Challenges and Supports to Elementary Teacher Education: Case Study of Preservice Teachers' Perspectives on Arts Integration

Jamie Hipp, Ph.D.
Louisiana State University

Margaret-Mary Sulentic Dowell
Louisiana State University

Abstract. *This case study investigates the factors that challenge and support preservice teachers' (PST) arts integration beliefs and practices. The participants include a total of 74 PSTs enrolled in a mandatory university arts course at a large Southern university across three consecutive semesters. Concurrent with arts class enrollment, PSTs are also enrolled in their capstone, semester-long, student teaching experience. The authors used PSTs' end-of-semester reflections and the primary data source. Findings illustrate that PSTs can be creative through arts integration within teaching and learning, while still acknowledging challenges at the school level. The authors detail how they revamped existing elementary preservice arts classes to focus on arts-integrated instructional practices. In addition, findings illustrate the need for strategic inservice training for mentor teachers on the efficacy of arts integration in elementary settings and for administrative support for the arts at the school level.*

> Because teacher candidates must confront a variety of tasks necessitating creative and adaptive thinking in an era focused on standards and high-stakes testing, learning about, engaging with, and infusing arts-integrated learning into teacher preparation aligns with the ideals of a liberal arts education" (Lorimer, 2012, p. 86).

In the United States (US), complex questions confront public education in the 21st century and require that teacher educators assume an active stance in improving teacher quality. Historically, political interests, spurred by the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (2001) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2016), both reauthorizations of the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (1965), have resulted in a preoccupation with formulaic, packaged, and scripted curricula (Altwerger, 2005; Coles, 2003) and high stakes tests (Garan, 2002, 2004; Johnson & Johnson, 2006) that silence teacher voices and stifle creativity, particularly in high stakes discipline-specific areas, such as literacy and math (Allington, 2002b, 2005). Within the past several decades, personal and political forces have intensified (Allington, 2004; Garan, 2002; Schneider, 2014, 2016), shaping the types of instruction public school children, especially urban elementary children, receive, narrowing curriculum and teaching to content specifically presented by a state high stakes test.

Escalating mandates derived from NCLB (2001) and ESSA (2016) legislation have increasingly dictated how educators, especially elementary teachers, teach in the US. For instance, often the literacy "forced" on urban elementary children does little to foster creativity (Finn, 1999; Meyer, 2010). Within the last 15 years in many elementary schools, social studies and science have been short shrifted, simply because they are not high stakes tested subjects (An, Capraro, & Tillman, 2013; Center on Education Policy, 2006). Of particular note, 71 percent of America's school districts have reduced arts, science, and social studies instructional minutes for increased time on the high-stakes subjects, (English Language Arts) ELA and math (Center on Education Policy, 2006). "Two-thirds of public school teachers believe that the arts are getting crowded out of the school day" as of 2012 (Farkas Duffett Research Group, 2012, p. 1). Furthermore, fewer eighth graders participated in both music and visual art education classes in 2016 than in 2008 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016).

Successful teachers engage in a multitude of tasks requiring creativity and adaptability (Darling-Hammond, 2010b; Lorimer, 2012). Educational reforms, however, have failed to provide teacher educators with a pedagogy that is rich in creativity and imagination, promotes reflective practice, and builds ownership of curriculum and adaptation of resultant practice. The result for the many who attend public urban elementary schools in the US is that teaching to the test has stifled creative teaching and learning opportunities, and curriculum has narrowed to reflect test items (Center on Education Policy, 2006).

The purpose of this current study is to investigate the factors that both support and discourage elementary preservice teachers' (PSTs) arts integration beliefs and practices. The current study uses a case study methodology (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009) situated within a Grades 1-5 teacher preparation program, wherein the authors reframed a required arts course for elementary teachers as an arts integration course, and thus provided PSTs with an outlet for innovation, creative talent, and artistic quality, especially as they were placed in public schools in a large urban center, predominantly populated with children of color.

Teacher quality improves with active engagement (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2010a; Schomoker, 2006) and includes ownership of pedagogical practice, deep reflection about practice, and strategic professional preparation and development. Quality teachers are the key factor in student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1997; 2010a; Schomoker, 2006). Teachers are the vehicle to provide students with opportunities to express knowledge creatively. However, this is not a recent finding. Over three decades ago, Wehlage (1987) established the need for curriculum and teaching methods that promote an active role for students, positing that without engagement, children were at risk for school failure, including dropping out of school. Rigorous experimental studies and quasi-experimental evaluations (Kemple & Snipes, 2000) demonstrated the positive impact of various types of experiential, inquiry-based learning on student retention, learning, and achievement.

In particular, studies on arts integration support active learning and engagement and deeper, more sustained learning. For example, Baker (2012) specifically studied the impact of arts integration on cognitive development, whereas Hardiman, Rinne, & Yarmolinskya (2014) specifically studied the retention of academic content using arts integrated practices. Greenfader & Brouillete (2013) explored the use of arts integrated pedagogy on the increase of language skills among students identified as English Language Learners (ELLs). McKinney, Corbett, Wilson, & Noblit (2001) focused their research on the efficacy of arts-based instruction within the A+ model of arts integration.

