Art Teachers' Professional Development in a Community of Practice

Jeonghyo Kim
THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VISUAL ARTS, THEATRE AND DANCE

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JEONGHYO KIM

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The members of the committee approve the dissertation of Jeonghyo Kim defended on April 30, 2010.

_______________________________
Pat Villeneuve  
Professor Directing Dissertation

_______________________________
Coco Readdick  
University Representative

_______________________________
Tom Anderson  
Committee Member

_______________________________
Dave Gussak  
Committee Member

Approved:

_______________________________
Dave Gussak, Chair, Department of Art Education

_______________________________
Sally E. McRorie, Dean, College of Visual Arts, Theatre and Dance

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members.
This dissertation is dedicated to Hyungho Kim and Yongsook Kim
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the purposes, contents, and processes of a community of practice (CoP) for art teachers in North Florida, using as a conceptual framework the practical model for CoPs developed by Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002). The CoP chosen for the study was well established, and involved approximately 25 elementary art teachers. Because the study focused on the personal meaning-making by the teachers in the context of the CoP, a qualitative, ethnographic method was used. Data were triangulated through the use of participant observation and ethnographic interview. The results illuminate the potential functions of the interrelationships within a CoP, the most basic of which were the effective mentoring of participants and the negotiation of differences through a culture of respect and caring, and an openness to diverse levels of expertise and work environments. Further, the common identity created by the CoP and helped it form effective partnerships with community arts institutions that enabled teachers to engage in community-based art projects that benefited teachers and students, and garnered public support for art education. The study findings suggest that a CoP of art teachers can serve as a cultural, social, and educational resource that effectively fosters art teachers’ professional growth in accord with a new conception of professionalism. Further, the evident benefits of providing professional development through engagement in a CoP point to fertile ground for educational policymakers and for researchers who are interested in the paradigm of learning-through-participation and in professional development for art teachers.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of this study, which concerns the usefulness of a community of practice for the professional development of art educators. Background information essential to an understanding of the study purposes is offered, as well as a statement of the problem and justification for the study. In addition, the research questions and research design are outlined, and the potential limitations of the study are discussed.

Background to the Study

This study investigated the practices and potentials of a community of practice for the professional development of art educators. Wenger and Snyder (2000) defined a community of practice (CoP) as “a group of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise” (p. 139). A community of practice is a learning environment where individual learners are willing to share their knowledge and experience in relation to the achievement of mutual goals, as well as to invent and make use of new knowledge through diverse interactions (Wenger & Snyder, 2000). This study examined an existing community of practice in which individuals share their knowledge and instructional experiences as a means of contributing to the creation of knowledge that benefits the group.

My Own Experience

As an elementary school teacher in Korea since the early 1990s, I found that the learning experiences designed to stimulate my professional growth were isolated and restrictive. In my
early teaching experiences, I soon realized that the knowledge learned in my undergraduate courses was already outdated and no longer applicable for classroom practice. Because I was very motivated to become a capable teaching practitioner equipped with theoretical and practical knowledge and skills related to art education, however, I sought a venue that could assist me in enriching my teaching and learning. In the hope of learning about the salient issues and burgeoning new knowledge in the field of art education, I attended several short-term workshops provided by local Korean educational institutions and universities. Unfortunately, I soon saw that the packaged curricula and resources they offered had less relevance to the art classes I taught than I had hoped for. Further, I realized that even if the learning experiences provided by these conventional training programs had served to elevate my art teaching, the valuable interactions with other expert art teachers came to an end after the programs were completed.

When I heard about a learning community led by a local educational institution, I was anxious to participate. There, art teachers pursued advanced artistic techniques and hands-on activities with each other; however, they did not address art activities for the classroom. In the private realm, my continued quest to find meaningful professional development remained unfulfilled. With little collegial or collaborative encouragement within my school, I needed colleagues with whom I could share my successes and obstacles in teaching. I found numerous online communities of art teachers in Korea, where the sharing of pedagogical ideas vigorously flourished. While there was some practical sharing of information on lesson plans and the use of art materials, such information proved to be fragmented and failed to provide guidance for sustained art instruction based on coherent pedagogical principles.

After five years as an accredited elementary school teacher in Korea, I had the opportunity to observe how Japanese art teachers have kept their motivation and enthusiasm for professional growth. In Tokyo and its outskirts, there are many local and national CoPs in which
art teachers voluntarily participate. In the course of one-and-a-half years of study in a large city near Tokyo, Japan, I was able to observe a local CoP and art classes presented annually by a sizable learning community. The art teachers I observed deepened their understanding of teaching art by investigating, discussing, and evaluating their teaching practices together. I had conversations with art teachers who were leaders of both local informal and national learning communities. Through this experience, I became convinced that a CoP is central to invigorating the professional lives of art teachers. One experienced Japanese art instructor who has engaged in local and national CoPs throughout his teaching career expressed a strong sense of attachment towards such communities. I began to believe that my own learning could be significantly enhanced by engaging with my colleagues in a CoP.

Thus, this study was inspired in part by my own experiences of a gap between educational reform initiatives, the authentic needs of art teachers, and the realities of professional development for art teachers in Korea. In addition, it was shaped by my experience in Japan, observing the vital CoPs among art teachers there. This study is the natural extension, then, of my persistent curiosity about the potential of CoPs to further the professional growth of art teachers, as well as to answer a pressing need for educational reform in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world. I believe that an art teacher’s professional competencies must include an aspiration to offer a high quality of art-related learning experiences to students. In addition, my experience as a teacher has helped me to see that the varying needs of students require improvements in art teachers’ proficiency and accountability. As described above, however, the existing professional development programs that serve as the typical paths for in-service learning by art teachers have proven to be less than satisfactory. It is my hope that this study can illuminate an alternative path for effective and meaningful professional development for art teachers.
Statement of the Problem

A competent and dedicated teacher is a prerequisite for optimal student learning in every classroom (Day, 1997). Unquestionably, art teachers are included in this assertion. Day (1997) has noted that teaching art is profession; therefore, art teachers must be professionals. As in other professional fields, teaching art requires concentrated study and a deep understanding of student learning styles, learning environments, instructional strategies, curriculum development, and evaluation. A professional teacher is “an instructional leader who orchestrates learning experiences in response to curriculum goals and student needs and who coaches students to high levels of independent performance” (p. 6). Meaningful professional development is an important element in helping teachers maximize such professional skills. However, in studying professional development among art teachers, Charland (2008) found that “top-down approaches to professional development” (p. 34) by district, state, or federal programs generally do not meet the practical and particular needs of art educators, as they are designed in a “one-size-fits-all format” (p. 34) and distributed in such a way as to skim over the most fundamental knowledge needed by art teachers.

The research literature on the professional development of teachers has highlighted the importance of CoPs as an alternative to traditional forms of professional development (Hodgkinson-Williams et al., 2008; Little, 2002; Shulman & Shulman, 2004). The researchers’ accounts have converged on examining the characteristics of CoPs, including interpersonal contacts, collaborative learning, performative knowledge (Hodgkinson-Williams et al., 2008), collective self-efficacy and teacher competencies, leadership, and reflective practices (Vavasseur & MacGregor, 2008). The available body of work indicates that considerable progress has been made in specifying the attributes and merits of CoPs among teachers. Yet relatively little research has investigated the specific dynamics of these interactions, as well as the practices by which
CoPs engender teacher learning (Little, 2002). Further, little research has examined the nature of CoPs for art teachers in particular.

Art teachers continue to face the challenge of finding and participating in meaningful professional growth activities. After conducting an extensive review of the salient literature on teacher professional development, I found that teacher learning in a CoP is considered an effective means for professional development, in contrast to traditional top-down approaches (Desimone et al., 2002). Importantly, a CoP among art teachers is seen as a powerful method for stimulating learning because it meets the participating teachers’ intrinsic needs for improvement (Charland, 2008).

Over the past decade, a good deal of research has focused on the value of CoPs for fostering innovative learning among teachers (Cataldo, 2009). Little of this research has focused specifically on CoPs for art teachers, however. This study examined the contents, purposes, and processes of a CoP for art teachers in particular. In addition, it addressed other significant roles or benefits of a CoP than those that already have been widely explored by social scientists or educational researchers. Looking at the nature of a CoP for art teachers served to identify the specific concerns and characteristics that might be missed in the criteria for a CoP commonly described by contemporary researchers.

**Research Questions**

The primary research question guiding the study is: What are the purposes, contents, processes of a community of practice for art teachers in North Florida?

In order to more fully answer this question, several supporting questions have been developed:

1) How do the art teachers perceive the community’s perspective(s) on practice?

2) What are the characteristics of the interpersonal relationships created by the art teachers?
3) What resources do the art teachers use to achieve the goals of the community?
4) What characteristics of the community of practice foster the participation of the art teachers?

**Research Design**

This research project answers the primary research question and the supporting questions that examine the nature of a community of practice (CoP) composed of art teachers. Ethnography was employed as a methodology for the study, since it intends to find particular meanings from the insider’s perspectives. Thus, this study is a qualitative analysis of a particular, ongoing CoP for art teachers, in Tallahassee, Florida. Descriptive data were gathered using qualitative methods such as participant observation, ethnographic interview, and a review of pertinent documents in order to identify the deep meanings of the participating art teachers’ perceptions and experiences in their CoP. While I remained open to other themes that emerge from the data, I incorporated an examination of interpersonal relationships in the community, participants’ perceptions, characteristics of processes used to perform common practices, and goals of the art teachers in the community. Based on these findings, I made suggestions for the development of communities of practice (CoPs) for art teachers.

**Research Site**

In initiating this study, I extensively reviewed the literature on community, CoPs, and professional development generally and among art teachers in particular. After identifying findings and themes, I established a set of research questions, and located a CoP of elementary art teachers in Tallahassee, Florida. I purposively selected this CoP as an appropriate research site, since a pilot test I conducted with this community demonstrated that it evidenced the same ideal features of a CoP as those identified by Wenger et al. (2002). In addition, a participating veteran art teacher introduced to me by a professor of the Department of Art Education at Florida
State University, as well as three other participating art teachers who completed the pilot test, pointed out the significant influence of their CoP on their professional growth. Observation sites for the research study include the location of a monthly meeting of local elementary art teachers and of workshops held for specific projects, such as the Children’s Guernica/Peace Murals Project. The CoP consists of 20 to 25 art teachers from public elementary schools in Tallahassee, Florida. Its sustained history of more than 10 years, and its formation through the spontaneous intention of art teachers, suggested that it is a productive research site.

**Data Collection**

I determined the full range of who is to be interviewed based on information obtained from the observations and interviews with participating art teachers. I chose my interviewees according to certain conditions, including (a) informed art teachers with long and deep engagement in the community, (b) beginning art teachers, (c) mentors and leaders of the community, (d) art teachers displaying active collaboration with local art communities.

The meanings that the art teachers hold for their participation in the CoP were reconstructed from this researcher’s rich, interpretive descriptions of community practices and the interactions between the participants in the community setting. Ethnographic interviews explored not only the inner meanings of participants’ experiences and perceptions, but also centered on clarifying the concrete details of their experiences and specific events. A review of relevant documents offered substantial information, as they represent the products of the activities designed by the participants. Transcribed interviews and field notes written during observations were analyzed through the phases of qualitative analytic coding outlined by Emerson et al. (1995): close reading, open coding, writing initial memos, focused coding, and writing integrative memos. The findings from this analysis of the interviews and observations were recorded as a written ethnography.
Justification for the Study

Concurrent with the increasing calls for overall educational reform in the U.S.—and the application of higher standards and new measurements of student performances—the teaching profession has come under increasing scrutiny (Little, 2002; Wilson & Berne, 1995). With the vigorous need for an innovative educational system, teachers face the challenge of implementing instructional reform that requires new forms of knowledge and skills, as well as providing consistent instructional practices and greater accountability (Poulson & Avramidis, 2003; Vavassaeur & MacGregor, 2008).

Among the numerous studies on teaching are a number that reveal an increasing concern about art education reform and the quality of art teachers. According to Day (1997), U.S. education reform, and art education reform, has been advocated for a lengthy period, as evidenced by such in publications as A Nation at Risk: The Imperative of Educational Reform (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America’s Schools (J. Paul Getty Trust, 1985), Tomorrow’s Teachers (Homes Group, 1986), Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education (National Endowment for the Arts, 1988), and National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts (MENC, 1994). Reports from national commissions (NCTAF, 2003) on status of education have emphasized the need to improve teachers’ professional growth (Vavasseur & MacGregor, 2008).

In response to these concerns and challenges, educational research on teacher development has flourished over the last decade. There has been wide acknowledgement that teacher professional development influences the growth of the overall teaching profession and the prospects for students (Glazer & Hannafin, 2006; Little, 2002, 1993; Poulson & Avramidis, 2002; Vavasseur & MacGregor, 2008; Wilson & Berne, 1995). Increased efforts to study the
intellectual development of teachers and means to encourage refinements in practice have extended an understanding of the ways and circumstances in which teachers and schools operate with regard to professional development (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Day, 1999; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992).

Research has pointed consistently to the limitations of the existing training model of professional development for teachers, “a model focused primarily on expanding an individual repertoire of well-defined and skillful classroom practice” (Little, 1993, p. 129). Little (2002) pointed out problems with this model, however, including the unsystematic training programs with decontextualized, incoherent, and fragmented content, and random and unpredictable learning opportunities. Moore and Hyde (1981) indicated that short-term skill training workshops, which are generally executed outside of the school day, put teachers in a passive role as consumers of knowledge, rather than in an active role as producers of knowledge guided by the expertise of the workshop leader. Further, such training curricula typically offer few applicable tips, and are largely irrelevant to the daily lives of teachers. Similarly, Poulson and Avramidis (2003) have argued that the best teaching skills are generative in classroom situations and that making teachers passive consumers of knowledge decided by others reflects an underlying view of teaching that can exacerbate problematic conditions in the classrooms. Little (1993) noted that educational reforms that call upon schools and teachers to reinvent themselves require teachers to participate in CoPs as well.

For over two decades, educational researchers have identified the limitations of traditional teacher development approaches, advocating for a new approach to professional development based on the formation of energetic collegial CoPs. (Little, 2002; Wilson & Berne, 1995). An underlying assumption of this approach is that professional growth occurs best when teachers are engaged in joint enterprises with peers where they can continually share one another’s successful
experiences and instructional goals, and collectively reflect on their mistakes (Boyd, 1992; Gallagher & Ford, 2002). In a similar vein, Little (1988) identified the characteristics of ideal staff development: it induces collaboration to derive a shared understanding, shared commitment, and responsibility; it is assumed to collectively participate in implementing practices; its primary concerns involve instructional strategies and the design of curriculum; time and resources are sufficiently ensured to advance newly-gained knowledge; and it makes a contribution to the development of professional habits and norms according to collegiality. Abdal-Haq (1995) also described characteristics of learning in a collegial community: ongoing learning and support; practice-centered and collective feedback; opportunities for individual reflection; interaction with peers and collaborative apprenticeships; a focus on student learning and the assessment of authentic learning; a strengthening of the bases of knowledge; a view of teachers as professionals; and accessibility and inclusiveness. Through mutually supportive interactions and engagement in communities of educational experts beyond their own schools, teachers can make practical knowledge explicit to themselves and others (Poulson & Avramidis, 2002). Likewise, Desimone et al. (2002) reported that professional development is more likely to transform a teacher’s classroom practices when it relies on the collective participation of teachers from the same school, department, or grade, active learning opportunities, and coherent linking to other activities.

A great body of literature in the general educational field, then, has highlighted the benefits of teacher participation in a community of peers for teacher development. Such an approach differs from traditional professional development in several ways. First, it prizes teachers’ intrinsic interest in the success of new pedagogical strategies and content matter (Poulson & Avramidis, 2003). Second, compared with institutional learning programs, it directs teachers to produce authentic, high-quality pedagogy that stresses the critical and imaginative thinking
capacity of students. Third, it enables teachers to gain ongoing support and continuous responses to their classroom practices (Mouza, 2002).

**Communities of Practice for Art Teachers**

Although communities of teachers have been recognized as a crucial milieu for professional growth in the general educational field, research rarely has illuminated the significance of CoPs of art teachers. When art teachers participate in a CoP, it gives them the chance to be engaged in learning facilitated by camaraderie and peer expertise, maximizing the opportunities for continual discourses on creating knowledge, best practices, and a symbiotic exchange of knowledge and concerns (Charland, 2008). Participating in a CoP can help art teachers modify and enlarge the learning culture of teachers.

Therefore, in order to enlarge our understanding of the practices and potential of CoPs for art teachers’ professional growth, this study centers on exploring an existing CoP of art teachers. This study took an open-ended, ethnographic approach to studying the nature of this CoP, rather than evaluating it strictly based on criteria previously employed by social theorists and educational researchers. Based on the findings, the particular nature of a CoP of art teachers was distinctively identified.

**Limitations and Assumptions**

My sensibilities and perceptions were engaged throughout this study, and would be greatly influential in the collection and analysis of data to create meaning. In a qualitative study, the researcher is an instrument for data collection, perceiving the presence of relationships in the behaviors of people situated in a social setting, and interpreting their significance (Eisner, 1998). In this study, observing, interviewing, analyzing, and interpreting were guided by my own insights about the interactions and practices of the art teachers studied. The ability to see what is significant and what is not is “the higher good” (Eisner, 1998, p. 35) and at the same time, the
limitation of this study.

This study employed multiple forms of qualitative data to ensure the trustworthiness of my findings. Member checking and triangulation were used in this study and were crucial devices for enhancing the authenticity of findings obtained by the qualitative data collection tools, that is, participant observation and ethnographic interviews. In addition, multiple sources of data made my interpretations more coherent and persuasive to others (Eisner, 1998). In short, these qualitative data collection and analysis strategies served to minimize the distortions generated by my subjectivity, as well as provide evidence to establish and support cogent interpretations.

In addition, this study depended on my firm faith in the competences and qualifications of the teachers voluntarily participating in the CoP I studied, as well in their earnest desires to be better professional teachers. Further, I assumed that the CoP has been solidified by the participating teachers’ creativity and perseverance, as well as fellowship. Taking the position of a socio-cultural constructivist whose assumptions are grounded in a belief in the learners’ instinctive motivations, I might employ a positive angle on the participants’ learning capabilities. Based on these beliefs, I began the study with an assumption that a CoP is an influential milieu for facilitating professional practices and inspiring healthy interpersonal relationships among art teachers. This favorable disposition toward art teachers and CoPs might unintentionally cause biases by unconsciously or consciously exaggerating the values I found in the data I collected. Another potential bias might emerge from my limited access to teachers in the U.S., which might make it difficult to understand the teachers’ ways of thinking and acting, beliefs, and educational system experiences, despite my relatively long engagement in the culture of teachers in Korea and my sustained contact with Japanese teachers. My continuous reflective awareness was my best caution against any such misunderstandings, as I endeavored to hold a middle ground as a researcher throughout this study.
Summary

This study began with the conviction that the traditional professional development of art teachers has revealed limitations in producing meaningful learning or resulting in adequate professional growth among art teachers. This conviction was based on personal experiences as well as on an extensive review of the literature on educational reform, teacher professional development, and student achievement (Day, 1997; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996; Petrie, 1990; Shulman, 1996). This study qualitatively examines the nature of the practices and potentials within a CoP of art teachers in Tallahassee, FL. This chapter contained a brief background to the study, the primary and secondary research questions, a justification for the study, and a statement of limitations and assumptions.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature related to CoPs among teachers. Research spanning more than two decades reveals an ongoing interest in the potential educational benefits for teachers of dynamic, collegial professional CoPs (Little, 2002). This research consistently has shown that such professional communities have done much for instructional improvement and school reform (Darling-Hammond, 1998, 1997; Desimone et al., 2002; Fogleman et al., 2006; Little, 2002; Vavasseur & MacGregor, 2008). Researchers have found that teachers’ learning is increased and teaching is improved when teachers collectively seek to explore new ideas about teaching and learning, find applicable techniques for acknowledging and responding to differences and conflict, replace ineffective teaching methods, and otherwise actively participate in professional growth (Baildon & Damico, 2008; Engestrom & Danielson, 2006; Grossman et al., 2001; Koellner-Clark & Borko, 2004; Little, 2002; Louis & Marks, 1998; Thomas, et al., 1998, Westheimer, 1999).

A significant body of research, then, indicates an interest in conceptualizing and investigating collegial relationships among teachers, and exploring the nature of professional CoPs. This review of the relevant literature addressed the research on teacher CoPs, as well as on the following: (a) the generic features of a community; (b) the use of a CoP as a conceptual framework for this study; (c) learning theories and social contexts; (d) learning through shared practices; (e) community and interpersonal relationships; (f) the features of professional learning
in CoPs; (g) approaches to the professional development of art teachers; and (h) guidelines for developing effective CoPs.

The Generic Features of a Community

Because numerous definitions of community exist, it is difficult to define it in simple and accurate terms. Scholars in the social sciences have defined the notion of community using its generic characteristics: geographical convenience, shared beliefs, interaction and participation, interdependence and shared practices, concern for individual and minority views, and constant circulation between the processes of stability and change. Further, much research has addressed one integral component of communities: human interrelationships.

Geographical Convenience

The earliest definitions of community refer to an identifiable geographical area. Aristotle described a community much like a village that connects a discreet number of families, and the joining of such communities as a city, an even larger community (Zimmerman, 1938). MacIver (1920) added the concept of association to the characteristic of geographical boundaries to include the peculiarities of any group or association, expanding the idea of community beyond merely physical conditions. Sorokin (in Zimmerman, 1938) discussed communities in terms of a way of grouping people and suggested that groups or associations are created by a sense of bonding, with the extension of this idea being that the nature of any group is determined by the strength or weakness of the interrelatedness among its members. Sorokin’s sense of community as an organized group enlarged the concept of community by suggesting that emotional ties among members are a fundamental component for sustaining a community. He emphasized that invisible but perceptible shared feelings or values are critical to creating relationships within an organization.

Nevertheless, Zimmerman (1938) argued that geographical demarcations have long been,
and remain, a critical element in making community. Community is also fostered when human associations exist long enough to accumulate traditions within them. Many social scientists, however, have slighted geographical conceptualizations of community and focused instead on communicative media and changes in types of government. Lindeman (1930) noted that the extensive practices or attitudes of social interaction within a community, such as cooperation, interdependence, or unification, cannot be maintained without geologically applicable conditions. In the same manner, the geographic area in the Anglo-American legal system was utilized to regulate community as a definite specification. The Magna Carta’s provisions applied in cities and towns, for example, indicating that the customs, practices, and rights of community in 13th century Western society were much more valid than any powers or laws (Zimmerman, 1938). The customs and practices of individuals in the New World, then, were crystallized in communities and eventually became the laws of society, more privileged than the powers or rights of the Crown. Thus, the types of designations for population associations, including “cities, boroughs, towns, and ports” (Zimmerman, 1938, p. 25), were determined differentially according to the propensities of community life and the unique nature of common experience in a community.

Shared Beliefs

In their definitions of community, some sociologists emphasize the idea of “collective representations” (Zimmerman, 1938, p. 15), that is, such definitions focus on things held in common, including values and beliefs, as well as the relationships among people. Zimmerman (1938) identified four elements of a community: social facts (social action), definite specification, association, and limited area. Faraganis (2000) defines Durkheim’s concept of social facts as “facts, concepts, expectations that come not from individual responses and preferences, but that come from the social community which socializes each of its members” (p. 63). Zimmerman
concurs with Durkheim that collective representations are the shared manners of action, thinking, and feeling of individuals within a group, influenced or constrained by its social facts. Such social facts are tightly tied up by the relationships between people, thus, individual action or thinking is understandable only in terms of the collective nature of the community where they belong. For Zimmerman, the difference between social and individual facts is strictly conceptual, like two sides of the same coin. In the similar manner, Scherer (1972) emphasized that any community is built by “a core commonness or commonality that includes a collective perspective, agreed-upon definitions, and some agreement about values” (p. 122-123). Selznick (1992) argued that the association of a community is strong when it relies on “shared history and culture” (p. 361), that is, it originates from a common language, ideology, or purpose and has developed through projects that lead the members of the community in different types of meaningful interactions (Barber, 1984; Bender, 1978).

**Interaction and Participation**

Social theorists have asserted that a flourishing community contains high levels of participation and interaction. According to Selznick (1992), “people are appropriately present and expected to be present in many different associations and in many different roles and aspects” (p. 364). In a community, the need of human beings for attachment and social bonds is satisfied through interaction and engagement (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Sociologists and political scientists have brought attention to the sense of identity and commitment that are furthered by participation in community (Westheimer, 1999). A sense of community responsibility cultivates individuals’ inclinations to respond to the communal quest for mutual engagement and commitment (Barber, 1984; Gardner 1991).

**Interdependence and Shared Practices**

A person cannot be explained merely by psychological or biological factors. Further, the
solutions to issues that a person faces are closely connected to his or her social domains (Scherer, 1972). Sudden social changes increase the interdependence of urban residents and spurs people to find a means for harmoniously living together. According to Bellah et al. (1985), a community is “a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision-making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it” (p. 333). Interdependence and shared practices that cultivate mutual need and reciprocity are consequential components of community (Raywid, 1988; Scherer, 1972; Westheimer, 1999)

**Concern for Individual Differences and Minority Views**

Classical sociologist Emile Durkheim (1938) made a distinction between the mechanical and organic solidarity of communities, demonstrating that changes in social organization resulted in a revamping of the nature of the society. In pre-industrial societies, social organization is based on rules implicitly and generally accepted by its members. As a society proceeds to industrialization and urbanization, however, social relationships among members in a community are founded on both interdependence and differences. Unified and prescribed regulations are no longer influential in decision-making in communities. Such ideas that consider the plurality of interests and individual differences in a community have a long tradition; they are found in the work of Aristotle, de Tocqueville, and Dewey (Westheimer, 1999). More recently, social scientists and critical theorists have made an effort to “demarginalize” (p. 75) those traditionally alienated from community discourse (hooks, 1994; West, 1990). Theorists have argued that a recognition and acceptance of individual differences should be considered a major factor in facilitating growth within a community (Furman, 1998; Gardner, 1991; Greene, 1985; Selznick, 1992). Ideally, the activities of critical reflection (Newmann & Oliver, 1967) and forums for exchange emerging within a community can lead to new perspectives.
Stability and Change

Zimmerman (1938) suggested that a community contains certain constant factors that can be differentiated from its variations. This constancy implies that two general processes occur in a community: stability and change. Thus, for a group to function as a community, certain generic conditions must be in place: geographical convenience, shared beliefs, interaction and participation, interdependence and shared practices, concern for individual and minority views, and constant circulation between the processes of stability and change.

Acknowledgement of Difference and Human Interrelationships

In the 1990s, social scientists considered a community to be ideal when tightened by the solidarity of its members, the common pursuit of sameness, and effective conflict resolution (Abowitz, 1999). Community was seen as a means by which to heal the problems of nations and organizations, where people may have a tendency to be self-centered or be restricted by chaotic and unresponsive systems. In our contemporary era, however, we find that communities cannot sustain and develop themselves merely through agreements and the avoidance of disputes. Because the emphasis on sameness within a community caused the suppression of productive pluralities of individuals and the elimination of diverse perspectives for resolving problems, the notion of difference has begun to take on greater importance among sociologists, postmodernists, feminists, and pragmatic philosophers (Grasswick, 2004; McKenna, 2002). Feminist and postmodern theorists have attempted to eliminate this emphasis on community in society, arguing that such an emphasis has the effect of “homogenizing oppressive social groupings” (Abowitz, 1999, p. 144).

Young (1990) asserted that an emphasis on communal norms eradicates differences, since it suppresses those who have opinions different from the norms of the group or community. Young (1990) similarly argued that the assumption of shared subjectivity is too utopian and
metaphysical to be realizable, because it denies “the difference between subjects” (p. 234) and tends to embrace only congruity of thoughts, values, and actions. Fraser (1997) compared the concepts of “public” (p. 97) and community, illuminating such characteristics as open-ended and unbounded practices in decision-making, discursive interactions, or habits of debate. Ellsworth (1997) abandoned the ideal concept of community, which she viewed as a local entity comprised of intimate relationships, because under such circumstances, the kind of direct dialogue needed to ensure democracy, resolve problems, and mitigate racism or sexism would be inhibited. She instead talked about a form of dialogue called “analytical dialogue” (p. 85), which creates climates that both nurture and enable individuals to disclose differences that have been forced down by authoritative power and that are more representative of humanity.

If we characterize modernist social groupings only in terms of negative attributes like homogenization and social structures that oppress imagination, however, our notions of community become dichotomized into binary opposites, community and human difference (Abowitz, 1999). Abowitz pointed out that such a distinct dichotomy between the conceptions of community and difference brings about a distrust of communal efforts to construct a democratic life. Despite the potentially oppressive and exclusive aspects of community, community practices have provided us with powerful moral and social norms of justice and compassion. Thus, notions of difference can be placed within community rather than posed in opposition to it. Without recognizing the presence of difference as a human reality, we cannot have sound communities where accounts of difference can be fully exchanged and individuals can reach their potentials. At the same time, arguing against community is to lose sight of one of the most essential aspects of social life: human interrelationships. Denying community due to its suppression of difference and its utopian nature is equivalent to implicitly negating the notion of human interrelations as a form of dialogue in which the negotiation of different views can occur. In short, disclaiming
community signifies a negation of the reality that community has contributed to nurturing positive, productive human relationships. On the other hand, reclaiming community in our time requires an exploration of different approaches to co-constructing a community and embracing the notion of difference.

A Conceptual Framework for the Study of a Community of Practice

Defining a Community of Practice

The term, community of practice (CoP), was coined by Etienne Wenger and Jean Lave in their 1991 book, *Situated Learning*. Shaped by the view that human learning relies on social relations, Wenger and Lave characterize human beings as engaged in all kinds of enterprises, from ensuring physical survival to seeking cultured tastes. Entering into these enterprises assumes a form of interacting and adjusting our relationships with each other and with the world in such a way as to fulfill instrumental goals. Communities of practice (CoPs) would be a means, then, by which teachers can effectively reach their personal goals for improved performance.

Recognizing the impact of CoPs in both the personal and professional realm, individuals engaged in management learning and education have increased the use of CoPs as tools for knowledge creation and innovation (Cataldo, 2009). As the term CoP became increasingly used within the field of management education, however, it grew more confusing for practitioners, scholars, and educators to support, develop, define, and even identify CoPs. In order to clarify the difference between CoPs and other types of learning groups frequently confused with CoPs, Wenger and his colleagues, Richard McDermott and William Snyder (2002), provided an illustration of the structural features of CoPs as well as a general definition of CoPs:

Communities of practices are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. (p. 4)
More specifically, CoPs are informally and voluntarily shaped aggregates where people spend time together, share information, insight, and advice, help each other solve problems, and discuss their desires and needs. In addition, using tools and standards they have jointly developed, the members create and accumulate tacit knowledge which they share. CoPs are not only knowledge-based but also practice-based social structures. Explicit and tacit knowledge is transmitted from expert to novice, or from generation to generation, in such a way that skills, understandings, relationships, tools, documents, and processes are shared and cultivated. By sharing knowledge about the processes through which practices are enacted, people come to find the value of learning together, feel the satisfaction of knowing colleagues with whom to share perspectives, and experience a sense of belonging to a group of interest. Over time, the members of CoPs develop their own distinctive perspectives on a topic, as well as a body of common knowledge and practice, that is, they build a common identity.

**Elements of Communities of Practice, Domain, Community, and Practice**

Wenger et al. (2002) observed that all CoPs share a structure consisting of, “a unique combination of three fundamental elements: a domain of knowledge which defines a set of issues; a community of people who care about this domain; and the shared practice that they are developing to be effective in their domain (p. 27).” A well-functioning CoP is identified by a proper balance between these three elements. The work of Wenger and colleagues offers a practical guideline which a CoP can follow in order to evolve and fulfill the potentials for its development.

A domain of knowledge is integral to creating a common identity, in that it provides a way of organizing knowledge and asking questions that fit within a boundary of shared understandings of group purposes and resolved issues (Wenger et al., 2002). In sharing an interest in a particular knowledge domain, the members come to feel a sense of accountability to
a particular body of knowledge and the improvement of related practices. Although the points of view in a knowledge domain may not be congruent with those of members of the CoP at times, the process of inquiry still creates knowledge and learning. The range of domains that a CoP may address is wide, and the issues and topics members manifest may regard a theoretical aspect of a professional discipline or seek to solve problems which have not yet officially acknowledged by a discipline.

Thus, a domain represents a common identity among members of a CoP, and is rooted in a shared understanding and the status of the domain in the world (Wenger et al., 2002). A CoP can help an organization gain a voice and develop professional leverage since it does not merely deliver issues or problems, but rather tends to be engaged in more complex and long-standing issues demanding sustained learning. CoPs are successful when the goals and the needs of the organization from which the members come are in accord with the passion and inspiration of the participants. If the issues taken up by a CoP are irrelevant to the organization, the CoP has limited influence on the organization and is marginalized. In addition, if the domain does not inspire its members, the community fails to move forward. In this sense, the domain plays the role of a bridge connecting personal meaning and organizational strategies. A well-established domain provides the CoP with a milestone for what knowledge it will steward, and simultaneously ensures that the organization will obtain the best knowledge.

Another element in the shared structure of a CoP is the CoP itself. The community generates the social constitution of learning (Wenger et al., 2002). A strong CoP contains dynamic interactions based on mutual respect and trust. It invigorates the members’ inclinations to share different ideas, ask difficult questions, and listen to others carefully. The intimate and open-minded climate of a CoP is an influential source of energy that stimulates inquiry.

Wenger et al. (2002) highlighted the role of community as a crucial element in an effective
knowledge structure. In contrast to just a Web site, a database, or a collection of best practices, a community is “a group of people who interact, learn together, build relationships, and in the process develop a sense of belonging and mutual commitment” (p. 34). The members of a community share each other’s ideas within a knowledge domain and bring unique individual perspectives to bear on given issues. They use each other’s ideas and build on their own views, establishing a sieving mechanism by which to handle overflowing knowledge. In doing so, they construct a social learning system that surpasses the sum of its parts. The interrelationships developed among members of a CoP are a decisive factor in fostering openness towards requests for help and a willingness to responding to them.

Although the concept of a CoP signifies commonality and homogeneity, it nurtures differentiation among members. Each member creates his or her own specialties, taking on different roles and status in the community; each develops a distinctive identity within the community. While homogeneity makes it easier to create a CoP, it is neither a necessary condition nor an ultimate goal of a community. With a common base for on-going engagement, each individual’s original perspectives function as an aid to create richer learning, an open atmosphere for handling conflicts and dissents (Wenger et al., 2002).

Wegner et al. (2002) have said that CoPs generate an internal energy that is not mandated by external forces. In this way, they are different from educational teams that simply come together for various short-term purposes. Healthy communities depend on the voluntary participation of members and personal investments to make the community valuable, rather than corresponding to a compulsion to do so. The spontaneous community participation provides benefits for everyone. Members believe that their contributions to the community will come back to them as benefits for themselves.

The last common constitutive element of a CoP is practice (Wenger et al., 2002). Whereas
the domain designates the topics the CoP attends to, the practice refers to the particular knowledge the members of a CoP share and develop. It involves “a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories, and documents that community members share” (p. 29). The description of a CoP provided by Wenger et al. is “a set of socially defined ways of doing things in a specific domain: a set of common approaches and shared standards that create a basis for action, communication, problem solving, performance, and accountability” (p. 38). This description highlights both the tacit and explicit aspects of the community’s knowledge. Thus, the term practice includes the idea of concrete resources such as books, articles, websites, and other repositories that members share. It also signifies “a certain way of behaving, a perspective on problems and ideas, a thinking style, and even in many cases an ethical stance” (p. 39).

Members expect each other to learn the basic common knowledge the CoP has established and maintained over time. It is not assumed that all members need to have the same expertise, but shared knowledge plays as a foundation upon which members can build their own capabilities. In addition to establishing a common ground of knowledge, CoPs facilitate the exploration of contemporary advanced knowledge in a field. Learning a body of basic knowledge and different ways in which to gain new resources enables CoP members to effectively work together within a domain.

Practice successfully develops in a CoP by a balance between joint activities in which the members work on ideas and the codification of documents or tools (Wenger et al., 2002). The members spend their time debating what they should do and interplaying with peers, and producing documents which make subtle problems and implicit ideas tangible. The two integral aspects of CoP, community activities and the creation of knowledge products, are aligned with each other in a sense that documentation and codification encourages advanced community activities, and at the same time, gives authority to the documentation.
A Practical Model for Communities of Practice

Wenger et al. (2002) presented a practical model for helping guide the development of a CoP. The model assumes that successful community development relies on a balanced interplay among the three elements of domain, community, and practice (Table 2.1). Too much of a focus on creating a knowledge base results in producing incoherent useless tools without manifesting the domain or community, like innumerable databases drifting on the Web. In turn, a community that is not involved in building a shared practice would be nothing but a social group of friendships. The following table summarizes the three elements of a CoP identified by Wenger, et al. (2002).

Table 2.1: A practical model as a guide to development (Wenger et al., 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Elements in the Structure of CoPs</th>
<th>Related Issues</th>
<th>Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain:</td>
<td>- What topics and issues do we really care about?</td>
<td>- Help a community develop a shared understanding of its domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The work of negotiating a shared domain is critical to community development</td>
<td>- How is this domain connected to the organization’s strategy?</td>
<td>- Find its legitimacy in the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What is in it for us?</td>
<td>- Engage the passion of the members of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What are the open questions and the leading edge of our domain?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Are we ready to take some leadership in promoting and developing our domain?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What kind of influence do we want to have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The three elements identified above require special attention for each one’s function and improvement, whereas the interplay of all three elements gives birth to a healthy CoP. A new domain emerges when the focus of a community shifts from out-of-date issues to current hot ones, and new practices are released but old ones are abandoned. Wenger et al. (2002) cautioned that all three elements are in transition at once: one stable element can endure and foster the safe transition of the other elements. A community with a stable domain and well-established practices survives disruptions due to attrition or conflict. Although practices are transformed by
innovations, a community whose members make a strong commitment to each other can go without any risk. In sum, it is the balance of the tasks associated with the three elements of domain, community, and practice that develops a sound CoP.

**Theoretical Approaches to Learning in Social Contexts**

**The Situated Learning Perspective**

The characteristics of the situated learning perspective on learning can best be understood by looking at its three primary premises: cognition as social, cognition as interaction, and cognition as transfer. Situated learning theorists assume that cognitive processes are activated in physical and social contexts (Schunk, 2004). Situated cognition is a way of describing how learning occurs (Greeno et al., 1998). Knowledge is seen as being situated in a context, and is meaningfully absorbed in learners’ minds not as fragmented pieces of information, but as part of activities related to it. Lave and Wenger (1991) noted that the prerequisite for “situated learning” (p. 31) is participating and doing in time and space. They emphasized that theoretical knowledge cannot be useful unless associated with actual practices in specific circumstances.

**Cognition as social.** The situated learning perspective proposes that “legitimate peripheral participation” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 34) can be a pathway to learning. According to Lave and Wenger, legitimate peripheral participation is a theoretical description of how newcomers become experienced members, and then eventually experienced participants, of a CoP or collaborative project. Legitimate peripheral participation purports to be an open way to gain access to sources for understanding, such as through the multilateral and diverse relations involved in community memberships, rather than only through intensive participation moving toward a single center. In this sense, the concept of “legitimate peripheral participation” (p. 34) affords a fresh way of looking at learning as a social practice, and it identifies a CoP as a crucial context for learning. Thus, situated learning and knowing is, ultimately, grounded in socially
constructed activities and particular situations where the activities are performed.

**Cognition as interaction.** The second premise of the situated learning perspective is cognition as social interaction. Situated learning theorists have argued that motivation for learning is facilitated by good instruction, and motivated learners actively search for effective instructional environments (Schunk, 1991). Cognitive activity is neither furthered exclusively by individual knowledge construction in an entirely internal state nor by the environment and environmental reinforcement alone (Schunk, 2004). Situated cognitive theorists have emphasized that the active engagement of learners through interaction within and among groups over time is the most important prerequisite for gaining knowledge or skills, enabling learners to achieve a greater sense of self-efficacy in their own learning by interacting within and among groups over time. Situated cognitive theorists highlight the process of interaction with others as a facilitator of knowing and learning. According to Putnam and Borko (2000), the process of learning refers to knowing how to participate in social interaction.

Teachers learn how to interact with each other through the use of tools like specific concepts, skills, and procedures. Through their interactions, they become acculturated into the ways of thinking in a community and the dispositions the community holds (Driver et al., 1994; Resnick, 1988). An important notion here is that learning is bilateral. Just as communities change through the ideas and ways of thinking of their members, the authentic experiences of learners, which are attained within complex networks of multidimensional interactions, become incorporated into their practices and then their situated learning environments as well. Beyond accomplishing individual tasks, the very cognition that is distributed across people becomes shared knowledge that is even more powerful than before it was distributed (Hutchins, 1990).

**Cognition as transfer.** Finally, situated theorists are concerned about how teachers’ new
ways of practices can be transferred into their across complex and multiple classroom settings. Research by Putnam and Borko (2000) on situated learning has suggested that learning can be generalized across similar contexts. Even when teachers have the knowledge and skill needed to teach a particular subject, teachers often have difficulty applying that knowledge in new settings, such as in actual classroom learning situations. Therefore, throughout their careers, teachers need a learning environment in which they can effectively learn new instructional theories and develop classroom practices before teaching their students. CoPs of teachers need to be illuminated as a prime way to yield the benefits associated with enhanced teacher learning.

**The Socio-cultural Learning Perspective**

Another approach frequently referred to in educational studies on the nature of learning in a CoP is the socio-cultural learning perspective. The theoretical basis for the socio-cultural learning comes from the work of Vygosky and that of activity theorists like Davydo, Leont’ev, and Galperin (Nunes, 1992). Both the situated learning perspective and the socio-cultural learning perspective emphasize learning through practice and the contexts where the learning emerges. Many of the ideas of Vygotskian theorists have focused on the relations that emerge between human beings in the course of everyday activities and learning. They have postulated that the relationships constructed between experts and novices, as well as in ordinary activities and social contexts, should become the primary impetus arousing learning (Glassman, 2001).

Three central propositions of the socio-cultural learning perspective can be applied to the learning of art teachers in a CoP. The first concerns Vygotsky’s (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, the second is related to the concepts of internalization, negotiation, and scaffolding, and the third involves the notion of co-regulated learning.

**The Zone of Proximal Development.** First, one of the fundamental concepts of Vygotskian theorists, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), answers the question of how
learning in a context can be supported. Vygotsky (1978) defined the ZPD as, the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or collaborating with more capable peers. (p. 86)

The ZPD is determined by the social conditions associated with the level of development of a culture and by interactions with others who have a particular expertise (Duveen, 1997). Vygosky (1978) viewed interactions constructed in the ZPD as the result of an internalization process of “teaching new members of the community how to use culturally developed tools and symbols” (Glassman, 2001, p. 6) by virtue of the assistance of experts. The ultimate goal of interaction in the ZPD is to lead novices to become “socialized participants in their culture” (Rogoff & Lave, 1984, p. 31). The concept of the ZPD stresses both the roles of experts in problem solving and the influence of interactions between mentors and learners using pre-established cultural norms and values (Glassman, 2001).

Vygotsky regarded social knowledge as something transmitted through the hierarchical relations between an expert, who has the freedom to construct, and novices, who are restricted to using social knowledge (Duveen, 1997). The expert’s role includes transmitting socially constructed values and knowledge using mediated tools, or symbols. The mediation function of the expert contributes to the learning and growth of productive citizens who fully participate in the culture (Glassman, 2001). For instance, a child develops a social identity by participating in symbolic interactions with more capable or competent adults or peers. Such social symbolic interactions instill beliefs and values, as well as knowledge about social life, and engage the child in expanding an ability to find a place in the social world (Duveen, 1997).

**Internalization, negotiation, and scaffolding.** The concept of cognition as social is in line with the primary premises of the situated learning perspective. Vygotsky went beyond
situated learning, however, by presenting more specific descriptions of social interactions and introducing the concepts of internalization, negotiation, and scaffolding. Vygotsky (1978) identified learning as the internalization and transformation of socially defined knowledge and sign systems. Hickey (2003) demonstrated that learning takes place in the ZPD, where interactions with more knowledgeable others can scaffold the learning of novices. Resnick (1991) argued that the role of others is a major component in the construction of individual knowledge. Learning is conceptualized as enculturation into ways of thinking and participation in the discourses and practices of a particular community (Cobb, 1994; Lave & Wenger, 1991). By extension, the ways of thinking of new members can alter the inclinations of a discourse community. Of course, the interactions between the members and the discourse community are mutually influential (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

**Co-regulated learning.** The third central premise of the socio-cultural learning perspective is the concept of co-regulated learning. Co-regulated learning presumes mutual learning among members participating in together in a social context. The standards and values of a community engaged in motivating learners are socially constructed, thus co-regulated learning extends the notion of intrapersonal learning from a focus on individual cognitive processes and the acquisition of higher-order conceptual schema to the influence of the social context on individual intrapersonal learning. In addition, the notion of interpersonal learning, in which intended curricula are enacted by a group, is enlarged to include mutual interactive learning relationships in socially situated contexts (McCaslin & Murdock, 1991; McCaslin et al., 1994).

**Applying socio-cultural learning perspectives.** McCaslin and Good (1996) used the notions of negotiation and internalization to describe co-regulated learning in a social/instructional environment. The standards and values of a learning group are created by a
continuous process of negotiation among participants in specific learning contexts. These standards and values are internalized in individuals in the process of interacting (Hickey, 2003). At the same time, Hickey asserted that when a community member’s viewpoints differ from those consistent with the identity of the community, it requires negotiation. Psychologists consider identity to be made up of one’s beliefs or values, whereas socio-cultural theorists believe identity to be the result of one’s lived experiences. In a CoP, one’s identity is built up through participation in the community itself, where one reaches one’s learning by consistently reconciling with the multiple identities of the community.

Many socio-cultural theorists have made an effort to explain the influence of participation in social interactions and culturally organized activities on psychological development (Cobb, 1994). Such a contextualist worldview assumes that an event cannot be understood outside of the context in which it occurred (Hickey, 2003). It singles out the significance of events rather than individuals as a unit of analysis. Vygotsky (1978) believed, as cited in Hickey (2003), culturally defined knowledge had been developed by collective participation of the members of that culture. Individuals can acquire knowledge by participating in the ZPD and simultaneously by using socially defined tools and ways of interacting (Hickey, 2003). In other words, socio-cultural theorists see learning as co-participation in the cultural practices.

While revealing the weakness of the existing professional activities provided by local and federal educational programs, the literature examined thus far in the study converges into a consensus that interaction within a CoP accelerates professional learning. The view that knowledge and learning function better when associated with social contexts of work and practice, has become pervasive in the studies exploring the significance of learning communities (Greeno et al., 1996). Both situated and socio-cultural learning perspectives extend the visions towards teachers’ practices and knowledge by valuing the sharing of different types of mastery
and the creation of multidimensional interactions for professional learning among members in CoPs (Putnam & Borko, 2000). In this sense, art teachers’ communities are presumed to provide not only social and cultural environments, which constitute an interactive social system, but also the cognitive tools, such as ideas, theories, and concepts, which are required to acquire professional competence (Cobb, 1994; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Learning through Shared Practices

The work of Tim Ingold, a British anthropologist, illuminates the nature of learning in a CoP by looking at learning as dwelling (Ingold, 2000). The dwelling perspective opposes both the modernist perspective on learning, in which a human acquires and masters knowledge and skills passed on by forebears, and the building perspective, in which humans must imagine representations prior to action. The dwelling perspective suggests that human beings learn when they are socially, culturally, and naturally entwined with others in reality (Ingold, 2000).

In the same vein, Lave and Wenger (1991) demonstrated that learning occurs through “increasing participation in CoPs” (p. 51). They argued that social participation and inter-subjectivity are “generative principles of identities and agency” (Crossley, 1996, p. 173). Plumb (2008) emphasized that the capacity for dwelling allows us to weave our lives with the fabric of culture. Namely, the human power for learning as dwelling is much more dominant than any other venue for social learning. This section explores the implication the dwelling perspective provides, comparing it with the building perspective of modernist and postmodernist theorists.

The Building Perspective

The dwelling as learning perspective challenges the ontological views of the building perspective, including the concepts of individual cognitive development and the relativism and liberalism of postmodernism (Plumb, 2008). In its view of the relations between humans and the world, the dwelling perspective is in opposition to the building perspective.
The building perspective is grounded in the dualism of differentiating humans from animals, nature from culture, and external reality from human imagination and creative activity. According to Ingold (2000), after observing animals’ building behaviors, Karl Marx noted that human beings’ actions are controlled in a different, more mindful way than those of animals, who “have their origins in hereditary characteristics” (p. 175). Similarly, as noted by Richard Dawkins, in his theory of evolution, asserted that human beings are separate from other animals because of their creative capability to construct and imagine representations, the “extended phenotype” (p. 158) in the brain prior to performing. The building perspective depicts nature as “a source to provide raw materials and sensations” (p. 178) for human cognition, and culture as an edifice of the “symbolic meaning upon reality” (p. 178) that human minds build over external reality.

The building perspective elevates the acquisition theory of learning in the education field. Assuming a distinct dichotomy between inside and outside, and mind and the objective world, the “acquisition theory of learning” (Lave, 1990, p. 47) emphasizes the action of knowledge building in the human mind. Learning is posited as a process by which humans establish in their minds representations of substances and incidents from exterior realities. The acquisition theory of learning asserts that, regardless of the context, knowledge is transmitted and then internalized into learners’ minds (Plumb, 2008). Individuals are seen as entities isolated from natural, social surroundings and take charge of forming suppositions about the world based on the input they receive through their senses and the cognitive schema that develops. Educators regard individuals’ learning as an entity that can be analyzed, diagnosed, and improved by prediction and adjustment. Because the acquisition theory of learning can lead to the conclusion that individuals alone are responsible for their failure to learn, Lave and Wenger (1991) have criticized this theory for its overemphasis on individual cognitive capability.
Modernity’s Human and Society’s Being

Both the building perspective and the acquisition theory of learning are consistent with Margaret Archer’s enlightenment conception of post-Enlightenment “Modernity’s Man” (Plumb, 2008, Modernity’s Man/ Society’s Being section, ¶ 1). Sydie (2002) discussed Archer’s conceptions of Modernity’s Man and Society’s Being, and noted that neither contains “the continuous sense of self that all humans have that emerges from practical activity in the world” (Sydie, 2002, p. 585). Archer (2000) maintained that the self is an “emergent property whose realization comes about through the necessary relations between embodied practice and the non-discursive environment” (p.123). She contended that human development and the “practical consciousness” (p. 135) can be realized only through practice, rather than acquired through “some intellectual mastery of linguistic principles or syntax” (p. 135).

For modernists, the ontology of human beings is founded upon the dualistic and instrumental perception of the relationship between humans and nature (Plumb, 2008). Nature, as the context in modernist principles, exists for human profits. Human beings strive to gain accurate and even-handed representations about the world in order to attain the rational supremacy to which they feel entitled. Modernity’s Humans, then, are depicted as being born on rational and reasonable ground (Archer, 2000). The individual’s knowledge is constructed through the intellect – rather than through encounters in the social and material world – using an innate power to practice objective observation and trained reasoning. That humans are embedded in historical and social situations is irrelevant. Rational awareness is the most valuable potential of the human being. Plumb (2008) noted that the modernist worldview depreciates emotion as something to be overcome in order for human beings to make progress.

The post-Enlightenment modernist notions of humans and the world are contradicted by postmodernists, who contend that human beings are constituted in social and cultural contexts,
and are not simply individual rational and solitary entities. In fact, in their criticism of Enlightenment and modernist notions, postmodernists set the base for the dwelling perspective. Rorty (1979) asserted that it is an illusion that the human mind exists merely to reflect objective events of the external world. Rejecting the dualism of modernity and essentialism, and taking up the mantle of relativism, postmodernist critics like Rorty have maintained that truth is engendered in the operation of social discourses, which form linguistic boundaries. According to postmodernists, within the linguistic sphere, human beings entertain thought to produce their own meaning. This idea is consistent with Archer’s (2000) notion of “Society’s Being” (p. 86), that is, an individual whose mind is a crystal generated by empirical constructions in social and cultural circumstances.

In short, postmodernist critiques have doubted the foundations of the Enlightenment ontology, which sets forth certain kinds of authoritative knowledge as a given. In addition, postmodernists have argued against “euphoric, grand and totalizing meta-narratives of human’s progress in modernity” in favor of “small, local and differentiated knowledge and narratives” (Plumb, 2008, Modernity’s Man/ Society’s Being section, ¶ 8). In terms of learning, postmodern theorists have concerned themselves with deliberations of the contextual nature of knowledge and a focus on the “intersubjective social constructions formed through continual encounters with all forms of discourse” (Kaufmann, 2001, Construction of Knowledge section, ¶ 1). However, Archer (2000) has asserted that the doctrine of postmodernism is dangerous, because it attempts to disclaim the peculiar aspects of humans that are inconsistent with the idea of the derivative social being. According to Archer, humanity is neither purely a pre-settled entity nor a social by-product, but a collection of individuals whose power is acquired through practical engagement with the world.
The Dwelling Perspective

The learning as dwelling perspective engendered new ways of viewing the relationship between humans and the world. Heidegger (1971) elucidated the meaning of dwelling by investigating the etymology of the word *build*. The verb to build derives from the Old English and High German word *buan*, which originally referred to a dwelling. This means that the word *buan* was much more comprehensive than the word *build* is in modern times.

