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Professional Development on a Sustainable Shoestring: Propagating Place-Based Art Education in Fertile Soil

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Abstract

Research on the impact of place-based education (PBE), in which educational experiences are situated in the local environment (Smith, 2002), consistently suggests academic, social, and affective benefits across demographics. Traditionally, professional development supporting PBE has been designed to support large-scale initiatives. In this study, a bottom-up approach for expanding the reach of place-based art education (PBAE) was implemented with teachers (n=11) from a school district in the southeastern United States through two sequential professional development workshops. We examined the extent to which this minimal intervention impacted teachers' understanding, buy-in, and creation of PBAE curricula. Results suggest that this organic approach, with teachers positioned as agents of change, can build upon pre-existing teacher interest and equip teachers to expand PBAE into their teaching contexts.

Keywords: professional development, place-based education, art education, minimal intervention, case study.

The current condition of our environment accompanied by the corresponding entrenched social, political, and industrial resistance to environmental action necessitate the need for radical change. Pope (2005) argued that our species often struggles to react to intangible threats:

The problems that environmentalism has failed to get a grasp on, or develop a deep public commitment and attention to... are intangible, global and future oriented. Global warming, habitat fragmentation, and the loading of global ecosystems with persistent but toxic and disruptive industrial chemicals are simply harder for an opportunistic, reactive primate species to understand as threats. (An Alternative View section, para. 5)

One solution is education rooted in the sensory, embodied locales of place. The literature on place-based education demonstrates that this pedagogy has the potential to make abstract threats tangible and to mobilize students for action – locally, but ultimately globally as participation grows.

Place-based education situates educational experiences in the local environment, including the local social, cultural, political, natural, and economic arenas (Smith, 2002). It makes education relevant by connecting it to students' lives, enhances learning by providing real-world experiences, meets the emotional needs of students to connect with nature, and better prepares students to protect land and communities. Other educational traditions and pedagogies also aim to foster a connection between learners and the outside world and often overlap or are interchangeable with place-based education, including: *Earth Education*, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), experiential learning, Environment as an Integrating Concept (EIC), environment-based education, conservation education, cultural journalism, real-world problem solving, context-based learning, problem-posing education, outdoor education, environmental and ecological education, bioregional education, natural history, critical pedagogy, service learning, community-based education, and Native-American education (Anderson & Guyas, 2012; Conaway, 2006; Gruenewald, 2003; Knapp, 2008; Powers, 2004). For instance, University Educators for Sustainable Development (UE4SD, 2015) described Education for Sustainable Development by emphasizing the importance of social relevance and real-world situations:

A good ESD educator at all levels not only knows his/her subject or discipline but is also able to transfer this knowledge and to use it in practice for desired (societally relevant) goals – so that the learner is able to take action based on the knowledge. An efficient ESD thus shifts the model of knowledge dissemination towards a more participatory one, where students' competences are developed in interaction with the educator: in discussions, engagement in real world situations, joint projects and activities. (p. 32)

Because of these similarities, we will use the term “place-based” to refer to any education program rooted in the local environment.

Since the Orion Society coined the term “place-based” in the early 1990s (Sobel, 2004), programs have emerged across the United States and internationally to include Canada, Great Britain, Norway, Australia, Costa Rica, India, Bhutan, New Zealand, Japan, El Salvador and China. The body of literature on place-based education programs is robust, and the findings are consistent: place-based education programs are widely beneficial. Benefits for K-12 participants include environmental knowledge, awareness, and appreciation; sense of place and place attachment; empathy with the environment; pro-environmental orientations; academic achievement and motivation; critical thinking; and perceived sense of engagement, collaboration, and sense of significance of learning (Athman & Monroe, 2004; Bertling, 2015; Azano, 2011; Buxton, 2010; Conaway, 2006; Creel, 2005; Ernst & Monroe, 2006; Howley, Howley, Camper, & Perko, 2011; Lieberman, Hoody, & State Education and Environmental Roundtable, 1998; Linnemans & Jordan, 2017; Powers, 2004; Santelmann, Gosnell, & Meyers, 2011; Sondergeld, Milner, & Rop, 2014; Takano, Higgins, & McLaughlin, 2009). These benefits occur regardless of geographic area, age, race/ethnicity, achievement level, or special needs of participants. Given the resounding conclusions of the literature, the rapid and extensive spread of place-based curricula and programs is imperative. When coupled with the deteriorating state of our environment, such curricula become crucial for educating citizens for a sustainable world.