Arts integration is a pedagogical approach providing opportunity to achieve curricular goals by having students create through an art form and connecting instruction between the art form and core curriculum, with students assuming active roles in both the arts and discipline-specific content (Aprill, 2010; Biscoe & Wilson, 2015; DeMoss and Morris, 2002). Arts integrated teaching and learning allows students to move from passivity in school to being active, engaged, and in charge of connecting content and skills in profound ways, as investigated by Doyle, Huie Hofstetter, Kendig, & Strick (2014) and Russell & Zembylas (2007). Silverstein & Layne (2010) provided the field with a working definition of arts integration, utilized by the US's pinnacle of the arts, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. The Kennedy Center was founded in 1964, but with roots that can be traced back to 1958, when Kennedy's predecessor, President

Dwight D. Eisenhower, signed bipartisan legislation, the National Cultural Center Act (1958).

Specifically, the Kennedy Center's definition in the US is: "Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both" (Silverstein & Layne, 2010, p. 1). Roughly two thirds of programmatic arts curricula in the US can be identified as *arts as curriculum* and *arts enhanced* curriculum, simply defined as the teaching of art or the use of art in teaching a subject-area concept (Silverstein & Layne, 2009).

Purpose of the Study

In the current context of US PK-12 education, neoliberal interests and commodification of teaching and learning are intensifying, resulting in a formulaic, one-size-fits all curriculum designed to impact students' outcomes on standardized tests (Berliner & Glass, 2014; Bracey, 2001; Johnson & Johnson, 2006; Schneider, 2016). This commodification and attempted corporatization of public education in the US promoting educational reforms of the last several decades has resulted in a narrowing of curriculum and an over focus on high stakes tests, teaching to what content is presented by state high stakes tests (Berliner & Glass, 2014; Bracey, 2001; Schneider, 2014; 2015). Several researchers have specifically investigated how political pressure has exacerbated high-stakes testing (Ravitch, 2014; Ravitch & Kohn, 2014; Schneider, 2016). From the onset of the intensified use of standardized tests, other researchers have focused on the impact of high stakes testing in the core subject of literacy (Allington, 2002a; 2005; Bomer, 2005; Gallagher, 2009; Garan, 2002). Preparing pre-service teachers (PSTs) to acknowledge high stakes tests but resist preoccupying teaching with their focus, and instead, authentically integrate the arts (McGill-Franzen & Zeig, 2015), intrigued us and led to this timely study. We were interested in the impact of arts integration preparation on a select group of PSTs, particularly in the factors that either supported and/or discouraged PSTs from engaging with and utilizing arts-integration.

Theoretical Frame

The theoretical stance that framed this study was advocacy for the arts. Advocacy for the arts in education is not new; Dewey (1934) first explored the connections between art and learning. Origins of integrating the arts with core curriculum subsequently surfaced in publications by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) which included such presentations as "Fusion of Music with Academic Subjects" and "Projects in the Interrelation of Music and Other High School Subjects" (Dykema & Gehrkens, 1944). An exhaustive literature review by Burnaford, Brown, Doherty, & McLaughlin

(2007) provides insight into the efficacy and value of arts integration. Student engagement has emerged as a prime motivator for learning. Researchers such as Charland (2011), Garett (2010), and Powell (2007) studied student engagement through arts integration using the lens of professional development and/or faculty development. Chand-O'Neal's (2014) research focused on a turnaround model of arts integration as a means of increasing student engagement. Greenfader and Brouillette (2013) provided compelling evidence that arts-integrated pedagogical practices improved student engagement among a population of students identified as ELLs.

Pertinent Literature on the Efficacy of the Arts

In a meta-analysis of 50 years of studies between 1950-1999 (published and unpublished, and appearing in English) that examined the connection between the arts, learning, and academic achievement, Winner & Hetland (2000) revealed three studies, a small yet important number, which demonstrated a causal relationship between engagement in the study of arts and student outcomes. During the past two decades, the impact of the arts on learning has been reported within a sustained body of research. For instance, an expansive body of research has emphasized the positive cognitive aspects of arts in education (Baker, 2012; Diaz & McKenna, 2017; McKinney et al., 2001, Nelson, 2001; Patteson, 2004; Wandell et al., 2008). Further, extensive research has been conducted specifically examining the impact of arts within targeted curricular areas (Patteson, 2004). Also, research on arts integration and teacher professional development (Berghoff, Borgmann, & Parr, 2005; Goldberg, 2001; Oreck, 2004) has been undertaken. However, there is a dearth of research examining the effectiveness of arts integration preparation for PSTs. Further, research documenting the influence of re-imaging elementary professional practice courses in art, and reframing them as arts integration, is scarce.

Decline of Arts Education Access and Availability

Recent federal research details the rapid decline of arts education access and availability in K-12 environs (Center on Education Policy, 2006; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012; President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 2011; Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). In schools without arts specialists, classroom practitioners often become students' only access to the arts. Although generalist teachers' main priority is the teaching of subjects archetypally considered "core," it is advantageous to integrate the arts (Music, Theatre, Dance, and Visual Arts) with English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Thus, embedding arts integration practices within teacher education programming may ameliorate the absence of art exposure and access in the elementary setting.