Ingold (2000) demarcated the building and dwelling perspectives on human learning. In the building perspective, learning is a process of incorporating external knowledge into the mind. In contrast, in the dwelling perspective, learning is a process of weaving oneself into the cultural, social, and natural contexts of one’s world. Human creativity and imaginative power is fostered through interaction with “responsive natural materials” (p. 344) over a period of “long-standing engagement in practice” (p. 344). According to Ingold, humans and chimpanzees provide a good illustration of learning as dwelling, because unlike the learning of chimpanzees, the learning of humans takes place in an ongoing fashion through a “mutual involvement with people and materials in the environment” (p. 347).

Archer (2000) noted that human beings achieve their intellectual competence and sense of self not through the social discourses represented by language but through their dwelling with others in a social and material world. In addition, Archer suggested that only through practical interaction with our surrounding environment can our sense of self be developed. Concretely speaking, such mutual engagement helps us to realize a sense of the interrelatedness of our lives with others. Our sense of both ourselves and the world, then, is not mediated purely by language nor gained without intentional interaction. From the learning as dwelling viewpoint, grasping the world is a creative unfolding process, requiring our constant perceiving to keep a close eye on our situations of involvement with others. The postmodern principle that believes language’s
effectiveness is the only means to engage our world is no longer reliable; language is one of many different practices by which we strive to understand our environment (Plumb, 2008).

According to Crossley (1996), humans possess their own powers and peculiarities that shape the world as they participate in interconnected cultural and social practices.

As discussed, learning as dwelling means that we learn through an ongoing practical engagement in which people and the world converge. As an outcome of the involvement of people with the world, new natural and cultural legacies are created and succeeding engagements are generated. The engagements create changes, which control our subsequent actions and awareness, and the effects of the engagements play a role in the shape of future engagements. In summary, just as to be a dweller requires the ability to learn, in order to learn we must actively engage in creative and reciprocal interactions with the environment (Plumb, 2008).

Tomasello (1999) agreed with Plumb’s view that human beings’ vigor for dwelling grows through the recognition of others. While our isolated engagements with the world remain merely in our own cells, the memories of joint engagements are shared and interwoven with other people’s memories. Tomasello emphasized that the dwelling power of individuals is indispensable for living and growing in the social, cultural, and material world. Individuals weave their own practices, actively engaging with the world.

The delineation of learning as dwelling is aligned with Wenger and Lave’s (1991) notion of “social learning in CoPs” (Plumb, 2008, Learning as Dwelling section, ¶ 4). Both notions have a definition of learning different from that of cognitive theorists. Rather than considering learning to be a process in which knowledge is memorized and stored in people’s heads, Lave and Wenger (1991) view learning in a CoP as a process in which people gradually learn by building membership. People in a CoP negotiate and harmonize shared and new social practices, and develop a social identity. Overall, as they dwell within a CoP, they become increasingly
capable of participating in practices for dwelling, which originate from awareness of an
intersubjective setting and an effort to actively engage in social practices (Plumb, 2008).

**Feminist and Pragmatist Perspectives to Building a Healthy Community**

This section examines the feminist and pragmatist notions which provide philosophical
foundations pertinent to building a healthy community. The discourses on both feminism and
pragmatism have challenged the political, cultural, and economic status quo (Seigfried, 2002). As
theorists came to see that both prevailing analytic philosophy and postmodernists’ symbolic
interpretations were of no interest in particular contexts, both feminist and pragmatist
perspectives grew in value. Pragmatism has been acknowledged as providing worthwhile micro-
perspectives as alternatives to earlier sociological thoughts. Over the course of its development,
feminist thought also has become more diverse, collapsing such dualistic notions as liberalism
and socialism; humanistic and woman-centered values; and race, class, and gender. Feminist and
pragmatist theories are deeply interwoven, even though the two philosophical movements have
been independently established for their own purposes.

This section discusses Dewey’s notions of community as reflecting pragmatic theoretical
perspectives. The ideas of the “Great Community” (McKenna, 2001, p. 112) and of democracy,
as the kernels of Dewey’s philosophy, convey many remarkable principles regarding the
realization of an ideal community. Tenets of feminist ethics include valuing human
interrelationships and difference, and ethical thinking. One representative feminist ethic is an
ethic of care. By exploring the meanings of caring relationships, learning groups can gain
guidance in creating an ethical community. In fact, Abowitz’s (1999) feminist-pragmatist model
was designed to explicate the ideal features of a community.
Pragmatist Views on Building a Healthy Community

Dewey’s “Great Community.” Dewey presented a vision of a “great community” (McKenna, 2001, p. 112). The pivotal ideas of the great community revolved around human interconnectedness and communication. The concept of interconnectedness refers to human beings’ behaviors, beliefs, and values as affected by the imagined responses of others (Dewey, 1984). When we recognize our interconnectedness and interdependence with humanity, we direct our concerns to others as well as to ourselves, and we can make informed decisions that enable us to realize the future we prefer.

“Lived experience,” (McKenna, 2001, p. 109) is essential for establishing a great community. Dewey called it “true associated living” (p. 109) in which members of the community grow interdependently and with the improvement of others, as opposed to merely being together. Dewey regarded associated living in the same light as “moral democracy in a society in which the good of each was the good of all and the good of each” (Westbrook, 1991, p. 248). Thus, for Dewey, “mutual advantage” (p. 248) is the goal of associated living. In a group that recognizes its interconnectedness, common good is achieved only when grounded in a democratic atmosphere that embodies “free and open communication, unself-seeking and reciprocal relationships” (p. 248). A democratic society guarantees the opportunity for self-realization of all people in the society. In this regard, engaging in associated living is an indispensable factor for lived experience that results in learning. Lived experience occurs in the process of individuals’ interactions with their physical and social environments. Individual liberty and community ideals are compatible, as both are needed in order to constitute a “moral democracy” (Dewey, 1984, p. 248).

Humans are naturally interconnected and interdependent in their private relationships. Dewey (1984) asserted that human relations are formed in the private sphere rather than by
contracts in the public sphere. He disagreed with the liberal model of a private sphere regulated by emotion and habits and disturbed by critical judgments. Individuals are bound by the private relations prior to the formal contracts. Feminist’s argument upholds the notion of construction of Dewey’s human relation (McKenna, 2001). For instance, Gilman (McKenna, 2001) mentioned the helplessness and demands for care are an origin to make humans irresistible and receptive to the needs of others. The partial perspective on liberalism of individuals brings in isolation of human and the lack of a sense of responsibility for others, and eventually blocks exchanging a sense of connectedness.

Dewey presented an ideal image of the individual required in democratic society called the “unified individual” (Ratner, 1929, p. 428). The “unified individual” refers to “socially embedded individuals” (McKenna, 2001, p. 112) capable of sympathizing with others and taking a hold of their lives with intelligence and critical thoughts. Such individuals have the propensity to be open and critically think about social tasks. Conjointly participating in creating and governing their community with the flexible habits of mind, they constitute a democracy within the community.

Dewey sought to realize “a great community” (McKenna, 2001, p. 112) in real life. In the great community, real attachments and interactions among the individuals strengthen democracy within a community, and the quality of democracy in a community reversely affects all manner of an individual’s association. The democracy Dewey sought to find in society is a means for individual self-governing and for achieving community, not an ultimate end in itself.

**Dewey’s democracy.** Dewey (1984) described the nature of democracy as having certain characteristics. First, a democracy is a method for stimulating constructive participation and productive communication among members in a community. A critical component distinguishing a community from just any coalition is the spontaneous participation of the people. However,
Dewey (1984) emphasized that participation alone does not guarantee the achievement of a great community. Healthy communication is indispensable for an applied democracy to sustain and develop into a great community. Healthy interactions are upheld by an openness to alternative choices and changes. Constructive communication accelerates the effective participation of the members. In other words, the three factors characterizing a community – spontaneous participation, productive communication, and reciprocal relationships – have an impact on one another in helping or failing to sustain the community.

The sound communication relies on critical inquiry and the intelligence of individuals. The miscellaneous ends of a democratic society grow through progress, which depends on diverse intelligent, unified individuals with different values and talents. Their conjoint activities and recognition of differences make joint activities interesting and prolific. Through continuous communication and inquiry within a community, the individuals achieve intelligence and critical thinking skills (Dewey, 1984), which then result in “a sense of self in community” (McKenna, 2002, p. 117).

As described earlier, Dewey believed that in order to achieve the ideals of a great community, it is necessary for democratic societies to foster unified individuals among its citizenry (McKenna, 2001). To raise integrated individuals, a community must arbitrate between the abilities and limitations of individuals, remaining open to a reevaluation of the variety of their differences (Dewey, 1984). A good community resists dogmatism, homogeneity, racism, sexism, and supremacy. In order to achieve and maintain flexible practices, a community must encourage individuals to cultivate the open-minded habits that are required to be a unified individual.

The feminist critique of Dewey’s notions of community. Feminist theorists have refuted Dewey’s model of a great community maintained by local, close, face-to-face relationships.
According to Dewey, local communities allow individuals to be involved in intelligent, and critical thinking, flexible approaches to individual differences, and an awareness of the socially-embedded nature of our selves (McKenna, 2001). In contrast, feminist analyses have disputed Dewey’s local community-based model. McKenna (2001) pointed out that Dewey’s notion of community stresses the close relationships of local communities, and this may mean that women’s work remains undervalued, discrimination or prejudice against others remains intact, and differences are repressed. In addition, the democratic individuals of Dewey’s great community are assumed to be equipped in advance with such qualities as respect for differences. Unless individuals are already equipped with flexible minds and are capable of critical thinking, the community will only evolve as far as a mere association or society. Further, feminist theorists have expressed doubts that all members in local communities can be transformed into unified individuals at once, as it is a lifelong process to become a democratic, integrated individual.

While believing in the values of close relationships, Young (1990) addressed the risks of suppressing differences for the sake of others in local face-to-face communities. Small, personal communities have a tendency to encourage people to conform to social mores more often than to express different thoughts. Young (1990) asserted that we need more secured individual spaces in which one does not have to agree on common foci, since difference in a community can seem personally and socially intimidating. Young (1990) advocated “city life” (p. 237) as an ideal form of community in which individual spaces, as well as distances from others, can be kept. According to Young’s definition, “city life” signifies more formal social relationships than the intimate ties naturally made in small communities. Urban people, for example, belong to a variety of social groups but do not necessarily interact and strive to find resolutions that bring about unity. While perhaps more open to gaining a large range of knowledge, individuals in urban settings do not necessarily feel pressure to agree on any particular way of life. In fact, the
fluid and multiple connections implicit in city life protect particular individuals or groups from being dominant and or enforcing any one perspective.

In regard to this city life model of community, McKenna (2001) noted that Young failed to recognize the fact that relationships among individuals can become bureaucratic and inflexible. There is a risk that human interactions and intimate relationships will not be able to develop in city life because individuals may be engaged in their own enterprises and focus more on their own individual needs than the welfare of others. Despite these weaknesses, Young’s model of city life can be considered a utopian model, because it also emphasizes the importance of developing critical thought and intelligence, flexible habits in regard to differences, coming together, and an awareness of social interconnectedness.

**Feminist Views on Building a Healthy Community**

Central tenets of feminist ethics. Koehn (1998) mentioned that female ethics is not very different from feminist ethics, in that both stand in contrast to male ethics. Koehn articulated several major characteristics of female ethics. First, female ethicists regard the self as relational rather than individualistic. Thus, human beings are not able to be self-sufficient if their lives are devoid of emotional attachments. Second, in contrast with the idea of traditional contractual relations that impose minimal duties of kindness on others, female ethicists argue for caring for the powerless members of a community. They discuss the rights of the vulnerable based on ethical obligations like love and friendship, other than legal ones. Third, female ethicists deal with the private and public realms, and increasingly acknowledge that the distinct separation of the two is not accurate. Fourth, they reject logically consistent principles, such as the objectivity of systems and the rationality of human beings, and are instead interested in individual particularities, such as various histories and accounts of a single action or situation, and other’s points of view. Fifth, while male ethicists stress deductive reasoning as the standard for ethical
reasoning, female ethicists underscore the importance of imaginative discourse in dealing with ethical and political problems. They see the value in dialogic processes that can give us different insights into practical problems and lead us to undertake mutually beneficial actions. Lastly, female ethicists attempt to call attention to real situations that people face and real people’s lives. Since we are historical creatures, it is possible for us to change the world by looking backward and forward into the real lives of people. Female ethicists would argue that the creation of a caring and trusting world is possible through our real acts of caring and trusting.

These central tenets of feminist ethics inform this study in that they point to thoughtful, critical, and open ways of being in and building a healthy community. A key component of feminist ethics, the ethic of care, is further elaborated below.

**The ethic of care.** The ethic of care stands in contrast to traditional ethics or male ethics of justice that seek to discover universal principles and apply them to situations (Koehn, 1998). Feminist ethicists argue individuals are not interchangeable due to their particularities of interests, desires, and needs, that is, the unique inclinations of individuals (Groenhout, 2004). Further, the morality of human beings originates from the experiences perceived through their five senses (Koehn, 1998). It is through physical contact with and support from others that human beings develop a self. Thus, a good life can be achieved by giving and receiving physical support and care, because humans are neither fully rational nor completely self-sufficient. Training in moral disciplines leads to insights into moral concepts. The embodiment of human existence leads us to take seriously the matter of particularity in caring for others. An acknowledgement that humans recognize the world in different ways demands that we critically examine various ways in which the caregiver cares for others and the cared-for is given care. On the other hand, there are common needs or desires all humans have (Groenhout, 2004). While they constitute their lives and identities very differently as they filter social and cultural concepts, humans also have
commonalities. Two implications follow: cultural differences need to be considered in social contexts, and at the same time, we should reflect on the concerns that many people share in a given culture.

Feminist ethicists define human life in terms of interrelationships rather than rational or impartial relations; human beings are seen as dependent on each other and expect to give and receive care (Groenhout, 2004). Recognition of the interdependent nature of humans places the analysis of relationships among individuals in a broader social context. Considering the relationships and narratives engendered among individuals is a crucial way for understanding the lived lives of human beings. In average circumstances, humans build up intimate relationships and care for others as naturally as they learn to speak and walk. Thus, caring is related not only to women’s lives but also to men’s lives, because all humans wish to care for and be given care from others. Larrabee (1993) suggested that feminists should no longer make use of such an ethic of care as a means of emphasizing gender difference and woman’s inherent characteristics. Rather, they need to promote an ethic of care as a theoretical and practical framework for interpreting and constituting social justice and moral activities.

Groenhout (2004) argued that social systems or structures should encourage ethical relationships, not merely intimate ones. Koehn (1998) differentiated ethical care from simple concern for persons or things. Care is more than being watchful of another’s well-being and assisting in promoting it. Care refers to “an interpersonal, active, and mutual reciprocity” (p. 24). Both the cared-for and the caregiver commit to striving to form a shared self. The ethical act is a caring one in which the caregivers become attentive to the needs, interests, and desires that the cared-for individually expresses. For instance, oppressive social systems such as slavery are not conceived of as care. Both the owner and the slave cannot develop a healthy sense of self, even though it can be said that they care for each other. Thus, true care is concerned with pursuing the
good of the other.

In sum, an ethic of care requires openness to understanding the particular social and cultural contexts in which humans care each other and an ideal picture of what human beings should be like. The best social structure is one that offers social networks to support ethical relationships and social services to allow proper care to be given when individuals are in need. Our social and political activities need to converge on creating lives in which we attentively care for others in appropriate and non-manipulative ways that reflect emotionally sound relationships and value human dignity and self-worth.

A dialogical ethic. A dialogical ethic complements and extends the ethic of care put forth by feminist ethicists (Koehn, 1998). It is important to note that while feminist ethics incorporates care, empathy, and trust, and provides an alternative to male ethics, it has weaknesses to overcome. One weakness is its exclusive emphasis on the process component of problem-solving. The accounts of female ethics reveal a common assumption that the opinion and autonomy of each participant should be respected. They emphasize only the process by which participants exchange various points of view. Such non-teleological directives and value-neutral approaches, Koehn (1998) has maintained, need to be augmented by principles by which discursive arguments can address concerns about achieving the goal of a better life. The argument of female ethics that there should be no presupposed goals is faulty, because we already have principles or goals that ultimately are directed toward achieving a satisfying life. Goals play a role in shifting sporadic points of view on controversial issues into teleological activities. Female ethics advocate an openness to every statement of every participant in a decision-making process, making it difficult, if not impossible, to critically and thoughtfully consider everyone’s claims. Thus, according to feminist ethics, a CoP would protect members from endorsing merely self-justifying assertions by setting as a goal direct conversation based on critical thinking, the
expression of different perspectives and ethical principles, that is, a dialogical ethic.

According to Arnett et al. (2009), dialogic ethics,

assumes the importance of the meeting of communicative ground that gives rise to a particular sense of good and is simultaneously open to learning and emergent insight that belongs to an ontological reality between persons, not to any one person in a conversation. Dialogic ethics begins with meeting what is before us—the good, the bad, and the ugly…Dialogic ethics makes us aware of differences that occur in our day-to-day lives with others, fostering a continuing conversation with respect for other people and ideas, living out a commitment to learn from difference in daily conversation. (p. 80)

Dialogic ethics necessitates a public space where agents can be maximally free to dispute each other’s descriptions of practical problems and so mutually progress toward the truth in relation to the best description of the problem and the best rejoinder to it (Koehn, 1998). The ethic of thoughtfulness for others is the most justifiable ethical approach, since it permits us to inspect the righteousness of inherited ethical opinions or principles. Koehn (1998) noted that it is important that our interrelationships with friends and families should respond to the question of how our actions and deliberations contribute to promote the good in life. If using female ethics as a paradigmatic principle to guide a community, we are likely to interact only with people whose spirit is akin to ours and to exclude others. Dialogical ethics, in contrast, urges the significance of critical conversation with others who are not of the same mind as us, binding us with the goal of improving our lives. In dialogical ethics, then, unexamined beliefs or thoughtless decisions are considered inappropriate.

**Exploring the Nature of Interpersonal Relationships in Communities**

Abowitz (1999) proposed a feminist-pragmatist model of community, believing that it deconstructs the dichotomy of community and difference by endorsing the democratic processes
of community life, such as consensus. Consensus is considered a complicated arena where diverse people economically, politically, and culturally influence one another. Consensus must be reached by working with the ebb and flow of accord and conflict, not merely by pursuing unity or sameness. In order to achieve consensus, we need to recognize the significance of dialogue as thought of by postmodernists, for whom dialogue depends on greater versatility and less uniformity. Without the existence of human interrelationships based on human difference, community is nothing but an oppressive social device aimed at stifling conflicts and disagreements.

The primary concerns of the feminist-pragmatist models involve praxis, social contexts, and human lived experience (Abowitz, 1999). Pragmatism refuses abstraction, fixed principles, presupposed priori, inflexible systems, and absoluteness. A pragmatist leans toward concreteness, facts, actions, and power. Feminism celebrates activism, diverse ways of thinking, inquiry, and women’s lives, which have been traditionally excluded as other. Both pragmatism and feminism focus on human lived experience, relying on pluralist notions for their analyses. In recognizing the plurality of human experiences, classical pragmatism advanced traditional conceptions of social groupings. Pragmatist theorists’ insights on difference were enlarged beyond a focus on hierarchical social structures by introducing a feminist critique to their analyses of human relationships.

Classical pragmatism is concerned with the interpretation of difference in contexts, rather than with power and difference in political structures (Abowitz, 1999). Pragmatism approaches inquiry from a methodological and epistemological point of view, such that previously solidified assumptions on difference are interrogated and questioned. Pragmatist theorists see as questionable or changeable beliefs and issues related to difference that occur as existing social norms. In the realm of pragmatist theorists, human difference is interpreted within its practical,
or real, contexts.

Many pragmatist arguments are in line with those of feminist approaches in that they deny dualistic viewpoints of the world and human difference. The essential notions of pragmatist theory reject the dualism that separates thinking and doing, mind and body, and theory and practice. Pragmatism argues that truth, knowledge, beliefs, and values exist in our actual experiences. Its focus on current practical problems, not fixed abstract realities, signifies its evident connection with feminist theory, which deals with urgent issues in actual human lives (McKenna, 2001). On the other hand, while pragmatist theory still restricts itself to a concentration on overcoming the notion of objective knowledge, feminist approaches highlight the use of subjectivity as a means of explicating true knowledge. Feminist theory inclines to explore particular experiences and feelings rather than physical and objective components that anyone can obviously describe. Its viewpoint disapproves of the idea of universalizing experience, since the experience is uniquely ascertainable only by the self, which is inherently different from others. In terms of this study, a perspective based on the proper combination of both pragmatist and feminist approaches can lead to an accurate account of the multiplicity of perspectives and voices in a community, and an acknowledgement of the changing and divergent interpretations of many people on reality held by different people.

Relational Ethics

Pragmatists and feminists both look at human difference through the lens of interrelated and constant relations. The feminist pragmatist model is engaged in an “ethics of care” (Abowitz, 1999, p. 225) characterized by human demonstrations of sympathy and empathy. Bartky (1997) described sympathy as “feeling with” (p. 181), while Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1988) depicted sympathy as “an affinity, association, or relationship between persons or things wherein whatever affects one similarly affects the other.” Feminist philosophers prize the
empathy that underlies human interdependence and interaction (Garrison, 1997; Leffers, 1993; Noddings, 1984; Pappas, 1993). Irrational ethics and human interrelations, areas to which traditional Western ethics has paid little attention, afford insights into the affective domains of human social, natural, and actual life (Abowitz, 1999).

Feminist theorists resist the tendency of traditional Western ethics to elevating respect, tolerance, and fairness. Their Feminist doctrines that appraise human relations are primarily involved in the “ethics of care” (Abowitz, 1999, Relational Ethics and Difference section, ¶ 2) or “relational ethics” (Abowitz, 1999, Relational Ethics and Difference section, ¶ 1) whose grounding accentuates human emotional connection and shared understanding. Caring signifies the relation formed by sympathy and mutual concerns. Feminists agree with that caring furthers extends the natural mood inclination for questioning, criticizing, and replacing that are part of the traditional Western ethics, which tend to rely on power and hierarchy. Feminist ethics do ultimately create an informal, private sphere in a public, bureaucratic society.

Suspicious of dualisms, pragmatist theorists intend to undermine the boundary of the rationality/affection dichotomy in social actions (Pappas, 1993). Like feminist theorists, they draw outpoint to the interrelationships established by emotion as integral fostering the ethics of inquiry in making a judgment. Dewey found sympathy has a great deal of influences on the data of social science data because it furthers intellectual perspectives rather than drives impulsive action. Dewey argued the intellectual activities of inquiry bolstered by sympathy constantly provide imaginative multiple practices. However, pragmatists, like feminists, contend that intellectual operations be driven not only by positive emotions of compassion or empathy but also by antagonistic emotions of anger, jealousy, or hatred (Abowitz, 1999). Such emotional responses function as a facilitator of the kind of genuine communication that is critical to sound social relationships. Both pragmatist and feminist theorists view emotion as part of the intellect,
not as part of a human being’s daily lived experiences. In addition, Dewey argued that it is a misunderstanding to characterize caring as the sole territory of women (Pappas, 1993). Dewey believed that inclinations of the ethics of caring are learned and transmitted through socialization. Likewise, a pragmatist approach avoids the presupposition that an ethic of care is more the cultural and moral domain of women than men (Noddings, 1984). In this regard, the feminist-pragmatist model of community calls for turning the notions of community and difference away from the essentialization of presupposed praxis and reflections of lived experiences to lived experiences themselves (Abowitz, 1999).

In conclusion, feminist and pragmatist conceptions of community incorporate a notion of difference which agents of a community get together and share diverse stances. The relational ethics valuing lived experiences offers an epistemological and moral grounding for the realization of reciprocal and sympathetic interactions in community (Abowitz, 1999).

**Critical Thinking about Human Differences**

The feminist-pragmatist model uses notions of difference as a tool for analyzing the nature of a community. For example, the research of feminist scholars of science tends to show interest in examining how women are marginalized in the realms of both scientific practices and products, in conjunction with race, culture, and/or class (Bianchini, 2002). Some feminist scholars have described science as a gendered enterprise dominated by white men. They have argued that the methods employed, standards of arguments addressed in scientific research and entrance into the profession of science have been decided and controlled by white men (Bianchini, 2002; Haraway, 1989). Other feminist scholars have expressed doubts about conventional ideas about the nature of science and scientific ways of knowing (Bianchini, 2002; Barad, 1996; Hardings, 1991; Hess, 1995; Lindee, 1994; Longino, 1990). Most feminist scholars insist on accepting multiple perspectives in science education and scientific ventures (Bianchini, 2002).
The post-Kuhnian stream of science regarded modern science as “social activity, as a set of practices and a body of knowledge created by a community of people called scientists” (Bianchini, 2002, p. 740). Longino (1993) expanded on Kuhnian’s notion of science as a shared activity to strongly affirm different perspectives and multiple voices. She argued that scientific knowledge is the product of the critical dialogue among members of a community, rather than the outcome of individual efforts. She stressed that understanding knowledge as a social outcome makes room for contradictory theories that meet the interests of different communities.

Fraser (1997) presented four perspectives on difference, arguing that various types of difference can be distinguished according to their contextual characteristics. Fraser is opposed to a politics of difference that does not differentiate between such variables as ethnicity, class, or gender. Negating such demarcations could aggravate a biased sense of inferiority, superiority, or equality. By ignoring the uniqueness of the contexts which engender variations of human experience, we fail to acknowledge the relative worth of substitutive norms, practices, interpretations, or judgments. Fraser also emphasized the necessity of normative judgments as well as the acknowledgement of human variation. She advocates eliminating differences that are based on societal inequalities, but also suggests that we must learn about excluded but meaningful cultures, as well as enjoy the multiplicity of human variation. According to Fraser, we should consider the relative values of our practices, interpretations, or judgments on the basis of moral and social standards.

Fraser’s feminist-pragmatist approach to difference provides a logic critical to reclaiming community. First, the feminist-pragmatist model of community disallows the transmission of stereotypical norms, practices, interpretations, or judgments, without inquiry. The differences manifested by diverse individuals and groups need to be examined through inquiry that addresses, at least in part, contexts such as culture, socioeconomic conditions, and capabilities. The feminist
perspective of Fraser’s community model underpins pragmatic methodologies by pressing us to inspect conclusions that may be connected with inequality, injustice, or discrimination. It may seem dangerous to purely celebrate difference, which can be rooted in a disregard for reality and an exclusion of others, yet reflective inquiry and discourses on difference can accompany speculation about the relationship between realities and contexts, and help explore the sources of exclusive behaviors. A combination of feminism and pragmatism eventually shapes a practical frame useful for making ethical judgments on difference. The feminist ethical approach to difference makes crucial the role of a non-oppressive and receptive society. Pragmatist methodologies debate questionable environments in society, and it is through the realization of a non-discriminative society, according to both feminism and pragmatism, that people can freely engage in interactions with their social environments, and thereby gain a satisfactory experience.

Fraser’s feminist-pragmatist model does not shy away from community but allows us to pay more attention to it in order to recoup it based on ethical conceptions of human difference. The pragmatic perspectives asserted by Fraser also rely on communal notions, including participating, interacting, discussing, working, and reaching judgments. Overall, human differences are shared, amended, and reformed through communal problem-solving activities. Difference is shared in the public space because it is through communication that diverse people recognize their interrelatedness with one another. In this way, the commonalities and differences between people coexist within a community, strengthening one another.

As described above, the open-ended notions of the feminist-pragmatist model of community dismiss universalizing and conforming to predetermined values and norms. Universalizing and conforming are viewed as habitual practices that prevent us from experiencing conflict, compromise, adjustment, and understanding. Deconstruction of uncompromisingly transmitted values and norms is critical to creating meanings from current
actual problematic situations. According to McKenna (2002), it is through critical thinking and reflective inquiry that we can keep open to human difference and make appropriate decisions.

**Communities of Practice of Teachers**

A large body of literature has demonstrated that the success of educational reform depends on the ability of teachers to enhance their students’ thinking, problem-solving, and knowledge acquisition (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1998; National Commission on Teaching & America’s Future, 1996). Teachers are increasingly required to have greater expertise in a number of areas, such as a deeper understanding of subjects and of changing students (Ma, 1999). Experimental studies reviewed herein reveal that the efforts of teachers to enrich their teaching have flourished around CoPs as a vital venue for professional growth. In reviewing these studies, certain common characteristics of CoPs conspicuously and repeatedly appeared, including 1) interactions between teachers, 2) collaboration in inter-professional settings, and 3) features of teacher learning in communities of practice.

**Interactions between Teachers**

**Exchanging knowledge of practice through interaction.** A review of the literature on the development of professional teachers revealed a consensus that one of the general standards in evaluating teachers involves instructional practices. Based on the national, cross-sectional results of mail surveys of 1,027 mathematics and science teachers throughout the country, Desimone et al. (2002) identified the key features of professional development activities for teachers. Such features included the type and duration of the professional activity, the collective participation of groups, opportunities for active learning, coherence in professional development, and the degree to which the activity promotes teachers’ content knowledge. Longitudinal surveys were conducted before and after a three-year implementation of the Eisenhower Professional Development Program, the goal of which is to improve the teaching and learning of students by
providing teachers and administrators with high quality, sustained, and intensive professional
development opportunities. The researchers examined the experiences of science and
mathematics teachers participating in one particular activity of a professional program. The data
revealed that the “best practices” (Desimone et al., 2002, p. 101) for professional development
relied on the way teachers learn and implement new knowledge. Improvement in teacher
practices also was boosted when teachers actively engaged in professional reform types of
activity that were provided consistently, such as interaction with their colleagues or mentors.

Another study revealed that innovative instructional tools stimulate conversations among
teachers in relation to the exploration of best practices. Baildon and Damico (2008) argued that
“educative curriculum materials” (p. 2) contribute to improving teachers’ instructional
competency by facilitating meaningful conversation amongst teachers. The curriculum materials
engaged teachers not only in challenging epistemological conversation but also in discussing
theories that concern converting curricula into classroom practices. Vygotskian notions provided
a conceptual framework for the study, in which the instructional tool, the Critical Web Reader
(CWR), played the critical role of a device that mediated and facilitated teachers’ new ways of
thinking about subject matter and pedagogical strategies (Baildon & Damico, 2008). A case
study was conducted in a prominent private international school in East Asia to investigate how a
six-person, ninth-grade humanities team comprised of English and social studies teachers
engaged in refining the usage of a literary and inquiry tool and creating an Asian Studies
curriculum. Extensive data were collected from observations of the teachers’ discussions,
interviews with teachers, and curriculum documents written by the teachers. The findings
showed that the CWR served to generate intellectual collaborative discourses, which helped to
construct meanings around the tool and substantial issues in its usage.
**Building an open-minded learning climate through interaction.** Successful professional development models employ a CoP as a vital means for facilitating the intellectual growth of both individual teachers and teacher groups because of its informal, agreeable learning atmosphere. Koellner-Clark and Borko (2004) argued that a CoP helps to provide an environment where the teachers frankly reveal their weakness and misunderstandings, discuss pedagogical issues, and jointly develop intellectual and social work (Grossman et al., 2001; Koellner-Clark & Borko, 2004; Wenger, 1996).

A qualitative study was conducted to explore how a professional teaching community consisting of 16 mathematics teachers evolved in the course of a two-week project STTAR on arithmetic to algebraic reasoning (Koellner-Clark & Borko, 2004). An extensive data set was collected to analyze the features of interactions among teachers. Data included daily field notes, written mathematics assessments, interviews with the teachers about their daily mathematics experiences, and daily responses to interviews with teachers and instructors. The authors argued that the open-minded learning climates fostered by dynamic interactions, including encouraging others to challenge difficult strategies and laughing and praising each other, led to in-depth dialogues in which teachers could make their understandings of concepts clear and focus on difficult algebra strategies.

**Collaborative Inter-professional Settings**

**Interdisciplinary teacher communities.** Two studies reported that teachers often display an inclination and dedication to developing a community, and that their efforts can eventually result in reshaping school cultures. Thomas et al. (1998) developed a model of community for teacher professional development. The researchers initiated the Community of Learners Project, the goal of which was to develop an interdisciplinary humanities curriculum using a department-based model. They asserted that the entire culture within schools can be reformed by the sense of
community that is naturally engendered through such communal activities. Triangulated qualitative data methods were used in the study, and included observations of discussions, interviews with 22 teachers from diverse subject areas, and the analysis written self-reports and video clips of the teachers’ practices. Their findings made it clear that the realization of the department-based model of professional development within this school stimulated the building of an intellectually mature community. The project served to reshape the school culture and change norms of privacy and noninterference to collaboration and interdependence. In addition, it set up continued opportunities for teachers to develop their expertise.

Grossman et al. (2001) noted that a school is a pivotal place for realizing true democracy in a society, and the most essential goal for teacher professional development activities is to enhance a sense of community among teachers. In their ethnographic case study, the researchers directed rigorous attention to the formation of community ideas within a school culture. Extensive data were gathered over a two-and-a-half year-period using the following instruments: observations of interactions among 22 English and social science teachers; observations of a special education and ESL teacher in a book study project; interviews with the teachers participating in the study in order to explore their perceptions of collective learning; and teachers’ written evaluations of the project. The study revealed that ongoing learning by teachers can maintained by a sense of community.

**Furthering authentic pedagogy through the collaboration of experts.** Engestrom and Danielson (2006) investigated teacher perceptions of how one school district supported and sustained a teacher-led staff development committee’s professional development program. Teachers regarded as exemplary by their administrators and colleagues were invited to serve on the district’s staff development committee (SDC). A grant-funded professional development model was implemented, based on a partnership between district and local universities, with the
intention of implementing a state-level Arts Council grant geared at providing professional learning on Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences theory (1983) and its application to classroom practice. Qualitative data sets were used to understand how the onsite, teacher-led model supported teacher professional growth and sustained curriculum reform, including a focused writing survey from the teachers, interviews with the teachers, and an examination of unit or lesson artifacts. The teachers’ responses revealed that a collaborative mechanism of peer coaching and collegiality among teachers with different expertise was effective for enhancing rich knowledge about the multiple intelligences theory. On the other hand, the researchers discovered that none of the teachers tried to change their instructional classroom strategies to reflect the multiple intelligence theory. The researchers concluded that in addition to simply augmenting teachers’ knowledge of instructional strategies, it is necessary to continuously provide the opportunity to foster teaching expertise through informal, like-minded, and collaborative peer conversations.

While a good deal of research has explored the features of teachers who have a desirable influence on classroom practices, Louis and Marks (1998) identified the professional qualities needed for the creation of a professional CoP. Louis and Marks described the collaborative efforts of teachers to engender students’ authentic achievement through a CoP in the workplace. They argued that collaboration in a professional teacher community is a supportive variable that enhances student performance. Research participants were selected from eight elementary, eight middle, and eight high schools that had made significant progress in restructuring the organization of their schools in order to heighten student achievement. Teachers from 24 schools were asked to complete questionnaires that addressed instructional practices, professional activities and backgrounds, and their perceptions about school culture. A set of extensive data was gathered from observations of instruction, interviews with teachers and administrators,
participation in regular school activities, and the analysis of teachers’ assessment tasks of student achievement. The researchers concluded that it is important to pay attention to the development of “school-workplace relationships” (p. 561). In addition, the collective reflection activities of teachers from different subject areas and the collegial support among school staff members resulted in strengthening teachers’ authentic pedagogy and enhancing the higher-order intellectual growth of students.

**Features of Teacher Learning in Communities of Practice**

McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) first used the term “professional community” (in Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 26) in their report on the effects of teachers’ groups in communities devoted to the professional development of teachers in secondary schools in California. The teachers in the groups discussed curricula, as well as a pedagogical approach to reform. They also shared different instructional strategies and practices with their peers. According to McLaughlin and Talbert, professional communities provide benefits that contribute to improving teacher professional effectiveness.

**Learning by doing.** The literature on teacher professional communities has identified the essential characteristics of such communities: learning by doing, the construction of identity, and the transmission of learning. The first feature of a professional CoP for teachers is that teachers learn by actually doing, just as professionals themselves learn by doing. Gawande (2002) found that surgeons learn through practice and reflection on their performance. Researchers in fields outside of education have observed how professionals learn by actually doing the work and reflecting on it. Likewise, regarding learning as something that happens in a context, rather than being organized in advance, Lave and Wenger (1991) have contended that teachers learn while talking and working. Accordingly, teacher learning is situated in social and collective contexts. Lave and Wenger discussed four processes of learning which occur side by side: learning by
doing practices, learning by understanding and creating meanings from doing practices, learning by participating and being with others, and learning by changing one’s identity.

**The construction of identity.** The second characteristic of a teacher community is related to the construction of identity. Wenger (1998) regarded the nature of learning as both explicit and tacit, including both what people say and observe, and what is left unsaid. The construction of identities is an integral part of teacher learning; it explains how newcomers learn and absorb the practices of the community and what they need to learn to become full-fledged executers. Newcomers increase a group’s understanding of what, how, and when; longtime members collaborate, collide, dislike, enjoy, and respect. All members become more involved in the community over time. The learning of newcomers is a process of establishing an individual and collective identity. Professional learning originates from the human need to feel a sense of belonging and to make contributions to developing the community by creating knowledge and experience.

**The transmission of learning culture.** The final valuable component of a teacher CoP involves the transmission of learning, which changes from something that results from a teacher’s individualistic efforts to something that emerges as the result of collaboration. Miller and O’Shea (1991) discussed four paths to teacher leadership: through experience, through knowledge, through vision, and through respect for children. By constructing informal and formal peer interactions in their community, teachers come to learn these four paths to the development of leadership (Lieberman & Miller, 2004). Fullan argued for shifting from a narrow view of isolated learning to interpreting the professional competencies of teachers from multiple perspectives. Distributing leadership among teachers builds a cultural form of sharing and collaboration, and then teachers absorb the shared culture. Lambert (2003) described the notion of “constructivist leadership” (p. 14), as something built up in “community, relationships, and
learning and purpose” (p. 14). Both Fullan’s notion of reculturing and the constructivist leadership of Lambert (2003) allow for understanding the nature of teacher professional development in the broader and more complex domain of community.

**Approaches to the Professional Development of Art Teachers**

Studies on the professional development of art teachers have appeared here and there over the past decade in relation to: art teacher preparation education (Day, 1997; Milbrandt, 2006; Unrath & Kerridge, 2009); professional learning through artist-teacher partnerships (Kind, et al., 2007); finding the meaning of teaching arts through exploring the experiences and practices of individual veteran art teachers (Anderson, 2000; Stout, 2002); and professional development in residential learning communities (Charland, 2008).

In order to stay abreast of new approaches in the art education field, as well as reinforce art teacher preparation programs, teachers must have on-going professional relationships with other art educators, an important implication of Day’s (1997) book, *Preparing Teacher of Art*. Milbrandt (2006) addressed the effective execution of a collaborative model for art teacher preparation that creates interactions between student teachers and university faculty. She proposed that novice and veteran teachers have an opportunity to intellectually and emotionally extend their professional competence by sharing the authentic issues that they unexpectedly encounter in classrooms. In addition to redefining and broadening the concept of art teacher preparation, Milbrant suggested that art teachers sustain ongoing interactions with their colleagues at a variety of levels, in relation to expertise, experiences, and geographic locations, beyond the walls of schools and institutions, throughout their teaching careers.

Two exemplary studies addressed the nature of art teachers’ teaching experience as well as professional competency. Anderson (2000) conducted an ethnographic study of six art teachers in different geographic and social locations in the U.S. whose teaching experience ranged from 15
to 25 years. Vivid descriptions drawn from observations of ordinary art classes and interviews with the study participants provided a deeper understanding of their beliefs and values related to teaching art and living as an art teacher. Stout’s (2002) research project was conducted from 1999 through the spring of 2002. A group of highly experienced art teachers throughout the U.S. were invited to participate in *The Flower Teachers Project*. Rich information was collected from the writings and audio-tapes of the 30 participating veteran art teachers in response to a set of question items involved the essence of their teaching experiences: teacher philosophy and personal background, education, and formative experience; actual classroom events and practice; inspiration and professional motivation; reflections on educational trends and issues; perspectives on the future of art education; advice for a new generation of teachers; academic concerns about specific curricular innovations; issues of diversity, assessment, and standards; and education funding. The stories portrayed keen insights into practical issues surrounding teaching the arts, and provided substantial implications for current and future art teachers.

In short, the studies reviewed in this section were motivated by questions about the best practices for professional development among pre-service and in-service art teachers. The researchers sought to investigate collaborative partnerships in the field of art education to examine effective art teacher preparation and the diverse experiences of individual veteran art teachers. Importantly, only one study concerned a residential community of art teachers as a vital learning setting (Charland, 2008). This professional development institute was created in order to formalize summer professional development offerings provided by the Michigan Art Education Association, a residential setting for learning where art educators lived and worked together for up to 6 days. At this professional development institute, teachers accumulated learning experiences with meaningful subject area relevance and gained a rigorous opportunity to concentrate on a range of topics they themselves identified. Formal and informal interactions
flourished in the residential community, which was geared toward prioritizing the goals of the learning community more than performing specific events. One weakness of the professional development institute was revealed, however. The art educators at the professional development institute were not inclined to persist in maintaining the valuable connections built in the residential learning setting and to sustain professional contemplation after going back to their routines. This study, then, suggests the need to consider the benefits of CoPs that continuously engage teachers in authentic learning.

**Theoretical Approaches to the Development of Healthy Communities of Practice**

Key notions of both pragmatism and feminism serve as the theoretical ground upon which this study builds, in that these ideas offer philosophical insights that can help us capture the characteristics of CoPs. The review of the literature on the community ideals of pragmatist theorists and feminist theorists delineated the two most significant components of a healthy community: close human interrelationships and shared practices. Moreover, the practical model for successful CoPs proposed by Wenger et al. (2002) provided a configurational structure of a CoP. Based on both feminist and pragmatist philosophical notions, and this structural understanding of CoPs, this section discusses the salient factors involved in building healthy CoPs.

**Interrelationship**

**Critical thinking.** This study aims to explore the nature of a CoP where art teachers are engaged in sharing knowledge and practices through face-to-face interaction. One way to understand the nature of a CoP is to examine the interactions engendered in specific settings, rather than on the effects obtained through the interactions (Baildon & Damico, 2008; Desimone et al., 2002; Grossman et al., 2001; Koellner-Clark & Borko, 2004; Wenger, 1996). Such an examination would focus on the ways community members jointly possess, publicly shape, and
transform knowledge, and create conditions that permit multiple alternative perspectives. Longino (1993) stated that knowledge is produced by “critical dialogues” (p. 113) among members who have an attachment to community-level standards. These critical dialogues reveal how individual art teachers, situated in different cultural, social, geological, political, and historical backgrounds, create genuine communication and construct sound social relationships, such as the respect and trust for an intelligent authority. Critical dialogues play an essential role in balancing the growth of individual expertise and improvement in the collective work of a larger community.

Pragmatism went through a paradigm shift prior to feminism in the second half of the 20th century, “from an absolutist, subject-centered conception of truth to a situated, perspectival, and discursive [one]” (Seigfried, 2002, p. 4). Arguing against the idea that knowledge is a cognitive interaction between an isolated subject and object, pragmatist theorists instead conceived of knowledge as “a matter of the use that is made of experienced natural events” (Dewey, 1917, p. 33). Additionally, intelligence is understood not as something acquired through universal and homogeneous logic but as a comprehensive ability engaged differently according to a specific time and place (Dewey, 1917; Seigfried, 2002). According to Dewey, intelligence is “the sum-total of impulses, habits, emotions, records, and discoveries which forecast what is desirable and undesirable in the future, and which contrive ingeniously on behalf of the imagined good” (p. 48).

This standpoint that situates knowledge and intelligence in the dimension of social interplay is congruent with Dewey’s conception of democracy as an experience that is deeply rooted in a belief in the social good (Pappas, 2008). Discarding the assumption that democracy is strictly a political mechanism, Dewey instead called upon individuals to realize democratic ideals in their everyday lives. In a more practical way, democracy as conceived by Dewey leads to a high quality of shared experience that can ameliorate problems both in society and in our
individual lives. By remaining cognizant, through critical inquiry, of the range of possible manifestations of democracy, we come to attain democratic lives. Thus, we give consideration to how we engage in our lives, how we communicate, how we cope with disagreements and conflicts, and how we participate in the experiences of our community. According to Dewey, it is by balancing the particular tensions between individuality and community that we can create integration and harmony in a pluralistic society. That is, while the freedom to be an individual may exist in an association, the improvement of the association depends on the intellectual ability to engage in critical thinking.

**Caring relationships.** The assertion that interpersonal relationships are a crucible factor in goal-oriented joint action has been upheld by research in the fields of socio-cultural psychology and cognitive psychology (Edwards, 2005a; Edwards & D’arcy, 2004; Edwards & Mackenzie, 2005; Goldstein, 1999; Oers, 2008; Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004). An understanding of the interrelational dimensions of object-oriented community practices helps enrich and enable the professional practices of members in a community. The ethics of caring is in the center of such interrelationships (Goldstein, 1999).

Although many feminist theorists have explored the nature and the dimensions of the ethics of care (Baumrind, 1993; Larrabee, 1993; Martin, 1992; Nicholson, 1993; Noddings, 1984; Ruddick, 1989), Noddings’ notion of the ethics of care has most informed the field of education (Goldstein, 1996). Noddings’ understanding of the ethics of care leads to questions about the characteristics of community interrelationships at the micro level. Unlike other feminist philosophers who focus on personality traits and dispositions when using the term caring, Noddings (1984) emphasizes the deep moral dimensions of caring relationships: “One must meet the other in caring. From this requirement, there is no escape for one who would be moral” (p. 201). Such moral relationships of caring are shaped by our choices and simultaneously by our
sense of responsibility and obligation, and involve affect and volition.

Each caring encounter is an interaction between the one who gives the care and the one who receives that care. In this interaction, the one-caring is responsive to the cared-for “with full attention and with receptivity to his perspective and situation” (Goldstein, 1996, p. 656). The idea of engrossment is associated with such care, and is embedded in the particular definition of receptivity put forth by Noddings: “I receive the other into myself and I see and feel with the other. I become a duality” (p. 30). In short, the one-caring makes a commitment to feel, to the greatest extent possible, what the cared-for feels. This is the experience of receptivity, and it requires that the one-caring willingly engages in feeling with the cared-for, rather than analyzing or generalizing his situation. The experience of fully receiving others in this way provokes a caring encounter. Once wholly receiving the cared-for, the one-caring feels a deep responsibility to respond. Noddings noted that the one-caring receives the realities of the cared-for and begins to feel these realities in the cared-for’s situation. The feeling then compels the caring-one to act in behalf of the other, not in her own behalf.

The other key attribute of the one-caring’s stance is motivational displacement, described by Noddings as the inclination to give primacy to the needs and desires of the cared-for. Motivational displacement is a natural phenomenon occurring in the mind of the one-caring, and is followed by receptivity. Goldstein (1996) described it as fully receiving the motives of the cared-for: “When the one-caring is feeling with the cared-for, fully receiving him, his motives become her motives” (p. 656). Noddings (1984) explained that this process involves: “stepping out of one’s own personal frame of reference and into the other’s” (p. 24).

The caring encounter is thus characterized as reciprocal because once the cared-for has accepted the care the one-caring gives, the encounter is completed. As the one-caring feels a moral obligation to care for the cared-for, he takes charge of responding to her in a caring
relation. Whether the care of the one-caring is meaningful or worthless depends on the response of the cared-for. The responses of the cared-for can become rewarding for the one-caring and serve as incentives for continuing care. Noddings assumes that caring involves a sense of obligation that originates from our wish to be moral; caring, then, is not only a continuous responsibility but also a form of ethical deliberation.

**Common Practices in Inter-professional Settings**

This study intends to examine the contents, purposes, and processes of the CoP for art teachers in North Florida. Overall, the literature reviewed on CoPs of teachers portrayed a community as a social system in which teachers’ expertise is nurtured through interactions and collaborative efforts in order to create knowledge. The pilot test I previously conducted suggested that the CoP I studied serves as a venue for enhancing the professionalism and expertise of the participating art teachers through the joint practices the community has created and accumulated.

Hence, practice is a key element constituting the structure of a CoP, as presented in a model by Wenger et al. (2002), and it is another axis to be examined in this study. This section focuses on clarifying how practice is effectively enacted by the members of a CoP. First, the metaphor learning as participation is reframed as interpreting and acting on the world and eventually finding useful resources. Expertise is redefined as a process of expansive learning within collaborative action. Expertise thus becomes a concept representing a relational agency which refers to “a capacity to work with others to expand the object that you are working on by bringing to bear the sense-making of others and to draw on the resources they offer when responding to that sense-making” (Edwards, 2007, p. 4). The professional quality of this relational agency occurs through the participation of community members in collaborative inter-professional practices intended to accomplish not only the objectives of the community but of
individuals.

**Redefining learning through participation.** Learning through participation can be more widely teased out to apply to learning in the workplace or post-compulsory educational systems as opposed to simply in school-based ones (Edwards, 2005a). Edwards has called for revisiting the participation metaphor, that is, the metaphor of learning through participation, since participating in social and cultural contexts does not simply address the question of how learning is shaped by context, but rather how we learn new practices. This view sees learning as modifying the ways in which we interpret and act on the world, not as efficient knowledge storage or the acquisition of established concepts and ideas. While some research has tended to emphasize the effects of learning in terms of cognitive development in individual learners, other studies reveal a concern with the systems and the contexts that support learning. Current research in the study of learning, however, stresses the potentialities inherent in the non-cognitive, inter-relational elements of learning through participation.

The two broad strands of ideas about learning represented in socio-cultural and activity theories have generated advanced insights on interpreting learning through participation. Socio-cultural psychologists, including Vygotsky, Luria, and Leont’ev, and others committed to creating a Marxist psychology with them, paid attention to explaining how the collective was incorporated into the individual through mediation processes that transformed ways of thinking and acting. According to Vygotsky, the ways we use material artifacts, concepts, and language indicates the way of our thinking and acting, and we shape and transform such factors through our own writing, speaking, gestures, architecture, music, and so on (Edwards, 2005a).

Leont’ev’s (1978) contribution was to develop the idea of an activity system by moving the focus from tools to the object of the tools: “It is exactly the object of an activity that gives it a determined direction…the object of the activity is its true motive” (p. 62). In short, both
Vygotsky and Leont’ev agreed that the action of the mind is elicited by its action on the world. Additionally, they addressed learning not simply in terms of becoming a member of a community but as a commitment to transforming the world through the continuous, knowledgeable, joint actions. Engestrom (1999), who developed activity theory from the work of Leont’ev, presented a notion of object transformation important to understanding learning in practice. According to Engestrom, learning is generated when the object of our action is advanced by the person or people acting on it. Learning through practice expands through diverse informed interpretations and contradictions about the object, which are produced by people operating the system. Then the object and system that one is operating are transformed by the outcome of expansive learning produced in a multi-expertise setting. Engestrom, therefore, was primarily concerned with enabling members of a system to ask how the system creates opportunities for action and thinking that can transform and change the way members think and act.

Other arguments on learning through participation originate from the work on the dialogic construction of meaning by researchers like Mercer (1995, 2000) and Wells (1999), as well as the anthropological approaches of Lave (1998, 2001), and U.S. developmental psychologists (Resnick et al., 1991; Rogoff, 1995). All recognize knowledge as being discursively built and drawn upon, rather than something attained, stored, and applied. Their concerns relate to transfer, how patterns of knowledgeable behavior learned in one setting are positioned in new settings. These questions are relevant to the support of social cultural contexts for learning, and more specifically to “how thinking and action are structured by the social engagements we encounter” (Edwards, 2005, p. 57). Greeno (1997) asserted that the transfer of knowledge is best understood by examining what individuals bring to interactions and how they adapt as they engage in practices. According to Greeno, then, learning involves “a capacity to recognize how one’s action
might be supported in a setting and to use the resources available to take action” (in Edwards, 2005a, p. 58).

From the angles of cultural psychology, cognitive anthropology, and cognitive psychology, the learning as participation metaphor requires a greater emphasis on examining “how learners interpret and act on their worlds” (Edwards, 2005a, p. 59). In other words, acting on our worlds leads us to pay our attention to diverse interpretations and to find useful resources to support our actions. In this regard, expertise is understood as located in a process of expansive learning within a collaborative goal-oriented action, “a capacity to interpret the complexity of aspects of the world and have the wherewithal to respond to the complexity” (Edwards, 2005b, p. 60). That is, professional learning involves how to come together, how to read a problem embedded within social practices, and how to respond it.

**The concept of relational agency.** An important concept, relational agency, refers to the nature of working together in joint action (Edwards, 2005b). Relational agency refers to “a capacity to work with others to expand the object that one is working on and try to transform it by recognizing and accessing the resources that others bring to bear as they interpret and respond to the object” (p. 172). That is, relational agency is a capacity to recognize who can be a resource and what work needs to be done to understand and negotiate the use of that resource in order to deploy oneself in joint action on the object. Edwards and Mackenzie (2005) mentioned that relational agency is generated from fluid relationships that encourage offering support and asking for support from others.