Currently place-based education exists in a number of forms: as district-wide and school-wide initiatives; as curricula designed and implemented by individual teachers in their classrooms; and in non-formal and informal learning contexts (Fazio & Karrow, 2013). District-wide and school-wide initiatives provide teachers with broad and sustained support including administrative support, leadership teams, professional learning opportunities, community partnerships, and opportunities for collaboration and interdisciplinary teaching (Fazio & Karrow, 2013; Powers, 2004). In school-wide programs, students' experience with place-based curricula is comprehensive and sustained: the curriculum "permeate(s) classrooms, hallways, school grounds, and local environs" (Fazio & Karrow, 2013, p. 614). While large-scale programs might be considered the ultimate goal in the implementation of K-12 place-based education, these initiatives do not often lend themselves to rapid and widespread adoption. They require widespread collaborations; long-range strategic planning; professional learning institutes; and targeted efforts to gain support from policymakers, those in key leadership positions, and those who will implement the changes (Batsche, Curtis, Dorman, Castillo, & Porter, 2007). Due to the extensive time, financial resources, and level of commitment required by all involved, school and district-wide initiatives may not immediately be feasible in all contexts. In order to expand the reach of place-based education, more organic, bottom-up approaches might occur simultaneously. In educational settings where interest and resources have not aligned to establish place-based foci, individual teachers and teacher teams might be best positioned as the harbingers and initiators of this curricula.

Professional development opportunities that can be broadly and rapidly implemented and propagated are needed. At the same time, research is needed on these forms of minimal- intervention professional development that can be organically woven into teacher schedules and easily implemented with minor time and resource allocation to determine their effectiveness, particularly in supporting teachers receptive to forms of place-based education. Non-science teachers represent fertile ground for these studies as they have had limited exposure to place-based education (Linnemanstons & Jordan, 2017). They represent a wide body of untapped potential as they have the power to bring ecological issues beyond the domain of science into the forefront of the general curriculum, thereby promoting a deeper and more holistic understanding of these issues that are deeply interconnected with all areas of life (Sondergeld, Milner, & Rop, 2014). Specifically, the discipline of art education is uniquely poised for compatibility with place-based education due to its inherently "sensory, subjective orientation" that can shift students' ecological attitudes and behaviors (Inwood, 2008, p. 70; Bertling, 2015).

This study examines one such minimal-intervention place-based education professional development program within the discipline of art education. The three research questions include:

Can a minimal intervention professional development program focused on place-based art education:

1. Expand teachers' understanding of place-based art education?
2. Increase teachers' buy-in related to implementing place-based art education?
3. Support teachers in successfully selecting and creating place-based art curricula?

Professional Development in Place-Based Education

In order to promote education for sustainable development, research on various methods of how teachers grow as professionals is needed (Yoo, 2016, p. 92). Research on professional development in place-based education is dominated by studies of “showcase programs”—approximately week-long, residential summer institutes. These programs often involve outdoor field studies, such as studies of rivers and watersheds; several follow-up sessions; and a fairly small number (5–20) of participants (Linnemanstons & Jordan, 2017; Meichtry & Smith, 2007; Powers, 2004; Rosenthal, 2011; Sondergeld, Milner, & Rop, 2014). In some programs, attendance was encouraged or required by administration to support school-wide initiatives (Powers, 2004), other programs offered financial incentives (Linnemanstons & Jordan, 2017), and others consisted of volunteers (Meichtry & Smith, 2007; Rosenthal, 2011; Sondergeld, Milner, & Rop, 2014). The findings of these studies are widely consistent in demonstrating positive impacts for participants including increased math, science, and environmental education knowledge; stronger environmental attitudes; deepened consciousness of place, ecology, and self-identity; increased teacher confidence and buy-in; and improved classroom practice. Within the field of art education, one study examined a six-day, residential summer institute at a wilderness facility where nine school-based artists were engaged in place-based education in the arts as a way to impact their habits of mind toward energy and its conservation. Consistent with the larger body of literature, the program positively impacted the artists, in their knowledge, awareness, and habits related to energy conservation and in their desire to incorporate their learning into their pedagogy.