Review of Related Literature on Arts Integration

Arts integration benefits both hard skills, measured by tests, and soft skills, or, what is referred to as non-cognitive factors, typically associated with workforce development (Kautz, Heckman, Diris, Ter Weel, & Borghans, 2014). When elementary classroom teachers integrate the arts with non-arts subjects, students' ELA achievement improves, particularly achievement associated with literate language features (Anderson, 2012; Anderson & Loughlin, 2014), speaking and listening skills (Greenfader & Brouillette, 2013), and high stakes tests (Walker, Bosworth McFadden, Tabone, and Finklestein, 2011). In tandem, integrating the arts also points to increased mathematics achievement, specifically success related to problem solving and using mathematical symbols (An, Capraro, and Tillman 2013), improved student attitudes regarding math (Werner, 2011), and higher standardized test achievement in state high-stakes math assessments (Cunnington et al., 2014; Harloff, 2011).

Noted educational researcher Gerald Bracey concluded that a drawback of standardized testing is a test's inability to measure soft skills or non-cognitive factors, including, "creativity, critical thinking, resilience, motivation, persistence, curiosity, endurance, reliability, enthusiasm, empathy, self-awareness, self-discipline, leadership, civic-mindedness, courage, compassion, resourcefulness, sense of beauty, sense of wonder, honesty, and integrity" (Strauss, 2011). Arts integration can also promote student acquisition of soft skills, including motivation (Garett, 2010; Smithrim & Upitis, 2005) and engagement (Cawthon, Dawson, & Ihorn, 2011; Chand O'Neal, 2014; Charland, 2011). Despite the abundance of integration benefits, however, teacher perspectives are varied.

Literature chronicling PST attitudes related to arts integration is in short supply. Rule et al. (2012) created and administered a longitudinal survey to preservice participants enrolled in three social studies methods classes at the University of Northern Iowa (N=65). The researchers administered the survey both before and after participation in an arts-integrated social studies unit on African customs and cultures. In Rule's study, a frequency table within the manuscript revealed that the most common deterrents to arts integrated pedagogy were time and standardized testing. Furthermore, preservice arts experiences greatly shape teachers' proclivity to integrate the arts in the future. Positive prior arts experiences improve teacher confidence in arts-based pedagogy and teachers' perceived value of the arts (Alter et al., 2009; Lummis et al., 2014; Russell-Bowie & Dowson, 2005); however, negative experiences can hinder both the quantity and quality of arts experiences provided in elementary classrooms (Barry, 1992; Grauer, 1998). Although not specific to the elementary level, Hagen (2002) investigated the relationship between preservice teachers' comfort in using music after enrollment in a required university arts class. The researcher examined participants' previous music exposure as well. "Years of experience in performing groups in high school and private lessons were

predictors of higher comfort levels with singing and multicultural activities" (p. 1).

Contrary to limited PST perspectives, elementary generalist perspectives on arts integration deterrents are well documented. The most cited challenge to classroom practitioner integration usage is time. This includes planning time, time to collaborate with arts specialists or other artistic teachers, and perceived time to execute arts integrated lessons and activities (LaJevic, 2013; Oreck, 2006; Saraniero, Goldberg, & Hall, 2014). Administrative support is also a contributing factor to integration frequency, as chronicled through different research designs (Bellisario and Donovan, 2012; Purnell, 2004; Van Eman et al., 2008).

Purnell (2004) used a survey design to determine the roadblocks to arts integration of 75 elementary school teachers, representative of urban, suburban, and rural school environments. Survey respondents cited a lack of both administrative support and collaboration/planning time with fellow teachers as the main hindrances to successful arts integration implementation.

Teachers involved in Van Eman's (2008) qualitative study also emphasized the lack of integration support from school administration who were markedly focused on high stakes tests, and, to a lesser extent, a lack of instructional time. One teacher expressed frustration with administrative testing mandates, stating, "The administration seems to believe that too much time is spent on 'fun' activities such as art, or using alternative teaching and learning strategies" (Van Eman et al., 2008, p. 14). Another "saw an entirely arts-integrated curriculum as an impossibility due to the pressure she felt by her principal…to focus on test mandates." The third bemoaned, "Not enough hours in the day to incorporate the arts in lessons… time is always limited." In a 2012 mixed-methods study, Bellisario and Donovan found that in-service elementary teachers who were graduates of an integration-focused Master's program considered high-stakes tests foci, and an absence of administrative support to be main obstacles of arts integrated teaching and learning.

Practitioners describe a singular administrative focus on both high stakes tests (Bellisario & Donovan, 2012; Oreck, 2004; Oreck, 2006) and pre-scripted curriculum (Garvis & Pendergast, 2010; LaJevic, 2013; Saraniero et al., 2014; Van Eman et al., 2008) as deterrents to using an integrated approach. Finally, literature indicates that preservice and professional development training in arts integrated practices improves teacher comfort and self-efficacy with varied art forms (Oreck, 2004). However, opportunities for teachers to participate in integration-specific professional development are scarce. The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (2011) offers an overview of the following arts integration training programs for classroom practitioners: The Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership, the A+ Schools Program, Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance (AEMS), Arts at Large, Center for Arts Education (CAE), Center for Creative Education (CCE), Chicago Arts Partnerships in Schools (CAPE), Higher Order Thinking Schools

(HOT), the Kennedy Center's Changing Education through the Arts program (CETA), the Arts Integration Mentorship Project (Project AIM), and California's P.S. Arts.