Relational agency has a parallel with the ideas of distributed expertise or distributed intellect, which begin with a focus not on individual intellect but on the resources that are to be found outside of individual minds (Edwards, 2005b). Distributed intelligence is based on the assumption that we can use the intelligence embedded within cultural tools and artifacts by
participating in the environments designed for their easy use. Distributed intelligence can be found in resources distributed among people participating in a system as well (Bruner, 1996). Distributed expertise, as a sub-category of distributed intelligence, is a topic frequently discussed in relation to professional knowledge, teamwork, and professional collaboration (Edwards, 2005c). Engestrom and Middleton (1996) identified distributed expertise as “collaborative and discursive construction of tasks, visions, solutions, breakdowns and innovations” (p. 4) within and across a system, rather than individual proficiency within particular areas.

Noting that relational agency fits well within activity theory, Edwards (2005b) clarified that there is a difference between the ultimate goals in working with others that the two concepts propose. In activity theory, the system is transformed through the expansion of the object in which agents are engaged, thus, the object is expanded by exploring and negotiating a variety of interpretations that may be taken advantage of within the system. The expanded object reversely works as conceptual tools and reconfigures them. On the other hand, relational agency anticipates changes in individual minds and learning, moving the focus from the system to joint action and an influence on those who are working within the system.

It is clear that a wider range of conceptual tools or resources for the object or task are available in joint action than in the case where individual effort is exerted, and the object is more expanded. The pivotal point is likely to be the collaborative object-oriented action which contributes to expanding the object of the system, but the ultimate outcome is individual change gained through joint action, rather than a reshaping of the system. Along the same lines, Stetsenko’s (2005) specification of the transactional relationship between human subjectivities and objects of a system allows us to recognize the significance of relational agency in exploring better solutions. Once the object is expanded through different ways of thinking, the expanded object in turn operates within the mindsets of the practitioners, and is then enriched by the
interpretations of others.

In summary, understanding relational agency as the capacity to recognize others as resources, to draw out their interpretations, and to negotiate allied actions makes us pay attention to what individuals might gain from collaborative action as an effect of recognizing others’ outstanding aspects.

**Community practices and relational agency.** Edwards (2005b) pointed out that recent educational reforms have highlighted the implementation of national curricula, national tests for students, and strict school inspections, resulted in limited teacher accountability for curriculum delivery and individual performance corresponding with specified standards. Edwards (2005b) conducted a series of studies on how student teachers learned to teach children with special education needs while deployed in elementary school classrooms under a system of distributed expertise. The results of the study indicated that there were very few interactions of student teachers (who were responsible for managing science, literacy, and math) with other teachers who were specialized in working with children with special educational needs. Further, the student teachers had developed their expertise in lesson planning, thus, their teaching was limited to distributing the predetermined contents of a curriculum. Because of this emphasis on covering the curriculum, the student teachers became increasingly estranged from responding to the children’s needs. Under this system which closely constrained meaningful interactions among the teachers, there were no opportunities to address the problems that the student teachers encountered in teaching, and they failed to gain the professional insights and wisdom of the expert practitioners. On the other hand, the expert teachers were also frustrated at losing touch with their children in the process of guiding the student teachers. Importantly, the complex and dynamic realities of teaching were not addressed, thereby limiting any professional advancement in coping with children’s needs and problems.
Edwards and Wiseman (2005) have suggested that the important concept of knowing how to know who can be helpful for teachers and other workers. This concept is at the center of collaborative inter-professional practice, in which practitioners need to know how to effectively use the expertise of others and align their professional practices with them. When teachers know how to know who, and collaborate with those others, they jointly expand the object using conceptual and material tools brought into play by their different expertise. They respond to different interpretations of an issue they face, and associate their knowledge with the expertise of others. According to Bedny and Harris (2005), such knowing how to know who plays a critical role in collaborative goal-oriented action. At the same time, it is important to identify who is proper for the practice and to rethink appropriate tools in order to avoid unpredictable results.

In short, the concept relational agency draws our attention to the ways in which new or responsive practices can be developed within communities with fluid and unpredictable objects, and to how one can import specialties when working across community boundaries. Professionalism is not simply a matter of induction and mastery into the knowledge and skills associated with existing practices, but a capacity “for interpreting and approaching problems, for contesting interpretations, for reading the environment, for drawing on the resources there, for being a resource for others, for focusing on the core objects of the professions” (Edwards, 2005b, p. 179). Thus, knowledge and professional practice are shaped through fluid object-oriented joint action that immediately responds to the changing world, and the world in turn is transformed by the conceptual and material tools.

This study investigates the functions of two areas of a community of practice, the community and the practice, as well as the influence of these two areas on the community’s domain. Figure 2.1 expands on the practical model of a community of practice described by Wenger et al. (2002), providing an elaborate theoretical lens through which to explore each area.
of the community and the practice. A community of practice is assumed to be a situated and socio-cultural learning setting. In addition, the feminist-pragmatist model of community (Abowitz, 1999), with its emphases on human difference, critical thinking, and the ethics of relationships, informs the analysis of the community aspect of the CoP. The area of the practice can be more fully understood by relational agency and common practices in inter-professional settings (Edwards, 2005b).

Figure 2.1: Theoretical lenses for each area of a Community of Practice

Summary

This chapter contains a review of the literature related to the concepts of community, practice, and learning, as well as a brief description of a pilot study conducted on the CoP to be studied. The literature reviewed spanned a number of disciplines, and included discussions of the
generic features of a community, learning theories and social contexts, learning through shared practices, community and interpersonal relationships, professional learning in CoPs, the professional development of art teachers, and various points of view on CoPs.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the method that was used to study the contents, purposes, and processes of a CoP for art teachers in North Florida. A discussion of the conceptual tools that informed the development of the methodology is provided, and the research questions and an overview of the research process are provided. In addition, a discussion of qualitative inquiry and ethnography is offered. The methodology is outlined, providing a description of the research site, informants, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods to be used. Finally, the chapter includes a discussion of research ethics as related to this study.

Conceptual Tools Informing the Methodology

The review of the literature provided sensitizing concepts that informed the research design for this study. For example, Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder (2002) proposed a model of the structure and characteristics of CoPs. Feminist-pragmatist perspectives about community have suggested a focus on human relationships as a salient factor in building a wholesome community (Abowitz, 1999; Garrison, 1997; Leffers, 1993; Noddings, 1984; Groenhout, 2004; Koehn, 1998; Pappas, 1993). Such philosophical approaches prize the morality of interpersonal relationships in which critical thinking and caring are both instrumental (Bianchini, 2002; Longino, 1993; McKenna, 2001; Ratner, 1929), as a flexible habit of mind needed for acknowledging and responding to human difference (Bianchini, 2002; Dewey, 1917; Fraser, 1997; Seigfried, 2002). A number of scholarly accounts of professional relationships in which
critical thinking and caring both are prominent led me to wonder about the nature of the interactions between art teachers in a CoP, and how they perceive and respond to multiple perspectives. All of these understandings informed the choice to use qualitative inquiry for this study.

The review of experimental studies on teacher professional development through a CoP revealed that teacher expertise improved when teachers engaged in collaborative interprofessional practices (Engestrom & Danielson, 2006; Grossman et al., 2001; Louis & Marks, 1998; Thomas et al., 1998). According to Lava and Wenger (1991), one of the noteworthy features of teacher CoPs is learning by doing. Research on art teachers’ professional growth in a residential community revealed that important discourses centering on pedagogical issues and instructional practices can be shared and mutually developed in a CoP (Charland, 2008). Some of the research discussed a rethinking of the metaphor learning through participation in terms of learning as practice that is generated when one recognizes how one’s actions and thoughts are structured by social engagements. Relational agency is a cardinal capacity in collaboratively enacting a community’s goal-oriented practices (Bedny & Harris, 2005; Edwards, 2005b; Edwards & Wiseman, 2005; Stetsenko, 2005). In this context, I came across the question, what sorts of resources do art teachers use to achieve the goals of a CoP? This question helped me to think about the CoP of the art teachers overall, and the characteristics of the community that encourage the art teachers to participate in it.

According to the literature review, then, teacher training programs need to shift their paradigm from an individual learning to collaborative learning that takes place in a collegial community (Little, 2002; Wilson & Berne, 1995). Poulson and Avramidis (2003) stressed that exchanging instructional expertise with peers in a community offers teachers practical knowledge and motivation for their on-going learning. A body of literature regarding teacher
professional improvement has revealed that learning is stimulated in mutually supportive environments. However, many of these studies have not specified how the interactions and interrelationships in CoPs bolster life-long learning. Rather, they mainly have discussed the learning by teachers of instructional techniques and curriculum design, as well as other questions about stimulating student achievement made by the teachers. For this reason, this study differentiates itself from others by focusing, in part, on teacher interactions with their expert colleagues and the negotiation of diverse points of view within the CoP.

Many possibilities for research questions were generated from the review of literature. The primary and supporting questions, especially, derived from the themes described above, are inclusive enough to consider other themes arising within the extent of this study.

Testing Assumptions and Identifying Art Teachers’ Community of Practice

In order to tap into the nature of a CoP among a group of art teachers in Tallahassee, Florida, I conducted a set of pilot test from September to November, 2008 in which I observed three art teachers’ art classes and conducted interviews with them. The pilot test was designed to simply obtain a broad understanding of the learning culture of this CoP, rather than identify its structural characteristics. The art teachers interviewed have participated in this CoP for around 20 years, since it was initiated. That is to say, they have been witnesses to its changes and development. One of the teachers has served as a coordinator of this CoP for 5 years. The other two art teachers gained the certification of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), demonstrates testament to their professional strengths. Based on my interpretations of the pilot study data, I derived certain assumptions about this CoP.

The art teachers in this CoP seemed most engaged in keeping abreast of current trends through sharing hot issues and new knowledge in the field of art education. Because their jobs were unsecured, and they were compelled to conform to the requirements of rigorous educational
reform in Florida, they were concerned with earning the academic credits and state board continuing education units (CEUs) needed to advance from the status of provisional to permanent teacher certification, and to retain permanent certification (Charland, 2008). More importantly, it was apparent that the proactive participation of members was motivated more by their passion for ongoing learning and for social activities that helped them feel a sense of belonging to the professional world. They revealed a strong satisfaction associated with the need for social participation, in addition to their satisfaction in gaining and creating the most recent knowledge and instructional practices.

Knowledge in art education ranges widely, from curriculum design, art techniques, instructional skills, student discipline, technology, and classroom management, to conceptual knowledge that includes art education theories and concepts. The nature of knowledge of the art teachers changes and is complicated by the knowledge they share with each other. Their knowledge of practice is most fruitful when created through workshops and making engagement with CoP’s events or projects.

The practices of a CoP are centralized upon common goals identified by the art teachers themselves. Although common goals were intentionally left unexamined in the pilot test, in this study they dealt with the philosophical groundings of art education, such as Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), high quality art experiences and student achievement, art advocacy, professional development, and shaping school communities. These areas are fundamental concerns of the art education domain which guide the practices of art teachers. Such areas also stand out the learning dispositions of the CoP I studied in my pilot test.

As observed in the pilot test, the relationships of the art teachers in the community can be characterized as ethical: they are willing to and feel a sense of responsibility to help and support others in need anytime. The relationships also are reciprocal. One art teacher needs the others’
expertise and gives his or her help, which comes back to them in a different form because each art teacher has a different specialization. The members are cohesively attached by friendships and fellowships which have been firmly built for a long time. Such lifelong relationships grounded on shared moral senses and affection seem to have created a secure climate for conversation, one in which tough issues and diverse perspectives can be discussed openly.

Consequently, the results of the pilot test demonstrated that the CoP to be studied has notable features of a true CoP. The art teachers in the CoP have shared goals and are dedicated to developing common practices. These goals include attaining knowledge and information in the course of performing joint activities, the demonstration of which are indispensible if the art teachers are going to be able to handle the complex problems they encounter in teaching environments and succeed in their ongoing professional evolution. Further, formal and informal interactions abound in this CoP due to its comfortable atmosphere, which makes it acceptable to talk about any controversial issues or negotiations. Moreover, the art teachers have developed expert practices in the their community, which are created and accumulated through the object-oriented activities they conduct, including student art exhibitions in public spaces, cooperative art projects connected with the FSU Museum of Fine Arts and local artists, presentations at conferences such as those of the Florida Art Education Association and National Art Education Association, study of the national art education curriculum, art workshops, and book study group meetings.

**Research Questions**

The primary research question guiding the study is: What are the purposes, contents, processes of a community of practice for art teachers in North Florida?

Augmenting this primary question are several supporting questions:

1) How do the art teachers perceive the community’s perspective(s) on practice?
2) What are the characteristics of the interpersonal relationships created by the art teachers?

3) What resources do the art teachers use to achieve the goals of the community?

4) What characteristics of the CoP foster the participation of the art teachers?

**Research Overview**

Because my research purposes aimed at studying meaning-making and perceptions, I designed this research project using a qualitative research frame and qualitative methods. The first phase of this research design involved the shaping of the theoretical foundations for the study by assembling, organizing, and synthesizing the relevant literature. Based on the review of the literature, the primary and secondary research question were framed, all of which inquire about the nature of the perceptions, actions, relationships and collaborative inter-professional practices that are represented within the CoP of art teachers under study. Given the research questions, I selected an ethnographic approach as a methodology for exploring the research questions within the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2.

The third phase of the research design involved identifying the research site and the informants who would participate in interviews and observations. My decision-making process began when a professor of the Department of Art Education at Florida State University introduced me to a veteran art teacher who has been earnestly engaged in a CoP of elementary art teachers in Tallahassee, Florida for about 20 years. Having communicated with this teacher over the previous two years and observed her art classes, I recognized that her teaching expertise had improved because of her ongoing participation in the CoP. For these reasons, I decided to choose the CoP in which this teacher participated as the informant of this study. I subsequently conducted a pilot test during the fall semester of 2008, which suggested that this CoP had the potential to facilitate the professionalism of its art teachers. At that time I made a decision to narrow the scope of my study to the community’s monthly meetings and associated workshops,
which have been readying for the implementation of an art project in the local schools called the Children’s Guernica/Peace Murals Project. I decided that by observing the monthly meetings of this community I could look intensively at the interactions of the art teachers, and observe and participate in the workshops, all of which helped me to investigate the ways in which the art teachers fulfill collaborative goal-oriented practices.

The fourth phase of the research includes data collection using the triangulated methods of participant observation, interviews with selected art teachers, and a review of relevant documents in order to gain insights into the nature of the dynamic interactions that occur among the art teachers, their multiple perspectives, and the process by which the group implements common practices.

**Qualitative Research Inquiry**

My interest in this study is to explore the nature of the experiences of art teachers in a CoP. As such, I sought to tap into their perceptions, or the ways they make sense of their experiences. According to Eisner (1998), in order to have a greater understanding of any aspect of human experience, one can enter the environments in which people live and learn about what occurs in their minds. Such qualitative judgments on the part of the researcher can be supported by obtaining multiple forms of evidence. Appreciating the qualities in an environment that are not only pre-existing, but also created by informants, requires that the researcher have the ability to perceptually differentiate what is significant from what is seen as routine and trivial.

We can vicariously experience educational practices if they are described by the qualitative forms of words and texts. The derivative experiences are not exactly identical to the lived experience but similar to what the participants and the researcher perceives. Often stakeholders such as policy makers, parents, principals, and local communities have little engagement with the real world of elementary art teachers but have the potential to impact the professional
development of the art teachers. They have little firsthand knowledge about the values their community embraces and the difficulties it faces. Therefore, research that makes it possible for stakeholders to gain a better understanding of teachers’ beliefs and concerns is critical to making good judgments appropriate for enhancing educational practices. In vivid and insightful ways, the qualitative work of educational critics and researchers provides a kind of the connoisseurship that enables stakeholders to better recognize on the successes and challenges of teachers (Eisner, 1998).

In general, qualitative research does not test pre-established hypotheses or theories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Instead, qualitative research typically employs an inductive research strategy to build hypotheses, models, theories, or concepts. A qualitative researcher seeks to find themes, categories, concepts, and even theories derived from the data, spending substantial time observing, interviewing, recording, interpreting, and appraising the settings (Eisner, 1998; Merriam, 1998). Along with the qualitative approaches I used in this study, I conducted a review of the literature related to the topics of CoP and teachers’ learning, and identified themes emerging from the work. Although I had initial questions about the topic when undertaking the study, and some understandings derived from the literature review, I did not begin with any specific hypotheses in mind. However, the themes and knowledge of which I am now aware served as sensitizing concepts once I undertook data collection. At the same time, my consciousness continued to open to newly emerging themes throughout collecting data and analysis.

Qualitative research reflects a desire to explore complex aspects of the culture in natural settings from an insider’s perspective (Merriam, 1998). Taking the position of an insider means that the researcher becomes another person who belongs to and is responsive to her contexts. In order to determine the unique meanings of the participants’ concerns, beliefs, and explicit
behaviors, the researcher applies her sensibility and schema to interpreting the significance of situations (Eisner, 1998). The interpretations of the researcher are based on her personal experiences and unique perceptions, rather than on standardized and uniformed criteria, and cannot be validated until evidence justifies the researchers’ insights. A researcher concentrates on rendering suggestive meanings and feelings behind realities and attaining cogency for the interpretations by employing multiple sources. Therefore, the researcher is required to present sufficient evidence to make the readers and stakeholders of a research project understand the particular characteristics of the contexts studied.

**Ethnography**

The purpose of this study led me to adapt ethnography as a methodological framework. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) defined ethnography as “the attempt to describe culture or aspects of culture” (p. 30). Spradley (1980) mentioned that some anthropologists define culture as “the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior” (p. 6). LeCompte and Schensul (1999) described ethnography simply as, “writing about the culture of people” (p. 21). The key concern of ethnography is penetrating the meanings of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are found in the behavioral patterns of a specific group of people. From this perspective, McDermott (1976) suggested that an ethnography should consider “the behavior of people by describing what it is that they know that enables them to behave appropriately given the dictates of common sense in their community” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 30).

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe ethnography as the “thick description” (p. 31) of the understandings the ethnographer shares with participants. An ethnographer aims to “share in the meanings that the cultural participants take for granted and then to depict the new understanding for the reader and for outsiders” (p. 31). In the course of conducting research, the ethnographer becomes increasingly engaged in the culture known to the participants, and her perception of the
The task of ethnographers begins and ends with discovering cultural traits which humans transmit, share, transform, exclude, and recreate by communicating with others in social settings over time. As a result, descriptions of ethnographic research involve the idea that ethnographer is immersed in the natural social life of individuals, where they interact with one another and develop understanding and meanings by sharing actions and adapting to particular situations. Entering into natural settings demands an ethnographer’s ability to adapt and create supports available in the local situations to expedite data collection or instruments that are critical to developing the narrative, story, or theory of local culture.

The ethnographer makes a commitment to precisely reflect the perspectives of the people she studies (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Ethnographic descriptions are made up of stories, words, and the interpretations of participants. Building a trusting relationship between the researcher and participants is critical to constructing an open and secure atmosphere in which participants share their opinions in a reliable way. Moreover, it is important for ethnographers to recognize the diverse voices of all participants in order to accurately interpret the cultures or communities.

Ethnography ultimately aims to build theory (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). It consists of “inductive, interactive, and recursive processes” (p. 15) to analyze and explain concrete data, such as the behaviors and beliefs of participants. Ethnographers begin research with research questions and “a series of hunches, guesses, initial hypotheses, models, and concepts that they are interested in exploring” (p. 15). Based on initial interviews and observations, ethnographers’ hunches and initial hypotheses are examined and improved until solid patterns are derived and a
reliable model is discovered. This process is characterized as cyclical and recursive, iterating between inductive analysis (starting with investigating specific realities and ending by drawing general patterns) and deductive analysis (applying general exploratory statements to specific items) in order to develop a model or theory.

Overall, ethnography goes beyond inscriptions that the ethnographer writes down about what she has observed (Emerson et al., 1995). In the process of writing field notes, the ethnographer begins to understand what she has been observing. Attending to the details of the interactions occurring in the field enables the ethnographer to grasp emergent meanings residing in the social interactions. Ethnography is a contemporaneous writing that occurs while writing field notes, which are the means by which an ethnographer interprets and translates into text what he or she sees and hears. Thus, writing an ethnography is an interpretive process by which an ethnographer creates meanings in the field.

**Methods and Instruments**

As described, this study employed qualitative methods, including participant observation, and ethnography interview. Since the primary concerns of the study related to a better understanding of the meanings of interactions of art teachers emerging in the processes of performing joint practices, I engaged in in-depth observations of the setting and interviews with the participants. According to the review of the literature addressed in Chapter 2, in order to build an intelligently productive and ethically advanced CoP, members must know how to: 1) deal with human differences, 2) emotionally and physically support one another, and 3) share expertise and resources. For the purpose, this study made cultural inferences from two sources, participant observation of the setting, and ethnography interviews with the participants as a main method. The two methods led to adequate culture descriptions of a community of practice chosen in the study (Spradley, 1979). The following matrix describes how I organized the data collection
methods to answer the research questions.

Table 3.1: Relationships of research questions to data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Rationale for the Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do the art teachers perceive the community’s perspective(s) on practice?</td>
<td>To understand the art teachers’ sense of human difference and its influence on decision-making activities of the CoP</td>
<td>Observations Interviews</td>
<td>Observation provides overarching understanding of how the art teachers perceive the community’s perspectives on practice when they work together in the community. Interview offers direct information on perceptions of the art teachers on different ways of thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the characteristics of interactions shaped by the art teachers?</td>
<td>To understand the art teachers’ sense of caring, and explore the features of their interrelationships</td>
<td>Observations Interviews</td>
<td>Observation focuses on understanding how the art teachers both emotionally and physically support and collaborate with each other. Data gathered from interviews can support initial findings from observations by offering more informal and explicit information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What resources do the art teachers use to achieve common goals of the community?</td>
<td>To understand what human and material resources the art teachers use to achieve the shared goals of the community, and how they find those resources</td>
<td>Observations Interviews</td>
<td>Observations and interviews aim to explore how they use people with different expertise in performing object-oriented actions, and what material resources they use for the actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What characteristics of the CoP foster the participation of the art teachers?</td>
<td>To understand how the interactions and performances of practices influence the CoP. To understand for what factors the art teachers make engagement with the CoP.</td>
<td>Observations Interviews</td>
<td>After identifying most salient components driven from the data of observing and interviewing the characteristics of interactions and performances of object-oriented practices, we can understand particular influences of these factors over the CoP.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Site

As described earlier, a professor of the Department of Art Education at Florida State University introduced me to a veteran art teacher while taking a qualitative methodology class. I was interested in examining what qualities characterize an art teacher as a professional. Interacting with her over approximately two years, I recognized the improvements in her expertise as a result of her participation in a collegial learning community. Previously, I had visited several learning communities of art for both elementary and secondary art teachers in Japan, and these had focused on exploring new artistic skills or art materials. After observing the CoP of elementary art teachers in Tallahassee, this monthly meeting seemed a proper site for the study because of the explicit and complicated interactions emerging within the community, the common practices they have accumulated over a considerable time, and the common goals for action and thinking that the community shared.

The research site is a monthly meeting of elementary art teachers from Leon County and other nearby counties, located in a central part of Tallahassee. There the teachers regularly get together on the second Wednesday of every month to share information about new developments and ongoing practices in art education in the county, state, and nation. An average of 20 elementary art teachers attend the meeting. Most are within the ages of forty to sixty, with fewer than five members in their thirties. Only about four of the members are men, and all have their own expertise in teaching the arts and organizing art education curricula.

The meetings are held in the art room at a local elementary school between 3:45 p.m. and 6 p.m. A range of topics are discussed, including local art exhibitions in which elementary students are involved, professional development workshops, assessment, policy, interesting lesson plans, and art materials. Often, Leon County Schools administrator attended, along with local art organization members, such as Amanda Thompson, an art coordinator for the Council
on Culture and Arts (COCA) for Tallahassee and Leon County; Viki D. Thompson Wylder, a curator of Education at the Florida State University (FSU) Museum of Fine Arts; and Jenn Hoesing, a curator at LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts. These people attend to help support the art educators in any way they can. The meeting is open to visual art educators from public, magnet, and charter schools of Leon County, as well as visual art educators from the private schools in the Tallahassee area.

In order to observe the processes involved in planning and executing collaborative object-oriented practice, I attended workshops being held in preparation for joint projects of this CoP and the FSU Museum of Fine Arts, such as the Kids’ Guernica/Peace Murals Project, supervised by a professor from the Department of Art Education at the Florida State University.

**Participants**

The participants of this study include 20 to 25 art teachers from public elementary schools in Tallahassee, Florida who attend the CoP described above. Over the many years of this CoP, the art teachers have engaged in a variety of collaborative practices, including monthly meetings, workshops, student art projects, student artwork exhibitions, and presentations at national and state art education conferences. According to Amanda Thompson, a director of education of COCA, this CoP of elementary art teachers is well organized, has the highest attendance, and is considered the most consistent of all the communities of art teachers in Leon County. The meetings of the community have been taking place for at least 10 years, so it has become almost a habit for the elementary art teachers to attend them. One of the most appealing points of this CoP is that although nobody knows exactly when and how the community was born, it has been perpetuated over a long time.

The continued existence of this CoP signifies that there is something about the group that the participating art teachers gain satisfaction from. For instance, without special attachments to
each other, the community could have faded away, much like other learning communities in which teachers gather in order to achieve short-term goals, like decorating the ward for their senior colleague who is in the hospital, or holding a baby shower for their junior colleague. I believe that the ethical spirit of caring and openness to their colleagues’ diverse thoughts and expertise has enabled the continued growth of the community under study. By extension, the ongoing and spontaneous participation of the art teachers in the community is also evidence that the interactions among them are professional, productive, intelligent, and ethical, and do not depend on an exclusive solidarity.

The participating art teachers are the informants for the ethnographic interviews. Initially, I observed the teachers in their monthly meetings, and then selected potential interviewees in relation to the purposes of this study. I continued to observe the monthly meetings and workshops even after I have begun interviewing. I chose for interviews those art teachers who I considered to be mentors and experts in art and art education curricula. I made this judgment after continuously conducting observations and determining through interviews which art teachers in the CoP are acknowledged by fellow members to be leaders and important contributors. As the interviews and observations proceed, then, the range of the informants was extended. Novices were interviewed in order to see the interactions between them and veteran art teachers which are considered meaningful in transmitting knowledge, skills, beliefs, and practices, and building a sense of community.

**Timeline for the Study**

Table 3.2 presents the winter and spring schedule of meetings for the CoP. I collected data until I reached saturation and then analyzed the data.
## Data Collection Methods

**Participant observation.** In order to understand the nature of the interactions and practices of art teachers in a CoP, I became a participant as well as an observer of the community. The involvement of the researcher participant ranges from “the performance of nominal and marginal roles to the performance of native, insider, or membership roles” (Jorgensen, 1989, p. 21). There are some examples in which researchers became full participants (Forrest, 1986). In other cases, researchers have played more nominal roles in activities at research sites or have covertly participated behind the scenes (Wallis, 1977). In any case, if the researcher is to discern the nature of interactions beyond their superficial layers, rather than merely attaining membership in a group and waiting for something to happen, she must effectively enter important events and meetings, endeavor to make sense of her observations, and utilize social management skills (Woods, 1992).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Methods</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Contents of Events Observed</th>
<th>Places of Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>December 15, 2009</td>
<td>Monthly Meeting</td>
<td>Riley Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 16, 2009</td>
<td>Preparation of the Kids’ Guernica Project Exhibition</td>
<td>FSU Museum of Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 18 2009</td>
<td>Book Study Group Meeting</td>
<td>Conley Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 13, 2010</td>
<td>Monthly Meeting</td>
<td>Riley Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 16, 2010</td>
<td>Teacher Workshop</td>
<td>FSU Museum of Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 16, 2010</td>
<td>Reception for the Kids’ Guernica Project Exhibition</td>
<td>FSU Museum of Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 10, 2010</td>
<td>Monthly Meeting</td>
<td>Riley Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 16, 2010</td>
<td>Book Study Group Meeting</td>
<td>Conley Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 7 to 9, 2010</td>
<td>Youth Art Month</td>
<td>Leroy Collins Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 17, 2010</td>
<td>Monthly Meeting</td>
<td>Riley Elementary School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although my participation was limited to just becoming a member of the community by attending the monthly meeting and helping to execute art projects, I concentrated on constructing rapport with the art teachers and arousing a sense of empathy towards the community. I started by getting to know how they respond to events as they perform practices of the community and perceive other members. In addition, I sought to get close to the art teachers. Although I have been to the meetings of the community and occasionally come in contact with a few art teachers, I did not know the site in an intimate way. Therefore, I planned to participate in the regular routines of this community of art teachers, and observed all that goes on. Through the experiences I gained from firsthand participation and observation (Emerson et al., 1995), and by taking and reviewing my field notes, I was able to examine in detail each of the activities emerging in this CoP of art teachers. I sought to grasp the distinctive qualities of the setting and wrote down my experiences of the subjects and processes. I used a rubric containing several foci to be necessarily observed. (Appendix A)

DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) defined participant observation as “a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their routines and culture” (p. 1). Erickson (1992) argued that one of the main purposes of ethnography in educational research is to illuminate “what is inside the black boxes of ordinary life in educational setting” (p. 202) by investigating the processes by which educational effects are yielded. Those processes, which remain hardly noticeable for participants and researchers because they consist of habitual and local interactions, can be revealed through an ethnographically oriented analysis. Participant observation, which is appropriate for investigating interaction, is used as a universal approach to fieldwork in ethnographic research (Spradley, 1980). Schensul et al. (1999) addressed participant observation as “the starting point in ethnographic research” (p. 91).
One of the main benefits of participant observation is that it allows a researcher to access to the real situations of human beings through direct observation and open-ended inquiry (Jorgensen, 1989). The goal of the method is to gain an in-depth understanding of daily lives. The direct experiential access to the realities of everyday life can be differentiated from the approach of deductive methods, since inductive methods allow the researcher to share her own insights. In this study, the ordinary interactions of the art teachers are the most potentially useful source for finding the meanings the art teachers themselves value in their CoP. This routine and natural world contrasts with the formulated environment typical of experimental research.

A researcher may have abstract inquiries or concepts at the starting point of her study, but the initially obscure inquiries and concepts are defined or redefined as the researcher becomes involved in the actual settings. Kaplan (1964) pointed out that participant observation follows a “logic of discovery,” a process by which to seek generalized concepts and theories. This method results in establishing theories and concepts originated from embodied human life (Jorgensen, 1989). The process of discovery is open-ended enough to re-examine findings, until appropriate problems, concepts, or theories are developed. The researcher is asked to continuously analyze and interpret social phenomena, uncovering meanings and categorizing them into patterns.

On the other hand, the concept of participant observation has been vehemently contested in the field of research due to the ambiguous role of the researcher as either an observer or a participant (Powell, 2006). Powell has argued that researchers’ participation is not necessary or desirable. Similarly, Wolcott (2008) challenged the involvement of the researcher and Krathwohl (1998) pointed out that the existence of the researcher affects the reactions of the participants. In particular, a significant problem of observation is that subjects who are conscious of being under inspection are likely to behave differently than they might in ordinary circumstances.

Although there have been fervent debates about researchers’ participation, many
qualitative researchers and ethnographers contend that subjectivity, or personal interaction, can be a useful tool (Krathwohl, 1998; Powell, 2006; Spradley, 1980). The participant observation approach, in particular, allows the researcher to penetrate the realities behind objective lived experiences (Powell, 2006). Krathwohl (1998) constructed a continuum of observation techniques from least to most obtrusive based on the participation of a researcher. This continuum considers: the covert participant observer; concealed recording equipment or concealed observer; visible recording equipment made unobtrusive; participant observation, recording done out of sight of observed; participant observation, recording done in sight of observed; and non-participant observer. In this study, I assumed the role of the unconcealed participant observer and participant observer with recording done in sight of the observed, which paradoxically made me less noticeable for the participants, because as a member of the group, I had engaged in building rapport and maintaining relationships with the art teachers. In this process, I paid attention to linguistic expressions, such as folk concepts and specific words, since such mediated and symbolic communication can help characterize features of the community (Jorgensen, 1989).

**Ethnographic interview.** This study was designed to investigate the nature of a culture of a CoP of art teachers. Ethnographic methodology was chosen for a study whose activities focused on understanding the CoP culture (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999) and ultimately making cultural inferences from the insider’s points of view (Spradley, 1979).

A large part of any culture is composed of tacit, as well as explicit, knowledge (Spradley, 1979). Both tacit and explicit culture are disclosed through “speech, both in casual comments and in lengthy interviews (p. 9).” Ethnographic interview revolves around the native language of informants. It is used to translate the meanings of one culture into a form that is appropriate to another culture. This study employed the technique of ethnographic interview as a primary
strategy, which encourages the art teachers in a CoP to talk about what they know. Centering on communication with the art teachers in the interviews led to discovering how they perceive the CoP, and what questions lay behind their everyday activities in the CoP. In the result, this study ended up gaining insights toward and analyzing specific realities to reveal the culture of the CoP, and describing it in their own terms.

The ethnographic interview chosen in the study began with the purposeful selection of informants for participation in interviews (Seidman, 2006). The qualifications for being chosen for interviews for this study were mentioned earlier, in the section on descriptions of the informants for this study. Briefly speaking, the art teachers were chosen for interviews based on their contributions to the CoP, their expertise, their length of engagement with the CoP, and novice art teachers. I gained information for this selection process through my observations of the monthly meetings and the workshops held for preparing art projects such as Children’s Guernica/Peace Murals Project, as well as by preceding interviews.

In conducting the ethnographic interview, I concentrated on what the art teachers talk about, and sought for discovering the inner meanings and perceptions of the selected art teachers, as well as the events and concrete details of their experience (Seidman, 2006). Having spent about five months with the art teachers of the CoP, I gradually learned to communicate with them in their language. By repeated explorations and through the use of special questions in the process of an interview, the art teachers interviewed became good informants in providing information about their common experience in the CoP (Spradley, 1979).

Schensul et al. (1999) stressed that planned questioning is the key to an exploratory interview, which seems unstructured but is rich with productive questions. In order to adhere to the topic of the study, the interview protocol was aligned with the research questions. Although I had a developed interview plan and an interview checklist, I maintained a delicate balance
between providing enough openness for interviewees to tell their stories and enough focus to allow the interview structure to work (Seidman, 2006). In the interview itself, I made an effort to develop rapport with the art teacher being interviewed in order to encourage rich conversation about her experiences and activities in the CoP. Through direct and follow-up questions I sought information on such areas as the teachers’ perceptions, ways of providing and receiving help from other members, friendships and fellowships, processes for performing art projects or events, and interrelationships in sharing expertise and challenges.

The interview checklist, Seidman (2006) recommended, was adapted to help the interviewee and the interviewer establish the contexts for the participant’s experiences and the meanings of those experiences. I conducted this inquiry on context in three phases that relate to: 1) the interviewee’s focused life history, 2) details of the interviewee’s experience, and 3) reflections on meaning. In this way, the interviewed art teachers reconstructed their early experiences (e.g., *How did you come to become a member of the CoP or a mentor?*), reconstructed the concrete details of their present lived experience in the topic area of this study (e.g., *What do you actually do, in terms of jobs, in the CoP?*), and reflected on the meaning of their experience by making intellectual and emotional connections between their work and life (e.g., *Given what you have said your life before you became a mentor or a member of this community and given what you have said about your work now, how do you understand mentoring in your life?*). Through this meaning-making process of putting their experience into language, the interviewees reconstructed details of their experience, selected events from their past, and imparted meanings to them.

In conducting ethnographic research, it is not necessary for all members of a community or organization, or even a large amount of people, to be selected (Schensul et al., 1999). Rather, by concentrating on interviewing salient informants or experts about the community I was able to
obtain more specific stories and understandings relevant to the topic. In addition, I did not establish the number of informants ahead of time, in order to add new informants as new dimensions of the topics relevant to this study, which became apparent through earlier interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used two criteria that should be met in order to adequately understand the participants (Seidman, 2006), that is, sufficiency and saturation. Sufficiency refers to determining if there are sufficient numbers to reflect the range of informants pertinent to the population so that others outside the sample can be connected to the experiences of those in it. To this end, I selected as many informants as possible in order for them to reflect the nature of the CoP. The other criterion, saturation, required me to conduct interviews until I began to hear the same information from the interviewees and no longer learn anything new. Although I did not prefer to schedule interviews in advance, I did my best to do enough interviews to achieve substantial data and to make sense of this CoP.

I set up the time for each interview so that the interviewed could know how much time would be needed and a schedule themselves accordingly. By so doing, the interviewees could participate without anxiety about spending undue time. Considering Seidman’s (2006) recommendation to keep interviews to approximately 90 minutes, I had planned the time duration for each interview to be 90 minutes, more or less.

In order to clearly record and safely save the interviews, I used specified written memos and audio-recording measures, such as digital recorder and mp3 players, in conducting interviews (Schensul et al., 1999). Compared with other methods for recording, such as video-recording, audio-recording has the advantage of producing highly accurate recordings, and most digital recorders have enough memory capacity for several interviews to remain on the recorder at once. However, this sort of research requires high-quality recorders, batteries or electrical outlets, a good microphone, and the time and money for transcripts. The interview protocol is included in
Appendix B.

Data Collection

The structure of this qualitative research incorporated art educational criticism strategies (Anderson, 2000; Eisner, 1991). A pivotal point of ethnographic research is to “discover significant human meanings, especially through looking at what, how, and why people do what they do in a social context (Anderson, 2000, p. 81).” I observed and participated in the community activities such as book study workshops as a learner and community art projects as a volunteer over the span of five months. This research process was valuable for my richer, deeper, and meaningful understanding of educational interactions and situations recurring in the CoP, and relationships with local art communities.

In conjunction with putting in an application of the educational criticism, narrative ethnographic analysis allowed for enrichment of examination of how the art teachers perceive in the community through exploring their community life (Emerson et al., 1995). Any narrative investigation is based on the awareness that “stories are not produced in a vacuum, but their telling is always situated within an interactional and sequential context” (Hutchby & Woffitt, 1998, p. 131) and they “are situated, and it is this very situatedness within social life that militates against conceiving of them in transcendent terms” (Freeman, 1999, p. 106).

The two approaches of exploring observational and narrative elements were combined in data collection and analysis. Such an ethnographic research encouraged me to immerse myself into the culture of the community, focusing on small stories and narratives of the art teachers recurring in the community collaborative practices (Hunt, et al., 2006). I further elaborated the process of this research study as the following:

The following section provides a timeline of Anderson’s (2000) phases involved in conducting this study:
December 2009–January 2010: Immersion and Reaction

I began visiting monthly meetings. My focus in this period was to familiarize myself with the environment and build a rapport with the art teachers of the community. I attempted to have as much conversation with the other art teachers as I could. I explored the joint art projects and work of the art teachers and how they worked together. I also met active art teachers, beginning art teachers, and mentors, all of whom had the potential to be participants for future interviews.

January 2010–March 2010: Description

Throughout this period, I was a participant observer, fully immersing myself in the community’s events, book study workshops, and monthly meetings. I participated in the Kids’ Guernica International Exhibition and at teacher workshop as a volunteer, in book study workshops as a learner, and prepared some refreshments for monthly meetings.

Interviews with 13 art teachers identified as appropriate for this study were conducted in this phase, along with the observations. I made transcripts of interviews, and wrote field notes about monthly meetings, book study group meetings, and community-based art projects. This phase also involved investigation of the nature of the community and its accumulated community practices through documents such as educational packages compiled for community-wide exhibits, and photographs of community art events, as well as the small, personal stories of the art teachers. I picked up stories and vignettes, and made further inquiries based on potential themes emerging throughout this process.

February 2010–April 2010: Interpretation

During this period, I analyzed data and constructed themes that captured some recurring patterns that became clear through “the preponderance” (Merriam, 1998, p. 179) of the data. This process of discovering categories required using my intuition, recalling the purposes of this study and knowledge found in the research literature, while seeking to discover the meanings
manifested by my participants (Merriam, 1998).

I utilized a constant comparative method throughout the process of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The heart of this method is the continuous comparison of incidents, informants’ statements, and so on. When I began to analyze data, I was unsure what data and segments of data would be eventually meaningful. It was essential to take advantage of the two criteria for finding units of data recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985). I attempted to capture the unit of data related to the study and to stimulate readers to think beyond the particular facts. I sought to find the units of data that represented “the smallest piece of information about something that can stand by itself” (p. 345). Therefore, the units of data were rigidly chosen and constructed in order to make them “interpretable in the absence of any additional information other than a broad understanding of the context in which the inquiry is carried out” (p. 345).

April 2010: Evaluation

According to Anderson (2000), when using education criticism in ethnographic research, the phase of evaluation concerns testing “both for the adequacy of its form to matter (internal verity) as well as to whether the interpretation has the ring of truth in life (external verity)” (p. 85). I promoted internal verity by checking to ensure that “categories and subcategories of the data analysis can effectively capture interactions and relatedness of the findings” (Merriam, 1998, p. 188). To this end, I concentrated on an examination the activity of constantly moving back and forth between the phenomenon of the community and my abstractions of the community. Through such deductive and inductive modes of thinking, it was made explicit that narrative accounts of interpretation are reasonably coherent.

The ultimate purpose of ethnographic criticism is to find “the meaning and value of the activity observed and its potential contribution to educational theory and practice” (Anderson, 2000, p. 86). I adhered to this idea by asking whether the situation observed was able to represent
what the art teachers stated or a suggested philosophy within the framework of this study. The analysis and interpretation of data allowed me to move forward to develop a theory that would both explain the data and enable further examination of similar situations.

Data Analysis

Analyzing field notes and interview transcripts. The primary data of ethnographic studies is rich, thick description of the culture and social phenomenon of everyday life. The task of an ethnographic study “is to reach across multiple data sources (recordings, artifacts, diaries) and to condense them, with somewhat less concern for the conceptual or theoretical meaning of these observations” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 8). Meaning in this study was created by the process of qualitative data collection, and by employing an ethnographic analysis. The ethnographic analysis is an analytic strategy in which the data themselves become a classification scheme, rather than borrowing encompassing categories conceptualized by other researchers to analyze data collected. The scheme can be constructed using terms commonly employed either in the culture itself (an emic perspective) or by the ethnographer (an etic perspective). I attempted to carefully approach interpretation of the rich and varied data I collect, finding patterns and categorizing coded data from the points of view of art teachers as well as an ethnographic researcher.

The purpose of ethnographic research is to discover and reveal relationships on socio-cultural patterns. Given the qualitative approach of this study, I analyzed field notes and transcribed interviews according to the stages in the qualitative analytic coding technique presented by Emerson et al. (1995). The components of this technique are close reading, open coding, writing initial memos, focused coding, and writing integrative memos. At the same time, data analysis does not occur in a purely linear fashion. I thoroughly read field notes and transcribed interviews in a continuous manner throughout the course of data collection and
analysis (Emerson et al., 1995), and conduct a line-by-line analysis of interview transcripts and field notes. Then I created categories and identified themes, patterns, and variations. In self-consciously and systematically reading field notes and transcripts as a data set, I could deeply immerse myself in the data and generating new codes and patterns.

The Process of Coding. In the initial open coding process, then, I focused on reading field notes and interview transcripts, and began to categorize segments of the data by writing words and phrases that singled out specific recurring aspects. Codes were labeled with colloquial expressions to represent art teachers, incidents, events, and particular concepts in order to identify distinct meanings in the CoP. These codes caught the subtle distinctions in field experiences, such as the atmosphere of the monthly meetings, natural conversations among art teachers, and the exchange of knowledge and information. In addition, the codes in the interview transcripts included concrete examples of art teachers’ common concerns, experiences of community-based art shows, and caring and helping. Although the codes that emerged in the open coding stage might not always have appeared relevant to one another, I intended to discover as many codes as possible due to their potential associations with the other categories to be developed. My initial foci were used as an instrument for sorting data and naming categories. Although initially I had no pre-established categories, when reading field notes and transcripts, I considered the relevance between the conceptual framework of this study and the codes (Eisner, 1998).

The open coding stage involved 22 categories: knowledge of practice, communication tools, goals, concerns, voluntary participation, diverse ideas of teaching, exchange of information, diversity and similarity of teaching philosophy, encouragement, helping, caring, natural conversation, co-learning, mentoring, friendship, open-minded attitude to different perspectives, welcoming diversity, a business program, learning in teacher workshops, learning from mentors,
collaboration with local art communities, school-wide art program, and community-based art events. Under these categories, sub-categories were classified.

Once some categories had emerged from the open coding, I wrote initial theoretical memos (Appendix C), which helped organize my ideas by conceptually tying different pieces of data into a category (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In short, in conducting initial coding and initial memoing, I identified, developed, and modified broader analytic themes and arguments on the basis of the filled-out case analysis forms of Miles and Huberman (Appendixes D & E), stepping back from the immediacy of the setting for the purpose of analysis (Emerson et al., 1995).

After completing the open coding and initial memos, I returned to a line-by-line reading of the interview transcripts and field notes. By developing a systematic, analytical process by which to filter through patterns and initial themes, I identified final themes derived from the supporting research questions, interview protocols, and behavioral features observed from fieldwork and dominant themes found in the informants’ narratives. These themes included art teachers’ perceptions about the community’s perspectives, interpersonal relationships between art teachers, resources and goals of the community, features fostering participation of art teachers in the CoP, and common concerns and needs of the art teachers.

By exploring relationships among labeled codes under each theme and between themes, I developed integrative memos linking discrete incidents to other themes and formulating various new themes and topics. In the integrative memos (Appendix F), I prepared contextual and background information for readers unfamiliar with the setting. The following organizational chart elucidates this process.

Additionally, a table for code explication was presented in Appendix G. This table provides the comprehensive meanings of the codes and includes examples – like quotes, observations, and descriptions of behaviors – that enlarge the inferred meanings of the codes.
Presentation of Data: Synthesizing Codes and Making Meaning

Chapter 4 consists of the most influential ideas that emerged from the interviews with the 13 respondents. In it, I describe the respondents’ experiences and perceptions of the community as well as observable behaviors that enlarge the meaning of the codes. The process of coding the field notes and interview transcripts yielded seven major categories related to the community of practice: art teachers’ perception about the community’s perspectives, characteristics of interpersonal relationships of the CoP, resources and goals of individual art teachers of the CoP, components fostering participation of the art teachers, features of structure of the CoP, common concerns and needs of the CoP, and common goals of the CoP. The frequency of each of these codes was considered significant in the analysis. Codes also were regarded as important if, despite having a relatively low frequency, they were related to other codes. In addition, I developed “a thematic narrative” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 170) by organizing the analytic
categories into coherent stories based on the respondents’ self-reported experiences in the community and observations I made in the course of field work.

**Data Gathering**

**Participant Observation**

As a participant observer, I made field notes of all of my experiences with the CoP. I served as a volunteer for the preparation and execution of a community art project at Florida State University’s Museum of Fine Arts, and participated with CoP members in book study workshops and teacher workshops provided by the same institution. The greatest amount of observation occurred at the CoP’s monthly meetings, however, since they represented the core space for art teachers to communicate with each other as they worked to achieve the goals of the community and share their instructional innovations. While these meetings might sound much like a meeting of a business association, the exchange of warm, collegial feelings among the art teachers actually provided a sense of intimacy in this professional setting. In the following sections, I use descriptions from field notes and narrative accounts from interviews and observations to illustrate the major themes arising in the teachers’ experience of the CoP. The following involves descriptions of common scenes of the monthly meetings and book study group meetings that I regularly observed (Appendix I).

**Monthly meetings.** Around 4 o’clock, the art teachers of the CoP begin to gather. The art teachers who arrange refreshments arrive at the art room earlier than the others. The refreshments [are] prepared on one shelf near the entrance of the art room by two or three art teachers in turn. Home-made foods such as cookies, cakes, or salads, and drinks are prepared. Such food fosters an open-minded, friendly, and amusing atmosphere for the meeting. On the other shelf, materials are arranged; they include agenda, instructional ideas, lesson plans, catalogues of local museums, detailed information about upcoming community-based art projects, sometimes cards for their
colleagues who are retiring sooner or later, and so on.

Art teachers enter into the art room, and warmly and joyfully saying hello to each other with a smiling face. Many of them take boxes or big bags where their students’ art works are stored to show the other art teachers of the meeting. Private or formal conversations naturally arise among them. They share their stories in relation to families, schools, and themselves. In addition, they do their best to gain as much information and knowledge of art teaching from others as they can until the meeting begins; new materials, books, artists, art education conferences, local art events and exhibits, and so on. The art teachers themselves function as human resources for the other teachers, each of whom is well versed in different areas of art education. The coordinator teacher of the meeting the coordinator teacher cannot help but feel hesitant to stop the smaller conversations of the teachers to begin the meeting.

The monthly meeting is characterized as a business meeting, rather than one for learning. The topics are diverse. However, community-based art events, such as Kids’ Guernica project or Youth Art Month, are primarily under discussion. They plan the projects, decide a theme and the ways of exhibition, confirm the due date for exhibiting their students’ art works, and so on. Presentations they delivered in the state art education, education, or technology conferences are often shared in the meeting. When instructional ideas are introduced, they appear to be most excited. Their conversations are not much associated with formal types of presentations or discussions. Their talking, however, is appropriately structured enough to spur their imaginative decision-making and problem-solving processes.

**Book study group meetings.** Book study group meeting is more focused on art teachers’ learning than the monthly meeting. Art teachers of the book study group are members of the monthly meeting. Six to eight art teachers regularly meet in an art room of Conley Elementary School after school at 4 o’clock, once or twice a month. The meeting lasts for two hours. The art
teacher hosting the meeting prepares for some refreshment, and the other art teachers bring some snacks and salads. Since they come to the meeting after school, they feel hungry. The food energizes the art teachers and fosters an intimate atmosphere for the meeting.

For the meeting/meetings I attended, They choose a textbook dealing with themes to connect art education theoretical approaches with practices in art class. They read one or two chapters before the meeting, and come to the meeting prepared to discuss the conceptualize art education theories and analyze art practices addressed in the reading. The discussion is filled with practical ideas directly applicable to their art classes. They do presentations showing their students’ art works and discuss what materials and artistic techniques to be used; what they should be careful in performing the art activity; and what aspects are good for students’ aesthetic development. The meeting provides them the chance to reflect and elaborate their practices already done in their art classes, sharing their instructional ideas with the colleagues through thoughtful conversations. Topics of the free talks are often extended to the happenings in their schools and students, meetings with secondary art teachers and administrators, and educational policies.

Ethnographic Interview

I was able to conduct interviews with 13 teachers representing one or more of the criteria for the study sample. Thus, each of the respondents was either an art teacher with a long and deep engagement in the CoP, a beginning art teacher, a mentor and leader in the CoP, and/or an art teacher involved in active collaboration with the local arts community. Although I expected to interview all of the art teachers in the CoP so that the study would reflect the most diverse perspectives possible, most of those participating in the interviews were the most highly active members. In spite of this limitation, the 13 art teachers interviewed were evenly distributed over the criteria mentioned above. In addition, the passionate and proactive inclinations of the
interview respondents allowed me to document their meaningful personal experiences and insightful responses about their experiences with the CoP.

Thus, the interviews provided a wealth of information on the beliefs, concerns, attitudes, feelings, and experiences of the respondents, not only as school art teachers, but as cultural agents in the local community (Appendix J). Along with insights gained from these interviews, the results of my observations as a participant of the group illuminated the nature and the constitutive features of the CoP and its potential to foster art teachers’ life-long engagement in professional development through a strong sense of community.

**Assuring Rigor in Qualitative Research**

In qualitative studies, the researcher is the instrument for collecting and analyzing data. The qualitative researcher fills multiple roles in conducting a research study, and the characteristics of the researcher have a bearing on every step of decision-making during the course of data collection, including questions related to what to observe, what to ask about, and what to write down. Who the researcher is and what values, beliefs, and assumptions he or she brings to the study, therefore, is pivotal in preparing to conduct a qualitative research study. Mertens (2005) addressed the significance of “researchers reflecting on their own values, beliefs, assumptions, and bias, and monitoring those as they progress through the study to determine their impact on the study’s data and interpretations” (p. 247). In interviewing, for example, the utmost concern is “the goal of minimizing the effect that the interviewer and the interviewing situation have on how the participants reconstruct their experience” (Seidman, 2006, p. 14).

We can hardly ignore the affects of the role and characteristics of the human researcher on interactions with participants in qualitative approaches. On the other hand, this subjectivity is the strength of qualitative research. We can maximize meaning by making good use of the researcher’s knowledge and background, both of which are critical to creating inferences and
explanations that account for data. At the same time, we can minimize recurring distortions if we are acutely aware of the nature of the human research instrument. In this sense, qualitative researchers need indicators by which to measure the quality of data and data collection strategies, and to offer evidence that information obtained from research is trustworthy (Mertens, 2005). The ways that a researcher perceives the world are influential in inferring meanings from live data. This constructivist view reinforces the caution that research is an outcome of the values of the researchers and cannot be dissociated from them. Therefore, to judge the quality of data collected in the study, I considered the following criteria: dependability, credibility, and confirmability.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) identified dependability as the interpretive paradigm’s parallel standard for reliability. Within the constructive paradigm, the method of determining reliability relies on “holistic, integrative interpretations of collected performances that seek to understand the whole in light of its parts” (Moss, 1995, p.7), rather than on quantification of consistency across independent observations. The interpretations can be authorized by criteria like a reader’s extensive knowledge of the context; multiple and varied sources of evidence; an ethic of disciplined and collaborative inquiry; and the transparency of the trail of evidence leading to the interpretations. The steps to warrant interpretations generated from my insights involved gaining recommendations from my committee, who are experts in the academic fields related to the study, as well as frequent communication with my major professor on the methods and courses of data collection. In addition, I gathered extensive data through observation, interviews, and a review of pertinent documents that reflect my research purposes, and I made interpretations by discovering the connections among the data.

