

**CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS INNOVATIONS PROGRAM
FINAL REPORT FORM**

Grant Recipient: Living Sky School Division and Cut Knife High School

Grant ID: 10030
(This will be listed in the grant notification letter.)

Date: June 15th, 2011

“Our Story Continues to Grow”

Creative Partnerships

We want to celebrate our students and their creative activities while working with our guest artists. This blog will document the artists working in Cut Knife High School and our community through Living Sky School Division with support from Creative Partnerships & the SK Arts Board.

Pages

- ★ 1. AIR 2010-11
- ★ 2. AIR 2009/10
- ★ 3. Dance 2009-10
- ★ 4. Music 2009-10
- ★ 5. Visual Art 2009-10
- ★ 6. Drama 2009-10

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Puppet Making with the Grade 5s

Big Ideas

- ★ animation ★ Art
- ★ Ashley ★ banners
- ★ Brad ★ celebrate
- ★ challenge ★ create
- ★ creative ★ Dance ★ display
- ★ drawing ★ explore
- ★ fun ★ Gabriel ★ gesture
- ★ Hip Hop ★ Holly
- ★ InfoRed ★ interviews ★ Keith
- ★ Kelly ★ lyrics ★ mask
- ★ media ★ monologue ★ music
- ★ nicole ★ performance
- ★ Play ★ poetry ★ Rap ★ Rap
- Music ★ sculpture ★ Simon
- ★ story ★ studio
- ★ symbols ★ technique
- ★ technology ★ thank you
- ★ theatre ★ visual colour
- ★ workshop ★ writing

Admin

- ★ Register
- ★ Log in
- ★ Entries RSS

1. Research Question

Please state your research question.

What are the real benefits of an Arts Education program? How might the experience with an artist promote student ability and raise self-esteem and confidence? How does an artist build resiliency in our students and help keep them in school? Will this have residual effects in the school and the community as we build relationships with surrounding schools?

Considering the documentary material you gathered over the course of the residency, what can you now say in answer to your research question?

Arts Education is for all - it is accessible by any student with a desire to explore, envision, collaborate and share. Students were exposed to a variety of artists over the past 3 years at Cut Knife and this year, were able to concentrate in more specialized ways through the workshops Nicole provided.

The benefits are many. The idea of art has become commonplace in our school - it has been a natural integration of the Arts into our everyday life rather than an 'add on' or considered a specialty item. It has allowed students to share their talents and go beyond the stigma of *geekish* to having a perceived "cool" factor." The level of confidence in the students has increased and this change is apparent to teachers who work with them daily in all classes.

Nicole took a multidisciplinary approach to the residency, bringing in other guests and incorporating writing, dance, theatre, puppetry, mask, story and film to the projects. This has built skills and uncovered talents that we did not know students possessed/ nor did students know they had lingering just below the surface. It was an eye opening experience for all involved.

How do you see what you've learned being applied in your community in the future?

We will see future impact in our community application because there is an increased awareness of the Arts and a higher level of ability and skills in CKHS students. This exposure goes far beyond the school walls - they have a confidence to share their ideas with others, to present their work, to create in many new ways. Students will continue to work on the community film project for the upcoming Centennial Celebration in July 2012. We see students with the attitude of "I am an artist and I have things to share" which has promoted our big idea of Our Story Continues To Grow. People from larger cities may find it difficult to understand the significance of this change - especially when it happens in a small town, for students with very little previous exposure to the Arts. The Arts are now accepted as a regular part of life and a valid mode for expression. The community of Cut Knife has benefitted tremendously from the partnership and financial support.

2. Documentation

Please provide a narrative summary of your residency.

This year the AIR program focused on theatre and creative writing with Artist in Residence, Nicole Schafenacker. From September-May, students had opportunities to learn about and explore many aspects of theatre and the performing arts.