Powers (2004) found in her evaluation of four place-based programs that summer institutes were invaluable for sustaining the school-wide place-based initiatives. Aspects of the programs that contributed to success were integrating experiential learning and the local setting; providing specific examples of place-based education; and offering opportunities to practice and participate in experiences, to develop curricula, and to build supportive teaching communities (Meichtry & Smith, 2007; Powers, 2004). While showcase programs represent many best practices, as they fully immerse teachers in experiential learning opportunities in outdoor environments in order to model place-based curricula and positively impact teacher attitudes toward place, they require significant resources and teacher time. Additionally, they are geared toward helping participants develop a connection with the natural environment that might not have existed prior to the workshop. For those who might already have such a connection, other less-intensive professional development opportunities might be possible.

Minimal Intervention Approaches

A large body of research demonstrates that sustained, intensive professional development is more likely to be more effective than programs of shorter duration (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). Similarly, research supports the positive impact of degree-related coursework for shaping instructional approaches (e.g. Pontes-Pedrajas & Varo-Martinez, 2014). However, studies on minimal intervention professional development demonstrate that improvement in practice and curricular change is possible with programs limited in time, expense, resources, and intensity (Emmer, Sanford, Clements, & Martin, 1982; Fields, 1990). Those minimal intervention programs that are most successful go beyond providing written material to include workshops or other

forms of support, provide a clear rationale, propose recommended changes already tied to existing practice, and limit demands on teachers (Coladarci & Gage, 1984; Fields, 1990). Research by Zhukova (2018) suggests that, after completing their first year of teaching, novice teachers are “particularly interested and open to participation in intense professional development activities” (p. 9), such as workshops. Our place-based professional development program incorporated these recommendations along with encouraging collective participation (Garet et al., 2001), where teachers from the same discipline, visual art, had the opportunity to professionally communicate and support one another in this curricular endeavor.

Methodology

We approached this study through a pragmatic paradigm, as we rejected historical dualisms between quantitative and qualitative traditions to embrace the mixing of methods (Greene, 2007). Subsequently, the research questions played a primary role in determining the methods we employed. Through this paradigm, we conducted a mixed methods case study of a group of visual art teachers and student teachers participating in a series of two place-based art education professional learning workshops. This case study design allowed for an in-depth exploration of teacher understanding, buy-in, and creation of curricula related to place-based art education. In this qualitative dominant, integrated design with a sequential component, methods were mixed for the purpose of complementarity, to tap into the different facets of teacher buy-in and creation of curricula, as well as for development of a rubric for assessing levels of place-based integration (Greene, 2007).

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in the southeastern United States within a large school district encompassing urban, suburban, and rural areas. Approximately 110 visual art teachers and 3 student teachers worked in the district and were required to attend monthly professional development sessions. As part of the minimal intervention professional development program under investigation, we conducted two sequential professional development workshops that were held during these built-in district professional development sessions. The first was during a district-wide professional development day, and the second was after-school at a district-wide professional learning session for art teachers. Prior to the first workshop, we inserted an announcement in the district’s weekly email newsletter for art teachers that provided a brief overview of place-based education and critical place-based art education, an outline of workshop activities, and a request that those interested commit to attending both sessions. Art teachers chose from a selection of workshop options with six competing options both sessions. Additionally, 19 of the 110 teachers were leading sessions concurrent to our sessions, which precluded them from participating in ours. We had 12 attendees that attended both sessions with all 12 of these teachers consenting to participate. These teachers and student teachers were primarily white females and taught a range of grade levels (elementary, middle, and secondary). Additionally, a high percentage (73%) were former students or current student teachers of the presenter, the primary researcher. This participation was unanticipated due to the small percentage of her students (less than 10%) as art teachers in the district.