In the interpretive paradigm, credibility is the parallel standard to validity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Yin (2003) suggested that the possible testing of bias depends on the degree to
which the researcher is open to contrary findings. There may be inconsistencies “between the way participants actually perceive social constructs and the way the researcher portrays their viewpoints” (Mertens, 2006, p. 264). To enhance the credibility, I spent substantial time observing the setting and interacting with my participants in order to gain a rich understanding from an insider’s viewpoint. At the end of every observation and interview, I verified with my participants what has been said and recorded, in order to enhance my ability to represent their viewpoints correctly and ensure the credibility of my findings.

Further, I sought to triangulate findings to gain a better sense of the data and how best to incorporate it. Multiple methods, including observation, interview, and documents analysis, establish truthful accuracy (Krathwohl, 1997). I employed multiple sources using the same method, including as many samples as possible to find consistency for evidence in the manifold responses of my participants, observations in diverse situations, and reviewing of primary and secondary documents. I could check the verbal responses of my participants against actual behavior or solitary behavior against that controlled by the presence of others. These actions allowed me to search for alternative explanations of the data as well as recognize the necessity for additional data collection activities.

A qualitative study should ensure confirmability as well, which refers to assuring the process by which the researcher reaches conclusions by synthesizing data and using of original data. For this, my colleagues and major professor reviewed field notes and interview transcripts with me, and we discussed whether the conclusions are sufficiently supported by the data (Mertens, 2005).

**Research Ethics**

In order to ensure the ethical soundness of this study, I completed approval consent forms of the human subjects application (Appendix H), and submitted it to the Institutional Review
Board (IRBs) at Florida State University. This application provided descriptions of this study, what would be done with the findings, possible dangers to the participants, and other pertinent information on ethical issues.

Marshall and Rossman (1995) have observed that efficiency and ethical considerations are critical criteria for qualitative research. Given these concerns, I followed the particular strategies to support ethical approaches that Bogdan and Biklen (2007) identified:

1. Avoid research sites where informants may feel coerced to participate in your research.
2. Honor your informants’ privacy. Unless otherwise agreed to, the informants’ identities should be protected so that the information you collect does not embarrass or in other ways harm them.
3. Treat informants with respect and seek their cooperation in the research.
4. In negotiating permission to do a study, you should make it clear to those with whom you negotiate what the terms of the agreement are, and you should abide by that contract.
5. Tell the truth when you write up and report your findings.

To these ends, participants were informed about the purpose and the process of the study, entered voluntarily, and had a chance to continuously make decisions about their participation. I would not take an authoritative stance as a researcher; rather, I sought to establish partnerships with the participants. If participants told me something in confidence, I respected their request. In addition, I was sure to protect the identities of participants during and after the research and used pseudonyms both in the final report and in the verbal reporting of information that I obtained through observation. Further, participants were told of my research interests and gave permission to proceed. When getting written consent of my participants, I promised that I would neither lie nor hide mechanical devices to record.

Since I was personally known to these art teachers in the CoP through several observations, I
started this research with a certain level of confidence generated by the trust between participants and me. However, before starting this research, I explained the procedures to participants and answer their questions in detail and accurately. Finally, I was devoted to reporting what the data revealed. I would not manipulate or distort original data. My inferences were based on the authentic data gathered from observations and interviews.

**Summary**

This research study was designed to explore the purposes of a CoP for art teachers in North Florida. Since this study focused on meaning-making on the nature of art teachers’ experience of professional development in a CoP, a qualitative approach to the topic was used. Based on the intention of the study, an ethnographic research was conducted. Data were triangulated using the qualitative methods of participant observation and ethnographic interviews. The use of subjective and objective interpretations of the researcher was employed in data analysis.
CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS:

Introduction

This chapter contains the findings from this study of a community of practice (CoP) of art teachers in North Florida. The data was derived from ethnographic interviews and participant observations, and its analysis was guided by the research questions posed at the outset of the study. The content analysis revealed recurring patterns evident in the CoP that functioned as analytic categories. These categories included themes in the teacher’s experience of the CoP, characteristics of interpersonal relationships, partnerships with the local community, and features of the CoP that sustain the participation of teachers.

Themes in the Teachers’ Experience of the Community of Practice

Mindset towards Difference

Welcoming Difference and Freedom

The interviews with the teachers revealed an open mindset toward difference. The atmosphere of the meetings was considerably receptive to contrary opinions, ideas, and requests. The inclination of the teachers to accept and seek to understand difference seemed to be based on an assumption that varying perspectives are to be expected in a group of individuals from different situations, including schools and families. In my observations, I noticed that the community participants were quite agreeable to diverse perspectives. Importantly, I detected a shared belief in the notion that different points of view lead to better solutions.

The topics of CoP meetings generally involved an upcoming art show, teacher workshop,
or art program held in a local museum, and the sharing of lesson plans and instructional materials. Because such topics were not political or ideological, the group largely avoided controversy. This deliberative attitude of group members could be attributed to a propensity toward compromise and the neutrality of the issues they addressed, as well as a profound understanding of difference and the role it plays in a productive decision-making process.

In the course of the monthly meetings, conversation naturally flowed as community members spoke up and offered opinions, asked questions, confirmed information contained in emails, communicated to enhance understanding, and worked cooperatively to find solutions. In this way, group members created a constructive discussion culture within the community, one characterized by an interest and acceptance of alternatives, rather than disapproval or disagreement. In fact, direct expressions of objection, antagonism, or tenacious insistence of the correctness of one’s own opinion were hardly seen in the community. Listening and frankly expressing alternate ideas, with deference to the views of others, were more common methods of communication. Beginning art teachers strongly feel the need to absorb the knowledge and skills of experienced art teachers. They are mindful of being assimilated into the community of teachers, and generally have a favorable attitude which facilitates their learning. Daniel, for example, has taught art in the U.S. for two years. He tries to learn as much as he can from his participation in the CoP, and he has made many efforts to be recognized as a regular member of the community, like other lead teachers. In CoP meetings, Daniel remained silent yet receptive, and demonstrated a strong interest in and concern about the community. In an interview, Daniel described his approach to others’ opinions:

I enjoy hearing what other people have to say. It’s interesting, I think, that when the art people get together, everybody is very creative. They may have different ideas about how problem should be solved. I just see all different points of view. Typically that’s what I like
to do, just listen. I don’t usually voice my opinion. I usually agree with somebody’s and I have a similar point of view to somebody. I would rather listen.

Although she has long been a ceramic artist – and an art teacher for 6 years – Haley regarded herself as a novice art teacher. She paid keen attention to what went on in the community and how and what others were teaching. In order to process the ideas of others, she would compare her school situation with that of other teachers. Her understanding of difference was grounded in her sense that she was free to utilize or not utilize other teachers’ ideas and methods as she desired, depending on her own beliefs and teaching situation. Such freedom of choice and acknowledgement of different teaching situations helped her deal with different points of view in an intellectual manner, other than adversely and emotionally. As Haley noted, I look at their ideas. I listen to their ideas. I think about how I can use them in my classroom and if they would work with my population of students or not. So I try. Because most of these other art teachers that I work with, they’ve been teachers for 30 years. And I still just feel like a beginner. I just have my 6 years now. So I always want to be here now to hear how they do things…I try to learn from them. I also sometimes disagree, but in my head I go, I don’t think that’s going to work at my school.

The art teachers I interviewed demonstrated that they welcomed different perspectives. Their attitude of listening to others’ opinions seemed to be rooted in a respect for each other’s different levels and types of expertise, as well as a belief in the function of different perspectives to promote diverse solutions. They believed that an unbiased mindset would help them to explore as many professional skills and teaching styles as possible, and that talking and listening to different teachers would improve their teaching. Thus, they believed that exposure to different levels of teacher expertise is related to improvements in learning. Idelle, a developing, yet experienced art teacher, described the inherent tendency of art teachers to welcome difference in
their classrooms:

Subjects of art are so diverse. Sort of all-encompassing. All teachers themselves tend to be a little more open-minded. As art teachers, we’re always looking for different things to happen. Maybe it’s a mindset. I don’t know how we think. Difference is good. There is a math class. You get one answer. I intend to learn every day from other teachers, other students, I have two interns this semester. I learn so much from my interns. Probably more than they learn from me. You do different things in different ways.

Earnest listening in the community allowed members to enter into discussion with a feeling of stability and trust. Members had a sense of confidence that others would respect whatever they said. This secure ground for conversation motivated free expression. Grace, who has been in the community for about 30 years, described the educated and insightful approach of the art teachers when in discussion:

They just listen. I mean, we are allowed to express our own opinion. It’s a safe place to talk and give your opinion. I haven’t seen anybody put down or anything and talk badly because they have a different opinion. They are polite and respectful. We are a pretty agreeable group.

Group members, then, acknowledge diverse opinions, but they still have the freedom to decide whether to participate in community activities or not. They may decide to remain spectators in decision-making situations if they choose not to take part. Kate described her freedom to choose not to take action, as well as her introspective inclinations. At times, she has chosen the position of a peripheral person with no mandatory duty to participate in the community activity:

We’ve got diverse nationalities. We have a lot of people like me. Dora’s from Central America. Cynthia is from the Middle East. We have a lot of African-American teachers that bring a lot of their culture into it. I think that’s about it. I think we have a nice diverse
group. A lot of the art teachers are kind of encouraging of new cultures, new ideas to bring to the curriculum. I feel comfortable with that...I honestly think so. In my particular experience, I’ve seen a lot of acceptance, I really have. They are very open-minded. They always listen to other perspectives. Honestly, when I don’t agree with something, I just listen to it, but I don’t necessarily participate on that. I just hear points of view or whatever was brought up. I haven’t had to stand out and say, maybe not verbally say, I don’t agree with that. I quietly don’t agree with that.

As mentioned, community members have autonomy both in the decision to disagree with the different perspectives of other teachers and to refuse to participate in joint activities of the community. Kate passively expressed her disagreement, perhaps because she did not want to hurt anyone’s feelings. She did not feel the need to speak up when she felt no engagement with the work or project being proposed. Others behaved similarly. In addition to merely watching to decide whether to join in a project or not, they had a tendency to express disagreement in a roundabout way. Community members were deliberately aware of caring for each other’s feelings. As Leanne stated,

I don’t believe that everyone has to agree with my way. I think that there are many ways and many of them are good. If they address something else, they want me to do something that I don’t know I agree with. I usually have a discussion with the other art teachers. And I usually, well, go along with what we all decide at discussion. We will usually talk about the good parts and bad parts of that idea. We will decide as a group, whether it is good for us to do or not good for us to do. But then always there is an option that I don’t have to do it. I can say, it’s great for all of them to do it, and I will support to do it, but I don’t have to participate in it myself, if I don’t want. So I always have a freedom to still run my classroom the way I want my classroom to be run. And I have the freedom not to
participate in a show if I don’t want to participate in a show. If it’s a small disagreement, then I let it go and I still participate. But we compromise a lot by just talking things through.

At the same time, most of the art teachers, including Jane, Ann, and Grace, honestly spoke their minds when they disagreed. When I observed the meetings, I did not see any conflict but did hear a good deal of discussion and suggestions. The teachers did not seem to have to make an effort to consciously control themselves in order not to offend the feelings of others. Their attitude toward each other clearly was embedded in respect and trust. The atmosphere of the meetings, therefore, was comfortable. I did not feel any tension or antagonism caused by different points of view. Jane dissents to conflict from the perspective that expression of conflict rooted in dogmatism and inflexibility does not have any good influence on the community as follows:

They are very accepting of diversity. I wouldn’t argue about an opinion that I disagree with. We just state opinions, I just say ‘I’m sorry, but I disagree.’ I explain my view and share her view, and we go about that. Sometimes we say, ‘If you say this side of it, this point of view,’ we just work it out. We don’t have disagreements and conflicts. [In] the past 7 years… I did not see that conflict. I didn’t. I am hoping we wouldn’t. We are educated. It shouldn’t be any conflicts. I haven’t seen it. We disagree on things. Don’t take me wrong. We disagree on, this workshop is useful or this workshop is not. All these artworks we should put in the library, I am not getting it and put it in. We disagree on these things in fulfilling art exhibitions. We talk about it. But I don’t see conflicts.

**Disagreement and Conflict**

After experiencing some conflicts in the past, the community came to agree tacitly that persistent disagreements without the possibility of reconciliation and negotiation do not
contribute to finding alternatives. At one time, a big conflict concerned the underlying educational philosophy of an art show. Criteria for selecting the artworks for the show were determined by the majority of the group. They spent a great deal of time negotiating and persuading each other. Rebecca described her experience of this sharp conflict, which occurred in a meeting about 15 years ago:

The one I can think about was quite a number of years ago. Somebody wanted to put up a big war poster. It was way back during the Gulf War. It’s been a long time. Before the Iraqi there was the Gulf war. It was done by the third graders. We usually put up the work but we thought it was very political. We had a lot of children who would be there, whose parents were military. So the way we solved that was just majority rule, because the majority of the group felt like it wasn’t appropriate for this artwork to be in the show. It’s supposed to show art, that kind of skill, that kind of learning by the children, when we have a show, and how we are contributing to the educational process of what children are learning, rather than making political statements. That was the big thing we had a few disagreements about in our time. I think it was usually a majority rule…I haven’t known about any big conflicts recently. I haven’t thought that anybody stayed away from the meetings not to put this piece up. It was very political. It wasn’t what we all agreed. We agreed that art should be of a certain caliber in the show. That was the biggest disagreement I can remember. Many teachers are no longer here. She didn’t stay in Leon County for very long. She was not as many here are, for years. She was upset at that time. She didn’t get to do that. But it was just what most everybody thought was right. I’m in the majority.

About ten years ago, when this conflict emerged, it played a critical role in teaching the value of embracing others’ ideas. Afterwards, they carefully discussed even very delicate things,
like how to mount children’s art work and the use of materials. Blair had been through some of the earlier conflicts in the group and witnessed unfavorable results when a teacher whose opinion was not accepted by most of the other teachers did not return to the next meeting. This hurt and injured both those who stayed in the community and those who left. Through this experience, the art teachers came to feel the value of collegiality and the need for a kind of ethics toward others, realizing that art teachers do not have other art teachers with whom to discuss their work at their schools. It helped the members of the community to reaffirm the importance of their CoP as critical to their teaching lives, since it represents a means of making important connections with other teachers.

The discord of prior years settled over time. According to Blair, there were stages that the group passed through prior to learning how to resolve differences through negotiation. First, there was dogmatism and emotional confrontation in the group, then listening to and exchanging opinions and finally, concessions and shared consensus. At the time of this study, the CoP could be considered to be at a refined level of communication. Members were cognizant that their purpose in discussion was not to hurt others but to reach better decisions by broadening their horizons as a team of art teachers with a common goal. At the time of my study, efforts to heal the earlier breach among members had finally been rewarded by a sense of harmony within the community. As Blair explained:

Different points of view you hear a little bit. In the meetings, as far as, do we want to do someone’s show. So there are different opinions all the time. We had differences of opinion in the past over…Something about hanging art shows. I can tell there is still an on-going one with hanging an art show. That’s why somebody doesn’t show up. And we left them space in an art show, like Youth Art Month. There is a big hall there. That’s a really important PR show for our district, for the public. So someone just does not come, not
communicating is not good. That made some concerned. ‘Send an email. Please make sure let us know you’re not going to be there. That’s fine. But tell us, but we really need to hear from you.’ The other thing is whether we should mount more professionally, like on mat board, or whether it should be on construction paper. Over time, it resolved that most of us agreed on construction paper. Well, first, we wanted to add more color. Number two, we don’t have to cut a mat. It looks more childlike when you added more colors, instead of that mat board. We discussed and ended up having a mount, we can do it in advance, and roll the construction paper, put it on long paper and then we go and just put it up at the space, instead of having to hang up each piece. We found it actually stayed on the wall. It is better [because] the mat board kept falling down. Now what we are doing, City Hall has a requirement. It’s framed and it has to be hung on the wall. The only time people get upset, there is on the frame following a party and it had a glass in it, or something like that. Otherwise, there is not any conflict. But those are requirements now for the show, so over time we have worked it out, what was portable for everyone, what hung up on the wall best, stayed on the wall, I think it’s trial and error, we try different things and people have different opinions until we figure out what actually works. Once we figured it out, we are pretty much in agreement now. There is the learning stage; people thought this would be better. No, this would be better. I think most of them freely express their opinions…We talk once a month with each other. So this is what we do, because we are isolated. We are the only person in our school. When we get to talk about something, we want to stop this conflict. But we sometimes are engaged in any conflict…like most people do.

Thus, the teachers were aware that conflict or disagreement is sometimes necessary in achieving a common goal, and in sustaining successful art teaching. They acknowledged that there can be some conflict or discord in the group when the purpose of disagreeing or arguing is
congruent with the goals of the community. Moreover, they agreed that the cooperation and support of colleagues is essential in continuously improving school art curricula and growing as a professional teacher. Ann described the relationship between conflict and productivity in this way:

Sometimes there are conflicts. But I think as a group we realize we all have a common goal. We want to teach kids. We want to be consistently successful in art. And we want to show the kids that artwork is valued through the community. Those are common goals. Even though people [have] different ways sometimes, I think as a group we are mutual enough, wise enough, to know it’s not worth disagreeing too much. Without all of these colleagues, we would not be learning so much from so many other people. I was at a little school far away. And it was just me, and I never got to speak with any other teachers. I know I wouldn’t be as good a teacher at all. Because it’s a lot harder. Teaching needs that support. So when people disagree, yes we argue sometimes. But not to the point where people’s feelings are terribly hurt, we are not mean. We respect each other. Disagree, that’s okay! You can choose to do this or not.

**Diversity in Art Education Pedagogy**

The members’ open-mindedness to difference and diversity derives from a strong aspiration to professional growth. The teachers were eager to develop new art lesson ideas and learn new things about pedagogy. This inclination of the art teachers led to the ready absorption of diverse ethnicities among teachers in the community. The teachers did not appear to have any biases or fixed ideas about particular cultures or ethnic groups, and the ethnicity and nationality of the community members was diverse: African-American, Middle Eastern, Central American and White-non Hispanic. The ages of community members ranged from about 20 to 60. Four out of the approximately 25 teachers in the community were male. This range of ages and cultural
perspectives proved to be a resource in helping members to expand their art education practices.

Most of all, CoP members placed a high value on the sharing of creative lesson ideas. They interpreted and transformed the lesson ideas of others to make them appropriate for their students and school situations, rather than just emulating or imitating them. This sharing of lesson plans and pedagogical perspectives seemed to be the highlight of the monthly meetings. As Jane observed:

What I think is happening, there are different styles. There are different viewpoints. For example, I am teaching art for life. Other teachers teach art for its own sake or comprehensive art, art across the curriculum, or teaching art by integrating reading, math, writing into the curriculum. Some teachers would say, ‘I’m just going to do teaching the skills and drills.’ I don’t care. I want them to know how to print, how to paint, or how to do this, it doesn’t matter. Other teachers will say, ‘I want them to learn art history.’ So the different things they bring in may cause a little conflict in my group, in my school, and in my community. At my school, I see it best for my students to teach them art for life. How to learn skills, principles, and to analyze and synthesize and critique, and aesthetics, everything all together, because it’s a whole unit together. I can just tell them how to draw without actually explaining why we have to draw. We need to draw, why? To express ourselves, we have to learn how a line is different. What other teachers like to teach through Monet, as an example, oh, let them do Impressionists...That’s fine for them. And then it’s not fine for me. That’s a different opinion ...We love participating in the community projects. We all get together. I really love the projects even if we have different styles.

Nora emphasized that her exposure to different strategies and disciplines served as a stimulus for improving her teaching. At the same time, she saw that the teaching ideas she gained
from others needed to be transformed so as to be pertinent to her population of students. Teachers felt enabled to use the ideas of others with their own discretion to create school art programs reflecting the specific situation at their schools. As Nora explained:

People bring lessons, share ideas. That’s one of the ways we are used to. We meet at one school every time. We used to meet at different schools every week and every month. But gas is too expensive. We don’t do that anymore. It’s easier to meet at one place, but it was nice to go to other people’s rooms and to see their environment… One of the other things we do is that we share a lot, our scope and sequence. Lots of activities that I do here at my school can’t be done at a school of low-socio economic children. Some of lessons aren’t appropriate and you have to gear them down.

**Similarities in Art Education Philosophy**

Because there were not many conflicts or arguments in the community, I assumed that the members had something in common with each other. Ellen explained that the reason the community does hardly have substantial conflicts is that all members share a mutual viewpoint about art education: ‘They are generally the same in their art education philosophical background.’ This common pedagogical perspective is discipline-based art education (DBAE). My observations of the meetings and book studies did not provide clues to this common philosophical approach, but in most of the interviews, the art teachers shared that they embraced DBAE for their classroom practice. Of course, the teachers adjusted the degree to which they employed the four areas of DBAE according to their students’ needs in the areas art production, aesthetics, art history, and art criticism. Further, the preference of art teachers for art production or art history influenced the way they implemented DBAE in their art curriculum. As Daniel stated:

I think there are a lot of similarities. The philosophy that I think of is discipline-based art
education. I think that a lot of art teachers follow that though. The teachers are incorporating parts of DBAE, aesthetics, art history, art creation, and criticism. Maybe some art teachers enjoy certain parts of it more. So they focus more on that. I’m sure that there are some teachers that do a lot more with history. I can’t remember the teacher’s name. But at the last meeting she was showing us a book of clipped Egyptian art. It was fantastic. I’d love to try that idea and it seems to me like something that somebody who is really interested in the history of art and wants their students to know more about history, that historical aspect, [would want to do.] Maybe another teacher would be more interested in just creating something that was Egyptian and they wouldn’t really go much into the history of it. So that would be difference…it’s just that different teachers focus more on different parts of that, the DBAE. I do more creation. I just would rather have the kids create something. I really think that that has something to do with the school where I teach. My school is a kind of a rural school. Some of the younger students that come to my school have very limited knowledge of simple things, like using scissors and holding pencils and holding paint brushes. For me, getting scissors in their hands, getting them to use pencils and pens, it’s better for them to not let them use the materials to create something and teach them history. I think that it’s more important to let them be hands-on [than to teach them history.] But if I was at another school, when they are home, they are making lots of things…then we would probably do more history. I would probably do more talking about art but because of the students that I have, I choose to do more of that, the creation part.

The art teachers in the CoP learned about DBAE in their undergraduate education or through teacher training programs, and DBAE is deeply embedded in their beliefs toward art education. Thus, DBAE is the domain within which the art teachers develop their school art
curricula and design community art projects each other. Rebecca felt that all the practices of the community are generated from DBAE. Rebecca explained how DBAE has a firm place in her art education philosophy:

Recently it seems like we are pretty much comfortable with DBAE and very similar perspectives. Although we don’t talk about a lot of things that are just for our own programs. We might be very diverse in our perspectives at our schools. But it doesn’t come up in the things that we deal with as a big group, as a community. Art teachers are generally pretty open-minded about different perspectives. We’ve all been through the DBAE. That’s interesting. I think most of us have been through DBAE training. So we are probably pretty similar towards that. When that was new, back in the 80s, that caused a lot of dissention. Because some art teachers, older art teachers, were so against it. They said that it wasn’t good. We just should do production. We shouldn’t be doing things like history. But those teachers retired. I think most of us are pretty-well DBAE trained. We don’t use it religiously, step-by-step, the way we were taught to use it. But I think they hold a philosophy of DBAE. I use different disciplines. I’m not just having children do production. When I graduated from college, it was 1960. A long time ago. Everything was just creativity. That works for kindergarten. Maybe first grade. We don’t just teach them some skills, but make it interesting by showing artwork that other artists have done, what they do in another cultures. It’s like the good artists keep on being creative, but part of the class needs more. But we have just a little bit of time, so I have really adjusted. I don’t do Western art history. I don’t put as much time into that as I used to. Because just the only place they get to be creative is to use the paint brush, to use clay, and to do hands-on everything. The system now, at least in Florida, is so much to do the test. And they have classroom testing. Classroom teachers used to allow kids to do things like that. Now they
don’t have time for it. That’s one of the reasons… I still like DBAE, but if I have a little bit of time, this is the only time we get to paint, draw, use clay. I just really cut down on the amount of time we spend discussing and learning art history. So I get more production. Because they don’t get it any place else. Production takes more time. I think the way I taught DBAE, we split the time 25 percent for each area. They have 5-year olds and 6-year olds talking about aesthetics for 25 percent of time. A little bit goes along way. I think I’ve reached the point and am comfortable with it. I would not become comfortable with, though, with totally leaving it out. We’ve been looking at Vincent Van Gogh. My 5th graders do printmaking. We looked up Andy Warhol and multiple prints and I like to show art from other countries and ours, too. We’ve been spending our time in it. I still would not be comfortable staying away from production. I don’t know what they get from that… It looks like, when I go to the show, I see their work. You can see that they’ve studied a country, a culture, or an artist. I just think that we shouldn’t sit and talk about it. We don’t say how everybody is teaching. But it seems like mostly we are trained that way. So I’ve really kept up with it and read a little bit about it.

Nora is one of a number of strong advocates of DBAE in the CoP, most of which are in their 50s. These members act as leaders and are active members. Nora describes the influence of DBAE in the community:

We are pretty similar. It’s because we are pretty much a discipline-based art education county. It is kind of focuses of our art education practices. We’ve done so many workshops. I am probably one of the stronger DBAE teachers, and Ellen, Ann, and Rebecca. Some of the teachers are not so much, they do some of it. But as far as philosophies, we embrace that philosophy. It’s just in different degrees of implementation… I’m very big on literature. Incorporating literature in my class, I use lots of books. These are some of the children’s
books that I read. Usually my lessons are based on the literature books.

**Characteristics of Interpersonal Relationships**

**Isolation**

Art teachers often feel a lack of communication with colleagues. In North Florida, each school generally has one or two art teachers. Such teachers do not have others at their schools with whom to share professional and personal challenges and successful experiences in teaching art. This isolation is an influential factor in cultivating the teachers’ engagement in and commitment to the CoP. Because belonging to a social system is an inherent need of human beings, the sense of connectedness provided by the CoP helps makes members feel reassured. Daniel’s school is one-and-a-half hours away by car from the school where the monthly CoP meeting is held. In spite of the long distance, he has attended almost every meeting since he has joined. As Daniel pointed out, the feeling of belonging is the biggest motivation for attending the community meetings:

> It is really far. I know that at my school, it’s expected of the teachers – as the art teacher, I am expected to attend the community art meetings. One teacher attends the music meetings. It’s kind of expected. But I also prefer to get information from somebody by actually seeing them, instead of just getting emails or just getting a little flier in the mail. It’s important to see them to find out about the exhibitions, we have that spring festival coming up, winter festival and what’s going on at FSU with the Peace Project exhibition challenge. It’s more interesting to hear about it from an actual person in that meeting rather than an email. Belonging to a group of people that are doing the same thing as you are. It’s nice to meet other people that are doing the same thing as you are. Sometimes being the only art teacher at my school, you might be alone and you don’t feel you do a good job. It’s also nice to be social and to talk with some other art teachers to see how they are doing.
as well, you can be related to all, and do a little better.

Belonging to a social system as a regular member means having people with whom to share ideas and feelings. The teachers I interviewed emphasized the need to have conversations with other art teachers in order to get feedback and explore new ideas about pedagogy. They felt emboldened by their participation, not only as a result of their colleagues’ encouragement and advice, but also by simply having a person with whom to communicate. Kate discussed the significance of such sharing practices in her daily life:

I love to share! That’s probably why I go there most. Because I like to share with people what I like to do, what other people are doing, other teachers are doing. That’s the reason why I always have interns because I like to have that conversation every day, talking about things, and ideas for teaching.

Haley missed having friends or colleagues working near her school who she could share her teaching practices with whenever she needed. Her school is considerably far away from other schools and from the central area of the city. She described wanting to have people who she can easily contact for advice and encouragement:

Plus how far from our town the school is. So we are very isolated. Like a lot of schools, for instance, Buck Lake has a middle school right next door. Very close. And Roberts Elementary school is close. And in town a lot of schools seem like they are only a mile apart. From Gilchrist elementary school to Raa, they are very close in, where we are like, 8 miles from the other schools. So I do feel a little bit isolated being the only art teacher. Sometimes I feel isolated out here. But it doesn’t bother me. If we are going to hold our meetings here, we would probably hear a little bit more grumbling because they have to drive. They feel like they drive clear out of town to get out here.

Idelle described the necessity of sustaining relationships with colleagues who continuously
seek to inform themselves about the field of art education so that they can share and professionally grow together. Although her school schedule is very busy, Idelle often feels lonely in her school because she does all the work by herself. In this sense, interplay with other art teachers in the community is vital to affirming her identity as an art teacher. She expressed her feelings of isolation:

We’ve got some teachers who are interested in the arts and happy to leave their kids out a little bit longer. They do some art projects, some do not. For the most part, the school is a very busy place in a day. It’s almost like a factory. One class in and out, in and out. That part is a little hard sometimes. So the more you can be enthusiastic about what you are doing in the classroom, the more the kids do better with this. Yes, I do feel lonely sometimes in this room. So that’s why the monthly meeting is really good. Kind of a touch-base with other people who do the same thing. Just busy with them, talking with them, it’s a good community for everybody.

Mentoring

Growing as mentors. The art teachers interviewed said that they would never forget the mentors they encountered when they were interns. These mentoring relationships were crucial experiences in their teaching careers. They learned from their mentors things that were indispensable for lifelong teaching, things that they could not have learned from textbooks or lectures at the university. Their teaching beliefs, attitudes, and philosophies were formed in the process of observing and discussing their mentor’s class. They attained instructional know-how concerning classroom management and discipline and the organization of the art room. The knowledge and skills gained from the direct guidance of mentors were applied and modified in their future classrooms. Ann talked about the noteworthy experience of her internship:

My mentor was so wonderful. She knew about instructional design. She is really good at
that. But she is a photographer as well. She took me to my first conference, a state conference. She introduced me to people – ‘the movers and shakers.’ She just took me under her wing. She explained things to me, pointed things out to me. I am always going to be grateful for her. She taught at an elementary school. She taught at a middle school. Now she is the education director of a museum in Gainesville. I saw her teach, and I thought, ‘Oh, that’s what I want to do!’ I saw her teaching little kindergartners, and learning everywhere, so much fun. Many years later I told her, ‘You really were a spark for me to be a teacher.’ She is just amazing. Great, great inner strength.

Like Ann, most art teachers deeply rely on mentors for their professional growth, both during their internship and after becoming teachers with their own classrooms. Ann’s mentor, for example, has served as a lifelong role model. A mentor’s caring for her mentee develops a reliable relationship between them, which plays a central role in augmenting the mentee’s learning and their on-going learning communication. The senior art teachers in the CoP have taken on the role of a mentor with a sense of mission, doing their best to help guide and care for their junior teachers. The mentor-mentee relationship is at the core of the interpersonal relationships of the CoP. Jane described the relationship with her mentor and the mentor’s influence on her learning:

Kate was my supervising teacher when I did my internship. I was her intern. I went to her school and I was working with her. She wanted to make me know and talk to me about how to deal with, how to plan, how to work with. She really taught me a lot. And I told her if it wasn’t for her, if I hadn’t had her as my mentor and teacher, I would’ve been probably someone else doing other things. She really had a great influence on me. She gave me the freedom in the classroom to actually teach the students, and she guided me towards what to do about materials, art lesson plans, all the things that I should learn…and how to teach
kids in a story-like way. We meet up all the time at the meetings. We end up sitting at the same table, and we became very good friends. Our kids have become very good friends. They went to school together, my son and her daughter. Their ages are the same. We visit each other; my kids went to her house. We became very good friends. We talk about anything and everything. We email each other, ‘Have you done this?’ and ‘Do you have any ideas how to do that?’ She emails me and I email her. It’s not like a big deal at all. If I need help, I always rely on her saying, ‘Do you have any ideas for this?’ or ‘What do you do?’

Mentor teachers encourage beginning teachers and help them to face challenges that they otherwise might not dare to face because of their fear and lack of experience. The knowledge and practice that mentors have accumulated serve as a scaffold for the mentee’s future success in teaching. Mentees naturally absorb the mentor’s expertise, accountability, and affection for art education in the initial period, like a sponge sucking water, and then grow to become mentors for the next generation of the community. Mentors set goals they expect the beginning teachers to achieve as a means of becoming a better art teacher. They devote themselves to the mentee’s professional growth. Leanne’s statement reveals how essential to her professional growth the presence of mentors has been:

Well, I am definitely a mentee. I think that being a mentee has made my job much easier. I’m more confident in what I’m doing because I have the support of other people. I guess it increased my confidence, which I think helped me to become more of a mentor to other people if I need it. I’m still a mentee more than a mentor. I wouldn’t take any risks in the classroom because I wouldn’t have the confidence to know how to do it. In knowing I can ask other people about how they might have done it, it always makes me feel like, ‘I can try that.’ Also, I feel challenged by the mentors because they do such fantastic big things
that I almost feel competitive. They do it, I will do it. They set a very high bar, so we have to. I think a lot of the work I’ve done has been to catch up to them to get to be as good as them. I worked a lot harder because of them. It’s easier for me to work less and say, ‘okay,’ and go home. Because of having mentors that really push me to do more and do more, then I do more and more and more and more... They work much more. I think that’s a big difference.

**Mutual satisfaction in mentoring.** Mentoring provides both the mentor and mentee with a feeling of self-accomplishment. While the mentee is able to satisfy the need for learning and professional growth, the mentor finds happiness and feels a sense of self-achievement by providing help to others. As a mentor, Blair talked about the significance of providing her support to other teachers in her life:

It’s a mixed feeling to do it, because it adds a responsibility, to give mentoring. So there is extra preparation. There are all kinds of forms to fill out for the district, you know, a lot of things like that. They are an unbeatable headache. But on the other hand, I haven’t seen so many of my buddies for over a month. And I am feeling a huge withdrawal because I didn’t make it... I am feeling their absence. I hadn’t had a chance to talk to them because I missed the last meeting. We didn’t have a Saturday lunch. I miss it. Actually, I won’t be able to go tomorrow to the meeting. I’ll get a seat at the end of the day. A couple of weeks I haven’t seen everybody. It will be good to see everybody. I become used to being with them. I think that’s important to have that interplay. So there’s the headache of doing the mentoring and trying to get to paper work done, and clearly finding out what they need. [But] I think that has given way, [and now] it’s very satisfying. Mentoring is a way you can help art teachers, and it means you also feel satisfied. It’s a give and take. You give up something, but you gain something too.
Mentoring is a unique opportunity to draw out beginning teachers’ latent abilities, because it is not official, but an informal one-on-one relationship. The formation of intimate relationships makes mentors throw their full support behind a mentee’s learning and growth. Rebecca gave some insight into the mind of a mentor:

I am a mentor. It has to do with professionally being an art teacher, working with new teachers, and working with classroom teachers. To get them our perspectives and help, including what they are doing. The third grade teacher was here doing Native American. So I gave her a lot of materials and gave her some ideas. So they don’t just use a little color sheet. I mentor classroom teachers and always have them come to me and ask for ideas. So I think I appreciate that. I guess that makes me feel something good. I feel like to be helpful to the community. It is a good feeling that you can be helpful, that people respect your opinions and come to you and ask for something, and ideas. It’s a good feeling to work with others that way.

**Transmitting tradition.** Experienced art teachers in the CoP were concerned about losing traditions that had been established and elaborated on by the previous generation of members and by themselves, including a culture that supported other’s learning, growth, and practices. The transmission of practice was accomplished by preserving the spirit of practice of the former art teachers in the group. This effort stemmed from a desire to sustain the CoP and watch it flourish. Blair reflected this sense of being aware of her responsibility as a mentor and lead teacher:

It’s time for me to get the next group ready. I’ll be retiring. Probably it will be 8 years. Eight years from now. Some of my friends are actually retiring now. One of our concerns is that shift in pedagogy, we say something is going to be lost. When our generation move on, how do we go on, preserve some of the practices we found very effective. There is sometimes a very different practice. You know, translate abstract ideas into practice. It’s an
important thing. We are going around different ideas for preserving that. Especially, since last year, we couldn’t have workshops for regular teachers. So we felt a huge hole – this is going to be lost. Nora’s retiring. Someone else is retiring. As they retire, who is going to take the next step, keep some of this practice alive, and the enthusiasm that they have? I think we are all feeling that that’s part of what we need to do now – pass on the practice.

**Caring and Friendship**

In addition to the apprentice relationship of mentor and mentee, the relationship of the community members is characterized by caring. The friendly relations between art teachers in the community informally ties person to person, leading to a bolstering of knowledge and ideas. The art teachers saw such caring as helping in the context of a friendship developed as part of a professional working relationship. Experienced art teachers, who have worked together and been engaged in the community since they started teaching, have cemented an especially strong comradeship with each other. When they face difficulties in their lives, including sickness, loss of families, divorce, and retirement, they mentally and physically support each other. Ellen views caring as a natural and habitual ritual of the art teacher’s community:

That’s definitely what we do. When my mother died, they came in and brought food, basically looked after what was going on. We do that. Linnie retires this year. She’s been very ill. She has been getting physical cares from different art teachers. But mainly people who are older, who are in her group, as friends, care for her, not as much the whole team.

When asked about the meaning of receiving care from the community, Blair’s eyes moistened and tears fell down. She could not say anything for a while and barely opened her lips. Blair holds a deep feeling of appreciation towards her colleagues in the community who supported from the bottom of their hearts when she was severely distressed by her son’s accident. She described her gratitude to the community:
Oh, sure, absolutely. My son had a very tragic accident. And he had a brain injury. The group was very supportive. You can write. Tears, tears, tears…Yes, very, very supportive. When someone has a divorce, we make sure that [we are there for them]…when people retired, we started an over-fifty lunch group. They retired, but they still are a part. This is a very supportive group. Now he is okay. He has a hard time keeping his job. What he can do, he is absolutely amazing –far more than I thought. The group is very good.

During my observation and interviewing periods, I received an email sent to all members of the community to inform the teachers of the loss of the father of an art teacher. The coordinator and the ex-coordinator urged all the members of the community to give consolation and encouragement for such hardships that one faces in life. An email sent to all the members of the community said:

Just an FYI…Jennifer lost her father the first week of January. It was too late to get a card signed by everyone at our meeting yesterday so if you are so inclined, please drop her a card/note and keep her in your thoughts & prayers. (January 14th, 2010)

When I visited Riley Elementary school to observe the monthly meeting in February, I found a card on the shelf where the meeting agenda and lesson plans are usually put. Decorated with pink ribbon, the size of a regular mail envelope, the envelope was put there to collect money for a member’s upcoming retirement party. There were some messages to her on the card, and they planned to give her a gift certificate to a food store, as well as some nice dishes. An art teacher would host the celebration party at her house.

**Professional Relationships**

The art teachers also perceived their connection as a set of collaborative working relationships. They looked forward to traveling with together, providing presentations at the conferences of the National Art Education Association (NAEA) or the Florida Art Education
Association (FAEA). They got along with each other as friends and colleagues in their profession. Their solidarity of purpose for achieving common goals created friendships that would last throughout their entire lives, as Ellen explained:

Officially, there are people who are close. But most of the time, a lot of the time, I notice a lot of teachers’ friends tend to be more at their schools, because they see [each other] day to day. My closest friends there, they travel a lot, get together. Ann, Nora, Blair, and Rebecca – those five are my different travel group. Good friendships have developed that way. We go to the conferences together.

The monthly meeting is thrives with chattering of the art teachers who are eager to share about their school and personal lives. Leanne, as the coordinator, pleasantly complains about the difficulty in breaking up their joyful conversations. She recognizes that the friendly relationships between the art teachers are those of professional coworkers:

It is almost difficult to start the meeting. ‘Hello, hello!’ Yes, I know. We are really, for the most part, friends. Colleagues who appreciate each other. We get a lot of ideas from each other. I think for the most part people respect the skills of the other teachers. Every person has different styles, different teaching styles. So talking to different people can improve our teaching a lot. By just having a conversation, saying, ‘You know, I tried this, I really messed up, how did you do it? I say, I did it like this.’ So we thought about a lot of problems and shared a lot of methods and how to make something successful, a lot of lesson ideas, just having conversations. And we say ‘I had a really bad day today,’ or whatever.

Ann held a firm belief that teaching is a unique profession in that it requires bonds between human beings that go beyond those of official working relationships:
Teaching, you develop strong friendships with other teachers. Teaching is so social and part of being human. I think a lot of time you talk to teachers and you see teachers as mentors, you make those bonds of friendships. You make that bond of friendship. To go beyond just being colleagues, just being teachers together.

On the other hand, though Haley felt there was trust among the art teachers in the community, and that she could contact others for advice or help, her relationship with them was more collegial than emotionally intimate:

I am not best friends with anybody. But we are friendly and acquaintances. I can call them if I need anything, make a call at Conley. Even though I don’t go out drinking with them on Saturday night, I still feel friendly to them. But I don’t have my best friends there, at the meeting. We bring food that’s good. We all meet at the meetings, exhibitions, and workshops.

Like Haley, Kate saw her relationship to the art teachers in the community as one of good co-workers and co-learners rather than informal, personally close friends:

Like friends that I’m going to hang out with? No. It’s more of a professional relationship. I could go and have dinner with some of them, but I don’t think I would do that. It’s more professional. Maybe because I’m so involved with other things, I don’t have the time for that. But they are very good friends – don’t get me wrong. I have very good friends there but I wouldn’t call them on Saturday and say, ‘Hey, let’s hang together.’ But I like them… They are very helpful, they are funny, they make people feel comfortable, they are sincere, you know, they are very helpful. So I appreciate that very much.

As a leading art teacher in the county, Nora has devoted her whole life to advancing the art education field and maintaining fellowship within the community. She has a firm faith that the other members would come rushing to help her if she needed them. Likewise, she is willing to be
a trusted person. She gets ready to listen to what problems they confront and to join in
correspondence to find solutions together. Her involvement with the members of the community has
shifted from a working relationship to an informal, collegial one. In a certain sense, Nora does
not feel it is possible to distinguish between friendship and fellowship in the community:

We all help each other with ideas, planning workshops, we do teacher workshops together.
We all help each other out. We are going through the National Board. We went through the National Board
process. Ann and I just got through it –renewing our National Board [certification]. Yes, that was a lot of work… Our county always had curriculum meetings.
And for four years I used to live them. I was the person who led them. It’s kind of required
that we go to them. It’s encouraged that we attend them. That’s why the district can get
information out to us, it’s easier. Before we had email, besides mail, that was the only way.
We’ve just always had a strong group. An art teacher got kicked around and the county
heard about this. That’s why we have people from private schools who come to our
meetings and people from Ocala County. They don’t have that many art teachers. It’s nice
to be around people who have the same problems, issues that we do. Usually scheduling is
a big one. Some teachers only have 30 minutes. I have 45, some have 50. How do we teach
the same thing? How do we do it in 30minutes? Some people don’t have any money. I
have a plenty of money. We share supplies and sometimes some of us have a lot to share,
especially, there are several teachers that teach and lead them, they teach art. We listen and
it’s nice for them to have somebody. We let them vent. We call a vent to get their steam out.
Yayaya…Crying about their problems. Let me tell you about my problems. Cry on my
shoulder. It’s okay. It’s nice to do that.
Partnerships with the Local Communities

Partnership with Local Art Institutions

Art teachers in the CoP actively participated in the art projects coordinated by local art organizations, including the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science, the LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts, the Council on Culture and Arts (COCA), and local community institutions such as Tallahassee Community Hospital, and so on. In executing those art projects as a team, art teachers took over different portions of the work. They created job lists and rotated who would be in charge of different projects. They took advantage of public spaces to hold art exhibitions of their students’ work, including lawyer’s offices, county offices, the public library, Florida State University (FSU) Museum of Fine Arts, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) Museum.

The art teachers in the CoP have diverse opportunities to be engaged in community-based art projects as long as they want to participate. That means they can find support from various community agencies. As a leader of many community art projects, Nora described her interest and active involvement:

We’ve always had, in the last few years we have had people come. Community people come. We invited artists to come and share. Students we had in the past, we had people from the community, come and bring their art and demonstrate and be speakers. It’s wonderful that we have community-involved support… We have FSU and FAMU, the city and county, commission on county culture and art. I worked with the Tallahassee Community Hospital, and do work with them. We work with the lawyer from downtown. They always come to the meetings. Sometimes they introduce themselves. The county office people sometimes come to our meetings… The LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts usually shows up. That’s wonderful.
Coordinated by LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts, GreenO’ween is a county-wide exhibition in which almost every school and art teacher participates. The project called Duck Stamp, mentioned below, is coordinated by a local ecology center as part of a local Wildlife Community Education Program. Jane has taken advantage of educational programs and competitions sponsored by such local community art and science institutions, using them to create unique curricula for her art classes. She created an exciting arts lesson, for example, by integrating it with a local community science education project:

Some ideas come from the community, sometimes not just from the art museum, but the LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts sets up projects and ideas, like GreenO’ween. There is one not even from just our community but from the state that we send advertisements, like Duck Stamp, where we study about birds and ducks, and an endangered species of ducks. You have the students participate in research on kinds of ducks, the grey goose, and on their habitats. If they are endangered, you make a drawing, and then you send it in for the competition. That’s another kind of work we study in our projects. There are many projects around here. It depends on the time, the theme each teacher wants.

Their partnership with the Council on Culture and Arts (COCA) is critical for the community of the art teachers. COCA is an organization whose priority is to build a comprehensive network of arts and heritage education opportunities between the community and schools. COCA works in four areas: creating awareness of arts and art education in the Tallahassee and Leon County community; identifying and addressing art-related needs of the community; creating a network of experts; and increasing access to and acceptance of arts education as a core component of all children’s education. In this context, COCA has financially assisted in bringing resources to students and teachers with grants supplementing what it produces as well as through the fulltime efforts of its Arts Education Director. For instance,
COCA facilitated integrated art lesson plans by securing funding from nationally-known arts organizations, provided teachers from all subject areas with an opportunity to speak with representatives from cultural and historical organizations and learn about their education programs, and made it possible for teachers to participate in professional development workshops. In 2007, COCA invited Faith Ringgold to be the headliner for COCA’s Arts in Education Expo, where two presentations were provided, one for teachers and one for students. In partnership with COCA, the FSU Museum of Fine Art used Faith Ringgold’s visit to kick off their exhibit called, The Story Project, which was used by students all over Leon County as a catalyst for creative writing.

The fourth edition of *COCA for the Classroom: A Resource Guide for Teachers* has been updated and is available to educators. This resource guide is filled with listings of educational programs, field trip opportunities, and artist residencies offered by local cultural organizations. In addition, the archived editions of the Arts in Education Newsletter is a monthly emailed publication that is meant to keep teachers and administrators informed of funding opportunities, new resources and products, workshops and events, and arts in education news.

Partnering with the FSU Master Craftsman Program, COCA has facilitated summer workshops since 2007 for educators across all disciplines in warm glass techniques. Most of the art teachers of the CoP participated in and enjoyed this glass workshop. COCA and Leon County Schools are working together to bring more professional development opportunities to educators in the public school system.

The Winter Festival Youth Art Exhibition is one of Tallahassee’s most anticipated annual events and COCA has been coordinating the exhibit at City Hall for almost 20 years. This exhibit of K-12 2D- and 3D-artwork is shown in a professional gallery space which is open to the public. Exhibits and receptions such as this one not only bring recognition and a sense of pride to the
student artists and their teachers, but also helps family members, visitors, and public officials recognize the value of art education.

The education director for the COCA, Amanda Thompson, has served as a liaison with schools, public agencies, private organizations, and community groups regarding arts and heritage education programs and events. She works very closely with visual art, music, drama and dance teachers as well as non-arts teachers and school administrators, assisting with curriculum development, ideas for funding special projects and forging new partnerships with community organizations. She plays the role of an advocate and support system. Therefore, her engagement with art teachers throughout the community has the potential to create a bridge from diverse art programs to the people of the community.

Another big art show occurs every year in March, Youth Art Month. Almost all art teachers participate in the art show that takes place in the Leon County public elementary schools. Community institutions, including museums, COCA, and educational institutions in the county offer diverse opportunities that art teachers effectively employ to promote quality art classes and professional development. As Jane indicated, there is energetic involvement of art teachers in community art festivals:

Amanda Thompson has the whole responsibility for the show. She gives us information. She puts up the wall and labels for the reception. She will be there tomorrow, for the Winter Festival Youth Art Exhibition. The next one is Youth Art Month. It’s in March. We have the whole month of March from the first week of the month. It happens in February. We decide when we have the reception and we invite our students. Each school has a section assigned to it. You will have this wall for Hartsfield, this wall for Astoria Park. It goes on. It’s organized. Each school has a wall and shelves to put art work on. We have the reception day we decide on and we all agree to it, to go and have the students there. We
have invitations for them. They come with their parents. Big pictures. Good artworks. That’s another one we do. We also have another exhibition at the Attorney General’s Office for the State of Florida. We sign up for it. We sign up for the show. It’s every three months. One school will participate and they do certificates and exhibitions. But the downtown library, through the year we can sign up for the month that we want. I have my artwork, my students’ work downtown now until the end of January.

Haley took part in developing an art curriculum supported by the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science. With this engagement, she gained the opportunity to meet artists and secondary art teachers. She described how being immersed in the art experts’ joint project made her experience a sense of professionally growth:

I’ve worked on a project at the Mary Brogan Museum of Art. A few years ago we did an educational project with their folk collection. So it’s like outside artists we have. We may have an exhibition of the period of Stone Age, a huge folk art collection. It was really cool stuff. They let us in there to look it up, all the stuff. We developed a curriculum, lesson plans, to go with that. There were lessons for it all. But it was separate from the Leon County School Board. The museum itself is building educational programs. This is the lesson plan. One of the lesson plans I developed while we were working together. I have a copy of this. We are online. Bessy Harvy. The artist has a site online. Because part of it is technology. Is this going to be part of how we use technology in the art room? We developed these lessons for all teachers. They pick it up and are able to teach with the Website, the State Standards. This was a couple of years ago. There was an art teacher from a private school, we had a high school art teacher. She was one of the teachers. I forget someone who participated in the project. We had an FSU student that participated. He got all of the art technologies together for us. I forget what his name is. We had six art
teachers, some middle schools, high schools, and private schools. Some were elementary but they ran private schools. One little lady was from an elementary school. I think one is from Arts and Sciences.

Table 4.1 Community-based art exhibitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yearly Art Exhibitions Provided by the Community</th>
<th>Collaboration Art Institutions</th>
<th>Place of Exhibition</th>
<th>Period of Exhibition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Art Month</td>
<td>Leon County, Leroy Collins Public Library</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>March 1 – March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeoween</td>
<td>LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>It varies.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 day to 2 weeks, depending on year, new exhibit with only 2 year history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winterfest</td>
<td>Council on Culture and Arts (COCA)</td>
<td>City Hall Gallery</td>
<td>November through December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Library Exhibition</td>
<td>LeRoy Collins Public Library</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Rotates every other month, 3 schools at a time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney’s Office Exhibition</td>
<td>Leon County Attorney’s Office</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Every three month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County School Board Offices</td>
<td>District Office</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Changed 2 times per year, each school to send 1 -2 pieces</td>
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**Partnership with Florida State University (FSU) Museum of Fine Arts**

The FSU Museum of Fine Arts is the primary collaborator most frequently working with art teachers in the community. The FSU Museum of Fine Arts provides a diverse assortment of teacher workshops and actively collaborates in hosting art projects with the CoP. Leaders in the community and the curator of education of the museum frequently have meetings to decide on a theme for the next art project and design its execution. They are of similar ages and best friends.
Through an informal conversation at a café or restaurant, as well as at the museum, they have developed and accomplished wonderful community art projects with schools in Leon County. In addition, the curator of education regularly attends the monthly CoP meeting as a member of the community. She plays a critical role, not only in connecting members of the community with people at the university, like professors and students, but in acting as a liaison between the community and local artists.

The curator of education also has a good understanding about the specific situations of art teachers because her background involves experience as an art teacher. The community recently successfully completed two big art projects in collaboration with the museum: The Story Project and Kids’ Guernica: International Children’s Peace Mural project. From planning through execution, two years were spent on each project. According to a member of the CoP, Blair, art teachers led the art projects based on their own art education philosophy, and since the curator acts like a supporter, she stood on the side of the teachers as much as she could. Blair felt that the curator of education was very accepting of what the teachers wanted to do:

We’ve done a number of things with the community. A lot of them are through Viki at the museum. Museum-based, some of them are, some of them are not. Some of them have been coupled with the Mary Brogan Museum of Art downtown, or the Winter Festival Youth Art Exhibition. It’s another one. So, those are activities and projects we’ve done with other community groups. Usually what’s unique working with Viki is that it’s alternate schools, secondary one year, elementary the next usually. But what we’ve done in past years is that we actually go to Viki and say, we want a show, this is a theme we want. We became curators for the show, and Viki has the expertise about how to do the museum stuff. Get the work and build the timeline, all those things the museum does. Arrange for the artists to visit us, and everything. That has been a very exciting partnership. And every
teacher is usually interested in the project. There is a vision to North Florida. Buck Lake Elementary goes pretty much on its own. Most recently The Story Project, which we just did, was a three-year project. Right now we have a group. Ellen and I met with Viki a couple of times. And we’ll have a large group in December, meet with her and come up with a new theme, ‘Generation’ – for another show within four years from now. So we are looking at doing another one. The idea came from the teachers, not from a show already decided by the museum. That would build it backward, from the school to the museum. And of course between them, there are shows which Viki does, has a show they’re having, and invites us to do activities with them. So those [are] a little different from what most museums do and are willing to do.