Literature specific to a smaller, yet important, population of educators, PSTs, reveals a lack of self-efficacy with arts integration (Battersby & Cave, 2014; Lee, Patall, Cawthon, & Steingut, 2015). Many states require preservice elementary practitioners to participate in at least three hours of arts methodology classes prior to certification (Arts Education Partnership, 2014). A limited number of teacher educators and teacher preparation programs have transformed portions of these compulsory experiences from a basic overview of the creative arts to fully arts integrated experiences (Branscombe, & Schneider, 2013; Robinson, 2012; Rule et al.,2012; Whitin & Moench, 2015). Values and benefits of integrated pedagogy, related challenges, and instances of transformed learning opportunities exemplify the dreams and possibilities related to arts integration in teacher education.

Study Methods

This phenomenological case study focused on arts integration, as defined by the Kennedy Center (Silverstein & Layne, 2010), which was refigured into a required teacher preparation course. The purpose of this case study was to investigate the factors that both support and discourage elementary preservice teachers' (PSTs) arts integration beliefs and practices. We purposely selected the participants based on both convenience and criteria sampling (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2007).

Beginning in August of 2016 through December 2017, we investigated four select groups of PSTs who were expected to enroll in a required three-hour arts-based elementary pedagogy course as part of a 120 hour program that included just one art course. This program specifically trained individuals interested in an elementary certificate focused on Grades One to Five.

Phenomenology (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994) describes the shared meaning for individuals of their lived experiences of a phenomenon. Within the phenomenological framework, case study design includes individuals who have experienced the phenomenon, and a combined description of the experience is created. This description includes "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). A phenomenological case study was particularly suited to the current study, which sought to investigate how to infuse arts integration within elementary subjects (ELA, math, science, social studies) within a high stakes environment. A timely overarching question guided this study:

1) What influences/factors/circumstances challenged or supported implementation of arts integrated lessons for PSTs placed in public, urban elementary schools?

Setting

The setting for this study was a flagship university, located in a large urban center in a southern US state. We identify the course itself, as well as student teaching placement classrooms as extended study sites over three semesters.

Participants

The sampling methods employed were convenience and criterion sampling (Collins et al., 2007), as PSTs were enrolled in this mandatory arts course. Convenience sampling refers to accessibility to participants, while criterion implies that all participants meet conditions for inclusion in the study. Concurrent with arts class enrollment, PSTs were also enrolled in their capstone semester-long student teaching experience. A total of 74 students were participants in this study. Reflective of national demographic data, 82% of public school K-12 teachers are white, teaching predominantly non-white students (Maxwell, 2014 & National Center for Education Statistics, 2013); of the 74 total participants, 72 identified as white. All were female. This demographic mirrors national demographic data as well (NCES, 2013). Four sections of the course were identified: one in the fall of 2016, two in the spring of 2017, and one in the fall of 2017. The authors co-taught one section in the fall of 2016; each taught a separate section in spring of 2017; and Author 1 taught the Fall 2017 section independently.

Of note, all participants were completing a mandatory one-semester student teaching experience. As such, participants are neophyte teachers with limited independent teaching experience.

Empirical Materials

Empirical materials (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) addressed the research question by analyzing PST perceptions regarding the factors that supported and discouraged arts-integrated practices. Four sets of PSTs' end-of-course reflections from three semesters of a required elementary preservice arts class were considered the primary data source. Reflections were generated in response to a two-part prompt: "What is the biggest challenge to arts integration in elementary classrooms?" and "If you could change one thing related to arts integration, what would it be?" All 74 participants answered both sections of the two-part prompt, with some writing an answer of phrase or sentence length and others writing a paragraph.

Analysis

According to Koro-Ljungberg, Yendol-Hoppey, Jude Smith, and Hayes (2009), qualitative inquiry should align analytical processes with researchers' recognized and accepted paradigms and methods. Our analysis was based

on Denzin and Lincoln's constructivist paradigm (2011). In tandem with constructivist thinking, data methods and analysis provided us the opportunity to create thick, rich descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of the PSTs' experiences of arts integration.

Initially, the authors coded the first set of critical reflections inductively, together, and line-by-line, achieving intercoder agreement (Saldaña, 2018). Employing Creswell's constant comparative method (2007), which encourages a continuous cycle of conception and categorization, we coded instances broadly using inductive, open coding. We noted patterns occurring most frequently in words and phrases specifically associated with arts integration. Subsequent informal reflection sets were coded separately. Then, Authors 1 and 2 reviewed all initial codes assigned to each set of reflections, again using Creswell's constant comparative method (2007). The first phase of coding was informative, but not comprehensive.

In order to establish more specific codes, we came together again as a team and decided to recode the entire data set of reflections collaboratively to achieve more consensus, consistency, and stronger intercoder agreement (Saldaña, 2018).