Data Collection

Data collection included pre- and post-questionnaires, participant and non-participant observation, and document analysis of participants' "unit plans." Questionnaires and observations were designed to address Research Questions 1 and 2: 1) teacher understanding of place-based art education and 2) increased teacher buy-in related to implementing place-based art education. Document analysis of unit plans addressed Research Question 3: supporting teachers in place-based art curricula development (see Table I). Questionnaires utilized selected-response and open-ended questions related to participants' understanding of place-based education and their interest level in implementation (see Appendix A & B). Participants were provided with unit plan templates designed to facilitate their construction of place-based art curricula (see Appendix C). These unit plans were scored by a researcher-constructed rubric to assess their level of place-based implementation (see Appendix D).

Table I

Research Questions & Alignment with Data Collection Methods

Research Questions	Questionnaires	Observations	Unit Plans
1. Can a minimal intervention professional development program focused on place-based art education:			
a. Expand teacher understanding of place-based art education?	X	x	
b. Increase teacher "buy in" related to implementing place-based art education?	X	x	
c. Support teachers in successfully selecting and creating place-based art curricula?			X

X = primary data collection method, x = secondary data collection method

Data Analysis

Mixed methods data analysis was conducted for purposes of *representation*, to better identify underlying patterns in the data, as well as for *legitimation*, to contribute to the interpretive validity of data interpretation (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). Both qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated during the data analysis phase through quantization (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1988) of questionnaire and unit plan components. The remainder of the data was analyzed in accordance with procedures from the qualitative methodological tradition.

We initially cleaned the data. First, we eliminated data from one consenting participant who did not supply all data sources, thereby reducing our participants to 11. Next, we quantized selected response items on the questionnaires by assigning numerical rankings to responses related to interest level and intent to implement curricula, for instance. Then, we conducted initial and focused coding for open-ended responses to identify themes. Themes and quantitative data were tabulated in order to compare pre- and post-questionnaire responses.

We used open coding to analyze the unit plans. Themes we identified from select components of the unit plans assisted us in developing a rubric to assess the unit plans' level of place-based integration. Then, these same unit plans were scored with this

researcher-developed rubric. Qualitative data from the unit plans supplemented these scores by providing contextual, in-depth understanding (Greene, 2007). Similarly, analysis of field notes provided supplemental data to describe the case.

Findings

Understanding of Place-Based Art Education

Pre-responses. Pre- and post-questionnaire items provided data related to participant understandings and allowed for a comparison between pre- and post-responses (see Appendix A & B). While all participants had some exposure to place-based art education through the recruiting email, which gave a two-paragraph definition and overview with comparisons to similar pedagogies, we were interested in examining their understanding due to their differing levels of prior knowledge as well as differing engagement in reading and retaining information from the email. Data from the pre-questionnaire revealed that participants began the initial workshop with a range of familiarity with the pedagogy, with scores forming a bell curve from “unfamiliar” to “very familiar.” Most participant responses fell in the “somewhat familiar” to “familiar” categories, with a mean of 2.36 on a 4-point scale.

When those who reported familiarity were asked to define place-based art education, all six participants used references to place, community, and/or the environment to identify the central focus of the pedagogy. For instance, one participant defined it as “knowing the environment & community of the students you are teaching and gear the lessons to apply to that,” and another wrote, “work is inspired by emotions, experiences, culture and social structures of a place or community.” One participant went further to highlight the importance of the local context and implied a critical pedagogical component: “Using knowledge of the environment and surrounding community to create an interactive curriculum for students, where they impact the community and environment in a positive fashion. Often place-based education involves going out into the environment & community.” However, the responses overall showed room for growth in participants’ understanding of the pedagogy.