Ann emphasized the significance of the meaningful and constructive partnership with the FSU Museum of Fine Arts in fulfilling big art projects:

For The Story Project, we came together. That one was not just elementary teachers, but elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Everyone brought in something a little bit different. Every teacher selected artists to invite to The Story Project and feature their work. That’s the most recent. Viki was the catalyst. The idea of The Story Project came from my friend Ellen. She said in one of the last meetings, ‘I have a lot of ideas. I just don’t see them through always.’ That’s what Viki does. Viki takes a good idea and sees it through. She makes it happen. She organizes, orchestrates, and coordinates really well. Just right so it can be done. She is a good mentor. She is in the community. She has affected so many of us. Viki has really good responses. We’ve worked on so many projects together with Viki. There is a ceramic project, the Story, the Peace Mural projects, and there is more.

Jane describes the process of collaboration that occurred for the Peace Mural project between the
teachers, Viki, and a professor of the department of art education of FSU:

This one went all around the school. The coordination came from the Florida State Museum, Viki. They have that project… that is going to happen in January with other peace murals. So we came up with the idea to where each school will participate to make it one community peace mural. We had a meeting. Whoever came in voluntarily that day and attended the meeting had a chance to put in input about the idea and the theme. What we needed to do about it was to come together. Okay, each works together to come up with an idea. There were many, many ideas and we ended up with one idea that we all agreed to and we thought it was a great idea. Then when we started, how many schools participated voluntarily, we divided the mural into some sections and then we worked it out. But it wasn’t like every school has to participate. Whoever wanted to do it. That’s how it was coordinated through the Florida State Museum. One is going to be in January, we had a professor from Turkey…Dr. Anderson talked to her and wanted her to do the coordination. But since she is far away, I was the ambassador to do that. He was, like, you will be assigned by me to be the coordinator. I came about what we will be going to do and then I went to the teachers and I told them what we are going to be doing. I’m coordinating and now I’m asking the teachers to assign two students from their schools to come and do painting. It’s still going to be voluntary, not obligated to send students and come to the show, and come to the exhibition and participate in it…Nobody went over for it. But I love doing it. We created a great team with Viki. She is another coordinator. We meet regularly and discuss and then we go and say what we wanted to say next, what is the next step. That’s how it came about. We thought together about having this beautiful exhibition. I suggested, ‘Why don’t we have a teacher workshop?’ It was both of our ideas. She says, ‘Wouldn’t it be possible?’ ‘It would be a great idea’ I told them. And then we started
coordinating it together and made the whole coordination and then we told Dr. Anderson, ‘What do you think about that?’ It’s possible. We worked together as a team. It was just an idea from a small idea, just because when you come for the work, the exhibition and reception on the 16th, it’s going to be hard to see everything and anything during that time. We thought we really wanted the art teachers to come and get a full experience of how these peace murals came about. This is how the workshop for the teachers came about. We just started working it together. It’s for a purpose also for the sake of kids. It doesn’t come easy. You really need to work together towards the thing.

Community-based Art Projects as Public Outreach

Ensuring the public values art programs. Art teachers are concerned about budget cuts which can result in the elimination of art programs from school curricula. They strongly feel the need to inform the public, including parents and principals, and the school board of Leon County, about the value of art programs for young people and the community. Art shows or projects at public spaces such as the public library, City Hall, the airport, and local museums are influential in drawing the attention of the public to arts and art education. Many art projects have been successfully accomplished by a diverse array of school-community partnerships. Teachers’ efforts to promote the value of the arts and art education have been successful in evoking the sympathy of the community. In spite of the current economical crisis, art programs in Leon County schools have been sustained and supported by local arts communities and art education institutions. Blair pointed out that one of the important purposes of community-based art projects is to make art visible to the community. In so doing, art teachers gain support for keeping art in their schools. Leanne hopes parents and the public realize that art education makes a great contribution to students’ growth. As she mentioned:

We hope to make art education, especially elementary art education, more visible in the
community. Community-based art projects provide the support for us to keep art programs going and keep parents and community members feeling like art education is important for the students to have; it’s one of the big motivators to put it out to the community.

Nora called for art teachers to be more involved in the local arts community, for example, through participation in art shows for the community. She believes that such efforts can enlighten the community about the importance of art education, enlarging collective concerns about the need for art education for young people. Nora expressed her strong affection for art education and the arts and her sense of mission about sustaining and developing art education programs in the Leon County:

They usually come to exhibits. They come and want us to do contests. We don’t do contests. Usually it’s for us to be involved in community events like openings, shows, come down and do those. We’ve done art and parts of things at FSU, given up our Saturdays off and gone down, and done demonstrations and hands-on activities for students, like we’re doing with Viki. We’ve done that at the [FSU] Museum of Art. We’ve done that at LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts. I host other art teacher meetings at LeMoyne. Last year we had wine and cheese at a reception and we did the tour of the museum. We do things like that to help. Art teachers become more involved in local, and become a member of museums. They belong to the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science or to LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts. It was my way to try to get them to come, and be more involved in the community because I believe art teachers should be exposed to as much the arts as they can. To get art teachers more involved in the arts and art communities. Because number one is that our programs are exposed. Number two is that our parents are out there. It feels like it gains credibility for our program. We are out there and expose our community to the world of art. We are trying to build the art community. We are such a football community.
Tallahassee’s all about football. Well, arts are growing. It’s been a slow development. As we are becoming, there are more and more arts in Tallahassee. And also the more exposure we can get out there, the better the program is. Plus, the parents’ support toward our programs increases. Art have been cut in this county. In a lot of counties, the art programs have been cut because of funds. We have developed. We’ve got a strong group. We build art programs in our schools with the support from the parents. As long as principals see the parents want art, art’s going to be in our school. Really it’s up to us to promote our program. That’s why we have already it in elementary schools in this county. Not every county in Florida has art. In South Florida, there is no art in elementary schools. They got rid of elementary art teachers to save money. So it’s very important we promote our program and have it exposed to the community… I don’t think people in Tallahassee will put up with them cutting art programs… We need the help and concern of the Leon County Education Board. That’s why we have a public library show. That’s why we have art shows. That’s why we had the opening the other night and invited the superintendent to come and give out certificates. We involve them in that. We invited our principals. Their exposure makes our school look good. They like that. They make it look good to the public.

Idelle spoke about the lack of concern for art programs among Leon County school board members. She has been in charge of contacting the school board members and superintendent in regard to school art programs. The interest toward art events and programs is very low at the district level. She expressed regret about their indifference:

I’m the PR person for Youth Art Month. That’s how I help: public relations, publicizing Youth Art Month. I send a letter or newsletter, and contact all of our school board members and superintendent. I try to ask them to come and plan a program. I do that… The only difficulty is to get their response. I think I sent out 25 invitations. We got two people to
come from the school board, that kind of thing. So we generally do not think that the program is highly supported at the district level, but at my school level my principal always comes to all art shows. At my school level very much supportive. Not quite as much at the district level, although the superintendent of schools, he is very supportive of the arts, and has been trying to keep art, especially in high school, which has just been cut from seven periods to six periods. But he doesn’t always come to art functions, or come to the Youth Art Month Show. As far as things we are planning, budgeting, he is supportive about art. So that’s good. But actually he does not come to events so much. Art events are a little different from music that the superintendent usually goes to – the music honors, chorus, and concerts. But there’s no event where you can sit and he can get up and speak.

So last year what I tried to do was have a speaking portion of the Youth Art Month program so people could speak. That didn’t work so well. I need to get in touch with the library again. They would not let us speak in the library, because it is supposed to be quiet. So they put this in an open side room. Not as many people came through there so it was not very high visibility. People from the district are too busy to come. They didn’t get a lot of visibility. It didn’t work very well. It could be part of the problem. It could be there they are not making time to visit. Part of it could be that it’s just not that visible because art shows runs several hours, it’s not like a single get up where you meet everybody.

Art teachers in the CoP are quiet activists who advocate the value of art education. They neither engage in political protests nor speak publicly for keeping art programs in the schools. They instead intend for the county and the public to realize the worth of art and art education.

Ann talked about the efforts of the art teachers in the CoP to advocate for art education:

We used to put shows together. We have done breakfast for assistant principals. We set up children’s works on the table. We fed them breakfast. We came together to do that in order
to advocate and to let our principals know art education is important. They should value it, but they don’t know always that though. So yes! We come together to advocate to be our own public relations, to be our own voice. That’s been pretty successful, but we don’t do that every year. We should. We should do that.

**Enriching art programs.** The art teachers in the CoP were anxious about the exclusion of art programs from school curricula, and this concern may have compelled them to be even more committed to improving art programs. While possibly influential, the threat of the elimination of art programs did not seem to explain why the CoP members were passionate about teaching art. A firm conviction led them to become teachers devoted to their art programs: the belief that art gives students a unique opportunity to wholly experience the world beyond that learned from other subject matter. When their artworks are exhibited in a public space, students feel like they have become artists. They more fully understand the role of art in society and even get a glimpse of what an artists’ life looks like. While art teachers work in various ways to grow professionally, public exhibitions enlarge students’ horizons in terms of the world of art. Melissa mentioned that one of the most important goals of community art events and teacher workshops has something to do with enriching art programs at schools, as well as the students’ knowledge about the world of art. Blair described the profound positive influence of community art projects on students and their families:

The other is to engage students with something that makes it seem more professional. Like what we do at the museum, we are taking the work and putting it in a professional setting. A little more sophisticated. Instead of just a thing which goes on the refrigerator, the little artwork that you take to mommy and mom says, ‘Looks good.’ It makes a little more formal presentation of it, when we take it to the museum. Because of the opportunity for a formal arts presentation, they feel wonderful. They feel fabulous, having that work
selected for something like that. It is obviously one of the reasons to do it. I had a show at my school with parents. I had Viki bring a community artist who actually hung real artworks in the school…where the big office area and big walls were. They brought the artworks to our school and it was caught by the expressive structures. There were no representational art works. They are likely to go to the museum on their own very little. So all the artworks were hanging there and this little boy comes in one day and says, ‘Do you know what my mom’s favorite artwork was?’ Not only was he proud of the one that was there, but his parents were picking out their favorite art works. There were many parents who would never go to art museums or galleries. So it brought the arts to another population and audience. They normally would not see it. I think that’s one of the things, they seem like, ‘I am an artist,’ when they see their work there. I am not just making art projects, I am an artist. They feel a lot of pride in their work and we are proud of them too. Otherwise why do we do this work? Because it’s a lot of extra work. Obviously,[it helps them]build that sense of self, pride, and confidence.

For her art program, Idelle tries to take advantage of as many resources from the local art community as she can, including local artists and parent-artists. The primary reason she incorporates those local art resources into her programs is to let students gain an even richer understanding of the world of art and realize that art is close to them. She described how she seeks closer ties with the local art community and with parents, so she can gain their support:

One is to enrich the experience children have. They can see real-life artists working. They can see what they are working on, that it can actually become a profession. It’s exciting for the school and for students to get together to do project that is community-based, like the Art for the Sky project. They are excited about seeing a portrait artist come in the spring, for the students to see working artists without taking them off campus all the time.
Fieldtrips are good. But we really don’t have the funding, the money for that. So we use great resources in town. Artists visit schools for free or very little. They just bring another dimension to the art education students receive. It’s fulfilling for me to see that I can tie things to the community resources. I try to make connections with community resources as much as can. Bringing artists to school or displaying my students’ art at a professional space. This is just an extension of what they’ve learned, and enrichment. Going one step further so they see that their work is displayed and valued in the community. So they can see what’s happening in the community with other artists. The excitement. They really like to do that. The parents are very supportive. They offer extra things, [sometimes] more than we want to do. Sometimes parents give me ideas about other contexts within the community that they know about or artists who will come visit my school. It’s just kind of a more well-rounded art program, more complete, a richer program.

Through art programs or art projects that introduce community art resources, parents and the public come to understand what students learn from school art programs and why it is important for students to have them. By extension, diverse opportunities for art experiences that are open to the public create new populations who appreciate artworks. Art is the way to connect schools with art communities and the public. Schools and the public form a shared domain for art education. As Idelle mentioned, school art education programs gain support from the community around them. Jane added another observation about the effects of community and school-wide art exhibitions:

I want to expose my students’ artwork. It is good for them to know what it feels like to appreciate the work, to have other people look at it, and for the community to be connected with what we do at school as well. What their children have been learning and what we teach their children about all that. It makes community connections of what’s going on in
Features of the Community of Practice that Sustain the Participation of Teachers

Continued Learning

The art teachers in the CoP create opportunities for learning in a variety of ways. One is to break into smaller groups corresponding to a set of particular learning needs. As a result, offshoots of the CoP include a book study workshop, and watercolor and oil color painting groups. Such small groups are generated whenever necessary. Summer teacher workshops are the most preferred learning opportunity. The monthly meeting is the primary place where such small groups and workshops are instigated in order to help members continue to learn. Blair explained why she feels that a learning community of teachers plays a critical role in her professional development:

When I first came to the district, Nora, particularly, was doing discipline workshops in the summer in the early 1990s, Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE). DBAE was just coming in. The Florida Art Education Institute was viable. One other thing that I did, I learned how to teach art better from them. When I went to college, it was a whole different theory. If you don’t have a learning community, and don’t continue to learn and grow in community, you don’t grow over the course of your career. You stay with whatever you learned in college. I think I am an art teacher today because of learning from them.

Ellen described the ways in which the CoP has awaked her to the trends in art education and arts:

Art teachers get more changes in philosophy that come down the pike. It takes a while for people to adjust. We are right now working from product-oriented to the idea of concept, process, and things that are more important. The big idea is more important. Skills are more important than having poor things at the art show. Most of us still love making art. The thing is, it’s hard to get out of that. I want to do this rather than skills or idea-oriented
things. I think art is conceptual now. Teaching the idea, thinking about creating. That’s new to the people. There are some differences between all art teachers. But I think that’s because not really knowing does not make a change. That’s why I think the learning community is good to help with that.

**Knowledge and practice.** Originally, they bounced around, learning and applying new technologies, artistic skills, and art education theories. In the community, short-term workshops which were timely and suited to their needs helped them to keep abreast with changes in educational expectations. Daniel mentioned the meaningful role the community has played in complimenting his art practice:

I enjoy going to the meetings because I want to see what other teachers’ rooms are like and to get ideas of how to teach things. The teacher who currently is hosting has posters about drawing the facial features in a portrait, I am stealing that idea. I’m going to use that. Because I have a hard time reminding the students to include all of the facial features. I’ll just make a poster - it works for her, so I’ll try that. When Ms. Melissa was teaching, I got a lot of ideas from her about how to organize my room. Because I was just starting out and I had all of these materials that worked, put together by somebody else. The last teacher had them organized the way she wanted them to be organized. I was looking at the room. I was looking to see how she organizes and how she uses materials, so I could go and reorganize my room, so it was easier to use. I also just really like to see the artwork that teachers bring for the exhibition, for the show, because it gives me ideas of different things the students can do. It just keeps things fresher. Those are my favorite reasons I am going.

The CoP has a zone that secures and fosters learning, since it allows art teachers to email or call anybody in the group whenever they need information and ideas. This is a trust that has been constructed among the art teachers over a long period of time through collaborative
implementation of teaching practices. Learning among these art teachers, then, can occur all the time and in different small groups, even as a unit of two art teachers. The teachers all have expertise in a particular area of art, and they like to exchange their expertise and skills. Jane described the experience of sharing her expertise in clay making with other teachers:

When I first started and I got my certificate, we had a program for beginning teachers. We had to meet teachers that have been in the field of art education for a long time, and be helped by them and learn how to run your class, how to manage, what kinds of projects to work with, and we did. It was really fun, because they had already tried some of these things. For example, if I’m doing a particular project, let’s say clay. I’ve never done clay before. We email each other. ‘Have you ever done this? Would you have an idea? How do I do this?’ We have always gone and done that. I was asked by a high school art teacher. He was originally an artist. He took the job as an art teacher. He never worked with clay before. An older art teacher had told him that I love to work with clay and I worked with clay so many times. I used to go on workshops and help her students with clay. I went to her school and did that with her students. So she told him to call me or email me. ‘I’ve never done clay and would you be able to do clay and show me how to do this?’ I say, ‘Absolutely’ We go and help each other in doing such things. And it’s easy and simple. We like to do it for each other. I take it as an extra experience. I taught the students while their teachers were watching – how to do clay and how to fire clay. After the second time I went…the teacher knew how to fire the kiln. Some of us, some art teachers, they are more towards drawing, painting, making clay, or printmaking. Each has our own experience in a particular field. When we see somebody’s artwork we are sharing in the art shows, ‘Oh, how did you do that? Can you help me with that?’ We tell each other.
**Learning new technologies.** The knowledge teachers gain from each other in the monthly meetings and in the book study is generally practice-oriented. It is obvious in the book study that the focus is on gaining knowledge that combines theory with practice. In particular, the appearance of new technologies in instructional instruments is the focus of attention of the art teachers. One art teacher explained to her colleagues how to use I-Movie, for example, and did so in a very friendly and humorous way. Although she is good at using technology for her classes, she did her best to make her less tech-savvy colleagues feel comfortable in. The art teachers paid close attention to her presentation, indicating their great interest in applying new technologies in their art classes. Jean described what she took from this presentation:

There are so many working with I-Movie right now. I am so afraid of using technology, at our library especially. If I can do it, you can do. I found I-Movie. I use I-Movie humbly. Now I have the picture and all the lessons – I am so sick and tired of fiddling with word processing. Now I handle recording on my computer, and add background music.

In one monthly meeting, an art teacher showed how to make a book of vocabulary cards for an art criticism class. It was combined using a spring. The front of each card was a picture and its back side was a key word taught in aesthetics and art criticism. She was elated about sharing her skills in using color printers and software for compiling pictures, and her ideas about how to apply these methods in her art criticism class. The art teachers showed a high degree of attention:

I shared my vocabulary words. I would be really tired of doing the same thing, vocabulary words, copy the words, and go on a wall sheet. I just got really tired of it. So I was looking at a catalogue, the National Board Certificate Teacher script chart. There were three cards. I thought that would be nice. One for vocabulary word, one for the technician, and one for the teacher. I thought about it, making my cards. Then I picked freaky story art as my first
unit...I had all my freaky story cards done, and we had the pictures from here. I had one word in my mind. I’ll have the keys, stand it up, and clip the card...I went everywhere to look for the plastic rings to combine all the cards, bigger than these. I went to Staples. I saw card books. ‘Why don’t you do that like this? Let’s put the two cards here.’ It is really cool. My kids now speak with those cards and find the right word corresponding to the pictures. It’s been a little bit more exciting to learn vocabulary words. Other than that it’s been fun to use it.

Elaborating on a big idea. In discussions in the meeting or in the book study workshop, the art teachers explored a concept or a pivotal idea related to an art project. They shared different perspectives and experiences, and sometimes had fervent conversations. For instance, Ellen provided information about a website where they could get quotes from different languages about the concept of peace. They then applied her ideas to introduce the abstract concept of the peace mural project to their students at school. The process of conversing and sharing their perspectives about peace led them to grasp it in a more intimate and comprehensive way than before they shared it. The following description of a conversation that occurred during a meeting shows how members shared diverse ideas centering on the big concept, peace:

“Because you can look up peace, it will take and give you all these website quotes. I will use music in my class to teach the concept peace. They can learn why they have to do peace, or global, any kinds of big ideas, amazing things.”

“Do you have some suggestions?”

“Yes, I’m doing the third, fourth, and fifth grades. I’m probably doing the morning, so anyhow those resources are over there. I also have this. I like a bigger idea, if you want to use that to learn about the concept peace.”

“This website is on that same thing. That has peace in another language, so that’s really
a unique thing for kids to write down their words. I will let students create pinwheels for peace.” The teacher introduced a project for effectively teaching the concept of peace to students. She will let every student create a pinwheel, and save it in a safe place, and then take it to a public place and plant it in the ground to send a message of world peace. Later, she made a DVD to record this project and used a song with it that symbolized a peaceful world. She presented her idea to the art teachers and distributed a worksheet about how to make a pinwheel, and information about the website for the project. Her colleagues replied:

“It sounds fun and wonderful!”

“Right!”

They all seemed to be very interested in talking and hearing about different individual’s ideas. One art teacher talked about a book about peer pressure in the classroom in relation to the big idea, peace. She introduced the book to the group. The book was about dealing with the issue of peace in school and among students. This teacher suggested that they think about brainstorming about peace, about how they can help their kids understand and interpret the theme peace. One teacher shared some ideas that had occurred to her:

I was in the car, listening to NPR. I heard the author, whose name I don’t remember…She was so good, for just a few minutes. I thought: I’ve got to write the book’s title down. It’s called *You Can’t Say You Can’t Play: Intervening in the Process of Social Exclusion in the Kindergarten Classroom*. She is a kindergarten teacher. She wrote the book, and tried this research project in her class and with fifth graders, about peer pressure. There are certain kids in the class you don’t want to play with and we don’t want them to play with us. She has the fifth-graders and asked them, ‘Do you think you guys just could do that?’ ‘No, no, this is our time. This is our freedom. You can’t tell us who we can play with.’ She says, ‘You guys can probably play with young kids, in kindergarten.’ It’s a great book. It talks
about how she wants to do this in the classroom and how she made this work. It even talks later – it has the dialogue she has with the kids. It was just really cool. She’s got other books to look at – the author’s image is on the two books… We are talking about peace first – not just peace in the global sense but peace in the micro-world, you know, peace in the playground... I have a class with two kids like that and talking to them about how they can approach each other and work together. It was really cool. She said later, one of the kids, the fifth grader said, ‘I still try to do the thing you told me.’ One of the kids that was always alienated. He chose to be by himself and doesn’t get along with others. The thing is that those kids who have problems end up getting along with the other kid who has same social class. Then they show their troubles. But they still bond together. It’s like they magnify each other and continue to get trouble. Isn’t it always in schools? I think it’s written by a teacher, it’s an adult book, written for other adults and for teachers. But it’s written by kindergarten teachers. It just sounds like a really different way to approach [peace] and I thought [it would be] a great book study in schools, especially in elementary schools.

These conversations demonstrate how the group elaborated on the concept of peace, sharing diverse interpretations and ideas about teaching it. Moreover, this conversation developed further as teachers connected their ideas with the practical aspects of the upcoming community art project. They discussed how to effectively plan the international exhibition and what work should be added. One art teacher presented the concept of ‘peace in the playground,’ another take on helping kids and teachers become familiar with the abstract concept of peace. Ellen’s idea of producing a DVD featuring peaceful images of children and hundreds of pinwheels symbolizing peace especially touched the art teachers at the meeting.
Developing diverse ideas. In the monthly meeting and book study workshop, different opinions bloom. While the topics of a discussion or natural conversation range from school things to family things, the most common concerns in the meetings relate to ideas about teaching, including discipline, classroom management, organizing the art room, characteristics of children’s artwork at each level, knowledge and information about new art materials, and so on. Moreover, there is typically fervent sharing of art education philosophies and salient concepts in art teaching. Members explore what and how their students achieve through an art lesson, and what needs and challenges they have. They attempt to share instructional ideas concerning how to effectively apply the lesson with their particular student population. They are not concerned with their ideas being correct and they do not hesitate to say anything whenever ideas come up. They do not assume there is one right answer, but they welcome investigating diverse perspectives about a lesson. The following description of the scene at a book study workshop illustrates the types of concerns they have for their teaching, how they cooperatively deal with each other, and how they construct their own learning through engagement in the workshop:

The host teacher began to present a CD attached to the book chosen as their textbook. They talked about going to the National Art Education Association (NAEA) meeting and the topics they will present at the conference.

“Blair, where did you get the CD?”

“I bought it.”

“It’s a CD?”

“She should talk to Jacky Hanson about that.”

Some of the art teachers wanted to get the CD or wanted to know how to get the CD. They were watching the CD, which deals with instructional knowledge in relation to art materials, the characteristics of kindergarteners’ artistic development, instructional methods, assessment skills,
and salient concepts in the art project which should be taught to the kindergarteners. The good thing about the CD is that it demonstrated how teachers can teach the lessons.

“Demonstrating, practicing on paper, you can just have kids do it.”

“Yes, they could do it.”

“And they can use those strips as the picture frames for anything later.”

“I did the lesson years ago using cardboard paper, it was so cool.”

They appreciated the artwork of kindergarteners, investigated the process of making and drawing, and explore teachers’ instructional methods and the goal of the lesson through the CD. They discussed a kindergartener’s collage.

“Abstract form, line collage, shapes...”

“They are colorful. Look at this.”

“I don’t know how long we do this.”

“I don’t know how much he has been working on this.”

“They practice three times and then put it on paper.”

“This would be a nice thing to have out to go from simple like the Moto Brook series of drawing.”

“This is a perfect school! They are silent.”

If they had watched the CD alone, they might have been less interested, and could not have explored the diverse meanings of the lesson. But watching it together, they continued to concentrate on the CD because they were able to share their ideas and responses to each other, thus sustaining their interest. Sometimes they made jokes. They even expressed interest in the size of apron suitable for kindergarteners’ physical developmental stages. The teachers were surprised at the very small aprons used for the kindergarteners, but not for the fourth or fifth graders. They talked about using such small-sized aprons, specifically their advantages and
disadvantages.

“The teacher has the standard size used for most persons. Kindergarten starts working in the big ones. Cause she thinks the kindergartners need the bigger piece to hold on to.”

“The kids haven’t put it on either.”

“She doesn’t care about the cloth. None of them have put it on.”

“It just takes too much time.”

“I put all the time into little plastics or put them on this size.”

“Oh, look at these.”

“I don’t quit the kids without doing it. And then they are done, throw over the chair, and slip it in and out. I should’ve done this this summer, if I let my fifth graders have bigger one.”

“Did you buy it?”

“I bought these. They have a tie. One tie here, came to the front. “

“So what I did was I just went and bought a bunch of cloth.”

“They look like real artists.”

“They are cute.”

“So I put some strings.”

“I got a big box of t-shirts like adult t-shirts.”

“I said to just wash it out after painting. Not on your skin, ever.”

They talked about some problems in using water paints with kindergarteners.

“I just have that washable paint which never comes out.”

“Not washable, or washable?”

“Yes, washable.”

“We have to be watchful in using the paint.”
“So if you want to use black and dark paint, be careful.”

They talked about student management during an art class.

“Look at this.”

“This one’s really pretty.”

“That’s a wonderful thing.”

They talked about kids’ clay work on the CD.

“Extend from that to the big one and then not everything at once.”

“She didn’t have to make each one work.”

“Yes, they’ll probably work out.”

“There are a lot of adults wandering around.”

“Actually this will work with my classes.”

“They use a cell phone to talk to each other, and they take a break. I have one kid, the kindergarten kid.”

“She has people walk around with the kindergarteners.”

“She has people walk around and take quotes from kids’ stuff. She had, like, pieces of paper to make some statements.”

“You bought them?”

“I ordered them from a company. I ordered them for the kids.”

“Take a look at the room and then think about how you would manage. We didn’t have things like that.”

“Yes. Parents can have questions. That’s what I’m saying – she has people go around and ask questions like that.”

They talked about art materials.

“Oil pastel, I like that.”
This is a cool thing. She again says that same idea with the structures, looking for shapes.”

“Yes. There is a lot of this stuff in this book.”

“I guess one of the things I’m concerned about is that big idea, because they come with that. They ‘Oh, I like this’ stuff - something cool, a kind of large ideas they are doing. There might be some of that we can talk about as we go through this book. The narrator of the CD is talking about these structures. They talk about the community. I just come up with some ideas you might also deepen.”

They share their ideas as they go through the book in relation to art education philosophy.

“We can look up some in the book. Open to page 48. I like those works done with an arrow”

“I like that too.”

“She doesn’t really read the adult guidelines, does she? I am looking at lesson resources: children’s trade book.”

“Yes, the dotted line.”

“I can’t imagine what she would do with kindergarten.”

“Here’s the thing like an alternative.”

“I like the lines made by patterns. She’s got tint colors.”

“Snowball Billy and a drop of water.”

“What page?”

“Unit six, lesson two.”

“She’s got these lessons, with children’s trade book lessons, to go with a pair of socks, for the eyes.”

“If you look at page 10.”

“U-um, that’s for the patterns.”

The natural conversation within the group seemed to be an effective way for the teachers to
freely express their ideas.

“What I want you to know is earlier, she has again the drawing, just exploring materials. Have you looked at 5a? In doing things, just do simple lines. Then just explore materials and play around with whatever you bring in, rocks, paper, and scissors, then they look at the crayons. Literally a different order. She is going back to the beginning…Look it up on page 12. That shape, cutting the shape. So there are a lot of these that just start. We don’t intend to do too much. I might do some of these, might not do all of these.”

“Because she is pre-K.”

“Depending on the population, you may meet to do something, because of their experience. So it is more important for Rudiger’s to cut in shapes and learn these. All my kids need to learn…Even how important for fifth graders. I ask them to still hold it, not pinch it…We start needing the paint brush and then turn it into a pretty teacher’s book.”

“It will be the way the teacher’s painting.”

“And then give them all ideas and explore, and then time to look at it.”

“Page 2, again you can add some lines, if you want, later, as an extension. And then you can see what happens with colors and the other is all that stuff goes together. One something is media. Draw and paint it.”

“I like the paper, the pictures of kids, would be a collage they are drawing on their base collage. After making the base collage, they’re drawing it.”

“Add a couple more and then has instead crown, shapes, and drawing on. And then I can give it through and have pages, somewhere textures.”

“Oh my gosh! On page 7, what does she do, what she does, is she sets up the table.”

“I can’t see myself ever doing this.”

“I love that, everybody, the group.”
“That would be great!”
“I’ve done that before. Yes, that would be great!”
“Oh, cool.”
“We’ve done that before in a cooperative learning class. I gave you bigger clay and I say, ‘Okay I need you either to build higher tower using one unit, decide on one unit, and see how you can build.’ This is a whole exploration.”
“All just playing with this.”
“Actually playing with things, and start making things.”
“Oh, people. You have some experience making clay work.”
“These colors are those clay reliefs, what is that?”
“Those are clay reliefs. That would be painted.”
“With tempera, if you want to put some in the clear room.”
“These things are really little?”
“She tells how big they are. She has them do their own like thing. I gave my slap but I think she says how big. Flatten and slap clays with the form of your hand. Slat should be thinner than your thumb and I’m telling you these are more like about five by six.”
“Nice.”

They discussed their previous teaching practices, including the use of art materials, the intention of the teacher, the artworks of the students, and things they might expect to happen.

“They can just roll their own, like a cylinder. Put it on their chair, put the paper on their chair, and the slab and push their hands into it really to push it harder, push them a couple of times and they get good slabs. Then they practice making cylinders, and put one of those in front of them. They do a really good job.”

“So you have made it out of several parts.”
“The cylinder experience, yes. Sphere for the head, little spheres for the arms, hands, and feet. Long cylinders for the legs.”

“Did you have some smooshed together or leave them?”

“Take around the spray bottle on their slabs, and just press it down. You don’t have to smoosh it at all. They stay together really well. Spray the clay, and slab it before they press it in and then just press it and then they don’t have to smear it and everything. Anything comes off. You are not either going back in the kiln or glean it. They stay pretty well.”

“What clay level do you do that with?”

“I did kindergarten first and last year, just like she did.”

**Perceiving What is Going on in the Community**

The CoP is akin to an assembly that comes together for the purpose of gaining information about what is going on in the community of art and art education in Leon County. In the monthly meeting, information about teacher workshops, art projects, and art events is distributed in a timely manner and teachers are later reminded about it. Then minutes for those joint community art events are shared and confirmed. If the teachers didn’t have this community, they would be more likely to lose sight of detailed notices or new information. They would have to do everything by themselves in relation to their professional development and art teaching. The teachers’ engagement in the community consists of the monthly meeting, summer workshops during summer break, and teacher workshops during semesters. The monthly meeting is different from teacher workshops because the primary business at hand is gaining information, as Ellen noted:

It’s important for me, again, keeping up with what’s going on. It’s not as much for making contacts, but keeping in contact with people who are spread all over the county. As far as my professional development, that’s not the place that I grow so much. It’s more about a
quick finding out what’s going on, talking to people, making connections, and making plans for doing something else. But I think growing, things are more in those book study workshops, coming to these workshops, and even traveling together somewhere to be at a conference. Those are more important for professional development, to me. Just a monthly meeting which is more about what’s coming next… Definitely we have an opportunity to get together in the summer with artists and art people. They do workshops with this, more arts-oriented and professional growth-oriented…I haven’t taken one of them yet. I would like to. The glass workshop. Kate was doing it in the summer, so I wanted to do that. That would be getting together with somebody in the community, not really teachers, but artists. The art teachers believed that the monthly meeting was indispensable to them as a center for all information, even though they are tired after school, as Jane explained:

Because it is always a new avenue for you to go and explore…It’s only once a month. And it’s only limited to those hours where we try to be there as much as we can. I try not to miss any meetings. I hardly miss them. I missed only a couple of meetings. I make sure to go and to attend these meetings to know what’s coming up, what projects we are going to be doing, I bring in more ideas to them, new things to show students’ artworks around the community. The agenda is limited. But we try, we are the best if we have something to share. There is always on the agenda, the last line, we say things to share. Many of us go regularly, we need to go. Time is really limited. We’d like to have more time to meet, but we can’t. Because we have other meetings at our schools. We have other obligations. We have things to work on, all the time, to do things. Troubles from school to school also bring in different issues.

The curator of education at the FSU Museum of Fine Arts and the coordinator of COCA come to the meetings to share issues and information regarding upcoming art projects. As a
liaison between community institutions and schools, Amanda, the coordinator of COCA, instigates discussion about an airport exhibition by telling the group what the airport asks that they do. She tries to encourage teachers to participate in the exhibition. What follows is an excerpt of a discussion about an upcoming teacher workshop at the FSU Museum of Fine Arts. It illustrates the sort of information that is shared in one monthly meeting, and how much information is dealt with in a limited time. As we enter the conversation, Leanne is discussing the information provided by the director of COCA.

Leanne: “We still have lots of rooms at the library exhibits. Please sign up, if you are interested in the exhibit, please let me know. I’ll pull it up on my computer. I have seen a lot of people signed up that are here, but we really would like you to fill those. I don’t know if anybody also signed up and filled it out this year.”

Some questions are asked by some art teachers about an upcoming teacher workshop, Linda Johnson’s printmaking and bookmaking teacher workshop at the museum.

Viki: “I have two things that I said last time. I’ll just pass this out here. Teacher workshop. Have you signed up for it? It should be pretty good. The workshop is going to be the part of what she does, Linda Johnson. With the printmaker and bookmaker. Just once again I’d like to mention, if you know anybody in your school, classroom teachers, would like to do this, please let them know. Would you fill it out, extra one passed out now? Okay, sure. Thank you. Pass it on… Many of you are hard to sign up and to show your work in our elementary student display for January. But I want to give you this again. Have you circled the due date? So you know when to deliver. I ask you today if you are going to participate in the student’s display, if you have any idea, what you are doing to do in the display, tell me today. Please note them on top of this sheet. It says, deliver artwork Monday, December 17th through December 19th. The work should be delivered before the spring
break, if you’ve been doing that for several years, because we make the exhibition overwhelming before winter break, we make the exhibition before the holidays, and then open our door in January. That’s the first exhibition. That’s why we should work in December because we hang it in December. The regular hours at the museum are 9 to 4. I stay later all the time. I usually stay until 6. So if you need to deliver the work after 4 o’clock, the door would be closed at 4 o’clock. But if you let me know, I’ll come to the door or you can call me, my telephone number should be on here. If it’s not, I’ll give it to you right now. The other thing that happens is if you come to the door, and the doors are locked, maybe you can remember this. Tap loudly with a key or coin. Just it has to be metal to glass, that sound goes through the museum. I can hear it anywhere, and I come to the door. It’s just you give me a few minutes to get there. I will get there. You can let me know and call me or either one anyway. If you are going to be, or participate in it, please just let me know.”

Leanne: “Jane, did you want to say something about the mural, how is it doing on that Saturday?”

Jane: “I am waiting on Sara. She is sending me promotion. It seems to be meeting more students. I’m not going to be able to have one child. What if so many participate from her school? It looks like one for each school. As far as I know, we should wait for November. We still have time because it’s January.”

Viki: “Can I mention another thing? It might be a few people, we don’t know, how many teachers come. That’s January 16th, but we have people who come from all over the world. It is going to be a teacher workshop. From Turkey, Greece, Afghanistan, India, Lebanon, Japan, and so on. I’ll send around the sign-up sheet like last time. I have quite a number of people who signed up and want to come. Please come and sign up today. The 15th is the
workshop. The 16th is reception day for everything.”

The art teachers had an active exchange with Amanda, the director of education from COCA, about Winterfest, an exhibition sponsored by COCA. They discussed the time, and the ways to drop off the artworks of children:

Amanda: “That’s fine, too. Hand it to me, that’s fine, but I just have emails all around. Have to fax it. Just I thought it would be easier for you. But if you want to hand it to me, that’s fine. When you even come and drop off and ideally, whether or not you could do that. If you have to do that, that’s fine. I’m going to send a reminder to you on December 23rd. I am going to send you emails on the 19th. On that Monday, I’ll send it out again.”

Teachers: “That would be great!”

Amanda: “I’ll just come and meet you. You don’t have to worry about driving across town and working after school. Just come to me and drop it off for your holidays. For two hours.”

Amanda explained her plan for the exhibition, and mentioned details, like what to do in case of an emergency, dates for hanging, and scheduling the hanging of the artworks of the children.

Amanda: “The next thing is that the airport contacted us. There is an airport gallery space curated by COCA at the airport. The airport contacted us and asked if we would be interested in helping that children’s exhibit. Let’s talk about detail things. What they are interested in are pieces of artwork to hang upstairs in the airport, which is a public space. There is a gallery space…It’s beautiful, gorgeous, and spectacular. They have a wall for this specific space if we want to buy into it. What they are interested in is pieces to hang upstairs in the airport, which is COCA’s space and which is very few public.”

Teachers: “That’s a beautiful space!”

Amanda: “There is a gallery space up there. You guys, a museum for Leon County. It’s fantastic, spectacular, beautiful, big, huge, and just gorgeous. They have a wall to allocate
for this specific exhibition.”

She encouraged the art teachers to participate in the art exhibition at the airport. She was so energetic and seemed so excited and even happy about informing the art teachers that they will have a public space to exhibit their students’ artworks. She is a kind of matchmaker, a liaison between the art teachers and community organizations.

**Socializing with a Purpose**

The monthly meeting of the community provides the art teachers, who are burdened with school and family responsibilities, a precious chance to meet and freely talk to their colleagues and friends. Moreover, most of the art teachers interviewed revealed that it is a benefit for them to make contacts with the local arts community. There are people at their meetings from COCA, the LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts, the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science, and the FSU Museum of Fine Arts. The teachers are inherently excited about meeting people who are in the same field and sharing what is going on in the arts community. In addition, they anticipate that the connections they forge with community art people will have productive results, such as school outreach art programs and teacher workshops provided by local museums for their school art program, as well as collaborative art projects with artists in their schools. Such programs create a climate that encourages people in the community to go to a museum and try to participate in local art exhibitions and art shows. It is a win-win system in which school-wide or community-based art projects implemented through the collaboration and support of art communities facilitate the creation of a local art culture, fostering the prosperity of local art institutions and museums. In this context, the art teachers of the CoP become cultural agents who instigate and promote the culture of art in the local community. The next major community-based art project is centered on the theme ‘generations.’ The participation of the art teachers in this upcoming project will continue to nurture a sense of community through art and art education,
for the students, the teachers, the schools, and local arts organizations. Ellen talked her efforts to connect art teachers and the arts community:

Probably we just try to get teachers interested in helping to participate. That would be the main thing. Especially, classroom teachers, looking for people out of the community, can be part of it. Looking for artists, that’s the very next thing, come up with artists. My role is helping identify them. I identify schools which want to be part of it. Maybe looking for things like running in serving grants. The grants that would deal with kids serving in some way may be going in the homes for elderly people, doing some kind of projects. Generations. One way is having elderly folks come into our schools to teach kids how to do crochet. Pass on the generational knowledge that kids maybe don’t have, because parents skipped it. Maybe their parents’ parents skipped it. I did learn it from my mother. A lot of kids don’t. Their parents don’t know. We are looking for grandmas to maybe come in. Learn something, teach something, and they are different. Art is just about grandma’s and grandpa’s lessons, passing that love down. There are a lot of ways to do that…Viki is the other thing. She kind of gives us like ‘Oh, cool! I’m here for what you want to do.’ She checks and makes sure it’s okay. She would’ve heard of what you want to do. She holds the meeting, she runs the meeting. She puts the calendar together. Here’s what we need to buy –this, this, and this. The censor and reminder. She’s totally the leader. She is really a connection. Not isolated from the community of arts. That’s the biggest role.

I asked about the reason why the art teachers are so passionate about participating in the community art projects, and Ellen replied,

That’s important again. Just being visible in community is important. Just because we really feel like it’s a way that kids, parents, and the general community see what’s being done in schools. How important art is. Really that’s a huge thing.
Likewise, Haley points out that collaboration with art experts enriches arts programs. In addition, her belief is that art needs to be shared as part of the whole community’s culture. The art teachers I interviewed had a common angle on the arts; they believed that art helps people come to belong to the community and the society. The commitment of art teachers to collaboration in community art projects connects art education, students, and community arts. With those diverse connections, arts communities and art education develop and become enhanced. Haley described how she has been engaged in work with many communities of art, including professors, artists, and museums, for her art program and professional development:

You can’t just do it by yourself. Because that’s not the way the world is. You have to cooperate with experts to learn what they have to offer you. You don’t have to cooperate with everybody. Art is personal but it is a community thing. It’s for people to look at and view and learn from. So definitely you have to cooperate with lots of different people. Professors that I’ve never had, like Ron Ybedra. He was in art education at FAMU, an art professor but now just does workshops. I talk to artists. I develop things with the museum. I cooperated with them and I had to contact those artists and their organizations, to get permission to use their materials in my lessons. Yes. We have to cooperate. I’ve always had big plans to do more and to get artists out here to work with me. Because we have some fine local artists around here. Then I think I can really teach new ideas to the kids. Thomas Brewer, he is in art education at Central Florida University….Nora works with him a lot at her workshop in the summer. We have had a visiting artist probably four years ago. We had a mural painter come in. He painted the fabulous mural at our school.

Nora’s philosophy toward art penetrates the tenor of her school art programs: art can contribute to building a sense of community for students through art projects evoking a consciousness of the global world. School art projects are important because they provide a place
where all communities enjoy art together. More importantly, the school art projects that she has implemented generally aim to raise students’ awareness about community, country, and the world where we live together. In this sense, she insists that art be indispensible in school curriculum and that art teachers be valued as cultural leaders for the community:

One of the things is our scope and sequence. I tell the kids all the time. ‘I’m an artist. I go home and work at my studio. And people create art for different reasons. I like to get the students involved in the projects. The Peace Mural project. Number one is, it’s a school-wide thing. It brings a whole school together in an optimistic way. Everyone from kindergarten through fifth can understand all the work everybody’s doing. Plus, we have an art festival this spring. April 23rd to 24th. We have a school-wide festival to celebrate art every year and they also get to see, I invite artists. So they get to see, ‘This is how people make a living, this is how people work, like Viki, who is going to come, and put work on display at the museum. They are invited to the museum. It gives some exposure to museum. It gives a family a reason to go out and do something related to art. When they get there, they get to talk about art together, which parents and kids don’t get to do a lot. They also get to see how something takes collaboration and cooperation. It’s just like last year, we created ‘art for the sky’ work. We were together on the field, as a huge crocodile. It is about all that is impermanent. We came together and made art. The concept of art in us is coming together and making it beautiful. That doesn’t hurt the earth. And we use natural things. It was a wonderful concept. Embracing such a concept like impermanence, or collaboration and cooperation, and being part of it. These are major things that help you to become a better person in life. A more well-rounded, understanding, and caring person that embraces the beauty of life and takes it in. Working together with different people in the community, having people come and see the children, see that they care about and enough
to be involved with the little kids. It’s really important. We are important enough for you. I go work and hang there and you come and talk to us. That’s all very important for the children. It will be the only exposure that they ever get. A sense of community through art. When they grow up, they will go to visit a city, and they will see a museum. My kid will say, ‘I think I’ll go to that museum.’ It continues to keep art as part of their life, and they are consumers. I want them to be art consumers. That’s why I bring my art in. Look! This is what I make and I show it. It is important for them. I do want them to grow up and want beauty in their life.

**Synergistic Atmosphere**

The art teachers prefer the face-to-face contact that occurs in the meetings rather than the simple electronic exchange of information, which would be more convenient. In the group setting, they can confirm ambiguous understandings of community’s art projects or check information by asking the person who is in charge of the work. The benefits of the interaction that occurs in the group makes teachers willing to spend time and bear the expense of gasoline to physically come to the monthly meetings and book study workshops. Repeatedly, teachers mentioned that they look forward to seeing the people in the monthly meetings and book study workshops, where they come to be cheerful and engaged. That is why they have so much fun in the meetings. The atmosphere is so comfortable and open-minded that participants feel they can say anything. It is not until the coordinator makes the announcement that the meeting is started that the art teachers make the effort to quit talking with each other. Once the meeting begins, however, the cheerful and boisterous conversation fades, as the group gets down to business. At times, a teacher will make a mischievous but friendly joke, which makes the meeting pleasant, though it very briefly interrupts the conversation. The art teachers are good listeners and earnestly respond to one another. Idelle talked about the meeting atmosphere and the art teachers’
caring demeanor:

We have become friends. I’ve got friends there. Everybody is really sweet and nice. We have a refreshment, which, by the end of the teaching day, is really good – drinks and chips and snacks, whatever. It’s like a social gathering as well as a meeting. It’s not cut-and-dry. I feel that they support me very much. It does kind of keep you energized. The colleagues really keep us energized. And also we’ve got some that put together workshops and book study that we can do, that help our individual professional development plan, which is a school-wide thing. Something that we have to do annually for our school contract. So we can learn about those things there… I’m certainly very, very happy [to be] part of that community. It’s really a great group of people. I feel like…I can rely on them. I can ask them anything. There is always somebody in the group. It is an expert or somebody who is willing to share something. Like I said, the community helps us out different ways. Email, you know, Ann, my friend says, ‘If you have trouble with it, talk to Nora, talk to this one.’ So somebody regenerates the direction within that group. That’s a good group. Really happy to have it. I taught in North Carolina for a while, but way back when I was much younger. They didn’t have a group like this. I don’t know that it’s typical. Nora taught in two states. There were not [groups there]. Many other counties don’t have a group like this. You can be busy with your own school, plenty busy enough. It’s a good group to be a member of, even though it takes time to participate in.

Because group members are so receptive to the challenges their colleagues face as art teachers, they are thoughtful and encouraging with each other. This kind of support leads the teachers to confidently voice their opinions. They feel like they have somebody behind them. Rebecca described her strong sense that she can rely on her colleagues in the CoP:

I was going to have a big art night in which we have tables for the whole school and the
hundreds of kids demonstrating artworks. Ann had done that regularly. She came over and she was the one that came over and helped me and gave me the ideas, ‘This is how I did it.’ I’ve gotten help with lessons. People just give me what they put together, materials that I’ve shared lessons, that’s a second way I found the group very helpful. Certain people, especially, are very helpful, and very good about sharing and stepping in and giving a hand. I’ve always gone since I’ve been in Leon County at an elementary school. I have very regularly attended the meetings. When I taught before, there was a junior and high school [art] teacher. We had no central meetings. We had no support system. There would be junior and high school - one music teacher, one art teacher, and they were kind of outsiders. I’ve really appreciated the fact that we have the support group that way, and meet and I love gaining ideas from people. I’ve been doing this for 23 years in elementary. I still see what people do. There are lessons and substitute lessons, whatever I get, and really good ideas from other people. It’s much better that we have a support group. That elementary school people give me their ideas and lessons, telling me how they had done something. I’ve always just relied on [the fact] that there is a support group.

**Structural Features of the Community of Practice**

The community is structured into two divisions: A leader group, and a learning, developing group. The leader group consists of 6 or 7 experienced art teachers in their 50s, all of whom have been engaged in this community since they were interns. Last year they formed an informal group within the community called the Over-Fifty Lunch Group. Rebecca explained how and why the group was created:

I think I will stay in contact with friends because I have good friends. There is a group of art teachers. We call these older teachers the Over-Fifty Lunch Group. We go out once a
month on Saturday. We go out for lunch. There are one or two retired art teachers. That’s the way we stay in contact with people that we worked with and then they retired. We still go out with them. We still have that.

They have been good friends over the years, sharing their pleasures and pains, including their personal and career lives. In this sense, the Over-Fifty Lunch Group is a crystalline body formed of good friendships throughout their professional lives. Collaboration and caring about each other’s professional development is a major purpose that sustains participation in the community. At the same time, it can bring about lifelong friendships, as Blair noted:

There is a good solid core that consistently comes, with some people who come and go…

The group was very supportive… When someone has a divorce and when people retire, we make sure that we started the over-fifty lunch group. They retired, but they still are part of the community and stay our friends. This is a very supportive group.

They offer ideas and know-how for problems based on their abundant teaching and administrative experience, drawing on knowledge embedded in real experience. In their very high attendance they present a vision to novice art teachers and developing art teachers, demonstrating how to lead collaborative art projects and participate in art education conferences, run teacher workshops, and make a bridge between their classrooms and diverse art experts in the local community. They are enthusiastic about mentoring – not in an authoritarian way but with a collegiate attitude. Rather than simply acting like leaders, they aim to give as much caring to the junior teachers as they can.

After the monthly meeting was over, seven young interns attending the meeting got together. The art teachers under whom they were working took them to the meeting because they will be preparing for a big art show for Youth Art Month. The interns began a discussion about how to help the teachers display student artworks at the downtown library. The natural
conversation of the interns involved swapping diverse ideas for the county-wide art exhibition as well as stories and challenges faced in their schools. After talking together they had a better understanding and sympathy for each other. Like the group of leaders, this young teachers’ small group is likely to develop within the community.

The associate art teachers in their 30 to 40s serve as a bridge between the leader teachers and the beginning teachers in their 20s and interns. They take charge of practical, executive jobs such as coordinating the meeting, taking minutes, planning the collection and display of artworks for an art exhibition, contacting the school superintendent, the planning the preparation of food and invitation cards, and planning the design of yearly art events. The associate art teachers instigate the participation of the younger art teachers and interns in community art projects and exhibitions. The younger art teachers come to learn about engaging in the actual work of the community. Idelle discussed how well-organized the community is, and described the process by which she became a member of the community:

As soon as I started teaching at a public school, I was invited. The invitations come via email and in the mail. All the art teachers, especially the elementary art teachers in the old days, and it used to include middle school and high school teachers as well. But now I don’t know if they need, they don’t typically need it as much as the elementary art teachers do. Their claims are a little different, and their schedules are different. Basically I was invited. I decided to go, and saw great resources; great experience would be so gained…Art teachers had a group person. We had somebody who is in charge of the community. Melissa was [the person] last year, and that person calls all the meetings. There is a coordinator in a school. She sends the agenda to them. That person is responsible for sending out invitations, the agenda, and reminders. We are organized enough. We have a secretary that takes minutes. But the head art teachers organize the
meetings. They take care of all that.