Activities included:

- Artist worked with Cut Knife Elementary, Cut Knife High School, Sweetgrass and Chief Poundmaker schools
- writing for zines, publication
- mask making
- mask performance
- clowning
- playwriting
- skills based workshops, introductory concepts, student sign up (voluntary)
- “Preserving Oral Culture through Story, Dance and Drum” – interdisciplinary project
- community interviews for the Centennial project & filmmaking
- creating commercials on film
- puppet making & story telling
- installation art based on original stories
- credo writing
- story theatre and tableau (“Battle of Cut Knife Hill” & “Creation of Seasons”)
- community based “Open Mic” (student organized)
- collective creation
- performer created theatre, inter-disciplinary project (invited previous guest artists to the collaboration)

These skills culminated in a collectively created play entitled “We are Different Through Change”. Students developed each aspect of the play including the script, set design, video production, and original music, and performed their own work as musicians, dancers and actors. They did two very successful performances and were greatly appreciated by students and community alike.

What methods did you use to document the progress of your Innovations grant?

1) Cut Knife High School AIR Blog <http://artistinresidence.edublogs.org/>

- The blog has been an excellent way to document the ongoing activities of the guest artist and students. This blog is promoted on the Cut Knife High School website, the Arts Live website and the Living Sky School Division website.
- The blog features student writing, artist writing, video and photos

2) Quarterly Reports

- Nicole kept very extensive documentation through her quarterly reports, including activities, programs and reflections



3) Technology

- Nicole was given the use of a camera and MacBook Pro to assist with documentation using writing, photos, film and original music.
- Both students and artist contributed to the documentation

4) Cut Knife High School Newsletter

- Nicole wrote a monthly report in the school newsletter, which is distributed to parents

Please attach/enclose selected documentary materials that show how you learned what you did, and the progress and results of your residency. These might include photos, videos, sound recordings, survey results, news clippings, testimonials, etc.

a) student writing booklets – grade 7 - 12

b) video – grade 2 “Battle at Cut Knife Hill”, Sweet Grass “Creation of Seasons”, grade 7 – 12 “Story, Dance and Drum” interdisciplinary project with guest artists,

c) photos

d) program for “We Are Different Through Change” final performance

3. Legacy

Please describe what you think will be the long-term impact of your grant.

We have a much greater awareness of the multi-disciplinary approach and ways it can cross subjects by connecting concepts and modes of expression. The staff has been exposed to many new ideas and supports for their programs.

The creation of the Arts Ed Studio will continue to be a place for student exploration.

- Integration of various forms of art into lesson planning
- Multi media application
- Respect earned from the community
- Resource building
- Location of increased art space in the school



What advice do you have for future applicants to this program?

In the beginning, take the time needed to help the guest artist integrate into the everyday culture of your staff. Provide staff with in-service time to get to know what the guest artist can provide and ways they might build meaning programs together.

Teacher buy in is very important. They need to view the process as an integral part of their teaching as opposed to it being an add-on. There needs to be long term planning to get the big picture established with the staff. Scheduling and timelines are essential to move classroom teachers to forward thinking. It was important for us to reach out to the other schools as we want to build bridges, but sharing an artist among schools makes for challenging communication between all parties so you must take the time to discuss activities and timelines.

4. Curriculum Connections (Schools Only)

How well do you think the program functioned to help your teachers implement arts education curriculum objectives?

Nicole worked with teachers identify outcomes and provided ways to encourage writing and performance through collective work from grade 7 – 12. For many teachers this is an area they need support in order to feel comfortable with the process and to understand the framework and strategies.

The partnership was very positive experience for teachers as it provided fresh ideas. For example: Nicole showed an approach to writing through the exploration of personal credos. This provided for both individual expression and group collaboration with built in student decision-making.

The Open Mic project created student leaders and built school spirit. Students were proud to read their work out loud to invited guests. The Installation Art project brought together a group of students who normally would not have classes together and yet worked very well with the pre-planning of Nicole and teachers. The outcomes spilled into other classrooms as a younger grade was invited to view and be an audience for the installation gallery. For teachers the process is more valuable than the product.

Nicole modeled a creation process that incorporated inquiry based construction, analysis of interpretation, critical response to other art forms and an openness to inter-disciplinary art.



What have you learned that might help other schools and teachers implement arts education in their classrooms?

Arts Education can be approached through many avenues as long as you have a clear understanding of the outcome. Teachers should be encouraged to take risks, allow for students to construct their own learning through a guided process and accept that the students brings valuable experience, perceptions and skills to any project.