Post-responses. The first item on the post-questionnaire was designed to measure participants’ perceived growth in understanding (see Appendix B). In response to the question “To what extent have these workshops expanded your understanding of place-based art education?” all participants reported that the workshops either “expanded [their] understanding” (4/11) or “significantly expanded [their] understanding” (7/11) with a mean response of 3.64 on a 4-point scale. Of these participants, one selected “significantly expanded my understanding” and added an exclamation mark. Unanimously, participants reported positive growth in their cognitive understanding of place-based art education as a result of the two workshops. However, cognitive understanding is not sufficient to indicate intent to implement and implement successfully. Thus, teacher buy-in becomes an important phenomenon to examine.

Teacher Buy-In. In this study, teacher buy-in was conceptualized as: 1) interest and 2) intent to implement the pedagogy in their teaching context. Pre- and post-questionnaire items were designed to measure these constructs and provide a comparison. Additionally, observation data supplemented the questionnaire data by providing context for understanding participant responses.

Pre-responses. Prior to the first workshop, participant interest levels ranged from somewhat interested to very interested with most participants (7/11) reporting “interested” on the pre-questionnaire with a mean of 2.54 on a 4-point scale. Participants indicated a diversity of reasons for their initial levels of interest. Many responses described the desire to learn something new, such as, “I like new things! And I like the place where I live.” Others’ interest grew out of their prior relationship with the researcher/presenter, who was their former university instructor, and included the response: “Missing Bert.” Other participants expressed the desire to learn how to incorporate the community or place into their curriculum, such as “[I] would like to do a place-based lesson but not sure about the logistics of making it happen.” Still other participants cited student-centered reasons. For example, one participant stated, “My school community is very diverse so if I could find a way to implement that into my classroom it would spark student interest.”

Post-responses. At the conclusion of the workshops, participants indicated higher levels of interest in place-based art education. Post-questionnaire responses fell narrowly within the “interested” to “very interested” categories, with most participants responding “very interested” (6/11). Unlike the pre-response, no participants indicated “somewhat interested.” The mean increased from 2.54 to 3.0, and the mode increased from 3 to 4 on a 4-point scale. Additionally, each participant’s level of interest either stayed the same (5/11) or increased (5/11), except for one participant whose score dropped one level.

In citing reasons for their interest level, participant responses narrowed from a wide range of responses to coalesce, almost primarily, around student needs and community-based reasons. Responses included: “This will deepen understanding and make art relevant to my students,” “I think my students would benefit from this positive focus and potentially gain levels of self-efficacy related to creating change,” and “It is important for kids to know where they come from, place around them & their role in this & that drives my interest.” The overview of the body of literature on place-based education and its benefits to students, presented during the first workshop, seems to have contributed to this emphasis.

Participants reported on the likelihood of their using the unit plans, created during the second workshop, in their teaching context. Responses averaged 3.27 on a 4-point scale. They ranged from “somewhat likely” to “very likely” with most respondents selecting “very likely” (5/11). Open-ended responses were positive and many expanded upon plans for implementation. For instance, participants wrote, “I would like to expand my ideas and practice incorporating other place-based lessons,” “I would like to get the specific [school] community involved as well-donations of materials and excitement about auction,” and “I would like to do this with my Art 1 or Advanced Drawing class next year!”

Participant behavior during the workshops supported the enthusiasm evident in many questionnaire responses. For instance, the majority of the participants indicated their willingness to implement the unit plan during the upcoming fall semester. Additionally, one participant shared with us that she communicated her learning of place-based education from our workshops with her principal and that place-based education is now becoming a school-wide initiative, particularly through the leadership of the related arts teachers. She also shared an interdisciplinary project she plans to implement in the fall that involves a collaboration with a public aquarium, where students will research native fish species, produce a large-scale art installation at the aquarium, and present their work to guests.