Blair also mentioned how well organized the community is and how effectively they collaborate:

The Youth Art Month, that’s a big project. Each year we sign up for job usually. We split the jobs throughout the year. We rotate it through us. This year I am not doing things. Last year I didn’t have a major role except book study. Other years I might be in charge of who hangs at the library. Individually, all of us. Every year I am in charge of getting work for certain shows we want to participate in. Fitting in a mount, taking it into Winterfest, mounting and taking it to the library and filling in my space. But someone else is ready in that the jobs, we rotate and measure it out, the spaces and find them, and things like that. We rotate some those roles. We have a job’s list. Different roles and different people at the beginning of the year, each school year, at the first meeting, or at the end of the last year, we decide which people will volunteer to do different jobs. Sarah is going to do refreshments for Youth Art Month. Someone else is going to be in charge of Youth Art Month’s exhibition spaces. Finding spaces. Someone else is going to check and see if the artworks are hanging before opening night. Someone else is [in charge of] the sign-up for the library, the monthly rotating show, and then reminds you, it’s your turn. Someone else is going to do the attorney general’s office exhibition. They’re going to tell you it is your turn. Someone else is in charge of hanging art works at the county office, so their job would be to let us know to bring two pieces of artwork to the next meeting. And they ask for volunteers to help them hang the show. So there is someone else, like a main contact person, for that set of jobs. Then each person has to do their part for that…This year my only job is the book study. That’s my only job this year. A number of years ago, I did what Leanne is doing. We rotate that too. And then Rosa did it as a coordinator. We transfer that job, too. I mean we take turns.
Table 4.2: Job list of the Community of Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jobs</th>
<th>Descriptions of Job</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art coordinator/Contact</td>
<td>Organizes the meetings, sets the agenda, gets meeting announcements out to teachers, administrators and district office. Often sends out other announcements as they occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Minutes</td>
<td>Take notes at the meetings and emails them to all the teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Office/Howell Center Exhibit</td>
<td>Schedules 2 day per year to change out student artwork at the district office. Calls the district in advance to arrange date and time. Takes care of frame needs, gets volunteers to help change out the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Exhibits/Law Office exhibits</td>
<td>Makes sign up list then emails and calls to remind the people who signed-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse Representative</td>
<td>Is the contact who helps write specifications for art materials, make additions and changes based on teacher input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Art Month(Y.A.M.) Exhibit Coordinator</td>
<td>Contacts with library personnel, sets dates for receptions, measures and labels each school’s exhibition space, sends program cover and invitations to the reception to all the art teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.A.M. artist reception Food Coordinator</td>
<td>Decides on refreshments contacts vendors and volunteers to make, bring snacks and drinks for the receptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.A.M. public relations &amp; publicity</td>
<td>Makes and sends invitations to all district administrators, and school board members. Contacts the press, makes news releases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.A.M. “Checker”</td>
<td>Goes by the exhibit before the reception and check for any problems or schools not hanging then contacts them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common Challenges and Concerns

Retention of art programs. In the course of my interviews and observations, the art teachers of the CoP revealed three common concerns about keeping art education programs in North Florida. One is the steep decline in the budget for education caused by the recent economic crisis. Though cuts have not yet taken place, the teachers felt that there is certainly the potential for art programs to be excluded from the elementary school curriculum in this financially critical situation. They cited as one source of their concern the cuts to the support
fund for teacher’s professional development workshops. Blair talked about the impact of this change on professional development:

We have to do professional development every year as a teacher. One of them is by choice and one of them is determined by the school as a school goal. Some of the teachers come to one of us and say, ‘Will you do a book study?’ We have a book study. So we can do professional development in our area, in art. That is how the book study comes about. Not last year, but about 8 years prior to that, we were getting mentoring bonuses in the State of Florida for holding the book study. We were motivated to do that because we earned money. Now last year and this year there is no money, so we are doing it for free. I do a book study. I am doing a book study this year, last year Ellen and I did it…The only thing that we got would be that the district picked-up [the cost of the] books. Districts pay for the books we are going to study. This year they are picking up the cost for books and maybe having guest artists.

Grace had experienced an economic crisis in the past which resulted in many art teachers losing their teaching jobs after art programs were cut. Anticipating the elimination of art programs in Leon County, she sounded a note of warning:

They need to be worried about whether they are going to cut it out. I don’t think they really are, or need to be, because it happened before. Back in the ’70s. There was one recession like this. The county I was working in cut it out from the schools. And there are still some counties that don’t have art at all in their public schools. And they need to be worried about it. They need to pay more attention to that. I think they are naïve. They don’t understand that could happen, has happened. They need to get certified in something else so that they can have a job, if the county gets in such a severe financial situation that it would consider cutting it all completely. They need to prepare for it. They need to have
degrees in something else. Just in case. That’s one of the first things cut, unfortunately.

**Need for a district art supervisor.** In addition to the threat to art education posed by budget problems, economic inequality between different schools and school levels results in educational inequality. Reduction of funding away from art education restricts the purchase of art supplies, which restricts the potential for student expression of through diverse art activities. Art programming at schools becomes limited, and art teachers begin to feel frustrated. Ellen was emphatic about the necessity of having an art supervisor who represents art teachers and publicly advocates for the value of art education for students:

- We never had an official one. We have somebody who’s been, like, the coordinator for music, PE, arts, and math, the four. They come to the meeting. And they just listen to us.
- For the most part, they have too many other things going on to do much.

In response to my follow-up question about what she would like such a supervisor to do for art teachers and art education, Ellen replied:

- I am not sure because I never had one. Don’t really know. I think part of the things would be finding out more about the latest information, researching what’s going on in another school district, teaching, and grading, dealing with schedules, and trying to make sure that there’s more equity among schools. Some schools just treat their art teachers specially. You know, special area [is not respected] in a lot of schools and in other schools is highly respected. Think, sometimes, if you have an advocate person who is at the county office. Kind of pointing that out. The superintendent will make sure there is an art teacher in all schools. Some schools, middle schools, particularly, feel guilty if somebody quits… Even in our county, there’s a lot of inequity…Other counties have less interest in keeping artists and art teachers. Our county, however, is fairly good about making sure we got it. The art program in Ocala County was cut back. They got rid of half of the art teachers. So the kids
have art half of a year and they have music for half of a year. And they switch. So art
teachers go to the school. That’s another county. On the other hand, what I am saying is,
even in our county, there is a difference in the amount of the budgets. We get a lot of
money for our school program. There is money they get to work with the various students.
But there are schools that do not have enough money.

The expense of purchasing art supplies was too great in Haley’s school. To cope with this
financial difficulty, she agreed to sell magazine subscriptions as a means to earn money for the
program. Haley described having to ask parents to subscribe to a magazine so she could raise
funds for purchasing paints and glaze:

We sold magazines. Every kid in this school got a little thing to sell a magazine. So then
the art room got [some money]. I think the first year we got 1,400 dollars, which was
really good. And the second year, I think we didn’t do as good as we had done. We got
1,200 dollars. But that money was set aside just for me to use. It would be nice if I didn’t
have to do that, if I could just make art…But that’s how I am able to get nice big jars, and
special stuff…Kids sold subscriptions. There is a company called American Fundraising.
And they come to me and go, ‘Would you like to make some money for your classroom?’
So he sent me all the forms and catalogues to show, ‘Do you know archeology? Do you
want National Geographic?’ People ordered them. You know, some schools do car washing;
some schools do cookie dough, or sell gift wrap. We got money for it. It is great. We
always ask for supplies, always have a fundraiser going on.

Leanne emphasized the necessity of having an art supervisor as a liaison for
communication between the community and the county School Board. She believed that art
teachers have to take on all the responsibility for their professional development, and are
neglected by the county. She asserted that art programs are not likely subjects for the school
district administrator’s attention:

I think this monthly art teacher’s meeting would be valued for professional development. There is the difficulty of convincing the county, of getting the School Board to say, ‘Yes, we will give you points for a meeting,’ because they don’t really know what we do in the meeting. We used to have a representative from the school board always in our meetings. She was wonderful and was great. Well, once the budget was cut, she lost her job, and she moved to another area. Now there is nobody, there is no art person. There is never really an art person in the county. There was somebody who did art, foreign languages, music, all different types of things. Now there is one person that does maybe twenty different areas. So she doesn’t have the time to come to the art meetings. But it used to be that we had a great representative who came to us, talked to us, and then she went to the school board, and explained about anything that we needed, and did any communication between them. She would communicate. But now we are very separate from them. Everything is done just by the people who want to do it. Really no one tells us that we have to do the meeting. It’s not mandatory. We don’t get any credit or money at all, no points at all. They won’t give us money for anything. We are employed, so all professional development activities are our responsibility. We have to keep our certifications. We don’t get paid for it.

Nora described what she thought the role of an art supervisor should be, including improving teaching conditions for art teachers, the preparation of art shows outside school, and connecting art teachers with the county. She indicated that the scheduling of art programs in schools is one of the greatest problems in the school system, not only because art teachers teach students in all grade levels of the school, but also because the time for one art class is only 30 or 35 minutes a week. Grace, for instance, is teaching K2 to K11 graders art. Nora appealed for enough time to organize her art curriculum and to let students concentrate on their art activity.
She discussed the need for an art specialist supervisor:

We need the Leon County office, an art supervisor. We have never had it in this county.

Other counties don’t have the money for an art supervisor.

I asked, “If an art supervisor worked here, what roles do you think he or she would be expected to do?” Nora said in response:

One of the things that they do is to help and to equalize the scheduling for the teachers who are annoyed by that. I also think that they can help organize and take up scheduling of art program in school. He or she may supervise some of the community art shows we do now, and help get those set up. And we can go out in the afternoon, after school, and hang a show. The supervisor can do that for the show – our day is extended. We are not doing that… We revised our scope and sequence last summer. We never have had a chance to go and do questions about the sequence, what’s working well with the scope and sequence, and what’s not working. They will communicate with other counties and help us to get supplies. There are a lot of things supervisors can do, like administrative skills. You definitely need somebody who knows the work of an administrator of art education. We have somebody in charge of art – she doesn’t know anything about it.

We’ve never had one at the county office that is an art person in charge of us. We do have somebody at the office that represents us. But she is a reading teacher. Even though she is a supervisor of art education for the State of Florida, it’s a music person. We’ve never had an art person at the state [level]. We’ve had a music person representative of art education.

Grace also put an emphasis on the critical role of art supervisors as advocates of art programs and representatives of art teachers. Such supervisors, she felt, should create a bridge between art teachers and the county administrators:

You have to pay somebody 60 thousand or 70 thousand to be an art supervisor to go
around and visit. There is none for music, either. One person does both. But they spend
their whole day helping the teachers, visiting the classrooms, and working with the budget
people, to make sure we all get the same budget so we have supplies to teach with. They
don’t have one. They had one. They used to have a supervisor.

Daniel would like an art supervisor who can play the role of a curriculum coordinator at
the state level. He has had difficulty dealing with students transferred from other states or other
counties who are on a different track of art learning because of the inconsistence between art
programs in different states or counties. Moreover, he insists that consistency and cooperation
between schools is indispensable to providing an art program that reflects a common state or
county art curriculum, so that the learning of students transferring from other schools can be
continued. He believes that the State of Florida State needs to set up a curriculum that teaches
fundamental, common art content. Daniel explained:

I think it would be nice for Leon County to have some better guidelines for the information
that students in the elementary level should know before they go to middle school. All of
the middle school teachers don’t know that they will have done this, this, and this, when
they get their students. All the high school teachers do not know that when they get their
high school students, their high school students would be experts in this, this, and this. I
don’t know if we really are aligned like that. Everybody really can focus on the same
things that we can track…In my school, we have a lot of students that come in the school
and transfer to another school. It’s difficult to know whether they are on the same track as I
am. Sometimes I’ll get students who are the same grade level, but they seem very
advanced for what my students are doing. Maybe I will get students from another school
who have not done any of the things I have done, because we are not consistent, we are not
all the same. That would be one thing that we can do…I think supervision is important.
More in tune to what is going on in the state, like if the Sunshine Standards are changing, she would be on top of that, share that with us. She could put more purposes on making consistence between the curricula of the state level and let us focus on teaching art. It feels like we have to be on top of that now. In the past, that was a nice thing. She (the previous art supervisor) was into visual art. She also taught. She was in an art classroom. She is there to be more like a liaison between what’s going on the state level, and what needs to happen in the classroom.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the data collected from interviews with 13 art teachers and field experiences conducted over five months. These data were collected mainly in on-site interviews and complemented by emailed communication. In the interviews, the art teachers talked about their own perceptions about the CoP, including their mindsets toward disagreement and conflict in the community, their experiences and feelings about giving help and caring, their mentoring experiences; their experience of participating in common community practices, and their concerns and goals.

The perceptions I derived from my observations supported and augmented the meanings conveyed by the informants. Sites for observations involved the monthly meetings, book study group meetings, the Kids’ Guernica project held in the FSU Museum of Fine Arts and meetings for its preparation, and Youth Art Month at the public library. As a participant observer at multiple sites, I was able to confirm the details of the informants’ narratives by discerning sentiments and perceptions that were generated in the process of interactions. The triangulation of data from interviews, observations, and participation enabled me to gain broad and detailed insights into the practices of the CoP. I interpreted all the data bearing in mind the research questions and the interconnectedness of information sources.
Vivid narratives about mentorship, friendship, and caring relationships were shared by most of the interview respondents. Similarly, respectful and caring attitudes outstandingly figured in the interactions and natural conversations I observed. Although different perspectives and disagreements were present to some extent, the openness of the CoP to diverse levels of expertise and different cultures was evident. Caring and mentoring were the primary form of interactions in the CoP, transmitting a common identity and creating the cultural artifacts of the community. The partnerships of the CoP with the local arts community and art institutions were also notable, and provided the impetus for accomplishing community-based art projects that benefitted teachers and students alike.
CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains an analysis of the findings of this study of a community of practice (CoP) for art teachers, including an elucidation of findings relevant to the primary research question and supplementary research questions. The chapter includes a discussion of the various impacts of the CoP on its participants, and implications of the findings for the professional development of art teachers. In addition, it contains a description of limitations, and suggestions for further research.

Analysis of the Findings

An assumption on which this research was based was that the collective, shared learning experiences of art teachers in a community of practice (CoP) can shed light on new ways of conceptualizing the professional growth of art teachers, since such practices exist in sharp contrast to prevailing notions of solitary learning processes. This assumption led to the primary research question guiding this study: What are the purposes, contents, processes of a community of practice for art teachers in North Florida? The results of the observations and interviews conducted for this study yielded a number of answers to this question. Most fundamentally, the CoP was found to be a social, cultural, and inter-professional site where art teachers could effectively support both individual and collective efforts. Through the collaborative, caring relationships and common practices within the CoP, the participants have been able to enhance their lives as professional art teachers and cultural agents in the community. Over the years, this
group has solidified, creating a foundation for a potent community learning culture.

Among the most prominent characteristics of the CoP under study involved the relationships forged between participants for the purpose of professional growth. The bonds among group members clearly were strengthened by engaging in collaborative community practices, that is, by professionally supporting each other through mentoring, co-creating, and caring. In this way, the group members created relationships that must be differentiated from kinship, family relationships, or pure friendships. Their relationships not only sustained the commitment of the art teachers to the community, but also enhanced their sense of accomplishment as professional art teachers. The teachers reciprocally encouraged one another by sharing knowledge related to practical tasks, and also reinforced their common approaches to the pedagogy, philosophy, and the theoretical foundations of art education. In this sense, the three structural areas of a CoP presented by Wenger et al. (2002) – domain, community, and practice – organically and mutually assisted in its advancement. Importantly, its openness to diversity and difference augmented the potential of this CoP to create advanced school art programs and community-based art projects.

Answers to the supporting research questions posed in Chapter 3 are provided in this section. In analyzing and interpreting the thematic narratives presented in chapter 4, I was able to carefully consider the initial intentions of those supporting questions. Using an iterative process, I reframed themes and inferred answers by linking ideas that emerged from field observations and informant perceptions related to the questions. The following questions, then, in addressing the secondary research questions posed at the outset of this study, elaborate on the nature of art teachers’ experiences in the CoP.
Question one: How do the art teachers perceive the community’s perspective(s) on practice?

This question addressed the members’ perceptions of the nature of the community, particularly in relation to homogeneity and diversity of beliefs and attitudes about art education practice. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 contained some related parameters that can be used to gauge the healthiness of a community: demarginalization of difference and minority views (hooks, 1994), flexibility on the basis of critical thinking (Young, 1990) and critical dialogues (Longino, 1993), the ethics of caring (Abowitz, 1999), and a comprehensive ability to cope with conflicts and disagreement (Pappas, 2008). Thus, this question essentially concerned the degree of tolerance for difference within this community. It was designed to examine, for instance, the extent to which members saw the community as welcoming different perspectives, or if they tended to want to establish communal beliefs in the community. In essence, the question concerns how the community managed to balance the tension between individual needs and the community’s common goals.

Reaching the Good of the Community

As the interview respondents revealed, there is harmony in the CoP in terms of the way members communicate with each other and accept different perspectives. The nature of the discussion and conversation in the community was stable and democratic. Agreements did not seem forced, and conversation flourished equally among all members. Disputes or antipathies, therefore, were not evident. The major instrument in settling disagreements and finding solutions was reciprocal communication. While the group members spoke candidly about various issues and frequently made jokes, listening and yielding in conversations were well-established courtesies that contributed to a positive atmosphere.

The quality of conversation was further improved by the educated and discerning attitudes of members, as well as their tendency to treat others in the CoP with politeness, a sense of caring,
and open-mindedness. Informal conversations, as much as or more than formal conversations, occupied a pivotal position, creating a safe place where members felt free to express different opinions and engage in creative interactions. An important feature of the CoP was its reliance on critical dialogue among the teachers. It is through such critical dialogue that the art teachers successfully engaged in genuine communication and constructed sound social relationships, despite being from very different situations (Longino, 1993). Thus, the insightful, compromising interplay among the art teachers, in welcoming difference and embracing compromise, was conducive to fostering a highly mature culture of discourse which advanced practices of art teaching and community art projects.

The art teachers studied represented two different approaches toward disagreement: one involved frankly speaking up when disagreeing with others; the other involved remaining silent when the discussion turned to issues not relevant to one or uncontroversial enough to be overlooked. Leanne, Melissa, Blair, Ann, and Nora corresponded to the former tendency. They frequently and spontaneously engaged in discussion with other teachers in order to negotiate different opinions. They engaged in sincere conversation with the goal of hearing and reconciling multiple perspectives. As often happens when individuals have a deep awareness of their interdependence and interrelationships (Abowitz, 1999), through the intellectual activity of questioning and criticizing they typically would come to sympathize with others’ points of view. In reality, the CoP members did not see this activity as criticism, since it entailed asking a lot of questions, expressing disagreement respectfully rather than defiantly, and making suggestions until a shared solution was reached. In the course of this process, it was apparent that all did their best to affectively and intellectually understand the perspectives of the other art teachers by considering the different situations of each school and each art teacher, and acting out of a kind of “ethics of care” (Abowitz, 1999, Relational Ethics and Difference section,¶1).
On the other hand, Kate sometimes chose to merely watch the discussion in the meetings, rather than participate in finding a shared solution, when she was not necessarily involved in the task being discussed. Rebecca generally followed the majority opinion, even if she did not fully agree with the final decision. Briggs, Haley, and Idelle, as advancing learners, tended to listen to and accept what the entire community wanted, especially looking to what the most experienced teachers were inclined to do, which derived from their trust in the community’s decision-making process and respect for the seasoned art teachers’ experience. All in all, the art teachers were cognizant that the achievement of the entire community was directly linked to the accomplishments of each individual member. In fact, the art teachers valued their mutual success more than their individual success. They knew that collaboration with others would provide gains beyond those that could be obtained through individual efforts.

**Freedom in Creating School Art Programs**

The CoP ensured that individual art teachers were given the freedom to stretch their imagination in art teaching. The community sought to be a forum for educational issues and ideas, as well as a place to demonstrate artistic skills and special practices. Although decisions about community art projects or big exhibits were decided at the level of the entire community, the art teachers were encouraged to create unique school-wide art programs that reflected their own expertise and philosophy of art education. Still, large-scale community art projects entertained a central place in the work of the CoP, and the collectively chosen themes provided a direction for school-wide art programs, where the teachers had infinite autonomy in running their programs and selecting sub-themes, artistic techniques, and materials. Thus, when the community-based art exhibits ultimately were presented, the distinctiveness of each art teacher’s art program was remarkable. This confluence of group and individual decision-making generated activity which greatly motivated the art teachers to learn more and become more fully realized

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professionals alongside their professional colleagues.

In one instance, the group agreed upon the theme of peace for a large-scale community art project, *Kids’ Guernica: The International Children’s Peace Mural Project*. The concept of peace was incarnated in diverse artistic ways: a two-dimensional imaginative landscape describing human’s coexistence with the rest of nature; quilts of animals made from yarns and cloth; collaborative quilt designs using Seminole Indian patchwork patterns and symbolizing peace and freedom; a three-dimensional abstract sculpture consisting of white-paper pillars and stones; a peaceful scene of Florida’s animals created by using silk screen techniques; a big, two-dimensional drawing and small silk screened works representing caring for each other and the earth; peaceful landscapes in black pen and watercolor; ceramic bowls inscribed with sentences stamped by cereal characters; collages of self-portraits portraying the students as kings or queens enacting policies that would help people, and so on. In this *Kids’ Guernica exhibit*, the art teachers did an impressive job of creating a variety of ideas that enabled students to flesh out the meaning of peace on their own. In the same way, the county-wide student exhibition, Youth Art Month, was designed to show the public and parents the artworks that each art teacher had guiding their students to create in their school program. Though planned by the CoP, Youth Art Month was further evidence of the flexibility inherent in such large-scale exhibitions of student art. The great extent to which the CoP fosters diversity and freedom among its members contributes to the sincere commitment of the participating art teachers to advance the curricula and practices of their school art programs. The professional development of individual art teachers in the CoP also contributes to the community’s cultural exposure to and awareness of art creation and appreciation.
A Shared Art Education Philosophy: Discipline-Based Art Education

Although the art teachers recognized the community as culturally and professionally diverse, Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) was the philosophical cornerstone in which their differentiated practices were deeply and commonly rooted. In the course of conversations during the monthly meetings, it was not necessarily evident that the art teachers shared a common theoretical ground. Yet, all of the informants declared that their teaching beliefs are entrenched in DBAE. This shared ideology tied the art teachers to a set of basic understandings that resulted in less conflicts and disagreements while carrying out the joint tasks of the CoP.

DBAE, then, is a domain of knowledge of the community (Wenger et al., 2002). The art teachers share their interests and make commitments to improve practices within the boundaries of the particular knowledge of DBAE. All of the informants mentioned that the art teachers in the CoP have, within the communal philosophy, different situations (such as their students’ art education experience) and different preferences for the four areas of DBAE (art production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history). In the community, novice art teachers, as well as experienced art teachers, advocate the philosophy of DBAE. The respondents noted that DBAE gives a common identity to the art teachers of the CoP. Thus, the art teachers tend to be committed to more complicated and long-standing projects, such as a three-year community art project called *The Story*, and feel motivated to promote such programs in the school curriculum. The shared passion of the art teachers, then, is consistent with the goals of the CoP, and the shared theoretical philosophy of the art teachers further inspires them to explore best practices within the community.
Question Two: What are the characteristics of the interpersonal relationships created by the art teachers?

This question concerns the relationships the art teachers developed through interactions within the community, and how these relationships influenced both these individual art teachers and the community as a whole.

Belonging and Interrelationships

Dewey’s pivotal notion of the “great community” (McKenna, 2001, p. 112), and feminist theorists’ beliefs about building a healthy community (Groenhout, 2004; Koehn, 1998) typically emphasize interactions with the real environment and an awareness of the social interconnectedness of human beings. Dewey’s “great community” theoretically was founded on a recognition of the interconnectedness and interdependence of human beings. “True associated living” (McKenna, 2001, p. 109) among humans, Dewey argued, involves seeking to encourage others’ improvement, not merely coexisting. In the same light, Dewey asserted the need for a “moral democracy” (Westbrook, 1991, p. 248) in which the common good is promoted through “free and open communication, unself-seeking and reciprocal relationships” (p. 248). His belief that individual liberty and community ideals can be simultaneously valued and sought after is consistent with the goals and practices of the CoP.

The art teachers in the CoP felt greatly isolated in their schools, since they did not belong to a specific grade group like the other teachers. For example, although Ellen disclosed that her original intention in joining the community was professional advancement, she stressed that her professionally amicable relationships with the art teachers of the CoP have been considerably influential in her life. In reality, a sense of belonging is a large part of what motivates the art teachers to attend the monthly meetings. For instance, Daniel does not try to miss any monthly meetings despite the long-distance drive from his school to the meeting place. His essential
purpose in attending the meetings is having the opportunity for social interaction with people who share his interests and who care about the same issues he does. Most of the art teachers, including Idelle and Haley, disclosed their need to touch base with other art teachers; they felt reassured in their professional lives through giving and receiving advice and helping each other, not merely by obtaining information. The isolation they experienced in their schools led their CoP relationships to be closer and more reliable. They experience a kind of interdependence within the community by helping and respecting each other, and they harbor in their minds a secure feeling of belonging to the world of art educators.

The relationships between art teachers are different from the kinds of strong attachments that form between kin. Rather, their relationships are based on mentoring and caring between professionals. These are not bureaucratic and hierarchical relationships formed by contract; they are instead personally intimate friendships formed through the small sub-groups that take shape in the CoP. These relationships are characterized by a conscious commitment to mutual improvement and a sense of ethical obligation to care for each other. Such ethical interrelationships stimulate actions and deliberations that contribute to elevating the good of one other (Koehn, 1998).

Creating Inter-professional Learning Contexts through Mentoring and Caring

The mentoring that took place in the CoP passed down the best practices, accumulated over more than 20 years, from mentor teachers to interns and beginning teachers. It was considered a mission of the older generation and represented a significant part of the ethics of the community. The novice teachers of one era have grown up to become the mentors for the next generation, with the support and assistance of the experienced art teachers who preceded them. The interview respondents seemed to cherish the moments when they mentally encountered their mentors, who they saw as being of utmost importance in their lives. Ann described how her
mentor inspired her to be a good art teacher just by being an exemplary professional art teacher. Jane felt a deep thankfulness and respect for her mentor. She described how, as an intern, she received advice and knowledge from her mentor that granted her complete freedom in teaching that she might not have felt otherwise. Leanne acknowledged that mentors make a big difference in challenging her to work harder. She has appreciated the fantastic things that the mentors around her have done, since they have made her feel competitive, motivating her to achieve the same level of creativity and accomplishment. The knowledge and practices of mentors are cornerstones on which the next generation of teachers is able to construct better practices. They help novice art teachers become professionals by sharing their love and passion for art, art education, and children, and steer them in constructive directions. Mentoring entails satisfaction both for mentor and mentee. As Blair said in an interview, mentoring involves a process of give and take in that a mentor gives something to the mentee, but gains something as well. Mentors have persevered and made progress in the community through their strong interpersonal attachments and a sense of accountability. After retiring, they long to ensure that the community’s practices will be further advanced by the succeeding members there.

Caring complements mentoring, and is another major part of the ethical relationships that form the community. According to Koehn (1998), the good life is achieved by giving and receiving support and care. Since our lives are interrelated, the expectation of giving care and being cared for is as natural as learning to speak and walk (Groenhout, 2004). The art teachers in the CoP manifested this spirit of care, treating each other in a warmhearted manner. Their sincere and amicable feelings bonded their friendships, leading them to lend a helping hand to each other whenever needed. When senior teachers retired, they were honored at parties hosted by members at their homes, and presented with gifts and cards. When members experienced the loss of divorce or death, they were consoled and comforted.
Caring also was demonstrated, of course, in the process of promoting others’ professional growth. On frequent occasions art teachers asked for help in dealing with particular art materials and techniques. They called or sent emails to those who knew specialized in ceramics, watercolor painting, glass crafts, printmaking, and so on. In addition, in the course of their frequent collaboration on community art projects, they shared know-how in the hours after school was out for the day, visiting colleagues at their schools and teaching them how to deal with various tasks. For the *Kids’ Guernica Project*, for instance, they discussed how to allot the space on a large canvas mural for each student and grade, how to move the canvas and where to dry it after painting, how to decide on a theme for the school with students, and so on.

Book study group meetings, especially, thrived with the variety of art technologies and knowledge of art education that were presented. Teachers shared successful practices they had engaged in at their schools, and often, teaching ideas or lesson plans were expanded and deepened through the ardent discussions of the art teachers. Such substantial, yet natural, conversations covered diverse topics: the features of art materials, such as paints, paper, and brushes; art techniques such as collage, photography, and 3D moving pictures; copyright issues in using artworks of students and artists; visits to schools by artists and collaborative payment for it; earning points for teacher certification renewal. Thus, the CoP represented the optimum context for teachers to absorb each other’s specific artistic skills and teaching practices. In this multi-expertise setting, the teachers’ learning was transformed and expanded (Engestrom, 1999).

The relationships developed within the CoP, then, were less personally intimate friendships than professional working fellowships. These professional caring relationships were built upon the cultural model of sharing and collaboration in the CoP. As members talked about teaching art and educating children, they shared their experiences, knowledge, vision, and beliefs (Miller & O’Shea, 1991). The resulting set of broad and complicated interactions within the CoP
fostered the learning of the teachers beyond the self-education context. The art teachers absorbed the collaborative learning culture.

By sharing their individual ideas in the process of learning, members constructed an identity for the CoP, one characterized by as the theoretical foundation of DBAE and a strong valuing of community. By extension, their joint actions resulted in community art projects like *Kids’ Guernica* and *The Story Project*, and shaped school-wide art curricula for individual art teachers. School-wide art programs like *Art for the Sky* (an ecological approach to art education) reflected the group’s strong commitment to promoting a sense of community in both students and parents through art. In this sense, the caring minds that art teachers have cultivated in their professional learning community had the effect on growing a spirit of community in their students and public through school-wide and county-wide art projects.

**Question Three: What resources do the art teachers use to achieve the goals of the community?**

This question refers to the means by which the art teachers achieved the joint, goal-oriented tasks of the CoP, including the resources they took advantage of in fulfilling its action and practices, such as artists and art education organizations. This question guides the exploration of two structural components of this CoP, its domain of interest and practice (Wenger et al., 2002). Questions related to the domain of the CoP concern the topics and issues cared about by the art teachers, how the domain is tied to the implementation of the community’s practice, and the leading edge and open questions of the domain. In examining the practice component of this community, I asked what knowledge the art teachers have shared, developed, and documented, what kinds of learning activities they have organized, what development projects this community has undertaken, and where sources of knowledge and benchmarks outside this community have been located.
Local Art Museums and the Council on Culture and Arts (COCA)

The community’s human resources have involved local and nationally-known artists, as well as professors from the art and art education departments of Florida State University (FSU) and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU). Its organizational sources have included the FSU Museum of Fine Arts, the Council on Culture and Arts (COCA), and local museums such as Mary Brogan Museum of Art and LeMoyne Center for the Visual Arts. The art teachers of the CoP have been engaged in many community outreach art projects and school-wide art projects in alliance with these local resources, in particular the FSU Museum of Fine Arts and COCA. They also have fostered school-wide art programs through which their students were exposed to diverse opportunities at local museums, such as a recent art event in support of the LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts. Haley described her part in developing an educational project sponsored by the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science. Also participating were six other art teachers from middle, high, and private schools in Tallahassee, as well as one graduate student from FSU, who was responsible for dealing with technology related to the project. This group ultimately created an educational packet consisting of an integrated art education curriculum about African-American history and art.

Partnership with the Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts

The Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts is the principal partner for this CoP. The art teachers and the curator of education at the museum, Viki Thompson Wydler, have had a reciprocally supportive partnership for years. Viki attends every monthly meeting, and informally, she meets up with the lead art teachers at restaurants or cafés as well as at the FSU museum at least once a month. They share their educational ideas over lunch or tea, and discuss themes for collaborative community-based art projects, such as the three-year *The Story Project* and the two-year *Kids’ Guernica Mural* project. The on-going conversations between Viki and
the art teachers have led to the successful fulfillment of a number of long-term community art projects. The acknowledgement of the catalogue for *The Story Project* described how it was developed by a team of art teachers from this CoP along with the FSU curator of education:

In 2005, Ellen suggested the growth of the curatorial/educational concept. She wanted to become a member of a curatorial team again, but this time she wanted to open the planning door to any school and any Leon County teacher who wanted to participate. We sat down to talk. ‘I think this exhibition should be about art and stories,’ she said. ‘The art should be narrative. We should look at any work that suggests a story—like Faith Ringgold’s quilts or work that focuses on heroes or myth or the everyday person. The exhibition would provide a good way to integrate visual and language arts.’ That day we mapped out a three-year plan and set a meeting time. We began spreading the word to visual arts and language arts teachers. Eventually teachers from 13 Leon County schools, and the Co-coordinator of Galleries at Tallahassee Community College, joined the team and began meeting once a month. All agreed on *The Story* as the exhibition title and did not even consider any other name. Together the team selected work and corresponded with the artists. Each teacher ‘adopted’ one or two artists for contact and interaction and determined to write the artists’ biographies for the catalogue with a sense of ‘story.’ The team felt the biographies should be written to appeal to multiple audiences which would include the general public and classrooms as well as the visual arts constituency of the Museum. The catalogue is being printed eight months early so teachers can use it to familiarize their faculties and/or use it with their lesson plans during the school year prior to the exhibition. (Catalogue of *The Story Project*, 2007, p. 4)

The professional relationships between the art teachers of the CoP and the FSU curator played a critical role in accomplishing such long-term projects. Viki was open-minded and
creative, and carefully considered the teachers preferences and educational purposes. She orchestrated, organized, and coordinated as a colleague, mentor, and curator. Her educational philosophies and beliefs were consistent with those of the art teachers of the team. Together they aimed to foster students’ affection and understanding toward art, ultimately enrich students’ lives by giving them a meaningful experience of art, and encourage the public’s commitment to art. Such common educational intentions and collaborative perseverance created a good partnership, which grew into one alliance with a variety of community institutions. Among the many institutions supporting The Story Project were: the Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts, with Curator of Education by Viki D. Thompson Wylder; a team of visual and language arts teachers from Leon County Schools; Allys Palladino-Craig, Director and Grantwriter; Jean Young, Permanent Collections Registrar/Fiscal Officer; Teri Yoo, Communications Officer; Wayne Vonada, Senior Preparator; Stephanie Tessin, Art in State Buildings. By the time of its execution, The Story Project was sponsored by Houghton Mifflin, the City of Tallahassee State Partners Grant Initiative and the Leon County Cultural Development Program, both administered by the Council on Culture and Arts for Tallahassee/Leon County; The State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs; the Florida Arts Council; and the National Endowment for the Arts.

In conclusion, one community art project grounded in collaboration between art education experts was effective in producing innovative ideas and better accomplishments (Engestrom & Middleton, 1996). It was an idiosyncratic opportunity for the public to learn and share in the understandings of the art teachers. In addition, as a team, the art experts were able to move the attention of government institutions and educational organizations toward art education. The art teachers and the curator of education at the FSU Museum of Fine Arts used their roles as cultural change agents to promote the entire community’s cultural growth.
Local Communities and Parent Volunteers

Four art teachers of the CoP collaborated with the local community in order to implement a large-scale, school-wide ecological art project, Art for the Sky, coordinated by a team of artists. The Art for the Sky project involved creating gigantic symbolic images to awaken our ability to see the world as a whole from the sky. In the project, all the students of a school, from kindergartners to fifth graders, gathered and created a big image. The art team and art teacher coordinated the scene and took pictures from atop big cranes and from helicopters. It took almost one month for the four schools to complete this project in each school. One school could not afford to pay to bring in the team and provide board and lodging. Thus, the art teachers of the four schools made a decision to engage collaboratively in this project. In addition, they made the best use of local community resources they could, including bringing in parent volunteers. A large portion of the expense of this project was donated by the business partners of each school, like Publix, Subway Sandwich, Britto restaurant, and so on. A crane was offered for free by a parent of one school that had one. Parents at another school who were professional photographers took pictures, at all the schools. The husband of one art teacher, who was a pilot, flew a helicopter over places where children and school staff had created a big image on the playground, for example, a whooping crane at Gilchrist Elementary School and a crocodile at Kate Sullivan Elementary School. Moreover, there were preparatory art lessons prior to this project at each school. The art teachers invited local ecological artists and Saint Marks Wildlife Refuge staff to the art lessons in order to inspire their students’ ecological concerns. In the end, The Story Project came together like an orchestra band of many local community volunteers, parents, and school staff.

The Goal of Community Art Projects and Events: Advocacy for Art Programs

The CoP studied was enthusiastically engaged in a number of community art projects that
ran parallel to their school-wide programs. As mentioned in the previous sections, the large art projects that took place at the county level came about through carefully constructed partnerships with art museums, educational institutions, and the public. Part of the purpose in conducting community art projects that coordinated with individual school-wide art projects was to help the public see the value of art programs and their place in school curricula. The teachers in the CoP were highly aware of the significance of exposing school art program practices and community projects to the public. By cultivating an involvement with local art communities and diverse networks of art experts, the teachers construct a base of collaborative partnerships promoting their community practices. On the strength of these partnerships, the art teachers of the CoP accomplished community art projects that attracted parents, students, educational administrators, and members of local art communities. In so doing, a sense of community through art was nurtured among them. The art teachers’ commitment to involvement in collaborative art projects created reciprocally supportive school-community-family relationships. Through this, the spiritual as well as physical and financial support they received from public and educational institutions enabled them to sustain and advance the conditions and outcomes of school art programs.

The art teachers sought to enhance their school art programs and enrich students’ art experiences by exposing the public to large-scale art events. This was their way of addressing concerns about increasing the participation of parents and educational administrators in school art programs. The art teachers wanted to let the public know what happens in art classes, what art education is, how children are immersed in creative art activities, how much children love art, and how greatly art education contributes to children’s whole development. They had nothing to hide; rather, they craved attention and appraisal from the public about their art practices, which have been given less consideration and been under-served by the current acute educational focus
Thus, a major goal of community art projects sponsored by the CoP was to gain public interest in art education. In addition, individual art teachers endeavored to strengthen the art programs for students at their school by exploring their own interests and keeping abreast of trends in art education. Each art teacher set up a year-long, thematic art education curriculum. Yet, rather than design fragmentary, temporary practices, the individual art teachers planned art projects structured around and consistent with the grade levels of students and the times and themes of community art projects. They held community exhibitions at a specific time of year concordant with the projects at their schools in order to give parents a special chance to see their children’s artworks, allow students to display their artworks to the public as student artists, and enable art teachers to show their professional competency to the public. The exhibitions at schools created the opportunity for open, free, and comfortable communication between art teachers and students, parents, principals, and administrators.

**Question Four: What characteristics of the community of practice foster the participation of the art teachers?**

This question is refers to the particular elements of this community that work to maintain the active and ongoing participation of the art teachers. The analysis and synthesis of interview transcripts and field notes revealed that the in-depth, continuous engagement of the art teachers with the CoP enables them to achieve their purposes for professional growth. The factors in this community have such a positive impact on learning over the professional lifespan, including supportive relationships and small talk, and joint practices with other teachers.

**Learning over the Professional Lifespan**

It is generally understood that student outcomes are directly impacted by a teacher’s particular teaching activities and the extent to which he or she effectively assists students’
learning (International Academy of Education, 2007). Fullan (1993) noted that “teachers’ capacities to deal with change, learn from it, and help students learn from it, will be critical for the future development of societies” (p. 4). The importance of meaningful learning throughout one’s career suggests a new paradigm for teacher learning, or at the very least, a new model of teacher professional development. Teacher learning policies and research must shift from a one-time, short-period, one-size-fits-all training model aimed at the acquisition of fragmentary knowledge and skills to a life-span learning model. This alternate approach must involve the exploration of a variety of resources that can be useful for classroom practice, and that can help teachers to make decisions and construct curriculum in the context of continuously changing and uncertain conditions. This new view of teacher education must envision sustained learning across the professional life span, rather than simply acquisition of the latest information about effective teaching process and techniques.

Most of the experienced art teachers in the CoP have been engaged in professional development over their entire careers, constantly equipping themselves with the latest art education theories, artistic techniques, and instructional strategies. In an interview, Blair confessed that without her participation in the CoP, she might not have developed past the knowledge and practice she acquired in her undergraduate courses, thus failing to adapt to changes in art education. Similarly, Ellen stated that the CoP represents a site where she can meet new and experienced art teachers, artists, and art educators, in partnership with universities like FSU or FAMU, for the purpose of gaining new information, reexamining previous knowledge and beliefs, learning about changes in the world of art and art education, and building on her own and others’ ideas and experiences. In this sense, this community is the intellectual, social, and cultural structure that promotes on-going professional growth by providing art teachers opportunities to think, talk, inquire, and read about art teaching in purposeful and
systematic ways.

The small learning groups that form within the community meet the specific needs of art teachers to advance their learning in a chosen area, such as watercolor painting, oil painting, printmaking, or book study. Thus, the CoP is not restricted to standardized, fixed programs for educating all art teachers. For instance, one book study group focused on setting up a kindergarten art curriculum and exploring art practices appropriate for their developmental level, since participants realized they lacked the proper theoretical foundation and experience for kindergarten art education. In the course of their study, they enthusiastically engaged in discussions about successful outcomes, problems, and solutions, introducing their kindergarteners’ artworks to the members of the book study.

The art teachers in the CoP were thinkers (not just do-ers) rather than knowers, whose ideas can be characterized as constructed rather than received. The art teachers in the study group carried their prior expertise and experiences to this new social situation, and collaboratively accomplished their shared purposes of learning about kindergarteners’ art. They ultimately constructed new knowledge and skills by linking previous knowledge and skills with new understandings. They did not merely receive information or implement teaching methods and curricula but also translated and interpreted art education practices, invented teaching strategies, and generated knowledge, curriculum, and instruction.

**Supportive Interrelationships and Small Talk**

One of the most outstanding features of this CoP was the interrelationships of the art teachers. In Chapter 4, the relationships among the art teachers are identified as mentoring and caring which is characteristic of friendship within the context of professional working relationships. The relationships among members of the CoP are tied by trust, sympathetic feelings for each other, and a professional and collegial mindset. The small groups, which are
organized to advance specific skills and knowledge as needed, often create tight connections between the members. Among the seasoned, longtime art teachers there are deep relationships that have expanded and solidified over their years together.

The CoP does not use a structured format for communication in the monthly meetings, teacher workshops, or book study group meetings. The members talk in unique and varying ways about teaching and learning. The conversations emerge naturally in an intimate kind of talk, and involve an unlimited range topics and ideas within the boundaries of the group’s common agenda, although members frequently share personal matters. They exchange classroom stories, share specific ideas and art practices, seek advice, and negotiate opinions. This small talk plays an important role – it fosters affirmative interrelationships, nurtures big philosophical ideas, and encourages the expression of diverse ideas and reconciliation necessary for larger community-based art projects.

Such reciprocally encouraging interrelationships within the community promoted caring and mentoring between the prospective and the experienced art teachers. Caring arose in informal, unplanned ways when someone wanted to gain from the dexterity of experienced art teachers with regard to classroom management, discipline, or artistic techniques. In such situations, the caring of the experienced teacher was seen as helping another face a personal difficulty in life. Caring minds and actions emerge from attentiveness to others’ needs, interests, and desires. Further, caring is not completed only by the care-giver, but is ideally executed when both the caregiver and the cared-for are reciprocally satisfied. This ethical relationship was especially evident when the colleagues were engaged in common practices, pursuing the good and success of the entire community.

Mentoring relationships between seasoned and newer art teachers in the community are much like caring in that they respond to the perception that someone is in need of care. It was
common for seasoned art teachers with longtime memberships in the CoP to willingly take the responsibility of helping beginning teachers attain the knowledge and skills they were so eager to absorb. Such encounters with a mentor were the most critical moments in the professional lives of these art teachers. In constructing relationships with mentors armed with a sense of mission and accountability, prospective teachers soaked up their approaches to art teaching, communicating with students, and coping with executive work. Such mentoring between art teachers took place from generation to generation of the CoP. In this way, the new teachers learned about the common purposes, concerns, and interests of the community, as the experienced teachers shared them the cultural artifacts that made up the essence of the community. Thus, in this CoP, mentoring referred not only to sharing of knowledge, but to the sharing of ideas and practices that characterized and sustained the learning culture of this community. In this sense, mentoring was a process of forging a common identity across the members in this culturally, socially structured site.

In this sense, natural conversations peppered with small talk helped to create ethical, supportive interpersonal relationships within the community, and formed a pivotal way in which the members constructively communicated with one another. These interrelationships functioned as the mainstay of the meaningful mentoring and caring that characterized the CoP.

**The Joint Practices of Art Teachers**

The art teachers’ learning in this community effectively reframed learning as an activity that occurred through participation. Rather than learning through the acquisition of established concepts and ideas, teachers learned through interpretation and action on the world as they sought to find useful resources to achieve their goals. The art teachers made a commitment to transforming the view of the public (including parents and education administrators) on art education, through continuous, knowledge-based, jointly-conceived and executed community-
based art projects. They presented their professional achievements to the public by holding a variety of exhibitions of student artworks. The processes involved in this joint practice included interpreting the characteristics of projects, finding artists, art experts and art organizations to support the projects, and expanding topics and practices through discursive interactions. Thus, the expertise required of the teachers consisted of, among other things, a capacity to work with other art teachers, artists, and curators of education of museums to accomplish a collective goal.

Teachers also were called on to attend to others’ sense-making and draw on the resources and expertise they could offer when responding to that sense-making (Edwards, 2007). They swapped ideas and traded opinions on subjects ranging from project planning to detailed artistic techniques necessary for promoting their art practices for the joint exhibitions. The different expertise of each art teacher created collaborative inter-professional practices. For instance, subgroups were created within the community according to the learning needs of the participating art teachers. Those who specialized in a skill, for example, watercolor painting, oil painting, glass sculpture, or printmaking, taught colleagues who wanted to learn one of those different artistic skills. In the book study group meeting, teacher shared art practices from their classrooms; their instructional techniques were as diverse as their range of expertise in artistic expression. Ellen specialized in water color painting. She gave a presentation in a book study meeting about the watercolor paintings she made with her students, and the use of techniques such work required. Haley, whose expertise is in ceramics, shared how she made reliefs in her art classes using clay and ceramic glazes. In one book study meeting, Kate, who is well-versed in art history, displayed an artistic timeline of the history of human beings that she combined with artifacts in a community-based art exhibition, and provided ideas about how to teach it to students.

To execute community-based art exhibitions or projects such as Youth Art Month and
Winterfest, the art teachers undertook different roles. Beginning and developing teachers were in charge of practical business like mapping out a structured plan and making contacts with art and education organizations, while experienced teachers acted as leaders by posting signs with the various points they were making. Through this engagement in joint practices, both the young generation of teachers and the seasoned teachers learned how to recognize resources and the work that needs to be done to negotiate the use of resources that are situated in overlapping social and cultural contexts. As a result, members’ professional knowledge about using resources was expanded, individual art teacher practices grew, and ways of thinking and acting were transformed.

**Implications for Professional Development and Art Education**

My research on the use of a CoP for professional development by art teachers was guided by the goal of exploring the nature of a CoP as a social, cultural, and educational system for promoting and supporting art teachers’ professional growth. Much like the definition of a CoP offered by Wenger et al. (2002), the CoP of art teachers I studied was an informal, voluntary, and art education knowledge-based and practice-centered social structure. While the CoP maintained a shared educational philosophy and common pedagogical practices, it was the acknowledgement of autonomy and diversity among the art teachers that enabled the group to conduct art programs that were a powerful thrust to accomplishing the community’s joint tasks. The personal and group achievements of the teachers I studied have led me to believe that the learning and professional development of art teachers can be maximized by participation in a community of practice, in contrast to a curriculum coverage model revealing the ineffectiveness in teacher education (Conkling, 2002) or the transitory provision of de-contextualized and fragmented content in teacher professional development programs (Little, 2002). Consistent with supporting this fundamentally untraditional approach to art teacher learning, this study
illuminates key implications for future models of art teacher professional development.

**Seeing Art Teacher Learning as Continuous Professional Growth: A New Paradigm**

The results of this study have shown that art teacher’s professional development should be contextualized in a social, cultural site of intellectual conversation, critical inquiry, and interactive exploration. This notion requires a re-conceptualization of art teachers as constructivists who inquire into messy, complex, real teaching and learning contexts, interpret and translate subject matter, and originate instructional strategies and knowledge of curricula, rather than receivers of information or implementers of given teaching methods and curricula.

For prospective and beginning art teachers, the CoP studied served as a bridge from the art education theories they learned at the university to the critical inquiry required to understand and work with students – made possible by the mentor teachers with whom they could reflect on their practices. For the leading, seasoned art teachers, this CoP functioned as a source of support that promoted their learning over their entire professional lifespan. Such a transformation in the concept of teacher learning extends the existing periodic in-service staff development model, with its focus on training in the latest educational theory and artistic techniques, into a model that engenders constant learning among art teachers by evoking their aspirations to better teaching of art in the context of inter-professional learning of the CoP.

In sum, new conceptualizations of learning compel us to be mindful about how to foster the optimal conditions for art teachers’ continuous learning, and take note of such conditions when mapping out policy and research related to art teacher education and professional development.

**Fostering Meaningful Relationships between Art Teachers**

Supportive interrelationships are one of the most influential factors in upholding the learning of art teachers within the community. A prominent component of the interrelationships
in this community was mentoring and caring, which were deeply embedded in the mutual, collegial support between these colleagues. The interrelationships aimed for common goals, that is, the development and maintenance of the CoP, the individual accomplishment of successful art teaching practice, and the advancement of school art programs.

Trusting mentoring and caring relationships contributed to creating an open-minded and agreeable climate in which the art teachers felt free to ask for and give advice and voice different opinions. Teachers developed not only personally intimate friendships, but also intellectual, collegial, professional relationships. Through mentoring and caring, the community’s artifacts, most importantly the knowledge and practices the art teachers have accumulated over a long time, were transmitted from the former generation to the coming generation of the CoP. In the process of forging and cultivating a common community identity, democratic interactions fostered diverse discourses centering on the group’s common beliefs.

In particular, the conversations that emerged in the process of mentoring and caring enabled the art teachers to ask questions about problematic situations and obtain answers genuinely rooted in effective art teaching and learning. The ongoing processes of examination and exploration created a collaborative learning culture within the community, and the participating art teachers came to internalize a new vision of collaborative inquiry and continuous growth. The collaborative spirit engendered by mentoring and caring built up a sense of community among participants, and led naturally to the sort of community-based art projects in which the CoP engaged. Hargreaves (1994) described the function of a collaborative culture:

Collaborative cultures can extend into joint work, mutual observation, and focused reflective inquiry in ways that extend practice critically, searching for better alternatives in the continuous quest for improvement. In these cases, collaborative cultures are not cozy, complacent, and politically quiescent. (p. 195)
Accordingly, those involved in art teacher education and professional development should consider fostering collaborative mentorships and caring relationships among art teachers. To this end, they should advance art teachers’ professional growth by initiating CoPs where art teachers are empowered, acknowledged, and rewarded, rather than solely promoting and rewarding individual accomplishment and autonomy that can lead to the scholarly isolation of teachers.

**Enriching School Art Programs through Community-based Art Projects**

The community-based art projects conducted by this CoP of art teachers distinguished it from other collaborations more focused on the accomplishments of individual teachers. While the CoP, as a team, has firmly built collaborative partnership with a variety of experts, including artists, art education organizations, local museums, and university art museums, the art teachers have individually worked with the diverse local art experts.

The monthly meetings of the CoP studied played an important role in illuminating current happenings in the field of art education and in the world of art, since experts from art and art education communities also attended the meetings and inform members of their upcoming art events. The CoP augmented the opportunities available to art teachers searching for diverse art educational programs, helping them to make choices that were more appropriate for their own school, students, and art educational philosophy. The CoP has made recent commitments to large community-based art projects, including *The Story Project*, the *Kids’ Guernica* project, and the next project, *Generation*. These huge projects were prepared over at least two years by the art teachers of this community and the curator of education at the FSU museum, often with the administration and support of COCA. The professional and friendly partnership of the art teachers with the curator of the FSU Museum of Fine Arts was a key impetus in accomplishing these community projects, enabling the teachers to expand their vision of art education, negotiate diverse opinions, and share art educational philosophies, trends, theories, and practices. The
natural, small talks between them led to unprecedented community-based art projects that
cultivated a liberating and democratic learning environment for students and the public in
relation to art.

In addition, diverse art events and exhibitions of students’ artworks have been held at
public spaces like Gallery 621, the public library, city hall, the attorney general’s office, and so
on. Sharing school-wide art programs and community-wide art projects with the public provided
a special chance to extend the horizons of parents, administrators, and general teachers toward
art education: they experienced with their own eyes how art programs contribute to children’s
growth. In addition, acknowledgement from the public constructed a trusting and supportive
school-community-family relationship. The concerted efforts of these three educational entities,
joined in the goal of enriching students’ art experiences, improved the conditions and outcomes
of school art programs.

Based on previous research on teacher professional development, which put more
emphasis on individual teacher’s learning within a CoP and discovering best practices in a
specific subject matter (Baildon & Damico, 2008; Desimone et al., 2002; Engestrom &
Danielson, 2006), it was presumed at the outset of this study that professional development in a
CoP may be restricted merely to augmenting teachers’ knowledge of instructional strategies. Yet,
this study revealed that the way of work in this CoP created cultural connections between the art
teachers and the community and gave them access to resources in the local communities that
went far beyond the learning of knowledge and practice they might have gained in a book study
meeting or workshop. The meaningful activities of the community-based art projects helped art
teachers to expand their horizons, even to the extent of making a commitment to social justice
and global responsibility.
Art Teacher Knowledge and Practice

Another implication of this research is that art teacher practices arise from their knowledge and theories: it is a mistaken assumption that theory is the exclusive possession of the university, while practice is the exclusive possession of the school. Assuming that teacher practices are tightly connected to research and theory, this study shed light on knowledge and practice can be balanced in teacher education. The art teachers made an effort to keep abreast of new theories and practices in art education by organizing book study group meetings and attending leading conferences of art educators, such as National Art Education Association and Florida Art Education Association.

The theoretical foundation of the CoP mainly originated from Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE). Integrated art education followed DBAE as the predominant educational approach of the art teachers. The art teachers’ recognition and knowledge of trends in contemporary art and art education expanded their practice: the more they knew about subject matter, educational theory, pedagogy, and instructional strategies, the more effective were the practices they developed. Accomplished art teachers of the CoP usually carried a deep knowledge base of art education theories, artistic skills, and effective teaching strategies, thus enabling them to create opportunities for meaningful art experiences among their students. The CoP contributed to advancing such practical knowledge by giving teachers access to knowledge sources outside their classroom, like artists and other art educators, and by sharing new art programs and art lessons.

The CoP provided art teachers with the opportunity to make explicit the tacit knowledge gained from experience. It allowed teachers to reflect on and articulate practices with more or less experienced professional art teachers. The book study meetings also facilitated teachers’ discourses on practice, practical inquiries, and reflections on practices. Such meetings offered a
treasure chest of teacher experiences and practices for novice teachers, growing teachers, and seasoned teachers to explore collaboratively. By working on the critical inquiries that emerged in the community, they generated a localized knowledge of practice and theory, and constructed opportunities to connect with larger social, cultural, and political issues.

