



2019 Arts Ed In-Service Day and 2020 Regional Arts Ed Day

Summative Evaluation - Overview Report
April 2021



Introduction

This report summarizes findings from evaluations of the 2019 Arts Ed In-Service Day co-hosted by AEC, Carnegie Museum of Art, and Carnegie Mellon University School of Music on October 14 and the 2020 Regional Arts Ed Day (RAED) held at Cornell School District on February 17.

About the programs

Arts Ed In-Service Day was piloted as a day-long professional learning opportunity tailored for music and visual arts educators. To accommodate changing school calendars and increase access to its programs, AEC staff piloted switching RAED from its traditional date on Indigenous Peoples' Day to Presidents Day. Arts Ed In-Service Day was created to offer an alternative for arts educators who could not attend RAED on its new day.

Regional Arts Ed Day is an annual, one-day meeting of arts educators, school and district administrators, consultants, and policymakers to explore the principles and practice of quality arts education. Presentations, discussions, and opportunities to engage with others are designed to spotlight key issues and current trends in effective practices for teaching and learning. The 2020 program was highlighted by a keynote address delivered by Jasiri X, co-founder and chief executive officer of 1Hood Media.



About the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to improve the programs' effectiveness, inform future applications to qualify as state-approved programs for continuing education, inform the design of additional programs, and document outcomes to advance the field and garner support.



Online survey After each event, attendees received an invitation to complete a brief online survey about their experiences. RAED participants could also answer the survey during the final session. About 75% of Arts Ed In-Service Day attendees and 90% of RAED participants responded.



Analysis Most questions asked attendees to indicate on a six-point Likert scale the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various statements about the programs. For purposes of analysis, only participants who answered that they "agreed" or "strongly agreed" are considered to have given an unequivocally positive response. All other answers—ranging from "strongly disagree" to "agree slightly more than disagree"—are classified as neutral or negative.

Overview of key findings

Evaluation question	Key findings
Who participates in Arts Ed In-Service Day and Regional Arts Ed Day?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A combined total of 112 educators and arts education supporters attended Arts Ed In-Service Day in 2019 (55 participants) and RAED in 2020 (57 participants). K-12 educators accounted for all Arts Ed In-Service Day attendees and slightly more than half of RAED participants.• The combined total is in line with average annual attendance at RAED since AEC began tracking counts of actual participants in 2014, but represents a 25% decrease compared to RAED 2018.• Twenty-six school districts and charter school systems were represented across the two programs. Nearly half of all K-12 educators who attended came from one of three school districts: Armstrong, Hampton Township, and Shaler Area. No teachers from Cornell School District participated in either program, despite the district serving as host for RAED.• Most of the seven organizations that sent staff members to RAED in both 2018 and 2020 have recently engaged in partnerships with AEC. More than half of the organizations in attendance in 2020 after not participating in RAED 2018 were involved in the program as session presenters or featured in some other way.
To what extent do participants engage in other professional learning opportunities offered by AEC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slightly more than half of attendees at the two events (54%) were participating in their first AEC program since at least 2016.• Across both programs, about three out of every five participants (61%) had not attended RAED since at least 2016. The proportion of first-time attendees since 2016 was higher among RAED participants (69%) compared to Arts-Ed In-Service Day participants (55%).
What are participants' reactions to Arts Ed In-Service Day? What suggestions do participants have to help improve Arts Ed In-Service Day in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Almost nine out of every ten respondents agreed or strongly agreed Arts Ed In-Service Day was valuable to them and has useful applications to their work overall, though the proportion was slightly lower among music educators compared to visual arts teachers.• Participants were invited to share ideas about how to make Arts Ed In-Service Day more useful. One-quarter of the survey responses offered no suggestions or expressed a positive reaction.• When asked what changes would help make Arts Ed In-Service Day more useful, several music educators were critical of the extent to which the content had applications to their work and requested a greater emphasis on instructional techniques, strategies, and lessons that they can use in their teaching.• Music teachers were less likely than their visual arts counterparts to agree or strongly agree the facilities were comfortable and productive for learning. Several comments criticized rooms used to host music track sessions at Carnegie Mellon University.• Teachers who participated in visual arts session track frequently recommended allotting more time to touring the Carnegie Museum of Art galleries, viewing individual works of art, or extending the program overall.