The implementation of arts education is vey compatible with differentiated instruction and multiple intelligences. Intentional planning and knowing the learner are keys to amazingly produced projects/assignments. It is about taking risks (teachers and students), taking that first step and asking the “how” do I incorporate this across the curricula, grades 7-12 that leads to success.



5. Innovations Program Goals

The goals of the Innovations grant program were identified in the application package. The Arts Board would like to know how the program addressed these goals. Please answer the following on a scale of 1 – 5. Your comments will help the Arts Board in its assessment and planning of the Innovations program.

Key: 1 = not at all 5 = beyond our expectations

Access

The residency provided innovative opportunities and access to arts and culture in the community.

(Please circle) 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Open Mic - student writing & student led – first of it's kind in the community!
Performances of original student written work
Community "Centennial Stories" on Film, learning how to conduct interviews
Lots of excitement over activities.

5. Artist's Practice

The residency met the artist's need for time and space to develop his/her own artistic practice.

(Please circle) 1 2 3 **4** 5

Comments:

I would rate this as a 4. It was extremely helpful to have my own space in the New Art Room to be able to rehearse and write. During the first half of my residency feel compromised about the amount of time I put into student projects and not having enough time to focus on my own work. I would say this balanced out in the second semester.

My artistic practice included writing a new play entitled Circling that will be produced at the Edmonton Fringe, keeping a journal of free-writing, developing a puppet and mask show with the theatre company Collective Voice, contributing writing to University of Alberta's production Somewhere Between Scum and Skank, acting in a production of The Vagina Monologues, developing a clown turn that was performed at CKES, CKHS and Poundmaker, and attending three professional workshops (Theatre for Young Audiences, Puppet-Making and Performance, Master Mask-Making).

Development of the Arts

The residency encouraged the development of future artists and arts groups in the province.

(Please circle) 1 2 **3** **4** 5

Comments:

Two students in particular, were encouraged to take a leadership role and to keep performing their work. They are interested in exploring this further. Nicole contributed to the development of new work with *Collective Voice Theatre* and led the group through a writing and development process that led to original work being produced and shown in Saskatoon and North Battleford. It is difficult to imagine how this will spread across the province, as we are only a small community. We believe the experience was very beneficial for our students and teachers.

Notes from students: Tia: Going to Open Mics in North Battleford has benefited me so much because if I hadn't I wouldn't be as open with my Poetry and my Short Stories. I love going to Open Mics because you get positive feedback on your work and how you can improve. Going to Open Mics has made me a better writer and it has helped me with reading in front of large groups.

Tahnee:

Hello! well my name is Tahnee, Im a part of the people that go to the Open Mic. So far it's been a great experience for me and of course Tia. Honestly, if it wasn't for Nicole, I wouldn't have **ever** read any of my poetry or even let people know. Lol` Now I'm confident with going out to read in public and now I even rap 😊Peace out , Tahnee



Partnerships

The partnerships that developed over the course of this residency will have a lasting impact in the community.

(Please circle) 1 2 3 **4** 5

Comments:

People in this community see the Arts differently now and have opened up their thinking through greater exposure to other forms of creating. It is less “strange” and more accepted. The students see it as a regular part of their school life. Community members and parents are curious and are asking questions. We hope to see the impact next year as well when we put together our Centennial film.

We are grateful for the financial support that makes programs like these possible. Small communities need artists to bring new perspectives and to keep people thinking, growing and developing in new ways. This innovative thinking will keep our communities vibrant and alive.

6. Financial Report

Attach a financial report that shows the actual revenue and expenditures of your Innovations program.

Revenue

Revenue

Partnerships Innovations Grant	\$30,000
Living Sky School Division	\$ 6,287
(Arts Ed consultant, communication costs, admin/payroll, MERCs,)	
Total Revenue	\$ 36,287

Expenditures

Artist Salary (\$3,000/month, 9 months)	\$27,000
Salary benefits (13%)*	\$ 3,120
Other guest artists:	
Story, Dance & Drum project	\$ 1,392
Final Arts Collaboration & celebration	\$ 2,900
Travel Costs & Artist Expenses	\$ 1,875
Total Actual Expenses	\$ 36,287

In Kind Expenses:

Materials/Equipment* (\$5,000 in-kind)	\$ 5,000
Communication costs*	\$ 500
Studio/teaching space (\$50/day, 160 days)*	\$ 8,000
Arts Ed Consultant*	\$10,000
Administration and payroll*	\$ 8,493
Total In Kind Expenses	\$ 31,993

