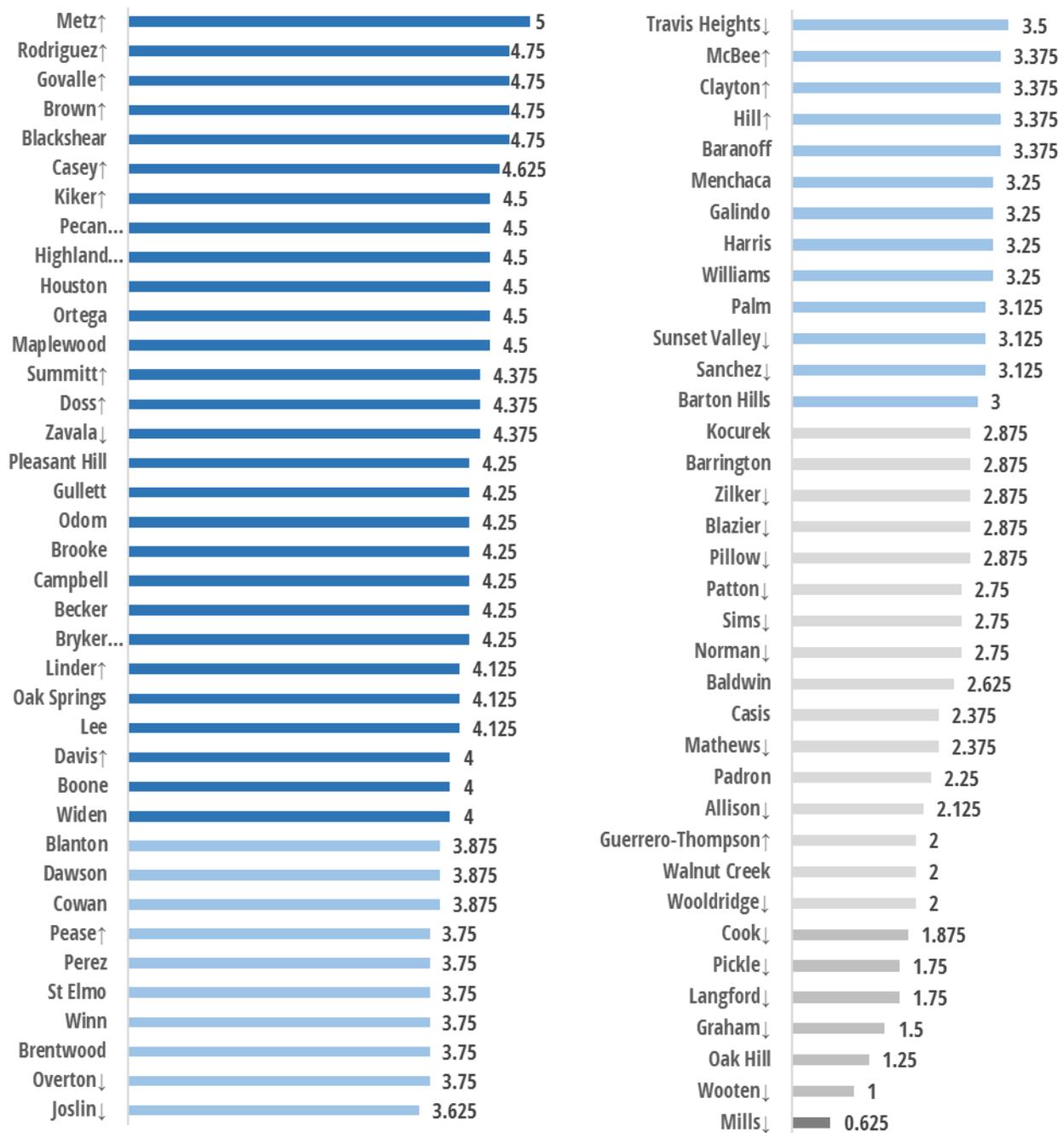
2017–2018 AISD Creative Campus Scores for Arts-Rich, Arts-Involved, Arts-Emerging-1, Arts-Emerging-2, and Arts-Uninvolved Secondary Schools



Note. Arrow after school name indicates a change of more than 1/2 point from 2016–2017. For more information about the change, see the creative-campus profile for that school at <https://www.austinisd.org/dre/surveys/2017-2018/creative-campus-profiles-2017-2018>.

Appendix D. Overview of Elementary Creative Campus Scores.

2017–2018 AISD Creative Campus Scores for Arts-Rich, Arts-Involved, Arts-Emerging-1, Arts-Emerging-2, and Arts-Uninvolved Elementary Schools



Note. Arrow after school name indicates a change of more than 1/2 point from 2016–2017.

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