



ARTS EDUCATION
COLLABORATIVE

Leadership Academy (2016–2017)

Summative Evaluation Report – Overview
September 2018



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INTRODUCTION

This overview report highlights key findings from an evaluation of the **Leadership Academy** class that met during the 2016–2017 school year. Data was collected from participants before, during, and after Leadership Academy—including interviews conducted almost a year following the program’s end.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Leadership Academy is an intensive year-long professional learning program facilitated by AEC to help educators develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes that promote quality arts education leadership in schools, arts organizations, and the community.

Participants in the 2016 cohort attended a week of day-long sessions in the summer, as well as five one-day seminar sessions throughout the 2016–2017 school year. Through facilitated discussions and activities, participants explored issues of leadership, pedagogy, and current issues in education. All sessions included an arts experience led by teaching artists, which were followed by time for reflection on implications for teaching practice. Additionally, each participant developed and carried out their own individualized action plan related to their professional goals in arts education.

Twelve arts educators participated in the 2016 cohort: nine arts teachers from public and charter school systems, two educators from arts organizations, and one university professor. Three-quarters of participants the 2016 cohort teach visual arts.



ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation is to improve the program’s effectiveness in facilitating learning, inform future applications to qualify as a state-approved program for continuing education, inform the design of additional programs for arts educators, and document outcomes to advance the field and garner support.



Two **online surveys** were administered at various points in the program. Participants were asked to self-assess their knowledge of leadership and arts education topics at the start of summer sessions, end of summer sessions, and end of the program. Prior to Leadership Academy and a few months after its conclusion, participants reported how frequently they had engaged in different leadership actions during the previous year.



Participants created and added to a **personal mind map** centered on the concept of leadership at the start and end of summer sessions, halfway through the program, and at the end of the program.



All participants in the 2016 cohort reflected on their Leadership Academy experiences during one-on-one **interviews** conducted almost a year following the end of the program.

OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS

EVALUATION QUESTION	KEY FINDINGS
In what ways and to what extent does participants' understanding of arts education and current issues in education change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">At the start of the program, almost half of participants reported they were not at all knowledgeable about Understanding by Design. At the end of summer sessions, most participants reported they were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about the approach.The percentage of participants who indicated they were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about arts and community resources in the region increased significantly after both the summer and school-year sessions, resulting in largest change overall among arts education topics from the start to end of the program.
In what way and to what extent does graduates' understanding of leadership change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No participants indicated they felt knowledgeable about leadership styles and situational leadership prior to the program, but all felt knowledgeable about these topics following summer sessions. Responses related to awareness of one's self and others—which includes leadership styles—accounted for the highest percentage of comments found on participants' mind maps overall at the end of the program. It was only mentioned once on the initial mind maps created at the start of the program.While almost all participants still reported they were knowledgeable about leadership styles and situational leadership at the end of the school year, the number who felt very knowledgeable dropped in both areas between the conclusion of summer sessions and the end of the program.At the end of the program, participants most frequently said they were very knowledgeable about three leadership concepts and skills related to setting goals and formulating plans to achieve those goals: action planning, goal setting, and prioritizing goals.On participants' mind maps, the number of comments about identifying and utilizing support resources doubled from before summer sessions to after, then tripled between that point and the conclusion of the program as participants more frequently referred to the role of networking, delegating, and accepting assistance as part of leadership.
In what ways and to what extent do participants engage in leadership activities in their work? How do attitudes, knowledge, and skills learned during Leadership Academy contribute to those activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In follow-up interviews conducted almost a year following the end of the program, many participants mentioned ways in which Leadership Academy introduced them to new support resources, helped them seek assistance from their colleagues, or aided developing new professional relationships and networks.Participants frequently indicated that they found value in the action planning process. A few reported they continue to apply the action plan framework to their work, while others talked more broadly about how Leadership Academy helped them to view projects holistically and think strategically about how to accomplish their goals.Three-quarters of participants reported they were continuing to work on their action plan projects—either trying to finish the plan as outlined, maintaining what they accomplished during the previous year, or expanding the scope of their original projects. While the majority of these participants said they felt they were making at least some progress, a few noted that development has proceeded more slowly than initially hoped.About half of the participants reported they pursued new leadership roles in the year following the program. These roles include leading professional learning opportunities and serving as department chair, program sponsor, or conference planner. Participants often credited their experiences with Leadership Academy as a critical factor in their decision to pursue in this work.
In what ways and to what extent do participants act to improve student learning in their work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Half of the class attended Regional Arts Education Day in 2017, and five participants have engaged in district-wide programs facilitated by AEC before, during, or after their participation in Leadership Academy.While most of the class has maintained at least occasional contact with others from the group, examples of professional sharing and collaboration were limited to a handful of participants.
In what ways and to what extent do participants remain connected with AEC and the network of professionals they encountered through Leadership Academy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Half of the class attended Regional Arts Education Day in 2017, and five participants have engaged in district-wide programs facilitated by AEC before, during, or after their participation in Leadership Academy.While most of the class has maintained at least occasional contact with others from the group, examples of professional sharing and collaboration were limited to a handful of participants.

OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS

EVALUATION QUESTION

KEY FINDINGS

To what extent do participants' experiences with Leadership Academy align with their expectations?

- Applicants to the 2016 cohort identified a range of outcomes they hoped to achieve by participating in the program: building professional networks, feeling inspired and rejuvenated, becoming more effective arts education leaders and advocates, and developing programs.
- All participants said the experience met or exceeded their expectations, though progress came more slowly or differently than anticipated in a few cases.
- A few teachers credited the program with having a positive impact on their attitudes toward their jobs and encouraging them to remain in their current positions.

What challenges do participants experience as part of the program and how do they suggest improving Leadership Academy in the future?

- Diversity appears to be an important factor influencing educators' experiences in Leadership Academy. A few participants noted a lack of racial and ethnic diversity in the program's content and among its facilitators, teaching artists, and participants—which failed to reflect the diversity of learners they serve in their work.
- Some participants expressed interest in ongoing opportunities to engage with other Leadership Academy alumni, either online or in person.



LOOKING FORWARD

AEC staff have implemented several changes to the program for the 2018–2019 Leadership Academy class, such as introducing online sessions during the school year and more purposefully focusing on issues of culturally responsive arts education. A comprehensive review of the curriculum and revisions to the program are planned in advance of the 2019–2020 class.

KEY ACTION STEPS

In response to the findings in this report, AEC staff plan to:

- more intentionally note instances over the course of the program when facilitators and participants demonstrate various aspects of leadership, using specific language and vocabulary to call attention to different characteristics and actions
- incorporate more opportunities for participants to explore aspects of leadership that appear to be less top-of-mind—such as motivating others, developing confidence and a positive outlook, striving for quality, and tending to one’s own personal well-being
- revisit leadership topics addressed at the beginning of the program throughout the school year to support retention of key ideas
- continually monitor the extent to which 2018–2019 class members feel the program is relevant to their individual experiences—including the disciplines they teach, the educational settings in which they work, and their personal identities—and they are given opportunities to engage with others who share similar experiences
- pursue the planned review and revision of the curriculum to center Leadership Academy around principles and practices of culturally responsive arts education
- provide Leadership Academy graduates with opportunities to connect with each other within and across cohorts

