

DREAM

***Developing Reading Education through Arts Methods* is a four-year arts integration program funded through the United States Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement: Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant Program.**

The DREAM program is a partnership of the San Diego County Office of Education via the North County Professional Development Federation, and Center ARTES at California State University San Marcos. The program's goal is to train 3rd and 4th grade teachers to use visual arts and theater activities to improve students' reading and language arts skills. Begun in June 2009, the program offers one week Summer Institutes coupled with coaching by professional artists throughout the year.

The research associated with DREAM is an experimental protocol whereby teachers are tracked in three categories: teachers who attend the summer institute and then receive weekly coaching; teachers who attend the institute only, and teachers who receive no training at all.

Ten school districts have had teachers participate in the project, including Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Fallbrook, Julian, Oceanside, Ramona, San Marcos, Valley Center Pauma, and Vista. This represents 141 teachers and approximately 3,000 students.

Results of the DREAM research:

- **Arts integration as a powerful for 3rd grade:** arts integration supports reading comprehension and language arts as demonstrated on year-end state tests.
- **Test scores in DREAM have improved by 87 points:** During DREAM's first two years of implementation, 3rd graders in DREAM classrooms have consistently excelled on year-end test scores. In Year 2, the 3rd graders in classrooms with art coaches did exceptionally well. They began the school year as the lowest performing of all the study groups (both treatment and comparison) on the California state language arts test. However, they ended the year as the highest performing group, improving on their prior year test scores by 87 points on average.
- **Theatre is an effective instructional tool in reading education:** Teachers who integrated theatre into their language arts curriculum to teach reading comprehension, inference and detail had students score higher on the state language arts test. Analysis identified that the more frequently teachers integrated theatre, the more effective they perceived it as a tool for reading instruction.

- **Instructional coaching in arts integration impacts success:** Coaching is a successful form of professional development. The majority of teachers in the study had little to no experience in integrating the arts and had received little arts education themselves. Much of the material and concepts were new to them. Teachers were randomized to one of two treatment groups. Both groups attended a 30-hour summer institute. One group returned to school to integrate on their own, while another group received instructional coaching in arts integration for an additional 20 hours during the school year. Both qualitative and quantitative data support the findings that the coaching was impactful. Coached teachers integrated more frequently, were more likely to use arts standards, were more confident in integration and were more likely to see it as an effective instructional strategy. Their student test scores on the state language arts test, when compared with the institute-only teachers and the comparison group, were overall higher at the end of the intervention year.
- **Summer Institute makes a difference:** Participation in the summer institute was beneficial for some but not all teachers. The institute-only teachers were integrating the arts more frequently than the comparison group teachers but not as frequently as the coached teachers. They had greater struggles to include arts integration into their teaching strategies without the presence of a coach. Their student test scores in language arts at the end of the intervention year were on average higher than the comparison group but not as high as the coached teachers' students.