Creation of Curricula

During the second workshop session, participants created a unit plan that incorporated elements of place-based art education. These unit plans were analyzed with a researcher-developed rubric that focused on content and context. Specifically, we analyzed the unit plans for the extent to which they incorporated the following aspects: local content, local artists/art forms, interdisciplinary aspects, local context, affective components (value of place) and transformative components for impacting the local community. Each indicator had a range of 1 to 4, and total rubric scores ranged from 6 to 24. The average rubric score was 16.6, with the indicator of local artists/art forms having the highest average score of 3.6. A local artist or art form may have included local weavers to demonstrate technique or a local art form such as graffiti. Second highest was the indicator of local content, with an average of 3.4. This included a focus on a local issue, such as mural design to focus on use of space. The average of the other four indicators were either 2.5 or 2.4. The indicator with the widest range of scores was for interdisciplinary aspects. While some unit plans clearly integrated science or math concepts and showed potential for contextualizing learning in a holistic manner, others reflected a more isolated approach to the unit implementation.

Discussion

As participants purposefully selected professional development on this topic, our approach consisted of building on their pre-existing interest. Ten of 11 participants indicated that they were either interested or very interested in the topic. While this initial interest was an expected characteristic of participants, the high percentage of participants who were former students or current student teachers of the primary researcher was unexpected. Given this initial interest and the number of participants who were former or current students of one of the researchers, the question of the extent of interest in place-based art education by a larger population of art teachers could be raised. However, post-questionnaire responses reflect a high level of interest in creating art lessons that incorporate the local environment. Unit plans reflected not only their interest but also their ability to incorporate local elements into the design. Enthusiasm for reconfiguring entire art programs into venues for promoting student engagement with local issues in a transformative manner was palpable particularly during the second session. Based on these findings, we are now interested in disseminating our strategies for informing art teachers' views on place-based education, fostering art teacher buy-in related to place-based education, and supporting art teachers with both the design and implementation of place-based units.

Conclusion

This pedagogy is informed by the ecological imagination, an appropriation and expansion of Greene's (1995) social imagination. She outlined how the imagination has power to overcome familiar definitions and divisions, to foster empathy, to expand consciousness, to envision other realities, and to begin the process of working toward a better world. Her discussion of this imagination focused on its power exclusively within the social world. However, the imagination is also desperately needed within an ecological

context, where arbitrary demarcations and hierarchies between humans and other organisms exist that need to be bridged and new ecological realities need to be constructed. The ecological imagination holds promise for this new mode of education: education that embraces the arts as a way to free imaginations. Through this approach, students are liberated from the normalized constraints of everyday, routine thinking and acting to invent fresh paradigms and to engage in novel ecological behaviors. A critical place-based art education can make this emancipation possible. Through a critical place-based curricular approach, art education becomes a means of awakening the ecological imagination—opening the world to new relationships, possibilities, critiques, and, most importantly, acts (Bertling, 2013, 2015).

Benefits of critical place-based education, such as fostering “a sense of wonder toward the places we inhabit, an awareness of the cultural and ideological forces that threaten them, and the motivation to take action” (Graham, 2007, p. 388), are well-documented in the research. While globalized perspectives are imperative to engage students in worldwide efforts pertaining to sustainability, “local cultures, languages, histories, and geographies anchor these transformative efforts within the neighborhoods and communities where implementation takes place” (Kelly-Williams, Berson, & Berson, 2017, p. 6). Therefore, the challenge lies in creating professional development offerings in this area that are not only logistically feasible but also transformative for participants.

Recognizing individual teachers as agents of change rather than relying on large-scale professional development offerings is one way to approach the dissemination of the positive outcomes associated with place-based education. As noted by Fazio and Karrow (2013), we can look to teachers as leaders for school-based changes rather than relying solely on administrators. Looking beyond the input of designated leaders and instead creating a shared leadership mode can create a setting in which teachers, as leaders, provide a catalyst for organic, bottom-up initiatives. The professional development model for empowering teachers to implement critical place-based art education described here shows potential for broader impact. Results of this study suggest that teachers themselves comprise the fertile soil in which place-based art education curricula are effectively designed and propagated.