For our second phase of coding, we again sat side-by-side and recoded all four sets of reflection data, using the initial codes we agreed upon as comprehensive *a priori* codes. We then examined, merged, and collapsed codes to the point of saturation. For example, the codes of *adds something*, *important*, and *necessary* were collapsed into one code, *value*. Another example of collapsing codes to the point of saturation involved the code of *resources*, which we initially coded as *materials*, *supplies*, and *space* until we decided upon *resources*.

Our next step was to review all reflection codes and determine code concepts. In grouping codes into concept categories, we identified the four code concepts – needs, barriers, excuses, and benefits – as reflective of either *Challenges to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level* and *Advantages and Recommendations regarding Integrating the Arts into Elementary Curriculum and Teaching*, our final themes. Table 1 exhibits the codes we decided to use as *a priori* codes in the second phase of coding, how those codes were clustered and determined code concepts, and then how code concepts were finally labeled as themes.

Table 1: Themes, Code Categories, Codes, and Code Instances

Themes	**Code concepts**	**Codes**	**Code instances**
Challenges to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level	**Needs**	Time Resources Professional development Funding Ways to incorporate	51 29 8 9 40

		Knowledge	18
	Barriers	Administration Standardized tests Scripted curricula Awareness	4 12 9 16
	Excuses	Messy Behavior Creativity	1 8 6
Advantages and Recommendations regarding Integrating the Arts into Elementary Curriculum and Teaching	**Benefits**	Collaboration Value Needs met Higher order Passion	7 52 3 2 3

Finally, we reviewed all PST reflections, evaluations, and critical self-reflections and compared all data sets to triangulate our findings (Charmaz, 2000; Creswell, 2007). In our analysis we attended to credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Creswell, 2007; Saldaña, 2016) through phase coding of multiple sets of empirical materials and prolonged association with each group of students.

Results

Two major themes emerged through data analysis: *Challenges to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level* and *Advantages and Recommendations regarding Integrating the Arts into Elementary Curriculum and Teaching*. Next is a brief discussion of each theme.

Challenges to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level

Data revealed five significant codes that contributed to this theme, based on code instances: time (51), ways to incorporate (40), resources (29), knowledge (18), awareness (16), standardized tests (12), and scripted curricula (9). Following, the authors discuss each code as they contributed to the theme of *Challenges to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level.*

Time. Budgeting time, or the perception that time was inadequate for integrated arts teaching, was a huge challenge and represented the highest number of code instances. This challenge – time – was exacerbated by two other mitigating factors. One factor was the issue that, as novices, these

PSTs were still mastering the ability to pace lessons adequately. A second factor for many PSTs was the inability of their mentor teachers to relinquish both control and deviate from their established classroom schedules. However, the complexities of this challenge were fascinating from a researcher's perspective. For example, one PST, Anna [pseudonym], from the Fall 2017 semester, specifically identified inadequate time – namely in relation to scripted curriculum and prioritization of high-stakes tests – as a major deterrent, exemplified by this quote from the data:

> In many classrooms, time is an issue. There is hardly time for all the "core" subjects. In third grade and above, not only is time an issue, but the teachers spend so much time prepping students for the upcoming [high stakes] tests.

Another instance, culled from the Spring 2017 data, was from Savannah's [pseudonym] perception:

> The biggest challenge that I faced when integrating art was a lack of time. We were always rushing through math already in order to have time for social living, so it was really difficult to make time for an art activity.

Similar to Anna and Savannah's views was Chaz's [pseudonym], a student from the Spring 2017 cohort. Chaz addressed the issue of PSTs as "guests" in mentor teachers' classrooms, as commented in her reflection,

> The biggest challenge related to arts integration is that there is not enough time and it disrupts the existing routine. In my classroom, when I did my arts integrated lesson, my mentor teacher's schedule was thrown off because my lesson took so long. It seems that because many teachers get set in their ways, it is difficult to change things up, even when it is something as simple as integrating the arts.

Conversely, time was viewed by some as a non-issue. For instance, one PST also from the Spring 2017 cohort, Bettie [pseudonym], shared, "Time was not an enemy because we planned it on a review day and a test day." These quotes exemplify the complexities of the challenge of time when implementing arts integration. These quotes also indicate the different classroom environments and the extent to which mentor teachers allowed PSTs to assume a more active stance. "Pre-service teachers who choose to take risks in their pedagogies are particularly vulnerable if by doing so, their mentor teachers identify them as being out of tune with their own way of thinking," (Cattley, 2007, p. 338). Supervising or mentor teachers shape preservice teachers' instructional practices and beliefs, which can substantially impact novice teachers' learning (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008; Hawkey, 1997) and contribute greatly to the development of preservice teacher identity (Cattley, 2007; Izadinia, 2015; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). It is crucial that mentors provide PSTs with opportunities to audition numerous pedagogical strategies during a student teaching internship. This is particularly true of arts integrated pedagogy, which relies on a cycle of collaborative planning, experiential processes, and reflection as the pedagogical practice is honed over time.