7. Artist's Report

Attach an artist's report consisting of the following:

- **artist's brief narrative on the residency's impact on his/her practice**
- **artist's description of what went especially well for the community during the residency**
- **artist's perspective on what future applicants to the program should keep mind in order to have a successful experience for both artist and community.**

Nicole Schafenacker:

Summary

This impact of this residency on my practice is that I've been able to identify what my skill set is as a writer and theatre artist (I would say its performer-created theatre) and learned more about my own process through teaching it to others. I've gained a lot of insight into how to go about developing manageable projects that will provide students with an opportunity to learn performer-creator skills. As well, I have been inspired as a writer by being in a new location, this has largely impacted my current writing project, a play entitled Circling. In terms of theatre projects, I have had the opportunity to work with a North Battleford theatre company, Collective Voice, on developing an original mask and puppet show, and to perform in a community theatre production, The Vagina Monologues.

What went especially well during this residency were projects that brought in the larger community either as audience or as subjects for a specific project. Three successful projects in particular were the Centennial Interviews (Historical Vignettes) in which students chose people in the community, often family members to interview about their experience living in Cut Knife, the Open Mics, and our final performance, We Are Different Through Change. Inviting the community into the school strengthened ties between the community and the school and allowed both students and community members to be inspired by, and to value, the place that they come from. As well, these projects gave students an opportunity to showcase the skills they have been learning and to see firsthand the impact that art can have on people.

To future applicants I would say it is very helpful to have an end goal for the residency. Knowing that we were working towards having a final performance for the students to showcase their skills helped me to develop projects leading up to the final performance that would provide students

with skills that would be eventually be used to create our final show. As well, it created a sense of accomplishment both for myself and for students to see the work culminate in final performance.

In hindsight I would also say that the artist will have a more successful experience if they are discerning about the classroom projects that they take on. Oftentimes I took on projects that did not relate to my end goal and took away from my overall plan. As well, I think its important to be realistic about how much can be accomplished in a certain time frame. At times we began projects that could not be completed in our given time frame. Lastly, I would say that being extremely firm about the artist time to instructing and planning time ratio will allow the artist to get more out of the residency.

Overall this residency was a very valuable experience for me. Working with students was incredibly inspiring at points and really helped me to realize the impact the arts, and the process of creating something, can have on the individual. I am thankful to the staff at Cut Knife High School for allowing me so much freedom in developing projects with the students and for their support of this program.

A more detailed account of my residency is included below:

September-November

I've been at Cut Knife High School for almost three months now and have been lucky enough to have worked with almost all of the classes. Just within this last month, I've found that more students are interested in participating in workshops and performance opportunities. There's been a noticeable jump in numbers from about 5-8 students in workshops during September and October to 15 in November. As well students have volunteered to do Christmas readings and clown turns. However, some of difference likely has to do as well with the age range of students: this month I've been working with Grades 7 and 8 students and they seem to be more overt than some of the older students who I was working with in September and October. Although when we did mask statues for the pep rally, I had students from Grade 7-12 participating.

I began my residency with more of a visual art exploration with the students; everyone from Grade 7 to 12 has had an opportunity to do mask making. We've gradually begun to incorporate

performative work such as exploration of mask performance, and clowning. As well, students in Grade 7B, 8B and 10 went from focusing on creative writing to presenting their work. They each developed short stories, poetry, personal essays and monologues and then had an opportunity to read their work in front of their peers. Except for three students, all read their work publicly.

An interesting trend with the first two workshops I held as well as my Storytelling group for the Dance, Drum and Story workshop, was that the majority of students who attended were First Nations students.

My goals for the coming months are to: focus on providing more performance opportunities; and structure workshops and my time within classes based on long term creative processes such as the historical vignettes project and eventually the culminating project. From now until the end of December I will be focusing on finishing an installation art project with Michelle Ramsay's ALT class, putting together Christmas performances as well as getting the historical vignettes project underway.