Overview of key findings

Evaluation question	Key findings
What new ideas about effective arts education practices do participants learn at Arts Ed In-Service Day?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants were asked to share one new idea from Arts Ed In-Service Day that they are likely to use in their work. Two out of every three ideas listed by survey respondents relate to content presented as part of the music or visual arts session tracks.• Breathing techniques explored in “The Killer B’s: Body, Breath, Brain and Boldness” were cited most often by music educators as a new idea that they are likely to use in their work.• For almost half of survey respondents who took part in the visual arts session track, the “Tour of the Art of Persuasion” session appears to have been the source of the new ideas, including instructional techniques and the concept of art as propaganda.
What are participants’ reactions to Regional Arts Education Day? What suggestions do participants have to help improve RAED in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than nine out of every ten respondents agreed or strongly agreed that RAED overall was valuable to them and has useful applications to their work.• In answer to a question about what changes would make RAED more useful, almost one out of every three responses was uncertain about how to improve the event, offered no suggestions for improvement, or expressed a positive reaction.• About seven out of every eight survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed the content of the keynote presentation by Jasiri X was clear and valuable. The remaining reactions fell on the negative side of the rating scale, however. Comments suggest a few attendees objected to an overt focus on political and social justice issues as part of the keynote presentation.• Most concurrent sessions were rated highly with a large percentage of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing that presenters used effective teaching techniques and the content was clear and valuable. Two sessions, however, were well below average in the proportion of participants who said the sessions were valuable to them.• A little more than one out of every three survey respondents commented on the concurrent sessions when asked what changes could be implemented to help make RAED more useful in the future. Several respondents requested more concurrent sessions related to their particular discipline or the grades they teach.• Almost all survey respondents said the facilities at Cornell School District were comfortable and provided productive spaces for learning. Comments about the facilities and food service account for less than one out of every ten suggestions for how to improve RAED in the future.
What new ideas about effective arts education practices do participants learn at Regional Arts Education Day?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When respondents were asked to share a new idea they are likely to use in their work, almost two-thirds mentioned content related to a concurrent session. The concurrent sessions mentioned most often in participants’ answers to the question about what they learned from RAED were also rated as valuable by an above-average percentage of respondents who attended.• A few participants identified the keynote presentation as the source of a new idea that they said they are most likely to use in their work—including one educator who reported they were motivated to discuss the importance of social justice issues with their fellow teachers and families in their school district.

Overview of key findings

Evaluation question

To what extent do Regional Arts Education Day participants feel a sense of connection with other arts educators and arts education supporters?

Key findings

- While almost all survey respondents said RAED provided them with opportunities to meet arts educators who they did not know before, a smaller percentage—about three out of every four participants—indicated they felt a stronger connection with other educators.
- When asked for a new idea they are likely to use in their work, several respondents mentioned meeting other arts educators and possible collaborations with new colleagues. In additional cases, participants referred to potential partnerships stemming from specific sessions.
- A few respondents suggested incorporating more structured opportunities for attendees to meet and interact with one another, such as facilitated lunch conversations, as part of the formal program. Other participants expressed a desire for more educators to attend, including school administrators.



Looking forward

AEC staff canceled all in-person programming during the 2020–2021 school year in response to the COVID-19 health crisis. Plans are currently underway to host the next RAED in fall of 2021.

Key action steps

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

- resume scheduling RAED on Indigenous Peoples' Day in October 2021 after piloting a switch to Presidents Day in February 2020.
- review the intended learning outcomes documented in the program logic model and adjust as needed to align with current goals.
- create space in the program for formal and informal peer networking and collaboration.
- increase opportunities at RAED for participants to engage in immersive, hand-on arts experiences and try out unfamiliar art-making techniques in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts.
- partner with selected individuals and organizations in priority areas to offer learning opportunities that complement session ideas submitted through the open call process.
- select venues and caterers who offer environmentally sustainable food service options that minimize non-recyclable waste.
- consider forming a response panel, working group, or advisory committee to offer recommendations about how to more effectively attract and engage specific audiences, such as music teachers.
- partner with regional and state arts education associations to explore possible connections, resource sharing, and marketing opportunities. AEC reached out to the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association while planning RAED 2020, but the attempt yielded little meaningful impact on the program—perhaps due, in part, to AEC staff turnover.
- align marketing messages about RAED to intended learning outcomes to more clearly communicate what the program is and is not about.
- create a social media toolkit for partners, past participants, and other influencers to promote the event, tailoring communications around elements that are likely to be most exciting to specific audiences.
- consider re-branding the program with a new name and logo.
- reach out to school districts that have sent large groups of educators to Arts Ed In-Service Day and RAED to encourage their participation in additional programs, including artlook® SWPA.