Ways to incorporate. Another significant code, representing 40 instances was, “ways to incorporate.” In some instances, this code interfaced with the first code discussed, “time.” Jessica [pseudonym], a Spring 2017 PST, illustrated this interplay between “time” and an example of PST arts integration usage, which the authors coded as “ways to incorporate” by stating:

> The biggest challenge I faced was time management. My students did two arts-related
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> > activities: They handmade an object and created, wrote, and filmed an advertisement. This was a lot to do in one class period but I was adamant on doing all of it in one day because there was only a set time being spent on this unit. Even though we were able to get all of it done, more time would always be nice.

While “time” and “ways to incorporate” were predominantly perceived by PSTs as “challenges,” not all PSTs viewed both similarly. This was demonstrated in another spring 2017 PST’s reflection. Reba commented:

> I find it difficult (at first) to integrate arts into certain lessons and subject areas. Although
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> > I have now learned from this course that that idea is not true, that was one of my biggest hang-ups regarding arts integration. Now that I have seen how easy it is to simply integrate the arts, I will be much more likely to integrate arts into my lessons. I have also learned that time is not as big of a problem as anticipated. I believe once the integration becomes more natural and comfortable, lessons will begin to flow smoothly.

Many of the PSTs’ reflections discussed “ways to incorporate,” but in the context of the struggles, i.e. challenges, they encountered situated within their assigned mentor teacher’s classroom. Like all teachers, mentor teachers represent a wide array of philosophical stances and perspectives on teaching, including views on the efficacy of arts integration. For instance, Raquel [pseudonym], a PST from the fall of 2016, responded:

> I’m scared to “waste” time by attempting to teach [arts integrated] procedures and be
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> > unsuccessful. I am also very timid about trying new things in Ms. Smith’s [pseudonym] classroom. She is not always the most accepting of new ideas and can be extremely harsh and blunt.

Another response indicated this same struggle as PSTs negotiated instructional practices within an assigned mentor teacher’s classroom, as evidenced by a fellow Fall 2016 PST, as Katie [pseudonym] revealed:

> I believe I might be able to incorporate more art in my own classroom one day, but I think it would need to be introduced very early on in the school year. My mentor teacher is very detail oriented and likes the lessons taught her way. I am not able to deviate much and I understand. It’s not my class at the end of the day.

To reiterate, PST participants in this study were enrolled in an elementary Grades 1-5 teacher preparation program. PSTs are not strangers to the power of storytelling. In fact, “Storytelling as an information medium is heavily used today in education and training of all types” (Andrews, Hull, & Donahue, 2009, p. 6). Many study respondents were eager to share their arts integrated experiences through short stories or examples, i.e. “ways to incorporate.” A third prominent code within this theme of *Challenges to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level* was “resources.” Originally, code instances “supplies,” “materials,” and “space,” which the authors elected to collapse into “resources.”

Resources. Due to the demands of the capstone experience, the university where the PSTs were enrolled strongly discouraged working during student teaching. Thus, it was not surprising to the researchers that, as an assumption, a total of 29 code instances of “resources” surfaced during analysis. Overwhelmingly, these code instances reflected the lack of resources as a challenge for PSTs to overcome. For example, Anna [pseudonym], a PST in the spring of 2017, stated, “The biggest challenge I faced was trying to plan a lesson around the supplies in the classroom that were available to me.” Another PST from the Fall 2016 cohort, Lucy [pseudonym], responded, “The hardest thing to me is having the proper supplies to integrate the arts.” Yet another PST from the Fall 2017 semester, Abigail [pseudonym], reflected, “I think the biggest challenge would have to be materials because things can get costly fast.” The elementary Grades 1-5 program did not supply any funds for PSTs while they were student teaching. As with most elementary teachers, any items not covered by school budgets typically come from teachers’ own personal funds. These three quotes represent the majority of PST attitudes regarding the challenge of accessing resources. However, one particular PST from the Fall 2016 cohort demonstrated the impact of this arts-integrated course on her perceptions toward the fallacy of the need for specific resources in order to integrate the arts. Roxy [pseudonym] ruminated

> I feel as though I thought I lacked supplies when I only considered incorporating visual art into my lessons. However, there are so many other forms of art teachers can include in their classrooms. No supplies are needed for many performing arts activities. I never considered incorporating performing arts into my class until learning about the demonstrations from this class. So far, I have had many students act out character traits and vocabulary words. Allowing my students to do this required no supplies and it was art!

Roxy’s response highlights the effect of teacher-educators explicitly modeling a repertoire of arts integrated pedagogy that does not require special resources, supplies, or materials. Such exemplars from the preservice arts integration course included theatrical tableaux vivants with sequence of a story (resources: open space), visual thinking strategies with historical events (resources: visual art masterpieces available through an online

search), body percussion with weather processes (resources: open space), and choreography with properties of algebra (resources: open space). Less frequent than the “resources” code (29 instances) were code instances for both “knowledge” (18) and “awareness” (16), which the researchers chose to discuss simultaneously in the following section.

Knowledge and awareness. The differences between the codes of “knowledge” and “awareness” are nuanced. While PSTs referred to “knowledge” as the understanding of arts-based pedagogy, “awareness” indicated the cognizance of arts integration’s existence as a pedagogical practice. This was echoed in PSTs’ reflections across all four cohorts. One example of “knowledge” was Ella’s [pseudonym] response from the spring 2017 semester as she stated:

> I think the biggest challenge related to arts integration is the experience and knowledge on the subject. I am thankful for this class, because now we have a bucket of ideas/lessons to pull from for each art form. Many teachers struggle with knowing art content themselves, therefore it is difficult for them to teach.