In terms of community outreach I've worked for several weeks with the Grade 5 and 6 students at CKES. Each grade made masks and had one class of mask performance and exploration. The Grade 5s and I are currently doing a clown workshop. I'm interested to see how the clown presentations will go as it is a bit of an experiment- they will each be presenting a short trick with a toy in front of the Grade 2 students. My goal is for their performance experience fun, exciting and successful. I am not sure yet if presenting a short trick with a toy, in clown, is too challenging, not challenging enough or just right.

I have been out to Poundmaker, Little Pine and Sweetgrass Schools and spoken to the Principals about coming in to work with their students. So far my involvement has been minimal, but I will make it a priority to work with these schools more in the coming year. I was able to present a clown turn at Chief Poundmaker School, and it was a great experience. The students (Kindergarten-Grade 12) were very excited and made a fantastic audience. I was able to connect with them very quickly and had many students ask me questions during the Q and A and afterwards as well. In January I have set up a schedule for going out to Sweetgrass School to work with Sylvia Weenie and Grades 3-6 one afternoon per week. I specifically want to incorporate the

Reserve Schools into the historical vignettes project and have them bring people from their community into the school to tell stories of their experiences living in this part of Saskatchewan.

I'm still finding the balance of 50/50 split of artist and instruction time to be a bit of a difficult balance. I've found that more of my attention has been on prepping for classes, but my plan is to prioritize and focus on a couple big projects that will lead to performance rather than several little projects at the school. Another thing which will help even this out, is that part of my own writing time will be put towards writing a script for the culminating project.

I've found almost all of the staff members at each school I've visited to be incredibly helpful and enthusiastic about the AIR program. At Cut Knife High School, I've found that staff are very open to my suggestions and provide support when needed. I think this is a very special school in terms of how familiar the staff are with each and every student and how passionate and committed they are about ensuring their students are given opportunities to succeed in a variety of ways.

November-December

These last two months have been full of a variety of projects. I have worked with classes from Grade 5-11 for a period of two to three weeks on each project. In the ALT class students wrote Flash Mystery Stories and crafted installation art further depicting their story. Meanwhile the Grade 11 English class began the Historical Vignette project by organizing our first Guest Speaker series. Grade 5 students at CKES had three afternoons of exploring mask and clown performance. This project culminated in a clown presentation that they performed for the Grade 2 students

Outside of classes, in workshop format, the Grade 7 students learned the basics of developing a clown turn, created a clown character for themselves and showcased their work in the Christmas Clowns presentation. As well, four Grade 8 students went around to grades 7, 8A, 9 and 10 and shared the Christmas monologues they had written last month.

Our guest speaker series began with Orval Ens, Germaine Vany and Lyle Ramsay speaking to students in grades 8, 10 and 12 about their experiences living in Cut Knife and of the local history of this area. The event was videotaped by the Grade 11 Media Studies students and was followed by Question and Answer sessions with the students.

When classes resume in January I will continue to work with the Grade 2 students at CKES on creating a re-enactment of the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, and the Grade 11 Media Studies students on developing a short film for the WorkSafe Saskatchewan competition. The main focus, however, will be on completing the Historical Vignettes project over January and February. I will also continue to work on the blog and will begin a short project at Sweetgrass School.

These last two months have been busy and as we move ahead I am going to try to be more selective about the projects I take on, keeping in mind that the main goals for my time at CKHS are to develop the Historical Vignettes project and create a final show. Helpful questions for me to ask before taking on a project are: How will this build community? How will this empower teachers and students; will they use this skill set in the future? Does this relate to either the Historical Vignettes or the Culminating Project?

January-March

The last two months have been focused primarily on beginning the Historical Vignettes, a project to be featured at the Cut Knife Centennial. Students worked in several different roles. For the Theatre Arts students they were responsible for completing several different organizational tasks such as contacting potential subjects, finding a time to bring them into the school, and having them complete the necessary media release forms.

The students also worked as researchers by developing and revising questions for their subjects and constructing a family life path of how they arrived in Cut Knife (or the surrounding area). Creatively, the students journaled about why they wanted to bring in a specific individual and what kind of scene or monologue they were interested in developing based on this source material. They also completed mini personal credos - a creative writing exercise to help students focus in on the particular topics they were interested in writing about.

Once our guests arrived they were in charge of conducting the interview which required effective communication skills. The Media Studies students learned technical skills as filmmakers and photographers, and were also responsible for providing direction to the subjects and interviewers.