Limitations

This study explored the nature of art teachers’ professional learning within a CoP. The site and sample were selected based upon researcher convenience; this research did not aim to generalize the findings. While it was deliberatively confined to a single CoP, in the larger picture of research on art teacher’s professional development, this study provided a wealth of knowledge about positive impacts on teachers engaged in a community of practice, and may offer solutions applicable to other CoPs of art teachers.

Participant Observation

In order to gather this information, I utilized multiple instruments for data collection, including participant observation and ethnographic interview. I engaged in participant observation to maximize my ability to discern the deeper nature of interactions beyond superficial phenomena. Despite being a deeply engaged member of this CoP, however, my position as a researcher still restricted my role in the CoP, resulting in limitation of access to emails privately or ordinarily exchanged among the art teachers in implementing community joint tasks; differences between my participation as a volunteer rather than a real member of the community; limitations in intruding into their discussion without previously shared philosophical grounds and practice experience. However, my long engagement with the CoP over one-and-a-half years, from pilot testing to completing the collection of data for this research, helped me to build sufficient rapport with the art teachers to become highly familiar with the practices of this community.
Sample

An additional limitation concerns the informants for the interviews. Out of 13 informants, three art teachers had less than five years of teaching experience; one art teacher had between five and ten years of experience; two art teachers had from ten to 20 years of experience; and seven art teachers had more than 20 years of experience. While I was able to attain much information from experienced art teachers with a long membership in the CoP, I may have gained more information from beginning and growing art teachers whose enthusiasm and initiative, and desire to fully engage in the CoP may have provided deeper insights into their dynamic, complex learning.

Application of a Feminist-Pragmatist Model

Lastly, a feminist-pragmatist model of community (Abowitz, 1999) led to the use of the concept of an ethic of care as a tool for analyzing the soundness of this CoP. The supportive relationship of caring fostered a democratic mood and created an equalizing balance between questioning and sharing of different opinions and respecting and helping each other. At the same time, critical thinking or critical dialogues (Longino, 1993) are another ethic for interrelationships drawn from the assumptions of the feminist-pragmatist model of community, and these were clearly seen in this CoP.

However, this CoP did not overtly articulate the different social, political, geological, and historical backgrounds of its members or seek to arbitrate subsequent issues; the art teachers were not in the stage of negotiating differences but already largely assimilated with each other and stable in communicating within a common theoretical foundation of art education. Instead of fervent arguments or discussions over major differences, when disagreement occurred, conversations in which alternate suggestions were made seemed neither controversial nor contentious, and represented the primary type of sharing in the CoP. Therefore, I did not observe
that practices of the CoP were improved or integrated through coping with a great deal of disagreements and plural perspectives (Dewey, 1917; Pappas, 2008).

**Areas for Further Study**

This research provides a foundation for future research on this topic. In the following section, I suggest three possibilities for replicating this study in relation to the conceptual framework, sample, and methodology. These alterations of this study put additional emphases on the organic interplay of the three areas of a CoP that correspond to the professional improvement of art teachers, and the interrelationship and practices that emerge in the CoP’s small subgroups.

**Conceptual Framework**

The model of a CoP provided by Wenger et al. (2002) was employed as a conceptual framework in this study, and was a helpful tool in envisioning an overall picture of this community. Based on this lens, this study centered on three main areas in the structure of a CoP: domain, community, and practice. This model would be helpful, then, in examining the relations among these three areas by centralizing a focus on each of them. For instance, in order to explore practice, one could look at how the CoP creates new knowledge by examining the discussion and conversation, and ways of using resources, generated by a book study group’s learning activities. Similar intensive investigations into the areas of the community and the domain would enrich our understanding of the structure of a CoP.

**Alternative Sample**

This research helped to envision a comprehensive picture of a CoP of art teachers by applying an integrated approach to the three areas of one CoP. In this way, the systematic features of these three areas were comprehensively investigated. Yet, in capturing an overall view of a CoP, it was difficult to obtain highly-nuanced insights about individual art teacher’s professional development. Thus, a focus on the learning process of one or two art teachers would
provide an in-depth investigation of the learning of prospective, beginning, growing, or experienced art teachers with detailed, concrete understandings of the features of professional growth corresponding to particular levels of teaching experience. For instance, mentoring relationships functioned as a driving force in strengthening and unifying the CoP, forming a cornerstone of trusting and supportive interrelationships. Studying such one-on-one mentoring relationships would allow the researcher to carefully observe complicated, dynamic interactions. Similarly, conducting case studies of the professional development of three or four teachers in a CoP would lead the researcher to discern each teacher’s distinctive teaching styles and differentiated pathways of professional growth. The participants of this study pursued professional growth in their own ways; the professional interests of art teachers are diverse and their expertise is pluralistic. For instance, one may be more interested in collaborative work with art and art education organizations, and publicly leading community-based art projects. Another may throw energy into nurturing knowledge and skills, participating in small learning groups within the CoP. Examining the subtle differences and commonalities in the ways of different art teacher’s professional growth would shed light on the nature of professionalism among art teachers.

Methodology

This study yielded significant implications regarding the valuable functions of mutually supportive partnerships between the CoP and local art organizations and art communities. In particular, it was evident that the interpersonal, collaborative partnership with a university museum was exceptionally critical to the successful accomplishment of community-based art projects, which extended the ways of thinking of individual art teachers toward art and art education from individual creation to sharing arts in public spaces as a service enriching the cultural growth of the community. In this context, it would be a useful for researchers to focus on
community-based art projects conducted in partnership with diverse local community resources. While implementing community-based art projects, the art teachers in this study advanced their school-wide art programs, furthering students’ artistic growth and creating successful art experiences for them. More research could examine how communities of practice of art teachers implement large-scale, community-based art exhibitions of their students’ work, and what influence such community-based art projects have on teachers’ professional growth. Moreover, research on school-wide art projects conducted in alliance with local art educators and artists would likely have valuable implications for art teachers’ professional development.

**Conclusion**

This study revealed that a CoP is an effective venue for art teachers’ professional development. An assumption was made in conducting this study that art teachers’ professionalism does not derive from guaranteeing individual autonomy or requiring individual accountability for professional development, but from providing teachers with opportunities to commit to collaborative practices in an inter-professional setting. A CoP of art teachers is such a setting that deserves more attention as a cultural, social, and educational resource for effectively fostering art teachers’ professional learning in accord with a new conception of professionalism.

The notion of providing professional development through engagement in a CoP points to fertile ground for art education policy and research and to a new paradigm for art teacher learning. This study illuminated the functions of the interrelationships within a CoP, as well as its critical contribution to the advancement of school art programs through the collective commitment of participating teachers, and to expanding their own and others’ art teaching knowledge and expertise.
APPENDIX A

OBSERVATION RUBRIC

1. Description of how the art teachers respond to different opinions of other members during discussion.

2. Description of how the art teachers make decision.

3. Description of how the art teachers emotionally and physically support each others.

4. Description of what material resources the art teachers employ and create.

5. Description of with what experts the art teachers attempt to contact both within and out of the community and what benefits they gain from the contacts with them (how the contacts with them influence the art teachers).
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Tell me about how the members of the CoP deal with diverse perspectives.

2. Talk to me about how you respond when the members of the community present ideas that are different from yours.

3. How did you feel when you received help from other members?

4. Talk to me about your experience of giving your help to other members.

5. Have you met mentors or good friends in the CoP? Tell me about them.
   1) How did you come to become a member of the CoP or a mentor?
   2) How do you understand mentoring in your life?

6. Tell me about your experience when you have done art projects or activities with other experts within the community or out of it.
   1) With whom did you work together and how did you find those experts?
   2) What were the goals of the art projects or events?
   3) What roles were you and your colleagues responsible for to accomplish those projects?

7. How does the art teacher’s meeting affect your professional growth?

8. How is the monthly meeting different from other opportunities like workshops provided by universities?
APPENDIX C

INITIAL THEORETICAL MEMO (EXAMPLE)

The following memo clarifies the ideas and connects it to information from a case

The mandatory factors facilitating the participation of art teachers are the common matters which art teachers face. They are exterior pressures that require art teachers to be continuously involved in developing their teaching competencies. National, state, and district policies might be the main factors pushing them to develop the practical teaching qualities of art teachers. To verify their accountability, the participation of art teachers in diverse workshops is necessary. Although it is true that the institutional conditions function as a dominant pressure for professional development, their intrinsic needs toward both learning and social engagement are more likely to be a motivation to become art education experts. Thus, the associations between teachers, including a monthly meeting, a book study meeting, a hands-on workshop, and a workshop for the upcoming community-based art project – the Guernica project, are not characteristic of bureaucratic, top-down mandatory training courses. They are places where their lives proceed, challenges are tried, and desires are realized as a professional art teacher. What art teachers define as professional development is diverse, ranging from micro practical issues like classroom management, time scheduling, and disciplining students to the embodiment of community ideals. The art teachers interviewed commonly mentioned “a big vision” as the most primary quality of a professional art teacher. The structure of their community can be illustrated as a map: some sub-meetings branch out around a central monthly meeting. Mentor leaders play a key role in providing new ideas and opportunities for the members by rigorously participating in big workshops, projects, or conferences held outside of the state and county. The visions of the leader teachers do not stay at the level of classroom teaching but also embrace social advocacy by sharing the outcomes of their teaching – the students’ artworks – with people in the community in public places. This is the way to make their voices heard, to showcase the significant influence of art education not only on student development but also on the community, since the teachers believe that such exposure will foster a supportive climate for art education in our society.
APPENDIX D

CASE ANALYSIS FORM: OBSERVATION (EXAMPLE)

1. MAIN THEMES, IMPRESSIONS, SUMMARY STATEMENTS about what is going on in the state
   1. Conversation is the cardinal form of informal interaction occurring in art teachers’ community of practice.
   2. Interaction of art teachers offers art teachers the opportunity to share information each other and reflect their practices.
   3. Contents of conversation allow art teachers to produce knowledge in relation to pedagogy, subject matters, art techniques, and problem-solving in enhancing their practices.
   4. Forms of conversation are identified by the characteristics of inquiry, informal natural talking, discussion for collaborative problem-solving, and inspiring feedback, emerging in voluntary participation setting.
   5. Exchange of information is occurred in personal relationships among teachers formed through community participation, which provides resources for their practices.

2. EXPLANATIONS, SPECULATIONS, HYPOTHESES about what is going on in the site
   1. Natural, intimate interaction occurring in community of practice plays a critical role in sustaining active participation of art teachers.
   2. Sustainable participation underpins on-going learning for professional development of art teachers.
   3. The monthly meeting provides broad conceptualizations of teaching philosophy and configurations for practices. Teachers should transform the ideas gained from the meeting into practitioner teaching knowledge.
   4. Knowledge, through which art teachers transform the broaden ideas into practical for practices, is created from autonomy of individual art teachers.
   5. Cooperative works with the public educational institutes, which are related to students’ art activities, is a main way to gain advocacy of art teachers.
   6. Art teachers make an effort to searching for ideas to develop the practices appropriate for their students’ characteristics and coping with essences of subject matters. Their practices are a composite body of all knowledge.
7. Personal propensity to teaching is a critical factor in prompting their professional development, including belief, attitude, or knowledge. The individual efforts of professional teachers promote development of their community of practice.

3. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS, MINORITY REPORTS, DISAGREEMENTS about what is going on in the state
   1. Learning in their community of practice does not necessarily refer to attainment of knowledge directly used in their practices. It is efforts and capabilities of individual art teachers in transforming abstract knowledge that are indispensable for creating practitioner knowledge.
   2. Professional qualities of art teachers may have been formed through life-long participation in communities of practice. Those professional attainments may have been developed by individual efforts such as searching for information their practices as well.

4. NEXT STEPS FOR DATA COLLECTION: follow-up question, specific action, general directions, field work should take
   1. Need to observe other art teachers’ practices to explore the features of professional qualities. (individual professional development efforts)
   2. Need to observe individual art teachers’ practices in relation to their upcoming community project, “Guernica,” whose theme is “peace,” but the respective practices implemented in each art teacher’s art class would be different. (collaborative professional development efforts)
   3. Need to observe and record their conversation to investigate what they do and what they feel influence on sustaining the community of practice.

5. Implications for REVISION, UPDATING OF CODING SCHEME
   1. Need to observe their conversation more in detail.
   2. Need to analyze their interaction via e-mails.
   3. Find broader labels for coding too specific codes.
APPENDIX E

CASE ANALYSIS FORM: INTERVIEW (EXAMPLE)

1. MAIN THEMES, IMPRESSIONS, SUMMARY STATEMENTS about what is going on in the state
   1. Art teachers’ community of practice is “a social space” necessary for creating practitioner knowledge.
   2. The ways of their “interaction” – inquiry, discussion, and collaborative exploration - in the community are democratic, not bureaucratic.
   3. The professional knowledge art teachers create in the community is “transformative, reified forms” of generalized theories.
   4. The community can be demonstrated by an umbrella structure: one main meeting and sub-meetings branched out from it.
   5. The central meeting consists of mainly elementary art teachers and a few secondary art teachers from the Leon County. The roles of the members are diverse and changeable, but some leading teachers serve as mentors of the members.
   6. The small size sub-meetings were spontaneously formed by their needs to learn more in the particular areas of art education.

2. EXPLANATIONS, SPECULATIONS, HYPOTHESES about what is going on in the site
   1. Art teachers strongly feel the need to participate in their learning communities because of pressures out of school reform policies to call upon professional development of teachers.
   2. Art teachers participate in the community not only to share common difficulties and information for professional development in the community but also to establish a sense of robust engagement with the community in itself.
   3. The past experiences in teaching art may make them long for creating their professional community because they realized they did hardly have had a source to gain feedback and better practical strategies and knowledge for their individual teaching.
   4. Art teachers aspire to train artistic techniques for their teaching.
   5. Art teachers make an effort to attain social advocacy about art education by sharing what they have been implementing for students in the public arena. The enhancement of social advocacy may contribute to bringing them strengthens to grow more engagement to their teaching as well as to encouraging students.
6. The professional qualities of art teachers may involve proficiency in organizing curriculum, implementing art lessons corresponding to students’ characteristics, and taking their students to the different art world through fostering their interplays with other communities.

3. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS, MINORITY REPORTS, DISAGREEMENTS about what is going on in the state

1. There may be conflicts among the members in making decisions and managing the community such as teaching philosophies or implementing projects as well as cooperation, openness, or harmonious dialogues. (How they cope with the conflicts?, How they self-governed the community of practice?)

2. Focus not only on interactions for collective learning but also individual learning. How is individual learning in the community of practice characterized? Their individual learning may accompany creation of meaning. They may learn through experience. The community of practice provides the space for the experience.

4. NEXT STEPS FOR DATA COLLECTION: follow-up question, specific action, general directions, field work should take

1. Need to talk with leaders of the main meeting and ask what specific things they have been doing for the meeting, and how they perceive the presence of the community as an art teacher.

2. Need to observe the workshops implemented in sub-meetings to know how they feel when they share their knowledge with other teachers, how they interact with each other.

3. Observe what they do in the workshops and what types of interactions occur.

4. Observe how to apply practices of other teacher into their classroom practices or transform the knowledge or technique into one appropriate for their students, after participating in their meetings or workshops

5. Ask about what efforts they have been making for their strong engagement with the community.

6. Ask What the desires are art teachers realize in the community.

7. Ask missing questions to them in the first interview

5. Implications for REVISION, UPDATING OF CODING SCHEME

1. Consider the ways to cope with conflicts

2. Need to more specifically demonstrate the types of interactions

3. Codes of the ways (such as language expressions) to foster strong engagement of the members

4. Change the specific codes into more general. Group some similar codes into one code
Conversation

The purpose of the study is to examine how art teachers enhance their professional qualities in their collegial community. This inquiry is concerned with investigating the characteristics of interactions in a community of practice as a facilitative learning environment. A community of practice, as Nickols (2000) said, is “a voluntary, informal gathering and sharing of expertise, not a corporate program.” This study commences with the assumption that the interpretive meanings of informal interactions in the community of practice will manifest themselves through investigating ordinary situated conversations, including teacher’s conceptions of subject, pedagogy, knowledge, and practice, and the ways in which teachers are conducive to professional learning (Little, 2002). Thus transcripts of digital recordings, as well as field notes of observations, are employed as primary sources for analyzing the characteristics of conversation among art teachers. Little (2002) stressed the significance of “discourse analysis (p. 920)” as a crucial strategy for capturing the content and disposition of teacher interactions. Further, the structures and processes of the interactions have an influence on the culture of discourses about teaching practice in a teacher learning community. In this regard, the coding of field notes and transcripts needs to be implemented through in-depth analysis of their conversations.

Knowledge-based Practice and Knowledge for Practice

Ideas about the art teachers’ practices are gained not only from other teachers in the community of practice but also from reading publications related to art teacher practices. The teachers realize the necessity of exploring diverse resources to broaden and deepen their students’ experiences even more. Their successful practices are derived in part from the shared knowledge of other teacher. Such practices represent crystallizations of teacher’s varied and comprehensive knowledge, such as knowledge of student development and learning, subject matter, class management, curriculum construction, art techniques and teaching skills, research of diverse materials, and so on.
APPENDIX G

CODE EXPLICATION (EXAMPLE)

SECTION I: ART TEACHERS’ PERCEPTION ABOUT COMMUNITY’S PERSPECTIVES

UN-DI: UNITED GROUP DIVERSITY
Different situations of art teachers/ Diversity of population of the community, a good range of age/ Certain disagreements but it’s nothing big/ Consensus/ Different perspectives, Little disagreements and conflicts, etc.
Examples:
• “We just agree with what we have different ideas”
• “When the group is going to do something together, we have to agree a little bit”
• “We have a nice diverse group of art teachers”

UN-MI: MINDSET TOWARD DIFFERENCE
Trial and error, the process of negotiation of differences, learning stages for dealing with differences/ Disagreements, yes, but conflicts, no/ Enjoying hearing different ideas/ Open-minded/ Respect different skills and teaching styles of other teachers; talking to different people improves teaching a lot, etc.
Examples:
• “When I hear different perspectives, I enjoy hearing what other people had to say. That’s interesting. I think that when the art people get together, everybody is very creative. They may have different ideas about how problem should be solved”
• “Everyone has different perspectives. From what I see, I think everyone has pretty well their opinions and the way the teachers are value”
• “We have a nice group of different backgrounds”

UN-DI-PR: DIVERSITY IN ART EDUCATION PRACTICES
Similar responsibilities and objectives of the roles for art projects, but individual goals to accomplish the projects/ diverse school cultural fair-school wide art project, theme, etc.
Examples:
• “I really love the projects even if we have different styles. We still come together onto community projects”
• “In the art workshops, everyone had similar responsibilities and objectives. We all shared creative ideas. However, we each had to attain our own individual goals to accomplish the projects”
• At the art meetings, people bring their ideas to the art meetings. If I have a question about my practice, the lesson I am developing, for instance, is it okay? When I come to art meetings, I bring samples and tell people what I’m doing. Our lesson plans would be totally different. Everybody teaches different artists. But they are really likely that “oh, that’s a great idea. How did you do that?”
• “It’s really a broad, similar base and then everyone goes about teaching differently”

UN-DI-SI: UNITED GROUP DIVERSITY SIMILARITY One shared philosophy and diverse practices
Examples:
• “There are a lot of similarities. The philosophy that I think of is the Discipline Based Art Education. I think that a lot of art teachers follow that thought. The teachers are incorporating the parts of the DBAE, aesthetics, art history, art creation, and criticism. Maybe some art teachers enjoy certain parts of it more. So they focus more like”

UN-AT ATTITUDE TOWARD DIVERSITY Listening, politeness, and respectfulness, etc.
Examples:
• “They are only ones in their schools. When we get together at the monthly meeting, we just support each other. As far as I know, there is nobody who disagrees with anybody”
• “They just listen. I mean we are allowed to express our own opinion. It’s a safe place to talk and give your opinion. I haven’t seen anybody put down or anything and talk badly about because they have different opinion. They are polite and respectful. When I have different opinions, I freely speak up. We are a pretty agreeable group”
APPENDIX H

HUMAN SUBJECT APPROVAL

Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392
APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 12/15/2009
To: Jeonghyo Kim
Address: 2325 W. Pensacola st. APT#149, Tallahassee, FL 32304
Dept.: ART EDUCATION
From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair
Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research

Art Teachers' Professional Development in a Community of Practice

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in
the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members
of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Expedited per 45 CFR §
46.110(7) and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except
to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential
risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may
be required. If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved
stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice.

Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects. If
the project has not been completed by 12/13/2010 you must request a renewal of approval for
continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your
expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.
Cc: PAT VILLENEUVE, Advisor
HSC No. 2009.3670
INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW
[Art Teachers' Professional Development in a Community of Practice]

Dear Participant:

You are invited to be in a research study of art teachers' professional development in a community of practice. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been engaged in the community for a long period, and are considered as dedicated to the development of the community, novice art teachers, or mentors or leaders of this community. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Jeonghyo Kim, Department of Art Education, Florida State University. The purpose of this study is to examine what is the purpose of a community of practice of art teachers attending in a monthly meeting in Tallahassee, Florida. In particular, this study aims to investigate the potential of a community of practice crucial for art teachers' professional development. If you agree to be interviewed in this research, I would ask you to participate in interviews and answer interview questions, including your perceptions to different perspectives of other art teachers and relationships among art teachers, and the ways to do joint activities of the community. The length of time for an interview will be less than one-and-a half hours and the frequency of an interview will be once. The location for the interview will be your school.

Risks are minimal: Comments you make may be included in the study. I would like to state that you will not benefit directly from participating in this research study and will not be paid for participating in this research study. The results of this study will be shared with you.

The records of this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent allowed by law. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify subjects by using pseudonyms. In addition, I will not link pseudonyms to places of employment (names of schools) and use time ranges for teaching experience, rather than specific numbers of years. Research records will be stored electronically in my computer at home and secured by passwords, and only researcher will have access to the records. These materials will be stored for three years after the completion of this research and will be destroyed after the three years.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the department of art education of Florida State University. If you decide to be a participant for this research study, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

The researcher conducting this study is Jeonghyo Kim. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact me at the Department of Art Education, Florida State University, 301 Francis Eppes Building, Tallahassee, FL 32306, Tel. 850-766-5745, jkohji@fsu.edu. And you can contact an advisor of this researcher, Pat Villeneuve, pvilleneuve@fsu.edu, Tel. 850-644-5473.

FSU Human Subjects Committee approved on 12/14/09 VOID after 12/13/2010 HSC# 2009.3670
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.
I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

________________________________________  ____________
Signature                                      Date

________________________________________  ____________
Signature of Investigator                      Date

FSU Human Subjects Committee approved on 12/14/09 VOID after 12/13/2010 HSC# 2009.3670
INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR OBSERVATION
[Art Teachers' Professional Development in a Community of Practice]

Dear Participant:

You are invited to be in a research study of art teachers' professional development in a community of practice. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been engaged in the community for a long period, and are considered as dedicated to the development of the community, novice art teachers, or mentors or leaders of this community. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Jeonghyo Kim, Department of Art Education, Florida State University. The purpose of this study is to examine what is the purpose of a community of practice of art teachers in Tallahassee, Florida. The purpose of this study is to examine what is the purpose of a community of practice of art teachers attending in a monthly meeting in Tallahassee, Florida. In particular, this study aims to investigate the potential of a community of practice crucial for art teachers' professional development.

If you agree to be observed in this research, I would ask you to permit this researcher to record your activities and interactions in the monthly meeting, a book study group meeting, and art workshops with audio-recording equipment such as mp3 and voice-recorder.

Risks are minimal: Comments you make may be included in the study. I would like to state that you will not benefit directly from participating in this research study and will not be paid for participating in this research study. The results of this study will be shared with you.

The records of this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent allowed by law. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify subjects by using pseudonyms. In addition, I will not link pseudonyms to places of employment (names of schools) and use time ranges for teaching experience, rather than specific numbers of years. Research records will be stored electronically in my computer at home and secured by passwords, and only researcher will have access to the records. These materials will be stored for three years after the completion of this research and will be destroyed after the three years.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the department of art education of Florida State University. If you decide to be a participant for this research study, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

The researcher conducting this study is Jeonghyo Kim. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact me at the Department of Art Education, Florida State University, 301 Francis Eppes Building, Tallahassee, FL 32306, Tel. 850-766-5745, jk06j@fsu.edu. And you can contact an advisor of this researcher, Pat Villeneuve, pvilleneuve@fsu.edu, Tel. 850-644-5473.

FSU Human Subjects Committee approved on 12/14/09 VOID after 12/13/2010 HSC# 2009.3670
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu. You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature __________________________ Date ____________

Signature of Investigator __________________________ Date ____________

FSU Human Subjects Committee approved on 12/14/09 VOID after 12/13/2010 HSC# 2009.3670
Monthly Meeting: December 15th 2010, 4:00-6:30 p.m.

C: Chair V: Viki S: Somebody Amanda: A

Today is cloudy and rainy. Teachers are coming into the art room. Some brought snacks, like pop-corns, cookies, scorns, soda, and so on. Some art teachers take seats and start talking. The topics are involved in what has been happened to them and their schools. Problems they encountered in their art class and new principal’s policies, art projects they started, and so on. They say hello to their colleagues whenever anybody shows up in the meeting. There are 9 to 10 papers on a shelf. Agenda of the meeting, lesson plans, book information, worksheets for art practices, announcement from Fine Art Museum of FSU about teacher workshop, announcement of peace project...

C: I just bring up, Idelle here. We still have lots of rooms on the library exhibits sign up she, if you are interested in, please let me know, I’ll pull it up my computer. I don’t know I can enter it..I just let her know ..You’re gonna this month. I have seen a lot of people signed up that are here, but we really would like you to fill those..I don’t know anybody also signed up and filled it out this year.

S: I should have signed it up last year, but they never went to pick them up, she was long behind...so she email me last week, do you have pictures? Yes I do..So They have new stuff now.

C: Okay, good good..That would be good for two months though?

Jane: I think she said three months.

C: Their tickets are wonderful, they take care of all..Okay, And I know that Kim really still have talked to her last month more info. And I haven’t been having much more about it so I’ll talk to Kim and I’m sure that I’ll get back to you. Make sure that.

S: What signed up for

C: They made it for us, I think it’s forty, right?

S: Let me know, if you are or not

C: She said about reducing it. As far as I know, there are still forty. They haven’t seen.

(Some questions...)

C: Okay, I’ll email Kim to get all their info. If you have to forgive me, if you take extra notes for
me, I’ll love it. Because Margie gives me more minutes, cause I lady …Viki..
V: I have two things that I said last time, (really great!) I just pass this out this here. Teacher workshops. Have you sign up for it. It should be pretty interesting and I would mention Linda. The workshop is going to .the part of what she does. With the print maker and book maker. (Buzzing)..So we’d love to have as many as parents ..Just once again I’d like to mention, if you know anybody in your school, classroom teachers, would like to do this, please let them know, would you fill it out, extra one passed out now? Okay, sure..Thank you..Pass it on. I have a teacher from Columbia County coming. I think it..
C: How did you find out about it?
V: I sent mails..Let them know if you remember..
C: Viki, I need you to get back on this. We have a mandatory thing (That’s find). I’ ll try to get out of it.
V: And then, many of you are hard to sign up and to show your work in our elementary students display for January. But I wanna give this again. Have you circled the due dates? So you know when to delivery. And I ask you to today, if you are going to participate in the student’s display, if you have any idea, what you are doing to do in the display, tell me today. Please note the ..top, it says delivery art work, April 7th through April 9th. So the work should be delivered before the spring break, if you’ve been doing that for several years, because we make the exhibition overwhelming before winter break, we make the exhibition before the holidays, and then open our door January. That’s the first exhibition. That’s why we should work in December because we hang it in December. (What time is it? Until 4 o’clock? ) The regular hours at the museum are 9 to 4. I stay later the time, I usually stay until 6. So if you need to deliver the work after 4 o’ clock, the door would be closed at 4 o’clock, but if you let me know, I’ll come to the door or you can call me, my telephone number should be on here, if it’s not, I’ll give it to you right now. 644-1299. And the other thing that happens is if you come to the door, doors are lock, maybe you remember this. You .tap loud .with a key, or coin, just it has to be metal to glass that sounds would be appropriate to go through the museum.I can hear it anywhere I come to the door. It’s just you give me a few minutes to get there. I will get there. (Hu…Good to know!). You can let me know and call me or either..any..If you are going to be or participated in it, please just let me know.
C: Jane, did you want to say something about the mural, how is it doing on that Saturday?
Jane: I am waiting on Sera. She is sending me promotion. It seems to be meeting more students. So I’m not going to be able to have one child..What if so many participate in from her school..It looks like one for each school. As far as I know, we should be waiting for November, We still have time cause it’s January. (And the students are supposed to be international students?) Yea. (Okay!)
V: Can I mention another thing? It might be a few people, we don’t know, teacher come from, but we have ..people who come over the world. It is going to be a teacher workshop. From Turkey, Greece, ..Afghanistan, North Korea, Japan..I send around you the sign-up sheet last time. I have quiet number of people who signed up and want to be, please come sign up today. (Great! Okay!)
W: 4:30 to 8:00?
V: (Yes!) dinner and wine..remember I mentioned last time. (I remember that! HaHaHa!)
W: As soon as I can get any answer from Sera, she..sent it last week. Email you that everybody knows if you wanna choose person and they know that the parents bring in that may ..(Great!)
One more thing, I made a wireman on the signing sheet she permission was slept..we have to very follow.. they originally from that would be memorial and ..on the peace mural. (Great! Very good!)
C: Amanda?
Viki: 15 is the workshop! 16 is reception day for everything. I’m sorry. I want to tell one more thing..(Yea, go ahead!).
C: Yes, that sounds good. Anybody that we give this out two years ago, they gave some out last meeting. She only had the copies. This is the art.. Sequence, that whole committee, a people put together this, does anybody need this? ( A bunch of people! Okay!) You need one? If you need one, I can copy for you, I can bring you one. (Is this extra?) Yes, Mam. I’m gonna make these copies. Anybody people are here, they show up, (hahaha!) But most people should have these two years ago! I got one on the CD. Cause I have one! (Hahaha!) If you do want one, here some then email me I will make sure to make copies. Okay! Amanda~ (Emails are very effective ways of their communication)
A: First of all, we ..(Some kidding..Many teachers respond to the kidding..hilarious atmosphere.) All you guys have the sheet received over the festival packet in your mail box. If you have not the quiz….tell me about it. Everybody got it? (C: You said you’d rather email to you.) A: Love that! (C: Could you re-email it? It's in my email somewhere..Probably if you say like if you email us and not fill it out, most people are just go and give us the other meeting.)
A: That’s fine, too. Hand it to me, that’s fine, but I just have emails all arounds and a kinda Jazz, I have to fax it, Just I thought it would be easier for you and it is half of you because I have half of trail, but if you want to hand it to me, that’s fine, whatever when you even come and drop off and ideally whether or not you could do that, if you have to do that, that’s fine, I’m gonna kick it out.( Hahaha!) . But what I do, because I’m going send a reminder to you on Januray 23^rd. I am gonna send you reminder emails on the 19^th. On that day, send it out again. (That would be great!) Drop off day is January 11. Actually it’s holiday, 11 to 12^th and 13^th too. I’ll just come and meet
you. You don’t have to worry about driving cross down and work after schools. Just come to me and drop it off for your holiday. For two hours... When are you going to be out 10 to 12...

(Exchange of information about exhibition at COCA, Time and the ways to drop off pictures of children. She considers teachers’ convenience and works taking the perspective of art teachers. Why teachers want to do exhibitions of children?) We would have met on 11. (She explains her plan for the exhibition, and mentions about details like emergency, dates for hanging, for scheduling hanging art works of children.)

The next thing is that the airport contacted us. There is an airport gallery space curated by COCA in the airport. The airport contacted us and asked if we would be interested in helping that children’s exhibit. Let’s talk about detail things.. What they are interested in are pieces of art work to hang upstairs in the airport which is a public space. There is a gallery space which we ever see..It’s beautiful, gorgeous, spectacular..They have a wall for this specific space if we want to buy into it. **What they are interested in** pieces to hang upstairs in the airport which is COCA’s space and which is very few public …(that’s beautiful space! It is..They usually positively respond when somebody suggests some opinions..) There is a gallery space up there. You guys museum for Leon County..It’s fantastic, spectacular, beautiful, big huge… gorgeous. They have a wall to allocate for this specific… if we want to buy him to it. it is a space that I am not entirely sure…I will let you guys have your opportunity today. Hey! (She hilariously makes suggestion that the art teachers would participate in the gallery exhibit. She encourages the art teachers to participate in the art exhibition in the airport. She is also so energetic and seems excited about and glad to inform the art teachers of the fact that they will have a public space to exhibit kids’ art works.)

(She is a kind of match maker between the art teachers and other organizations).

S: What’s the size of the wall? And…questions for detail preparation…

S: I would say the wall may be 40-feet-width. Clinton and I went to...met the director of the gallery at down stairs. This is upstairs. We don’t have any ideas..We collectively agree with that it can probably have a house between 20 and 30 pieces comfortably. They are a lot of work very specific to airplane and it’s a lot of work they may or may not be seen by a lot of people (ha,Ha,, ha..). That’s great! Something good sounds permanent. (An art teacher suggests another opinion) That would be another piece. Rotating exhibit here that probably not going to all that class meeting..This is an year-on stretch..And their work comes down and given back to students and then somebody else works this on. And that doesn’t necessarily mean that it has to be all works from Riley students. You can be a mix. As long as teachers, students, and parents understand that something that it’s going to be off for extending a period of time and return later. ..In my heart, if
I can’t ask them to do, if so many want to do..(Let’s do it! Art teachers’ response is so active and positive. I mean …Hahaha ) You know..There are our lessons you can create. That’s the key! You probably end up creating something new. (She tries to lead the art teachers to exerting creatively and actively in the gallery exhibit.) I was not just asking developing you guys to do that. They are invited to the airport every year. They do whole all the career day of ..That would be the cool project. But I don’t know if you guys do, if we can even structure to.. Does anybody have…lesson? Here is the opportunity to tell you what..If anyone is interested in it, get in touch with me. If taking the room,.. but I have to also tell you..a couple of weeks ago, from …who is the new issue communication person at the district. He want to sit down talk with you about how to get more art work from art educators in the around district community. He and I and Clinton sat down together and talked about what some of his ideas are, it might be concern in all of these discussions does just not create more work for you. That is my number one goal because the idea is lovely porcelain, art work to promote what’s going on in-school high quality art education. But how you guys create some from the scratch, it’s not what I haven’t been in my mind at all. She asked about who is interested in the airport show or how some ideas for new exhibitions…

S: I have questions on it. Many many years ago when I was a child, we had a rotating party at the airport. If we have been to and go to the airport to see the children’s art, do they have the party..? 

Amanda: Smaller than this bulletin board. Nobody knows there..Nobody says A museum just is upstairs. There is A museum in Tallahassee somewhere. …They are more interested in elementary and middle, not necessarily high. I told them I will give you a rundown of the discussion. Somebody wants ..more than welcome to send me an email or call me after this meeting today… I’ll just make it happen..(An art teacher wants to confirm what Amanda says. Three questions she asks, Would you be willing to take a look down and put you up to look back it, if you want to see it be rotated? They want those kinds of things. But,..I think we should go the Leon County because I …don’t want to rotate…The teacher says disagree with their opinion..She expresses her opinion clearly and honestly.)

Amanda: I will be able to negotiate with him more public space, perhaps it would be the space in the community ..outside of the world. How would you guys feel about that? Work on the wall, something that more people would see.. (She conveys what the airport wants to the teachers. She plays a role in intermediating negotiations between the airport and the teachers. )

Leanne: For me, that would be very beneficial because the kids, it’s nice for …to see the work, exposure to the community. The other good thing about exhibiting the kids’ work is what makes work, perhaps love it, is the kids seeing it, and the kids’ parents seeing it, and their family seeing
it. So they are not invited to see it, opening, reception, or they’re not just gonna see it on a every
day basis like raspberry..cranberry grocery store some more public, then I’ve started to lose
interest, because the kids, I’m taking their work, basically sealing it..But if they see it, and it’s up
in a public space, I think it’s a really big deal.

Jane: I am interested in it just because even though it is isolated, some people are seeing it, (yea!
Those are our pieces : some art teachers express their agree with Jane’s opinion) All my kids’
work there, a whole school, they have a stage on it. That’s how I started it. Every year I changed
so often, on occasion, I asked, “can I change it?” What I have done, no frame and nothing, I used
this at the beginning, it’s so useful. ..I put in the fabric. They loved it…I was shocked by the kids’
work…When the kids’ work was exhibited in the public space, it just started three-dimensional,
it’s quality work… bumping and pumping and bumping and I picked up the way...now we can do
it.. (She takes a successful example she had participated in an exhibition in a public space. She
explains about how she worked for another exhibition at a museum in downtown.) ..They loved
it. From that day, I just changed it

Leanne: So where is exactl. ..because I’ve seen it before different colors put there?
(Some art teachers started saying their opinions for
Leanne’s questions, they make a boisterous
noisy, which the teachers usually do when they agree with the opinion..or find a solution for a
problem. Art teachers make a joke..)

Jane: I have some managers coming to me, you know, People come and see me and ask …All
say this is good. And the kids..oh my god! I thoughts there were birds over there. It could be not
their work. I don’t put names. It’s really, really good. (A fabric? I saw yesterday! It’s so pretty. )
Oh, really? ..It’s up to you. You speak to the managers from around your school, help, and ask
them, because they are partners somehow and somewhere, make them partners for your school.
They started bringing in coupons for the kids to go to..It is a really cool example and idea. You
can put in their picture..(She explains the skills to put the kids’ work on the wall and to take those
work off and take back the students.)

S: They are good because they are friendly doing business,

Jane: You can bring in ..enrich our goal and.their favor. We have to. I just thought if we
would ..stick it out and stick it back to the students.

S: General Justices are more public, good. Less public may be not so hot.

Jane: I work at doctor’s offices. Maybe somebody will see it. Parents and kids will see it. I put
the first name. It will be on the back of the work. The name is on the back of the work. Write it
down on the work, just first name and slash,  grade, ….the first letter of the teacher, So it’s
really not very identified on the kids’ things. (oh, privacy).
Leanne: Okay! (she tries to switch topics.)
Amanda: In my discussion when the airport .., I will take his comment and feedback after then and see what comes up.
Leanne: So if anybody is interested in, sounds like, you know, some art teachers are interested in this, probably sounds like some maybe no. But someone gonna and heads this up because you’re heading it up, are you gonna take care of,
Amanda: I’ll do it. I will help to do that. Yea! That’s my job. (maybe their concern is related to the responsibility and duty on the exhibition. Who are going to take care of the exhibition as a supervisor? Amanda suggested to have an exhibition, some art teachers agree with that because of the publicness of the exhibition, some art teachers disagree with holding the exhibition because of the duty, they concern about how they rotate the kid’s work, work the exhibition, save their safety..there are some problematic issues)
Leanne: There is a reception or give us certificates, something..?
Amanda: Um~I keep it mind.
Leanne: Their offices are great! One time is great!
Jane: That is great. When I talked with Chris about it, it’s a same day.
An art teacher: You didn’t send Chris’ email individually? Email me..
Jane: I keep in mind..
An art teacher: Then everybody can follow up.
Amanda: That’s one of the reasons why I am interested in stepping up..You guys don’t get each pieces of information better than contradictory.
Leanne: So it’s sort of organized.
Amanda: Yea. If by chance someone gets something like that, call and all follow up on it and look at and see it what we’ve done and..
Jane: We participate in this. I’ve seen emails somehow..
Leanne: Lawyer’s office is inside of the building. (art teachers who know the building exchange information about it out of order. An art teacher a little bit strongly expresses her perspective to ..)
S: I am very interested in getting more public..and less moving.
Leanne: That would be an another issue too. Because that’s junky looking house.
Amanda: They are three building.
S: But safety thing is different.
Amanda: I have a meeting tomorrow morning ... Hopefully we will be able to narrow down, and talk about what COCA facilitate, develop workshops, remember last I talked you guys about…for things like that. I’m gonna Next time when I’ll see you, I will be able to report some more specific.. (Amanda makes announcement that she will prepare for more specific information about the exhibition to the teachers. Art teachers discuss issues in relation to the
exhibition, there are some contradictory opinions and distrust to planning the exhibition. Amanda tries to do her best to give them more accurate information for them to make decision of opening of the exhibition)

Leanne: I have one from Marcia, she has an art show tomorrow, she is hanging art work today. Ellen would be here to present what they are going to talk about. Does anybody know Marcia’s book study?
Ann: A continuation of studio thinking, They are mentioning about K-12 practices…
Leanne: I know that Ellen, I think they are leaning towards thinking curriculum..because may be doing both..She wants to talk about the..Let’s skip the Marcia thing. So we make sure we email to you (Ann).
Leanne: (She made a calendar for the monthly meeting group where they share information in relation to events of Leon County, update, change and add something, even put in individuals’ schools’ field trips. Even little things, and there are just general information. Quincy exhibit too. You can look at the whole year. I’ve got all kinds of calendar, it’s free. I’ve got school stuffs in different colors, and I’ve got personal stuffs in different colors. You can do all that. Just see the art meeting stuffs. Log in and just figure that out. This is easy for me to put in all there and just check it whenever you can fill that out like this. And then majority of details about it. You can also see if you are missing something, you can email me and put it up in that way. It’s really easy way to personally communicate with each other. You can even create your own calendar. You can print the agenda out in different colors with your different categories. You can add to our group.

Amanda: Can I go on that beyond that too? Coca hosts a public calendar. It’s something where folks can go on and add stuffs. (She gives information about COCA’s calendar. It is more about public information in Tallahassee. Go to the website:...She provided the address for them to get the calendar.) We are learning media outlets, go to more than thought.com. People are using it defending …looking for ...For October alone, a number of people checked at ….. There is information related to confer, exhibit, you can do fundraiser. So nobody guesses to say there is nothing to do in Tallahassee any more. All you have to do is to look at the calendar. I really encourage you to put all that kinds of stuffs, If you are doing anything to open to the public, that’s the place you go to, it’s super simple and it takes less than a couple of minutes, get stumpt and give me a shower to walk through, but I can’t imagine we can…If you want to work with that, give me a shot..
Leanne: I think we are done. Does anybody want to share something?
Leanne introduces some lesson plans. There are some lesson plans and if they send her lesson plans to introduce to the art meeting, she will send it for them. An art teacher introduces his
lesson plans to the art teachers. He explains about how he taught and his kids were doing it. His information is very detail and practical. He showed some examples of kids’ art work for their better understanding. “they trace and then they use their hands to make up the outside. kindergarten and first grades they enjoyed that. This one here actually is not on..I kinda made up some rules then, you can draw one vertical, you can draw one diagonal, kinda make up the sequence, their favorite food in one, ..their favorite instrument in one, favorite color, favorite initials, favorite activities, maybe more something, favorite pattern in one, they really enjoyed a lot, I kinda scribed down. .She did like a body art. She was here last year. Does anybody remember her? You can see an influence. She came one day. We would continue ..there is another example, that’s from ..website I found it. But this is a small version, we did on the ..control by 18 paper and I used up and around her hands. These faces are turn than triangles. They had a lot of fun with this. …lower on the page. And then they were crazy about what they did. Multiple days they stayed a lot of time..They had a great time. These are totally the thing that everybody is going to do it...They spent a lot of time, and ...So it was an easy step plan for those parts. Especially we have a few example on…These are information that I had earlier” “Cool!” (Teachers are very pleased to know the lesson plans. They are buzzing, focusing on talking about the advantages of the lesson plans. Their talk is so positive that he who presented the lesson plans seems like to be proud of himself because of his sharing of the lesson plan. The explanation about the processes of how he did it and the focus of his lesson, and his philosophy, and students’ response, the advantage of the lessons he offered the art teachers. They look like the lesson plans he introduces are not difficult to apply and they seem to imagine how they are going to do the lesson plan in their own school.) Wow! Ann introduced her art lessons. Art teachers look like excited about hearing her art lesson practices. “So much fun. You have kids take a paper, trace their heads and their arms...Let’s try again. And then lower and looks better. ..”Showing examples of kids’ work, she talks about materials used in making the art work, ways to reduce mistakes, challenge for the art project, kids’ response, and skills to make the art work. Teachers directly gain knowledge and skills for applying the art project into their art practices from their colleagues. Sometime there are some materials, work sheets applied...She talks about episodes in doing the art project with kindergarteners…That’s kinda another three dimensional things. ”Many years ago she (an art teacher) taught clay..Ann asks about her name to the teachers for developing her clay project. I can give you her contact number (Amanda)...Sharing information about other art teachers who participated in the meeting or artists is habitual to the teachers. Practical and lots of information is shared among teachers in very direct ways.” One of the most exciting time in the meeting is when they share new art lesson plans. They come
to be more comfortable with talking about and excited about providing their practices. Information in relation to art materials, skills, new ideas, new concepts, experts in the specific area of the arts are shared.

“One of drawing shape patterns, little songs, and I need to kindergartens were passing stuffs out, collecting things we are gonna doing that, I show that.. doing something. Ann, did you really talk to him about the arts? ..Yea! They bring Audubon! There was not a bunch of our part. (not at all! Yea!).”

Jane: “But I have been using butterflies, animals, symmetrical, all these concepts, they are fabulous.”

Leanne: “The symmetrical? It’s very good. If you think about your cross curriculum stuff, it’s on there. All your cross curriculum stuff is on there…Honestly, pretty art ones look at the older the ones there are high school stuffs, you have to preview them because they may have high school grades stuff. But for the most parts, still for the high schools, so they are not put completely in a progress stuff. The only thing I have a problem with the high school age stuff is that they can show a little bit heavy. You know, heavy topics for the little kids, some violence. Today we had a thing A Africa, it shows weaving, it was on African cross? people. It was a great way to show them where the clay comes from, can they be blown way, but they show them digging it out underground and all the whole process. So it’s just a really great video flip. But it was art video for high school. So they were looking at…”

Amanda starts introducing another clay art project consistently related to what Leanne said. “(It’s not art stuff..) But it’s art education stuff. It’s a documentary; it’s a couple of years, not new. I think in 2007. But it’s about the kids who are from good parents from London,.. the school goes to the music festival under near a Compala? which likes a big city, kids came and four or five individual kids follow the music ..and preparing for traditional performances. That is very difficult collage because we scheduled so..But what happened through the process of this exploration through their history ..through the arts, it’s really really what arts do for the kids, how helps heal, and if the sober, its major sober, but it's so really cool video…”

Leanne: “It’s not fantastic, but it’s really good for my kids. With my sub, standards part…In my school, bugs me a lot to do Afcat stuff, so this is actually from the AFCAT book. What I’ve been doing is A AFCAT cross curriculum of art connection. From a few years ago, if you don’t have one, the happy to borrow and copy from me..But what it has is reading the same kind of AFCAT, but it’s reading, but I will do it with the..to tie it with the lesson we do it. So right now we do fiber arts and quilting, so I found these are on internet, just different quilt patterns, and every kid I make sure that they try to get different ones they are copying each other, and they try to make
up a pattern in the . . cloth, they read about a story about a cloth, and there are different grade levels, and there are answers and questions about cloth. And they also have a story book if they run out of time and read story books. But they have these on a lot of things on clay. . . This is really good. If you’ve known you have a sub which is not ganna do a lot of explaining, no direction, So this takes a little directions. And I actually usually give them the grade levels under them often, because if no one explains to them, they can do themselves. And I often find one of quilting in all the books. And they are cool because they also bring about a tradition family and I used them a lot.”

“I’ll grad the book. Three, four years I got 6 grade levels. They are good!”
“Yea, they are good. For AFCAT crabs, they tie art with curriculum.”
Their talks again start exploding. They sometimes naturally talk in small groups. They talk with art teachers who are next to themselves. Leanne “whenever we do textbook options, they got grade workshops that kids find directions. You will find everything and directions are there. They add reading levels, and you give additional . . stuffs. And this is Edwards, teacher resource book. A lot of copy stuffs. That’s visually really good. And they have worksheets. So these are super easy to use. . . But I still do very a lot of work. And they got actually handouts for like a color wheel. They are doing that kinda stuff . . . So anybody needs that kind of stuff, all my book shelves are right on the corner, so feel free to look through.”
“I have a question. This is just a throughout, even just think about probably next year, but I’m wondering about techniques for some high schools, but one of our teacher stage, if you do present at every TC, every TC is an important education multiple . . . a sort of giant candy store, an educational technology, it is an amazing, a couple of years ago. . . there is a . . . smart board, . . . If you will present Every TC, you . . pay for it. Oh my gosh! I’m not gonna present. But we as a group are forced to do presentation, if two or three people get together, next year we will present in January, in Orlando, we can . . something really noble, technology art, because there are a lot of data on computer.”

“There are so many working with I-Movie right now . . . I have at our library specially. I got started to do that. I am so afraid of . . . if I can do you can do. Now I use power point Humbly, Oh, my god! I can do power point. I found I-Movie. Now I have the picture and all lessons you are so sick and tired of. . . Now I have a . . . I handle recording on my computer, add background music.”
An art teacher introduces the way how to use I-Movie very friendly and humorously to her colleagues. Although she is now good at using technology for her classes, she tries to care for not making her colleagues feel uncomfortable and difficulty in using technology. Her ways of speaking is so respectful. The respectful ways of their speeches make anybody in the meeting
feel free to express their opinions and motivated to express themselves. They do not need to be
afraid that their lesson plans do look worthless and trifling. Most art teachers in the meeting are
inclusive to others’ ideas and opinions and focus on gaining as much information as they can
listening to their friends’ ideas and perspectives. In a brief instant, art teachers become immersed
in sharing information in relation to using technology in art lessons.

“Where did you get your self-camera in your room?”
“I have camera on it. So you can set products.”
“I have a camera. I just use it for recording too. I record video for one of my....I had written
scripts and all the special teachers had to be a part we give...and then we make a movie. It was
really cute.”
“All those I-movie and I-photos are broad programs...”
“It has so many options.”
“Do you have an Apple?” “I have an Apple.”
“But there are other movie programs.” “In my school, we all are Apples.”
“They are cheaper than Dells.” “I know, I know.”
“I will share my Boca words. I would be late and really tired of doing the same thing Vocabulary
words, copy the words, and go on wall sheets, I just get it really really tired. So I am looking at a
catalogue, NBCD script chart. Three cards..That would be nice. One for vocabulary word, one
for technician, one for the teacher. I thought it..doing my cards, then my first unit one, freaky
story art. So I have all my freaky story cards done, you know at the word, and they in the middle
cards are technician, and we had the pictures from here. I had in my mind like this. I’l have the
keys, stand it and clip the card. Well I had my…possibility. I went to everywhere to look for the
plastic rings, bigger than these. And I had already all the cards. They have three cards, I go to
Staples. Well Why don’t you do that like this? Put the two cards?..It is really cool. My kids now
speak with that ..and find the word..It’s been a little bit more excited to learn vocabulary words. I
use ‘my refeature …’ for color printing. Other than that it’s been fun to use it.”
“But a lot of work…though” “It’s amazing!”
“Yea, but now I have a pattern and just input new words. So it’s easier. But it took me a long to
do that first time. But it is fun for them to work with the cards. They memorize…sentences and
words. They are really nice!”

Leanne makes announcement that an art teacher wants roommates to share rooms in
NAEA conference. 145$ for a day, it’s expensive. She is looking for roommates.
Leanne prepares an event for the teachers at the end of the meeting. She makes a list of numbers
and names and calls the number. The teacher of the number wins. He or she can have a gift.
Through that simple event, the mood of the meeting becomes more exciting and synergistic. I
won in the event. I am given a brown paper box where a funny Halloween stuff is. Even after the meeting is finished, they do not try to leave the room quickly and talk with other teachers and share more detail information about the lessons which were introduced in the meeting. They also talk about the art project. Guernica project.

**Kids’ Guernica Project’s Description: January 16th, 2010**

**FSU Museum of Fine Arts, 8:00a.m.-7:00 p.m.**

Kids’ Guernica brings in the spirit of Guernica of Pablo Picasso which depicts the bombing of Guernica by German and Italian warplanes at the order of the Spanish Nationalist forces, during the Spanish Civil War. Pablo Picasso was commissioned to create a large mural for the Spanish by the Spanish Republican government. Guernica is a reminder of tragedies of war and torment of innocent civilians. Especially Guernica drew the world’s attention to Spanish Civil War. Its’ size is 349 cm X 776 cm (137.4 in X 305.5 in).

The project of Kids’ Guernica was initiated by the cultural organization Art Japan to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. Toshifumi Abe representing the two cofounders of this project, Tadashi Yasuda of Arts Japan and professor Karo Mizuguchi, contacted and asked Tom Anderson, professor of art education of FSU, who had worked on community mural making, to coordinate the Tallahassee children’s mural and prepare for presentations accompanied with the mural painting project. The first Tallahassee peace mural was created in 1995, setting a norm of the project: that is, a peace painting by children, exactly the same size of a mural as Picasso’s Guernica but on canvas (3.5 X 7.76 meters).