Germane to “awareness,” a quote from a Spring 2017 PST culled from the data exemplified this code. Alice [pseudonym] reflected, “A lot of teachers don’t even know about arts integration.” In this study, awareness and knowledge emerged as separate yet related issues that challenges implementation of arts integration. Furthermore, the interconnectedness of “standardized tests” (12 instances) and the resultant proclivity to use scripted “curricula” solely focused on test preparation (9 instances) was a separate barrier to PSTs’ perceptions regarding challenges of arts integration, albeit to a lesser extent than resources, knowledge, or awareness. In the following section, we discuss in detail the challenges PSTs encountered in local schools as they grappled with the laser-like focus on pre-scripted and formulaic curricula used to prepare students for eventual standardized testing.

Standardized tests: Scripted curricula. The over-emphasis on standardized test results and the pressure to perform appeared to influence the degree to which scripted curricula was utilized. Combined, the standardized tests and scripted curricula codes accounted for 21 instances. The mentor teachers’ school or district’s adopted curricula were tightly formulaic and prescriptive and laser-focused on test prep; therefore, integrating the arts was viewed as extraneous and challenging. A Fall 2016 PST, Bonnie [pseudonym], cited her challenge with the district-mandated Eureka math curriculum and stated, “…integrating the Arts has been most difficult in my Math class. Math at [school name] comes from Eureka ©. Eureka © is very detailed, scripted, and leaves little room for expansion.” Specific to standardized tests, a Spring 2017 PST, Juli [pseudonym], astutely reflected, “The biggest challenge is the LEAP [state-mandated high-stakes

test]. Every teacher is so focused on the test that they will not even entertain an art lesson."

Notwithstanding the variety of PST challenges to arts integration that emerged during data analysis, a Fall 2017 participant, after taking the preservice arts integration class, "think[s] that all these challenges are easier to overcome than first thought." The design of the preservice arts integration course contributed greatly to this perspective. The course directed PSTs to actively participate in arts integrated learning experiences during class time. PSTs were also required to plan and facilitate two arts integrated lessons over the duration of the semester – one for the students within their student teaching placement and one for their in-class peers. During each integrated lesson facilitated for/with their preservice peers, five to seven PSTs served as lesson observers to provide timely feedback to PST facilitators using an observation form created weeks prior by all PSTs enrolled in the class. The observation form/rubric outlined the specific components enrolled students believed should be present in an exceptional arts integrated lesson (Table 2) based on their knowledge of arts integrated pedagogy from the semester. Understandably, participants in each section of the course (one in the fall of 2016, two in the spring of 2017, and one in the fall of 2017) identified slightly different criteria for their class observation form.

Table 2: Observation Rubric Created by PSTs (Fall 2017 Section)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Arts + Curriculum</u> (2 points total)
• 2 points:
-Natural connection between arts and non-arts content
-Standards/objectives posted or reviewed by facilitator
• 1 point: One of the above tenets present
• 0 points: None of the above tenets present</td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Lesson Design</u> (2 points total)
• 2 points:
-Lesson participants have opportunities to receive and demonstrate knowledge via visual/auditory/kinesthetic/tactile modalities
-facilitator encouraged participant collaboration and/or there is evidence of collaboration with colleagues prior
• 1 point: One of the above</td><td><u>Enriched Assessment</u> (2 points total)
• 2 points:
-lesson participants encouraged to self-assess or peer assess
-feedback is accurate and specific
• 1 point: One of the above tenets
• 0 points: None of the above tenets</td></tr>
</table>

tenets • 0 points: None of the above tenets	
Facilitation **(4 points total)** • 4 points -facilitator encouraged a climate that promoted student ownership/accountability, discovery, and choice -materials preset and ready for student use -transitions between lesson components seamless and rehearsed -students engaged in complex ideas/problem solving instead of rote learning • 3 points -3 of the above tenets present • 2 points -2 of the above tenets present • 1 point -1 of the above tenets present • 0 points -none of the above tenets present	
Recommendations	

Supports to the Implementation of Arts Integrated Teaching at the Elementary Level

In juxtaposition to the challenges perceived and faced by PSTs within the four course sections, supports when integrating the arts at the elementary level also emerged from data analysis. What became clear during the teaching of the actual courses, as well as through data analysis, was that both the school setting for PSTs student-teaching placement, as well as the classroom setting for the compulsory PST arts integration class, were typically reflective of mentor teachers' beliefs regarding the efficacy of arts integration.

PSTs' self-perception of their own attitudes and beliefs, coupled with the perceived beliefs of their mentor teachers identified "value" of arts integration as a supportive factor in their own arts integrated endeavors. This represented the largest code instance (52) and is best articulated through a Fall 2016 PST's response:

> Studies show that when the arts are integrated, students not only enjoy learning more but also retain the content more than they would without it. Benefitting the students is what is most important, and I think would lead to a tremendous rise in student performance.