Though we were not able to fully complete this project by developing a scenes and monologues inspired by the interviews, the interviews themselves were successful and that the students learned valuable skills in the process. The aspect which I enjoyed the most about the project was that it brought parents and other members of the community into the school and became larger than a classroom project- it provided a unique opportunity for members of the community to share their perspectives on life in Cut Knife. Students commented that they were inspired by the interviews and learned more about the people around them.

The constructive feedback that I received was that the scope of the project was too large of an undertaking for the two classes to cover in a limited time frame. Constructive feedback from the students that I received was that they wanted to feel more prepared for the interviews themselves. This is valuable information to consider as we embark on our final project. The Centennial project will continue to be developed further in the next academic year.

As we move towards our next project, a collective theatre piece, the teachers and myself are making it a priority to set achievable goals and to maintain clear communication with one another. Lastly, I think everyone would like to have more student input when it comes to developing the project so that it is ultimately a meaningful learning experience for them.

Overall, I think the work which was done on the Historical Vignettes provides an inspiring and valuable jumping off point for the work to come in the following year. It made steps towards developing stronger connections between the school and the larger community as well.

The projects completed at CKES and Sweetgrass School have also brought me in closer contact with our larger community and having the projects filmed and put on DVD will allow students and teachers to exchange student work between schools. Another example of student work being brought to the larger community is the two students in Grade 10 who have consistently attended the Open Mike at the North Battleford Public Library with me. It has been inspiring to watch their growth as writers and to see the increase in their confidence and ability to creatively express themselves. I believe they will act as leaders to the other students in our final project.

I am excited to begin working on our collective piece with several of our teachers. I believe it will be a great opportunity for students to see the reward of developing the artistic skills they have been cultivating over the last three years by showcasing their work and sharing it with their community.

April- May

We began April with the goal to expose as many CKHS students as possible to a credo writing project in order to spark interest about the Collective Theatre Group and the Final AIR Celebration. I worked with Mrs. Luyben-Switzer (Grade 9 and 12), Mrs. Whitebread (Grade 7B), Mrs. McGovarin (Grade 7A), Mrs. Erickson (Grade 8), Mrs. Ramsay (ALT) and Mrs. Rumpf (Grade 11) on this project.

We began by having students brainstorm five credo values and then journal about the one that interested them the most. In their journaling they included a personal anecdote based on their chosen credo value. In groups students shared their creative writing on that particular credo and used their personal anecdotes to inspire a scene. Once the scene was written and rehearsed they had the option to incorporate props, costumes, set pieces and music. On the final day performed the scenes in front of the class.

After completing the credo writing project students had the option to sign up for the Collective Theatre Group with the end goal of developing a collection of student-written scenes to be performed at the Final AIR Celebration. The Collective Theatre Group worked together for six weeks and continued to draw on skills learnt during the credo-writing project. They selected a group credo value (Change) and in smaller groups wrote scenes based on this unifying theme. Certain students worked individually on production elements such as writing original music, designing a poster, and publicity. Collectively, the students developed a set design, costume design, and chose a title for the performance.

Two days before the performance we brought in returning guest artist, Holly Hildebrand to help students construct their set design. Returning guest artists Ashley Johnson and Brad Bellegarde helped students choreograph a dance piece and write a rap song which were added to the

collection of performances. On May 11th students performed We Are Different Through Change for CKHS and Grade 4 and 5 of CKES in the afternoon as well as for the community in the evening.

There were also a handful of side projects I completed over April and May. Over the course of three classes I worked with Mrs. McGovarin's Grade 8s to rehearse and film commercials the students had written in groups. With each group I gave a brief tutorial on how to set up the camera and tripod and film their commercial. I also worked with the Grade 5 students to construct puppet characters and explore storytelling. They began by brainstorming and making sketches, went on to construct the puppet and begin exploring how the puppet could move and be brought to life. Finally in groups they wrote short scenes featuring their puppets to perform for their class.

Lastly, I worked with Grade 10 students Tia Anderson and Tahnee Albert to organize two Open Mics in Cut Knife. These were open to the community and brought in great audiences with both emerging and established performers and writers. The blog has continued to be updated by myself and occasionally by the students. It features pictures and more information about the above events.