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Appendix A Place-Based Art Education Workshop Pre-Questionnaire*

Name _____

1. How familiar were you with *place-based education* (or *place-based art education*) prior to reading the announcement for this workshop?
 - a. Unfamiliar with this approach
 - b. Somewhat familiar with this approach
 - c. Familiar with this approach
 - d. Very familiar with this approach
2. If you answered c or d above, please provide a brief description of place-based education.
3. What is your interest level in implementing place-based art education in your classroom?
 - a. Not interested
 - b. Somewhat interested
 - c. Interested
 - d. Very interested
4. Please provide an explanation for your level of interest.

* All responses on this questionnaire are voluntary.

Appendix B
Place-Based Art Education Workshop Post-Questionnaire*

Name _____

1. To what extent have these workshops expanded your understanding of place-based art education?
 - a. Did not expand my understanding
 - b. Somewhat expanded my understanding
 - c. Expanded my understanding
 - d. Significantly expanded my understanding
2. What is your interest level in implementing place-based art education in your classroom?
 - a. Not interested
 - b. Somewhat interested
 - c. Interested
 - d. Very interested
3. Please provide an explanation for your level of interest.
4. In what ways, if any, is the “unit plan” that you created different from your previous approach to art curriculum?
5. How likely are you to use the “unit plan,” created in this workshop, with your students in the upcoming Fall semester?
 - a. Unlikely
 - b. Somewhat likely
 - c. Likely
 - d. Very likely
6. Please provide any additional information related to your plans for this “unit plan.”

* All responses on this questionnaire are voluntary.

Appendix C
Place-Based Art “Unit Plan”

Name _____ School _____

Big Idea: _____ Grade Level: _____

Essential Questions:

Understandings:

Artist(s) / Art Form(s) Studied:

Performance Tasks/Projects:

Unit Overview:

Place-Based Aspects:

Engaging students in the **local context** (ex. outdoor education, field trips, guest speakers, interacting with natural items, etc.):

Engaging students with **local content** (ex. examining local social, political, economic, cultural, historical, and/or ecological issues; studying the local landscape or built environment; studying local artists or art forms; etc.):

Promoting appreciation and care for place:

Engaging students in **impacting the local** community/environment:

Cross-Curricular Connections:

Rationale:

Appendix D
Place-Based Art Education Unit Plan Rubric

Criteria	1	2	3	4
1. Local content	Does not identify any local content (including artists/art forms)	Does not identify any local content other than artists/art forms	Identifies at least one local issue/area of study that functions as secondary content	Identifies at least one local issue/area of study that functions as primary content
Local artists/art forms	Does not identify any artists/art forms OR intent to find one	Identifies an artist/art form that does not have ties to the local environment	Identifies an artist/art form (not local) whose work deals with issues of place	Clearly identifies local artist/art form or intent to find one
Inter-disciplinary	Does not identify any interdisciplinary connections	Identifies an interdisciplinary connection but little to no evidence exists in the plan	Identifies an interdisciplinary connection with some evidence of connection in plan	Identifies an interdisciplinary connection with clear evidence of full integration in plan
2. Local context	Does not employ any strategy to integrate the local context	Employs one strategy to integrate the local context	Employs two strategies to integrate the local context	Employs three or more strategies to integrate the local context OR makes significant use of two or more strategies

Sequel to Appendix D see on the next page.

Sequel to Appendix D.

Affective components (toward place)	Does not articulate any intent or methods of cultivating value for place	Vaguely specifies the methods used OR values gained	Vaguely specifies methods used AND values gained	Clearly specifies the methods used AND values gained during the unit
Transformative component (toward place & community)	No transformative component articulated	Transformative component vaguely articulated	Clearly articulated transformative component but it does not appear to be connected to the unit	Clearly articulated transformative component that is connected to the unit and impacts the local community/environment
Total				