This particular piece of reflection data exemplified how, through this course, PSTs were forming an understanding of the efficacy of arts integration and

perceived arts integration as an overall benefit to teaching. Although the respondent's view that arts integrated teaching augmented the acquisition of test content was general in nature, the perception of improved academic achievement as supportive to implementation of arts integration should be studied further, particularly in causal studies. Finally, access to resources or creative application of existing materials was also identified as supportive to implementation of arts integrated teaching at the elementary level.

PST reflection data was overwhelmingly skewed toward the challenges PSTs encountered when attempting to integrate the arts into their lesson plans. Overall, the theme of *Advantages and Recommendations regarding Integrating the Arts into Elementary Curriculum and Teaching* was much more nuanced, but reflects research findings from the field. Again, it is important to note the novice status of these PSTs. The Discussion section of this manuscript further explores PSTs' perceptions.

Discussion

The qualitative data analysis presented above speaks to a variety of educational stakeholders. The findings are significant and illustrate that teaching and learning in schools can be creative when PSTs seek ways to integrate the arts. Further, implications for teacher education are important and can serve as models of arts integration for university faculty, PSTs and mentor teachers who host student teachers.

Additionally, multiple recommendations seem to be warranted from the data. Many PST challenges to arts integration coded within data collection and subsequent analysis can be mitigated three specific ways: revamping existing elementary preservice arts classes to focus on arts-integrated instructional practices; strategic inservice training for mentor teachers on the efficacy of arts integration in elementary settings; and a call for administrative support for the arts at the school level.

Specifically related to the authors' reconfigured arts-based pedagogy class with a focus on recommended arts integrated practices, PSTs provided feedback on the class through an open-ended prompt. PSTs repeatedly cited the value of arts integration to their work. This is evidenced in a comment from the Spring 2017 semester:

> [The instructor] truly opened my eyes to the benefits and purpose of arts integrated lessons. It does take time and planning, but she showed us how easy it can be to incorporate art integration into any lesson if you welcome your mind to the possibilities.

Furthermore, a Fall 2017 PST affirmed:

> [The instructor] has inspired me to use the arts within my future career. She has taught
> me the many ways to do this cost effectively and curriculum rich. I now feel more prepared for my upcoming teaching career because of this class.

A number of PSTs' course reflections touted the arts integration class for its ability to improve awareness, demystify arts integration practices, and alleviate challenges. This resonates with the researchers/authors who promote earlier enrollment in the required preservice arts class. A total of 74 PSTs participated in this study. From the 74 responses, 12 of the participants suggested the class be offered earlier in their program, as many hoped to utilize arts integrated methods in their student-teaching placements in lieu of learning arts integrated methods concurrent with student-teaching. A Fall 2017 participant summarized this perfectly, stating, "[The course] should be taken before student teaching because it prepares you to teach. By the time we began creating our own arts integrated lessons, student teaching was halfway done."

Multiple benefits stem from situating the class earlier in the course sequence. As PSTs are learning content and delivery in discipline-specific classes, such as ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies, the arts integrated course would assist in strengthening novice teachers' repertoire of instructional strategies. At the flagship university setting of this study, discipline specific courses include the following instructional methods: cooperative learning, concept mapping, Socratic questioning, think/pair/share, interactive notebooks, manipulatives, and project-based learning. By introducing these strategies early in the course sequence, PSTs have ample rehearsal time with each prior to the student teaching experience. The same would be true of arts integration, if presented earlier. Additionally, competing for time alongside the semester-long intensive student teaching would be a non-issue, and earlier access to arts integration materials, resources, and training could strengthen arts-integrated pedagogy as PSTs develop their skill and command of recommended practices.

Furthermore, the researchers/authors encourage arts-integration training specifically for mentor teachers. Mentor teachers shape the development of preservice teachers' practices and identity (Cattley, 2007; Izadinia, 2015; Zhou & Zhang, 2017), which can significantly influence novice teachers' learning (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Hall et al., 2008; Hawkey, 1997). Data analysis of PST reflections revealed numerous matters related to mentor teachers (expectations, existing classroom procedures, timing), which served as challenges to PSTs' arts integration perspectives. Inservice training focused specifically on arts-integrated methods for mentor teachers, potentially in conjunction with their student teachers, may lead to shared beliefs and practices based on the efficacy of arts integration.

In addition to recommendations for both teacher educators and mentor teachers, administrators can also promote arts integration. Principals are in a pivotal position to allocate appropriate time and resources (funding and space) and to set curricular expectations, specifically the authorization to integrate the arts with district-selected curricula packages. Principals can also support classroom teachers' arts integration endeavors by creating common planning time with school or community-based arts specialists (Author, 2017). By promoting arts-based pedagogy as a valid use of

instructional time, reconsidering instructional time for the arts, and encouraging classroom teachers to supplement pre-scripted lessons with arts-based strategies, administrators can support the arts at the school level within the current high-stakes environment.

Conclusion

Teaching is profoundly intricate and rich. For the authors, it is hard to imagine teaching without integrating the arts. Lessons learned from Dewey are as germane today as they were several generations past. “If we teach today’s students as we taught yesterday’s, we rob them of tomorrow” (Dewey, 1944, p. 167). The current study adds to the body of literature regarding the efficacy of arts integrated practices related to elementary teacher education.

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