Anderson (2009) clarified the philosophy of Kids’ Guernica in a catalogue for the exhibition of International Children’s Peace Mural Project held at the Museum of Fine Art of FSU. First, Kids’ Guernica mural project desires children to envisage how they can contribute to peace as citizens of their countries and the world. Even though children participating in the project have different countries and cultures, they are common with human being’s fundamental needs and concerns “such as the desire to live safely in peace, free from war or the threat of war (p. 6).” Through an instrument of art, children are allowed to express not only the universal wishes as human but also their own locally distinctive desires. Diversity and unity, thus, is harmonized in each mural. Second, as an educational approach, Kids’ Guernica peace mural feeds children on “a sense of belonging to the community (p. 6).” Working together to create a huge mural, children learn to respect others. That is, while they express their individual specific minds in the process of mural making, children become conscious of concerns on peace shared among people in the world. The peace mural project aims at fostering both individual unique minds and collective ones of children.
Each speaker from 14 countries explained each peace mural: how they inspire kids’ perception to peace, what concepts, meanings the murals involve.

<Description about each mural: Catalogue> They provided presentations about how the kids’ Guernica was born, what they intended through the world project from the position of art educators, and how the project helped the kids to understand and interpret the concept of peace in their ways.

Experience as a volunteer of Kids’ Guernica Project

I badgered a coordinator art teacher of the project participating me to the project, because I wanted to be a help to the community of the art teachers. In addition, participation could become an opportunity to learn by my experience about the art teachers’ one. The second day of the project consisted of presentations of the speakers at the museum and performance of mural activity in the garage nearby the museum. The art teacher coordinator and a professor of the department of art education of FSU planned to draw a mural in the garage with exhibit of five murals which were made in the countries by kids. One or two international kids for each elementary school participated in the mural activity. Around 20 kids were involved in the activity.

I arrived at 7:30 am in the garage. When I got out my car, the art teacher and a professor who led the Kid’s Guernica project in Turkey just started taking barricades to block up cars entering into the second floor of the garage. The art teacher coordinator with sweater and sneakers says to me, “good morning.” Barricades are placed in entrance and exit of the garage. Parents who arrived earlier than the beginning time helped us to carry and place the barricades. We carried every color’s acrylic paints and brushes, rollers, and paper plates, to the activity site. We also carried a piece of big canvas from the art teacher coordinator’s car to the place where mural project would be done. Because the canvas was so heavy, we joined efforts to carry it. When we were almost done with preparing for today’s mural activity, children and their parents flocked together one by one. Although it is heavy rain and windy outside of the garage, children and parents look excited about the mural activity. A high school art teacher showed up, who is from Texas and graduated from the department of art education of FSU 28 years ago. She says to be a friend of some art teachers of the community. She just became a volunteer for the day’s mural activity.

Before getting into creating a mural, the art teacher coordinator let 15 kids jump 20times with their arms open and shouting the number of times. The kids who meet first today and so are strained are relaxed by the physical activity and the awkward atmosphere is broken by her. Her ways of communicating with kids are refined and skillful, which would come from her yearlong
commitment to teaching. Another art teacher, a member of the community, shows up. The Turkish professor and the art teacher coordinator do their best to inspire the kids’ imagination in creating a village which consists of houses exhibiting cultural, ecological features of their own countries. They divided the canvas into around 16 or 17 areas for each kid. Every kid is given an area in which they will create their country’s house. The coordinator makes suggestion to the kids, “How about drawing a big tree in the center of the canvas? Its’ root spreads out into the earth and its’ branches are supposed to connect each house. So your neighbor’s houses are connected with one another.” She intends to have as much conversation with the kids as possible, which naturally leads them not only to be open to their neighbors from different countries but also to express themselves. While they are sketching a house of their country and animals, and flowers with chalks, the teachers ask them some questions to help draw their creative thinking, continuously having conversation with the kids. The process of creating a mural, talking with the kids, is most focused in this mural project.

I am in charge of giving different colors and clean brushes to the kids nearby the mural. It is so hard work for one person because average 4 or 5 kids one time line up to change colors and clean brushes. At that time an art teacher of the community come to me and says, “You can get some rest. I’ll take care of here.” She is willing to be my partner for the job. An art teacher from Texas voluntarily participates in cleaning brushes by dipping them into buckets. The art teacher coordinator is definitely immersed in helping some kids who have difficulty in deciding what to add surrounding houses. The kids become more bogged down embodying a house and animals and flowers in their own ways. Each house of the kids has different shapes and architectural structure. The animals, flowers, and trees show features of their country’s nature. Houses separately drawn in the initial sketch of the mural are connected by clouds in the sky, leaves and branches of the big tree extended out of the center of the canvas, which symbolizes ties and closeness of all countries, cultures, and people in the world. It was an original educational aim of this project to incite the children a sense of community and global sense.

Many art teachers of the community come to see the mural activity with their families. They give words of praise about the mural to the art teacher coordinator, “it’s very fabulous.” They reveal their impression which encourages. Their show-up in the mural activity site manifests strong interest and commitment to art and artwork of children. 14 art teachers of the community participated in making Tallahassee Kids’ Guernica Mural. More than half area of the mural is painted around at 1o’clock when the people participating in morning presentation at the museum and visitors like parents, art teachers, and university students came to see its’ process. Six murals previously produced in Japan, China, Ireland, India, Nepal, and so on, paralleling the
mural. Some people had an opportunity to talk with the children about their country, plants, animals, and houses. The talking also serves as a precious chance for the children to express themselves through art, share their stories in the United States, and meet with diverse people. The children as well as the art teacher coordinator look very proud of themselves.

Parents manifested interest in the process of making a mural, and ask and answer about the meanings of the mural and the educational purpose of the activity. (This activity plays a critical role of the path not only to allow abundant communication with people of local community about the concept of peace but to naturally awaken them of the important role of art and art education. Teacher workshop in association with the International Children's Peace Mural Project was a kernel for the art teachers of the community to extend communication with international people including artists, journalists, arts administrators, and art educators.)

International Children’s Peace Mural Project

The fifteenth Kids’ Guernica Peace Mural Project exhibition was held at the Museum of Fine Art of FSU in January, 2010. It started in 1995 by exchange of children’s mural between Japan and the United States to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. It is in pursuit of constructing “world peace through a locally specific, globally envisioned peace project.” Creating a huge peace mural is embodied by community collaboration towards the shared goal of constructing world peace. On the other hand, it is open to display local peculiarity to the fullest measure in relation to local natural, cultural, and social conditions. Every mural demonstrates specific interpretations of peace drawn by children of Tallahassee, Nagasaki, or Calcutta. The concept of peace is explored not only as universal terms but also as specific terms through workshops accompanied by exhibitions of murals.

<The Second Tallahassee Peace Mural >

14 art teachers and about 2000 children from 14 schools in Leon County participated in creating the second Tallahassee peace mural. Art teachers and Florida State Museum of Fine Arts Education Curator, Viki Thompson Wylder, had the first meeting and a teacher workshop of Leon County at the museum in March, 2009 to discuss the contents and composition of the second peace mural. In the first meeting, Dr. Tom Anderson offered a presentation on enduring ideas, history, and concerns of the mural project by showing photos of previously produced murals in many places of the world. They studied the philosophy of the project, including along with specific idea of each mural. They explored how the universal concept of peace has been interpreted and embodied in the specific, concrete fashion by children of different countries. After the presentation, around 20 art teachers divided into two groups. Each group discussed what contents to put in the mural and how to design it. Viki coordinated the meeting for planning
to create a mural of peace in Leon County. They decided to divide the mural sized canvas into two parts, a central part and a border surrounding it. The art teachers suggested diverse ideas for central sections and blocked sections Tallahassee peace mural should be.

**<Jane’s Response>**

Tuesday, January 26, 2010 9:54 pm

Hello,

Sorry for the late respond.

This experience has been one of the most satisfying to me. Elementary students is challenging, but the outcome for the peace Mural was fantastic. The students were able to discuss their thoughts, feelings, and engage in the issues of peace and living in a safe environment. When I told the students that the canvas is a piece of land that was given to them to build on it their own homes, the students knew what they what they wanted to have in their own Village or city. The students represented their own family background. We talked about different cultures, yet we all here in Tallahassee painting our own village on one canvas. They wanted to have a school to learn more, park to play at safely, and a garden to plant their own food. For me, I would like to work with more students on creating Peace Murals.

It is not about painting only, but all the aspects and issues that comes with it. The great ideas that comes from the dissections between students that meet for the first time. The way that they interact with each other without borders even though that they are from different cultures and background. They are at peace while working the Peace Mural.

**Book Study Group Meeting: December 18th, 2009, Conley Elementary School, 3:30-6:00 p.m.**

6 Art teachers get together in an art room of Conley Elementary School after school. There are materials and instruments on desks. They are looking at an art teacher who explains her landscapes water color paintings performed with her first grade kids. She shows materials-rectangle type of paper, black acrylic paints, pieces of plastic expired credit cards, brushes, and artistic skills – applying black paints on the edge of a plastic card and stamping on paper concentrating on expression to stamp consecutively and continuously the edge of the plastic card on paper and using small brushes to express delicate branches of trees.
<Practical knowledge: Discover of New Materials>
“Put their name, and pencil and pen..names on all the cards I had these in there.. And they can
use just many. Try it out. See what it was, and not for anything wet. Because they are mess up
and turned out to be cold and may not be landscapes. The boxes are by donations. You have to
pull it in part of the computer paper or pay check. Other thing, you don’t need to use just credit,
this is a key card that I took from a hotel.”
“Wow! Your card’s put the just with you! ” An art teacher looks like to be excited to providing
information and knowledge which can be concrete enough to understand and practical enough to
be directly applied to the art teachers’ art classes. When the art teacher shows alternative ones
such as key cards as well as credit cards, the art teachers shouted with great joy because of the
fact that they get new art materials to be used with their school kids. The teachers asked
questions where she gained the art materials, how much time she spent this practice with her kids,
how she motivated the kids,..
“You have these in different plates. I keep these in different plates because these are kinds of
different steps, too.”
“Just plan lower.” “okay” “some of them”
“I usually just sort of have it at all. It could be all one tray. You just try to see how many times
you can get on lines and see what happens when you keep doing it. So you’ve got these longer
lines, and thicker and then they get thinner. Then you can try and again this is where you might
want just to get back and try some smaller ones and smaller edges. And you can start having sort
of built on. I have a lot of tree silhouettes. We have looked that a lot, images, trees. I don’t know
that hotels, somebody who works for a hotel, they have a lot of whole bunch of those (plastic
keys). Did you get?”
“Yes, I have. Some of them last summer and some of them this winter..”
“So anyhow they can look at these trees I have. Pictures of palm trees that they are looking at,
kind of do this idea”
“Yea, it seems like the (tree’s name)”

<Applicable, transferable knowledge>
“There is a thing that we were talking about, we did a lot of idea was horizontally. But you don’t
want to cut your page at hand, can put it low, and get more information, more sky emphasis, or
put it high, have more grounds, but you know, half is not a good idea. They can just do that that
kind of to give a lot more interests. But just do. Several like this again. Knowing the first for
what I’m doing, I’m just trying things out that doesn’t turn out fine. You know, you just keep
working do this and just try different one. Try to keep your hands clean as soon as possible. The
need is just kind of need, different quality that they get. Some of them starts doing this, it’s like
you know? From my purposes, sometimes that works out. Again they are experimenting, you’re trying things, seeing what might work to suggest trees.. and see what happens, “Reflection in water!” An art teacher is surprised at kids’ painting. They are looking at kids’ paintings.

When she thinks she deals with important information and knowledge, her voice becomes a little bit loud in order for the art teachers to pay attention to and keep those in minds.

“Then by the time getting color in there then you can go then. Just looks so cool! Here is they go a little crazy in the covering up everything. These are my Miss Fran’s go, her hair goes back. And I save the bunch of these. They can get there. They are not to be go, you don’t go, get these wet. You are just going to keep on. You might need me to have some paper, something on usually have a piece of paper. There are also on the scrappy that they can be on. Put a little foliage on the some or you can keep them. They usually do crazy. This is favorite part. Some of them just black out though. A whole sticky thing. (She tells about her experience in her classroom, showing the real example of student’s works. They understand easily the whole process of the lesson because of the real materials and real practice.) Some of them turn out really cool. It’s interesting to leave just enough white. But ideas haven’t as much not be unstand you again. This is throw away stuff. I should’ve just brought some of these in boxes..I used the name tags for these. Next time I’m bringing some.”

“Yea, sure.” “Just a little time consuming the full part..Do some of these let them dried and it will be by next week you can come back and put into the old stuff. That’s just coolest.”

Art teachers start black acrylic water painting, divided into two groups.

“Cool!” They encourage each other in doing painting.

“we’ve done several other ways, working on the format of landscape. But I wanted to put. We would spend right after school.” They have a chance to ask questions whenever they have problems or wonders in doing water colors. They can get answers about the paintings.

An art teacher shows kids’ art works of other lesson related to Chinese water paintings to draw bamboos which is framed with string and construction paper like Chinese water paintings.

“I am taking her book in doing fourth and fifth grade students. The things put in there. That’s my kindergarteners’ ones. Like that.” “I love that.” “Fifth grades did that?” “That looks good.” “She starts with the phone and umbrella. She has fourth and fifth grades well.” Other teacher’s example of the bamboo lesson.

“I read about one of woman…She has the kids, fourth and fifth grade thread and multiple needles. So we are already ready to go. That was stick tape and Ann had set up.”

“Oh, that is nice.”

“(saying about an art lesson using a sewing machine) This is again the pieces of kingdom. We picked animals that wouldn’t necessarily be. Friends together and sewing pears and trying to do
banners.”
“That’s cool. I don’t have mine to get at all.”
“Yea, next week a bunch of kids like have nothing to put the whole class in there. That’s not so much work. Kids that are a little learning squish outline of some animals I can barely tell what it is. They may have not done anything else. And then you got this kid and take this over Thanksgiving to work on it.”
“And bring it back.”
“And bring it back!” They are talking about how to settle their schedule for art classes to make it the art show.
“But she is doing on this tray where she puts and holds in. But she talked a man?”
“I’m not sure. They started the tray.”
“Then she moved them to what my kids were done.”
“I can’t imagine by doing that. I can hardly get them, not some of class that not step each other with their fingers, but it is daily basic.”
“They don’t have that problem.” They are talking about disciplines for students in classroom.
“You can put onto easily.” “Right”
“And you can find in her book with the older kids again. But I think she writes …young because my little ones are so accepted.” “I think they are willing tomorrow.” “Yea, what exactly do you want me to do, which I feel like I get that from kids. Show me exactly. You want me to do it, and I will copy it.”
“I don’t mind if they copy mine.”
“She really does a lot more, exploring, really taking one idea and just pushing into the max and then but it time then they express trees and primary bright then the time I get to fourth and fifth grades. You can do the concepts. And they can deal with the materials. Cause they used to do what they can and can’t do at all.”
“This is a great idea. Did you use regular groups?”
“I used double stick tape for that.” “God, I love that idea. It’s so beautiful”
“Fifth grade. Sequences are for fifth grade.” “It is fun.”
“They told me how to get out chairs years ago. One person from the county, they said, go out and then you get to the corn field and trip on the road band to get chairs. That’s right. That’ what they told me.”
Some art teachers concentrate on creating as many paintings as possible because they want to use them for their art class as an example. Some art teachers are talking about preparing for upcoming art show, disciplines of students in art class, art lesson ideas. Diverse topics are discussed.
“Her book, she really advanced though. I’ve taken a lot by that. This is fourth grade. This is fifth
grade. All the stuffs are from kindergarten.”
“How did you get the little tiny..?” “Dried brush!”
“Okay, okay, painting with dried brush!”
“That’s okay I try myself!”
An art teacher just comes in. They welcome her cheerfully. “Hey~”
“We just started!” “Come in”
“Isn’t that cool? Is that right?”
“This is so clean! I mean it’s such a small space. I have a new track. I should’ve brought one. I have these cotton bag nuts. I got my kids a big and cheap and they are wearing up. So I cut them in fours and the bed mat blot paints and they look so beautiful. They were white. And the kids use tempera water color. One of my parents come, “They are so gorgeous!” Even the kids said, “Oh, they are so cool.” “I had Sponge Bob at the moment.” “Sponge Bob?” “My big yellow sponge’s fun.” “You will never win Melissa Melissa.” “No!” “She is so much fun.”
“I just regarded my first role. Put your name on your paper.” “Me too.” “That is a little expensive.” “I have icons in the beginning of the year, my plans are to go along and Mrs. McBride could put your name on your paper.”
Their learning atmosphere is so pleasant and informal, and comfortable, which inspires them to say freely anything. Most topics of their conversation are involved in ideas about new art lessons, their previous practices they performed in their art classes before the workshops and challenges and success, discovery of new art materials and their usage, application of the practice they are doing now, considering characteristics of kids’ grade level.
She shows new tables she purchased which are very functional. “I took cafeteria tables. Fold it up and use the center for displays. And have it around cafeteria for doing the programs.”
“I should’ve accepted that. Maybe I can do that in hallway.”
“You can use it in cafeteria”
“Yea, it is turned out really cool.” “Yea, that is a good idea.” “Really nice.”
“Oh, you would like this.” “This is, I thing I can do it.”
“Bamboos.” “Did Evelyn Pender show this?”
She applies black color paint on the edge of a plastic card piece and draws a bamboo.”
“Oh, grandfather’s bamboo.” “Look at this!” “Oh, my goodness!”
“Is that your drawing?” “I have some kids did.”
“Third grade did.” She learned how to draw bamboo with Chinese brushes and Chinese Ink at one workshop of FSU.
“They are so cute.” “Wow, they are so cool!” “It’s amazing that kids did.” They are very excited about appreciating bamboo drawing of third grade kids.
“JooAnn fabrics?” “Yes.” She shows aprons made for kids and explains how to make it and
where to get the fabrics to make the aprons. Kids usually wear adult’s old shirts or aprons, which are too big for the kids to move their hands and body.

“I love this lesson! This is great! U~I like that too. This likes a silver bridge. Isn’t that beautiful?”

“Yes.”

“Credit card, is this your idea?”

“She mentioned that we use them anymore.” “That’s good!”

“I love the reflection thing. Who did that?”

“Fran” “come and demonstrate” “You put it down and smear it.” “Just like bamboo?” “Yes” “You can use very long one.” “So do you have no more credit cards?”

“We’ve been using credit cards to pull them through the heddles, to work through thin metal pieces thread through. We use this credit card to cut into hook top like a wave. It was a perfect pulling thin thread to this hole, cause it doesn’t wave at all.”

“One of the workshops she does is you know share do one thing with kindergarteners. Learn over and over again until exhausted possibilities, horizontal, diagnostic, making squares, discovering how everything makes things then show bring in a box that has other things you can add to it. You can add more two things.”

“Nobody did order two. I should get them in a day.”

“We should be doing that.”

An art teacher shows a little camcorder which has a function to take moving picture for an hour with great convenience. She takes a moving picture while they are doing the water color painting. They take funny gestures and introduce themselves when they are taken. An art teacher who hosts the study workshop in her classroom pops up the moving picture, using her Mac laptop computer and smart board. They shout for the surprisingly convenient usage of the little camcorder. Very hilarious. They endlessly talk with each other about art show and other art teachers’ art lessons, workshops. “We create grade level four groups. So I have two. My principal gets this idea that it’s not fair. You have to go…” “Actually we do this month, we have to go and to do that kind of stuff unfortunately.” “I don’t know reading groups” “Do you?” “Kindergarten and I trace whatever haven’t the kids cut out paper or go to the Xerox machine for ..”

“You would be an like A.” “Yes” “He decided to especially divide that block. I was the last person to go because I’ve taken fourth and fifth grade. Kindergarten a lot of times go and “Mrs. A there should be something in your room, so you could do it.” And I like “Yes, I do!”

“I like that. These are beautiful.” “That would be great Christmas card, wouldn’t it?”

34:57

The hosting teacher starts presenting DVD attached to the book they chose as their textbook. The talk about going to NAEA and their topics to be presented next year NAEA.
“I would do through it. Because I am doing national (NAEA) rather do that. But every TC is just cool.” “Where is it?”
“Blair, where did you get the CD?” “I bought it.” “It’s a CD?” “She should talk to Jacky Hanson about that.” Some art teachers want to get the CD and they get to know how to get the CD. Smooshing..They are watching the CD which deals with knowledge in relation to art materials, kindergarteners’ artistic developmental characteristics and their responses, instructional methods, assessment skills, salient concepts in the art project which should be taught to the kindergarteners. The good thing of the CD is that it focuses on showing how teachers can teach the lessons. 43.17 “Demonstrating, practicing on paper, you can just do have kids do.”
“You know, yea, they could do.”
“And they can use those strips as the picture frames for anything later.” “I did the lesson years ago using cardboard paper, it was so cool.” They can see kids’ art works, the process of making and drawing, teachers’ instructional methods, the goal of the lesson, through the CD. They discuss about collage. Abstract form..line collage, shapes, ..
“They are colorful. Look at this.”
“I don’t know how long we do this.” “I don’t know how much he has been working on this.”
“They practice three times and then put it on paper.”

“This would be a nice thing to have out. To go from simple like the Moto Brook series of drawing.”
“This is a perfect school! They are silent.”
If they watch the CD alone, they would feel boring. But they really enjoy watching the CD because they share their ideas and responses. Sometimes they make jokes.

They start talking about apron in detail. “She has a standard size for most persons. Kindergarten starts working on big. Cause she thinks the kindergartners need the bigger piece to hold onto.”
“The kids are put on either.” “She doesn’t care about the cloth. None of them have put on.” “It just takes too much time”
“I put all the time into little plastics or..on this size so,” “Oh, look at these.” “I don’t quit the kids without doing it. And then they are done, throw over the chair, slip it in and out, so I should’ve..on this summer. If you are bigger in your fifth grader..” “Did you buy it?” “I bought these. They have tie. One ties were here came to front.” “So what I did was I just went and bought billcrow on the bunch of...” “They look like real artists.” “They are cute.” “So I put some of strings..” “
“I got a big box of t-shirts like adult t-shirts.”
“I said just to wash out (after painting).” “not on your skin” “ever”
“You have to go home. I’m sorry.” They talk about some troubles in using water paints with kids.
“I have that washable paint just never comes out. “Some colors” “not washable, watchable..”
“Yes, watchable (we have to be watchful in using the paint)” “So if you want to use black and
dark paint, be careful.”
“Look at this.” “This one’s really pretty.”
“That’s wonderful thing.” They talk about kids’ clay work of the CD. “Extend that to big and
then not everything at once.”
“She didn’t have to make each works.” “Yea, they are probably worked out.”

“They are a lot of adults wondering around..” “Actually my classes are works with..” “They use
cellular phone, talk to each other, and they take break, I have one kid. The kindergarten kid..”
“She has people walk around with the..” “She has people walk around and take quotes from kids’
stuff. She had like a pieces of paper to make some statements.”

“You bought them?” “No, no.” “Kleamy trace (?)” “It could be. I ordered them from a company.
I ordered for kids.”
“Take a look at the room and then think about how you would manage. We didn’t have things
like that.”
“Yea. Parents can have questions. That’s what I’m saying she has people go around and ask
questions like that.”

“Oil pastel..I like that.” “This is the cool thing. She again says that same idea with the structures,
looking for shapes.”
“A lot of this stuff in this book”
“I guess one of the things I concerned about is that big idea cause they come with they ‘oh, I like
this’ stuff of something cool, a kind of large ideas they are doing. That might be some of that we
can talk about as we go through this book. You know, the woman are talking about these
structures, they talk about community..I just come up with some ideas you might also deepen.”

“We can look up some in the book. On P. 48..”
“I like those works done with an arrow” “I like that too.”
“She doesn’t really read the adult guideline, does she? I am looking at lesson resources:
children’s trade book.”
“Yea, the dot line.” “I can’t imagine she would do with kindergarten.”
“Here’s things like alternatives.” “I like the lines made by patterns. She’s got tint colors, ..”
“Snow ball billy and drop of water.” “What page?” “Unit 6, lesson two”
“She’s got these lessons with children trade book lessons to go with a pair of socks, ..for the eyes, ..”
“If you look at 10 page” “U-um, that’s for the patterns.”
“What I want you to know is earlier, she has again the draw, just exploring materials. Have you looked at Five A? In doing things, ..just simple lines. Then just explore materials and play around whatever brings in rocks, paper, scissors, then they look at crayon. Literally different order. She is going back to the beginning. We just saw folder in the ears. Getting in the ears is literally just folding what it is vertical, horizontal, diagonal, what the different kinds of lines are on. Looking it up on the page 12. That earing shape, cutting shape, so there are a lot of this just start that we don’t intend to do too much. I might do some of these, might not do all of these” “Cause she is pre-K” “Depending on the population you may meet to do something, because of their experience..So Rudigers cutting in shapes and learning the ..is more important. All my kids need to learn into use of crowns more than one way. That’s cross. Even how important for fifth graders. I ask them to still hold it, not pinch it. But then we start needing the paint brush and then turn into pretty teacher’s book.” “I will be the way teacher’s painting.” “And then give them all ideas and explores then time to look at.”
“Page 2, again we start by tickling the paint which just what crown’s working about using dots paints, you can add some lines, if you want later as an extension. And then you can see what happens with colors and the other all that stuff go together. One something is media. Draw and paint it.”
“I like the paper, the pictures of kids, would collage they are drawing their base collage. After making base collage, they’re drawing it.” “What page’s that?” “Add a couple of more and then has instead crown, shapes, drawing on. And then I can give it through and have pages, somewhere textures..” “Anyway and then the clay grandma” “oh my gush!”
“page 7” “what does she do, she does, is she set up the table.” “I can’t see myself ever doing this.”
“Love that everybody, the group” “That would be great!” “I’ve done that before.Yea! That would be great!” “Oh, cool.” “We’ve done that before in cooperative learning class. I gave you bigger clay and I say ‘okay I need you either to build higher tower using one unit, decide on one unit and see how you can build. This is a whole exploration..’ 1:19:46 “All just playing with this.” “Actually playing with things start making things” “Oh, people. You have some experiences making a ..” “These colors are those ‘relief clay..’ What is that?” “Those are clay reliefs. That would be painted.” “With tempera, if you want to put some in clear room.” “These things are really little?“ “She tells how big they are. She has them do their own like thing. I gave my slap but I think she says how big. Flatten and slap clays lab with the form of your hand slat
should be thinner than your thumb and I’m telling you these are more like about five by six.”
“Nice.” “They can just role their own, like a cylinder placed to sit down. I haven’t sit on, you
know, put it on their chair, put the paper on their chair, and slab and push their hands into it really
to push it harder, put them a couple of times and they get good slabs. And then they practice
making cylinders, put one of those in front of them. And then they really good job.” “So you
have made it out several parts.” “Cylinders experience, yea. You know, spear for the head, a little
spears for the arms, and hands and feet. You know. Long cylinders for the legs.” “Did you have
some smoosh together or leave them?” “take around the spray bottle on their slab, and just press
it down. You don’t have to smoosh it at all. They stay together really well. Spray the clay, slab it
before they press it in and then just press it.. and then they don’t have to smear it everything.
Anything comes off, you are not either going back in the kiln or glean it. They stay pretty well.”
“What clay level do you do that?” “I did kindergarten and first last year, just like she did.”

Monthly Meeting: January 13th, 2010, Riley Elementary School, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

S: Somebody
<Big Idea they share>
Melissa: You can be desperate...I quest a copy. This sequence I don’t know who else has a hard
copy. Evelyn gave me CDs, so at the grade level, philosophy, benchmarks, If you someone has to
do this at schools, also put together, but I’m not sure it is. We put together some suggestions
for big ideas because you know art education is in the middle of a ship Prin Brother’s ideas are
really nice.. Prin Brother’s just by chance from ..It has a big idea, topics, it has..you wanna
explain.. (Big Ideas: Share Common philosophy to art education)

Ellen: between two parts, what do you want to understand, those are big ideas, artists make
things beautiful, understand the intention between craft and art, that’s a big idea, she put that in,
This is used in doing a long line dealing with the ideas, peace, as my main theme, and it
really helped me sort of figure out graphically a little better kinds of things we wanted to know
about the artists we are studying and then what they are doing and then a kind of a big idea..it
really works well for me. (Sharing their experience in using ideas. There are some art
teachers leading the meeting, but there is no authority )

Blair: (DBAE) Obviously Story project with FSU That is a big idea..There are a lot of sub-
stories within that. It also really gets to open the purpose someone’s doing on artist’s purpose.
There are the purposes why they are making it. So there are some suggestions as well for that
just a couple of chips things like that. So open the different document..seven or eight…. If you
don’t have one, this county you get plastic. Unless she cares about plastic things, you can add my envelopes If you are new to Leon County, you don’t still have a sequence, raise your hands and I’ll bring you CD. You can find it. (Guide New teachers by sharing a scope and sequence that Leon County requires them to teach)

S: That would be great cool. (hahaha~~) This is at very cheap prices (they are joking). ..I will bring my lap-top and burn CD if you want CD.
(They are so hilarious talking with each other) Put your name down this sheet.
S: I’m teaching ~collage class. This week I’m doing at 7:00AM until the starting my day with mural. I’ve got the mural.
S: Let me put this way. We’ve gotta a unique little piece. We’ve gotta a clue..It’s Whooping cranes.

S: Do the right thing, but anyway (Bustling…chuckling.. Marcia, you are not next..
Melissa: Then we can talk about library exhibition raws.( Information 😊). They are talking about area for the exhibition. (Topics are very diverse and they just freely stand up and say considering if others want to say or not. They ask any questions when they don’t understand and have a kind of disagreement. They actively response and there are flourished, detail information about exhibition, art project..).

Leanne: If you are interested in…About artists..portraits. Crown market..Do you have questions?

Ann: 86 year old volunteer..John Huncky Yard. Under Leon County Security. What this means for teachers is that he has a big building. It’s actually part of Leon County School’s Warehouse. But they have the hall on the second floor. So what I’m coming to this is ..(Come on, just get the point! We are waiting!) ..I’m going to argue with this. I said to him “I can’t get there before today to see there,” but I love to go and take pictures and to see what’s like real life plan. If you have worked… As we talk, we really like to work to be under the theme, “safety,” whether or correspond to his response.. So I like to do the collage mural things, we can do something like that. If you are interested in joining, take them, send me an e-mail me, and I’ll tell John.

(Suggestion of joining the art event at the warehouse. There are only choices and voluntary participation to art events and activities. They are not forced to participate in any activities. So they do just encourage each other to join art activities or projects, rather than compel.)

Ann: I can give you an idea! I guess it’s safety. One of things we did is as a lesson, drawing
lesson, I went around my digital camera, and took pictures of the school. What I get was I got so closed. You had to figure out where you were. So I did a jungle gym very close and I call it architecture very details. But it would be needed the thing for something like that. In my opinion, you are not looking at being safe, but arts are very safe..It’s looking at what around. I gave the kids the pictures.. where are we which was our idea. I think burk with.

S: You think themes, say again, safety,
Ann: Safety. Weather is in hurricane and tornado.
S: Some questions for Ann.
Ann: I don’t know at this point, I think kids are in Leon County school somewhere hunky yard. I was not we can… I will do collage with my kids.. you can have to.
S: I wanna change..
Leanne: Okay, who will be interested in this, people who go into the special facility, the people that we really need to know.
S: I wanna another traffic pattern if you go to..(Yea! Many art teachers respond to her suggestion)
It’s brand new, ‘cause Some the other schools..
Ann: So who would be interested in doing something possibly made? You want to..
S: Yea..If you won’t, it’s not, I’ll be more than heavy into my school worked through of the department..
Leanne: I like your idea, just one thing we get in..
S: How many color copiers that they can use? Not that many.
S: I know some of you are against this..I’m not gonna offer this, but Richard does have one of those planner..I am not saying..

(Detailed ideas : the way to keep students’ art work by using digital camera.) Some of us say that we are talking about doing something permanent. If you can take color copy of digital photograph..a lot of times very good. And it’s permanent. Make it put it up print and have them and keep it. Even if it is only 8 and a half by 11..Richard gets great success from doing that at the school because kids take the work home, but their work is still showing somewhere else which is real class. To do it things like that, if you already have work or have done work..take pictures and print first.
Leanne: some questions..
S: Probably (response)
S: Too much money. I would’ve never suggested anybody to get one.
S: 18by25?
S: The other thing our fourth grades are doing right now, so that’s another option. Ask fourth grade teachers who want to do classroom piece, they would give. Even if they have few pieces, that’s 18by24, if your teachers would do that, cause all schools are like that..that’s another
alternative to do.
Amanda: Can I just jump in this is we are talking about later on, but we have approached airport.
They would possibly give us space at the airport. In addition to that, if you guys would be
interested in, but I know it’s hard to come up with the work, (We want to do..No, that one could be cool.), we already have the spaces and additional walls. (Yea..we can make that). (They very welcome to do art exhibition at the regional airport.)
(both sides..)
S: Let me know if you want to do …
S: LeMoyne has another kiln? That schools work in it.
S: We don’t have one..Yea, how much is this…

<Teacher Workshop at the university>
Viki: We already have teacher workshops. I have some teachers’ requests. In the afternoon, we
will be serving lunch. (Uh~). Several workshops would be the parts of exhibition. Second part of
the workshop plans to transform what you can do into your classroom. So that will be 12:30 on
Friday. The only thing you have to do is for parking you have to pay 3. 50$. You get the
catalogue.(boisterous..uproarious, sensational, ..) (The workshops usually probably consist of two
parts: one is discussion with artists and their presentations, explanations, and the other is about
how to transform the art works into their classroom practices: Teacher’s Knowledge)
Teacher education crap ..(boisterous..uproarious, sensational,..)

<Introducing Art Project and instigating the art teachers to participate in the project: Peace Mural>
Viki: I just want to call attention on our students’ clay elementary teachers. I am gonna happy to
ger this information. This year’s theme simply is “peace.” We noticed peace and challenge I will
tell you that. I thought PBS program said these pieces so encourage you. Most people think
peace is boring that nothing you haven’t had on your peace. I wanted peace to become added to
something. I just wanted you to think about it in that way. Notice once again you can have that’s
new exhibition any media, any kind of hard work, group projects, that’s anything you send us, it
will be good from keeping sealing to pull.
About “peace mural project” It is a piece of mural anywhere..Showing catalogue. We have a
piece of mural.
We have already now.

Jane: January 15 we are getting the first workshop. Artists are coming. Another artist (name) is
coming from Greece, and you will be installation piece..Video, pictures, we will be taking to
represent. But my school will be transforming their …to the museum..located and shared. Those people will be having teacher workshop. They will be presenting what they have done on their schools but they will bring in schools whatever they’ve done on their own countries, they’ve been contributed to their experiences, workshops... Denis who is interior designer maker and professor, he had a big…(She is enthusiastic when she introduces the project to them, which make the art teachers willing to participate in the project. They have conversation about the big workshop)

Viki: The workshop for teachers is 4 until 8 o’clock. We will like you to sign and know how many people will be attending. Providing the dinner..(having dinner and wine..Boisterous..hilarious..)
S: Can we order white or red?
Jane: We do have a garden Japan..Greece, Germany..A lot of people will come out of the countries.
S: These people have been participated in the mural project?
Jane: Some are professors..Community organizers..
S: That doesn’t mean that they may be participating on Saturday.
Jane: We will send him permission..and have these International students show up..the number of the students should be known..but All students will be invited for that exhibition, the show, all the events we will have on Saturday. We will be in the garage..
Viki: Upstairs. Peace murals will be upstairs..all around the world. The performance will be on Saturday.
I’m just putting your name and write down your schools’ name.
S: It’will be on 15th, Saturday?
(She connects the community mural project with her school’s art project, which results in having students’ learning about the abstract concept, peace, deeper. School Wide Project: A Wind Indicator Peace Project. She shares the idea for her own peace art project.)

Ellen: Can I take back off these …? I don’t know if you guys got panel school piece things, handout over there. I have this..that’s a warm up for kids this year… I thought out to have these out and open house, then very easy to make a mat to bring my just show..You just use a strip pen and pencil with a razor which is the most kids still have now. This was started by now a Timo high school teacher is down from south Florida, four or five years ago. And every year more and more schools are starting, you are supposed to go out on the morning of the 21st. Put them on the public place,..
(Make them around the town and last time I’ve seen) I’m just passing a couple of the books I’ve
got and it’s hard to find literature. A piece of abstract thing that is very hard to find..That’s my brandshow..That’s Julie pick this up on the Internet, humanityquest.com Teachers with big ideas. Because you can look up peace, it will take and give you all these website quotes. (music, they have to do peace or global any kinds of big ideas, amazing things..(Some suggestions..) Yes, I’m doing the third, fourth, and fifth grades. So I’m probably doing the morning, so anyhow those resources are over there, I also have this, I like bigger that if you want to use that to learn up the .. (A question about the exhibition..from Margie). They can’t. Just depends. There’s not telling to get together. But they can take home whole family and put in the front yard. I guess more kids in your room. This website is on that same thing. That has peace another language, so that’s really unique thing for kids to write down on their words…(She is thinking about making DVD using the school wide wind indicator.) S: Chaotic, but it was fun and wonderful… S: Right!

They seem very interested in talking and hearing about the Books, Classroom materials. S: I did this drawing paper. The bigger..Have your paper needs to be noticed? But I can just do this. I’m not gonna have this pencils with razors there. They’ll be going to take them home.. S: I’m sure there is a lot of magazine, it’s free, it’s amazing, every month in your box for free, and also come with the grade. Books, classroom materials, and another one is for elementary school came out, but I haven’t got it yet. called “Starting Small.” So there is teaching tolerate which take 10 to 12, and new one is just “starting small” and it’s after K2-2. “ Teacher …” got lesson plans, articles, Obama’s speech on race which is fantastic, but there is AP’s lesson in here this month. So anybody got this month, actually read it, (widespread..?) which is really easy one to use what there are scrap back. You always get salad? piece. They get photo trips forward on to fabric they show each other…with copy machine. I also think standing would be great.(where did you get the magazine?) get the website..Maybe “teaching tolerance.or…I’ll go get this for a second. Some of us want to see.. S: (another website of teaching ideas suggested by Ellen) It is fabulous.. It talks about rethinking responsibility, Rethinkingschools.com

One art teacher says about a book which is related to Peer Pressure in classroom. She introduces a book to them. The book offers the knowledge in dealing with the issue of peace in school and among students.

S: I was in the car, listening to MPR. And I heard the author, whose name I don’t remember..It was the ..She was so good for just a few minutes I thought I got to write the book down. It’s
called “Can’t say You can clay(?).” She is a kindergarten teacher, she wrote the book, and try this research project in her class and fifth graders, too, about Peer Pressure. There are certain kids in the class you don’t wanna play with and we don’t want them to play with us. And she has the fifth graders and said, “do you think you guys just could do that?” “No, no...this is out time. This is our freedom. You can tell us who we can play with.” She says you guys can probably play with young kids, in the kindergarten. These are fifth graders..for this and will be maybe young. That my for, but not me. It’s a great book. It talks about how she wants to do classroom and she made this working. It even talks later it has the dialogue she has the kids. And it was just really cool. She’s got other books to look at the author image on the two..We are talking about peace first that came. Not just peace in the global sense but peace in microworld, you know (Yea! That’s right!) peace in the playground..The kid, although once, I have a class two kids like that and talking to them about how they can approach each other and work together. It was really kinda cool. The one she said later, one of the kids, the fifth grade said, “I still try to do thing you told me that one of the kids that was always alienated, I choose to be by myself and don’t get along with others because I don’t get along with others. The thing is those kids who have problems end up the other kids has same social class. And then they show their troubles. But they still bond together. It’s like magnify each other and continue to get trouble. Isn’t it always in schools? I think it’s written by a teacher, it’s an adult book, written for other adults and for teachers. But it’s written by kindergarten teachers. It’s gotta a lot of year’s ..just sounds like really different way to approach and thought about great book study in schools. Especially in elementary schools.

S: It would be great to take kids in gallery space. Environmental things..the kids has to think about it..bomb..Until we will find out how many schools we have, and then we will prepare for materials..If you want to do that, email me and
S: I have a question about the real art to the school. Do we have that work?
S: Art education director, which has been? For the classroom out and in it that proper organizations that offer either which opportunity is to be run into your classroom or fieldtrip properties..60 to 70 % of the programs coca provides the portraits for free. So take a look at it (where is it? Yea, Keep going..). Ah, Cocanet. or. Caca’s website, you can just put art and education that and try it there and we are up to school year..This is the latest one, just from the art educators, but who are to use drama, movement, can we also control or controlled it out playing...Winter festival.. We realized that sometimes we are looking for very specific, certain plan for whole..for actual publications..really ended up be ..It’s online and download for free and you can print it out piece, you can a lot of work you can do it. Check it out there. If you have research in your classroom and kids respond to it, let me know.
S: I think you guys probably will get a hard copy of the prospective application mail. What I
have learned is that for some reasons the city sends out just …application, No~It’s taken me a while for to do that. (No~I got it). I apologize for ..I am following up with the electronical. All the states time to be in that …rules are all the same..I have put on one fly change of the dimension. We do have a dimension to constrain this year cause everyone makes bigger and bigger..I am talking about frame under four feet, I mean I am not talking about very clear today. ..We are not having exhibitions this year. Under the works we have done last a couple of years. We do probably do the way to look around now …dialogues between administrator and you guys. Let me know..They are telling me, they are very very supportive for arts..they know that everyone is very nervous about it..They are trying to be holding to listen to …I said it would be helpful to actually talk about it. One on one and others and let me know..I know there are many workshops, I guess, they are specific to disciplines, and one of them said that I offered to them educators’ workshops without something they supported Not only …paper would be supported (Wow..I love her!!, - Okay, we got the workshops..do you know pink performance?)

Amanda offered information for workshops application and schedules..I always open to your suggestions and topics of workshops..

Share materials …An art teacher brought her old stuff and art materials
Share Video…An art teacher made a video clip about defining art…the concept of art..Funny movie..

**Monthly Meeting: February 10th, 2010, Riley Elementary School, 4:00-6:00 p.m.**

Today’s meeting looks more hilarious than before. There are 6 interns with their mentor teachers. (C: Coordinator, S: Somebody)

C: Let’s start with Jane. Guys, this is a new teacher at Colon. (They welcome, cheer with hands).
So you’re gonna learn so many things about tons of work you have to do. (They laugh loudly. Leanne is so humorous. ) You know it’s optional! But you’ve already, there is a plenty of work around. (A new teacher: Okay.) It’s like what you need, take notes. (She acts like a senior art teacher, which makes the atmosphere of the meeting amusing.)
And speaking of covering Idelle Brock’s position, Idelle Brock is gone. I didn’t know that, everybody didn’t know. Before that, we need somebody to take over her job of library law for sign-up. So think about it, we will bring it up at the end of the meeting. It should be pretty easy this year. I mean we’ve a lot of done it. All the sign-up stuff. All your job probably is calling people and remind them that they have the library. Call it people to remind them. Maybe talking to the Law Office. The coordinator. So it’s probably not very much. People probably called a few months. So if you’re willing to sign up for that, let me know. And Jane has something issue.
Jane: The peace mural was done on that Saturday. The only thing that is needed was a little picture of outlining and nice students who were participating. Brainstorming and outlining. We did outlining and it took just about one hour afternoon. (Great!) Yesterday we presented and met at the conference room…(She reported her experience of the Guernica peace mural making on the Saturday.) We have signed up and put it up in my cafeteria.…

C: Yes, you’ll remind me and you can talk to me about it too.
Jane: But I do have some news. I am invited to take to three peace murals. The peace murals I painted with Denis from Turkey. The peace murals that I had with the operation of the Japanese and my school, and the peace mural that according school participated in. I will visit Budapest in Rumania. (Um..You’re kidding! Art teachers congratulate her visit to Rumania.) I was like, “oh my god!” March 20. (Wow!) (She feels very self-achieved through participating in the international project of peace mural as one of the coordinators. She is very energetic. Through the international, broad experience, she looks proud of working as a professional art teacher. She shows art works of Japanese kids to the art teachers in which their desire to peace is represented for the 65th anniversary of Nagasaki.)

The peace mural that our school made and this peace mural will be travelling. When I sent our piece to them, I sent gifts to the students in Japan. we made cards, messages,…(She explained the process of exchange of art works of her students and Japanese students.) So this is what they send us. (Cool! Teachers are so impressed by the works of art by the Japanese students.) You can see some of them kindergarten, all of the school are really fascinating. (She shares more detailed her participation experience with the art teachers: how this peace mural theme of the Saturday came up, how she communicated with the people who are from international countries. She invited them at the last day of the project symposium. An art teacher suggests that this peace mural can be a cover of the book the Leon County would publish.)

All: Good job! (Art teachers applaud her wonderful and passionate work for the community art project. They acclaim.) 8:10 By the way, I should’ve brought the peace mural at the county meeting. I asked all the teachers to work so hard…Then they started to make comments and questions and they were so very supportive. Now they know what we did. I told them we don’t just go paint and apply colors. (Right!)
Me: Here is a collect envelop for Linnie’s retirement gift on the counter there. If checks are okay, run into Jean Rebecca, just whatever amount you’d like to give. There is a card. So you can write a message for Linnie. Whatever you want.
Jane shows **pictures** sent from …They are so excited about that. Very uproarious. And they look like to exchange some information and ideas. A group gathering at a table talk about what they should submit for renewing their certificate. Or some art teachers discuss about school wide projects. Some art teachers talk about how to use camera in an art class. It lasts for about five minutes. They sometimes come to be uproarious and hilarious when having surprising news or exciting things happen to the meeting or their colleagues. They sincerely share the pleasures and bitters of the members. They are not jealous about their colleague’s success in fulfilling community art project and achieving successful results in art teaching. 13:39 It is so hard to get attention of the art teachers because they are so deeply immersed in natural, abrupt conversation with each other.

(You are right!) (Yea.)

(An art teacher breaks the long chat of the art teachers. The chattering no longer seems to be waste of time to them. Rather it is the most productive time to allow them to share anything.) First of all, thanks for your patience. (16.24) I always wish I can do it. Everybody see a file at this point. Everybody looked at an email. If you open the map, you see the beautiful map using powerpoint. They are awesome. I am excited about that. Click it. That’s coming from those into putting map step. You have to handwrite. (That’s pretty.) It was a beau

(He explains how to display students’ art work. Teachers received maps for the upcoming exhibition via emails before this meeting. This meeting is for confirming what they know and prepare for the exhibition. He is in charge of this exhibition, so he set up plans, including display of 2D and 3D works of art. He divided area of the public library into the number of schools participating in the exhibition. Teachers are demanded to finish display of their students by March 5th. After school, they are individually supposed to be done with the display. So this meeting is important for them because they need to know what they exactly should do and where to display their students’ works of art. The art teachers should give description about the works of art. In addition, they think about together the most effective way to display 3D works of art. Their conversation is resilient. One teacher makes an alternative idea. They thoroughly consider it. Another teacher makes suggestion about it. Likewise, the conversation is object-oriented and a pathway to find better solutions.

There is work demanding thorough deliberation of the teachers. They need to think about how to protect the paint of the library wall from coming off and what glue they should use for this problem. He encourages them to use clips, instead of sticky glue for preventing the damage of
the ceiling and wall.)
Kevin: The ceiling has the gradient of…Mostly they provide the clips. The best plan is that you should go to the library and you should schedule to spend your time.
Somebody: We got a nice powerpoint. (A few years ago they made it.)
Kevin: Let me have that.
Ann: The library’s probably a work on Sunshine State Standards about putting things on the walls. They really hate it. And we say, “you know, Kevin probably would need. I’m just ..quit. Please, please, please…I’m really mad. They’re really wonderful people. They don’t usually get that, but these are inspect on them…
C: we’d like this powerpoint. I’ll try to email this to you. I can burn CD and bring to school and mail for you. But this is very humbled to see what it looks like…If you need this, I’ll send out paper, you just write here, name and your school. I’ll try to email.
(Email is the most critical way in which they share information.)
S: If they want to contact, some of those antiquate points..sometimes…
(A teacher jokes. She suggested using again the past plans for this exhibition rather than make new one. They suddenly laugh aloud clapping their hands. A teacher teaches an easier and more effective way to pop up students’ art works, based on her successful experience.
A teacher adds more knowledge on it. “You have nine feet space. So you use three those banners, cut it into two-walk sides because you have to learn to tie. It looks nicer because of a little bit space. Between them, enter to between them. It’ll make a plenty of enter too smaller than thirty six…Blair mentions detailed information about the usage of allotted space. “Pick it in the local stores. Don’t go Office Depot.” An art teacher, Melissa, jokes. Teachers burst into laughter. “Oh, let my husband make sure that.”

Leanne: This is one of the fabric wall. Just like bulletin board. We usually use t-pin. T-pins are usually there? (No.) Oh. (Get, bring it to there. Print some all too. Cause she never knows if you’re going to have another one.)
Some of hooks are gone. If you’ve been what you are hanging, you might want to check and bring something because I know this repainted, and there are some new paints. And they don’t get some pull down. I’m not sure. But the hooks for the area.
Melissa: Go (a store name)…Everything’s there. I just bring some.

Blair: What does not work is just making like this. It’s just doing …That does not work. It’s as much 30 inches, exactly 40 on it. We can try it. Try and decide the correct size. If you put this on the show like that, tape them, so little things are peeled up.
Me: Yea. I usually use scrap and …and then take them off. Just a little peel up. (They discuss
about the wall size and the materials appropriate for fixing the art works on the wall. They come to find better ways to adhere the art works to the wall.

Daniel: Any other question? …Last year a few of us decided a more good idea. When I got close to the reception time, there were a few schools. They didn’t get the emails and what happened there. I kind of ask you should be an email. Just let me know that they’ve already the circumstances.. Whenever you want to do, just let me know who you get.

(They discuss about the schedule of when they start displaying the exhibition. He collaborates with the coordinator of the Leon County, communicating through emails. He regards what they decide or consider issues to the art teachers of the meeting. He plays a role of an intermediary between the Leon County and the community.

I’ll email you as soon as I find glass cases. I am thinking of that if you did it last year or a year before, you might be…I don’t know the glass cases were underneath the stairs, or new and they seemed open. I just make sure that first. (As a supply for display, glass cases are used.) She should email me any day now. She should email back. If you are interested in it, hold on to it.

Somebody: Can you also check when we work down?

Kevin: Okay. The question always comes. Can we hang the works of art weekend?

Blair: Kevin, one thing is that some area sometimes, they have to come down. (right) Just make sure there is exception. (Right)

Kevin: Sometimes work schedules go in. Okay. I’ll try to find out all that information for you. Okay. I’ll try to give you. (Thank you) Oh, no problem.

(They freely ask anything if they have some questions or suggestions. Kevin is receptive to whatever the teachers ask. The range of their discussion is from broad to detail.) We’re having two different receptions. If you think for some reason, you get long space or short space.. If you don’t feel like you use your short space, you know, it’s encouraged, but it’s not requirement. You can send an email. I can give you someone else. There are usually people that like a little bit extra room. So let me know and send us.. You don’t have to let me know, if you are going to use it.

Blair: One more thing, (she has a lot of experience in this community project, so she can give ideas derived from her experience.) The (.) County there is Zero teachers, including music teachers, art teachers. ..It’s changed. The registration time could not be in any art of the district. 31.42 With that line, if everyone will be willing to use 18 pieces of paper, and display, and put something like from (artist’ name) or brain research, any of those things about what the art contributes to problem solving critical thinking skills, any word of a little thing, because what happens in the time of art that they see, they see only product, don’t see the process, thinking, all the stuff. So earlier I want them to know that we do more donate pretty pictures. Maybe there is
no tied connection. So everyone if you are willing to do, please introduce 12X18 size of art works..

(She feels a strong accountability in enlightening people in the county with regard to mind to art, not the product but the process. She encourages the teachers to participate in an exhibition to inform that the process of art production should be paid more attention to. This requires voluntary participation of art teachers because it is not mandatory. There is a strong sense of accountability as an art teacher.)

<informing art education, documentation, publishing, presenting at conferences: teacher’ professional quality>

Ann: NAEA site has Elliot Eisner’s ten things of art teaching, so how about applying and taking and sending and putting them on. What size do they say? (12X18) Anybody wants to send me a couple of photos of your kids’ action, it would be great. Kids’ pointing out to art work, something and of course production, but any art history or discussion kinds of things well. I would be happy to add those photos and make sure these can be photography and displayed. Any school’s products. There is only ten of them. We just display. There is a hallway.

Ellen: And then what I think is that everybody should do with your things just displayed. A little care about specifics too. What were behind that. Think about the process, Thinking, not merely product of art)

C: for each project.

Ellen: this was play to learn about skills, ..putting things together in 3Dimensional.

Rebecca: I like the stained, but more than stained glass. They are from Christine …I could learn the stained when I displayed. We do have standards. (Can we borrow them?) Yea. We can put together art works. Here is the very nice part. It might be nice…

Ann: okay. The other thing is April. Is this a thing to be Idelle PR. The more kids come, the better the more public and principals are going there. If you want to do performance..

Blair: Last year nobody came and talk. So… All the parents were last year. But it really did not work.

Idelle: I can do invite something. We can…People come porcelain campaign.

S: Someone else come from a couple of schools. Four or five people.

S: Can you email me and give information to me? I have contact in the district.

Idelle: Okay. You will invite separately two or…

(They make an effort to draw the public and people of the district on art events.)

Ann: Let me think about..

Leanne: Also anybody put your ticket and send students. So our emails those still let put your
school. Put your kids’ names on it. I’ll make certificates for several art shows we do because they encourage them to do it. So I do invitation, letter home, certificates, I just send consents to home. So if you want to copy, I can forward to you the letter, send home and certificate and all the stuff. So you can borrow it. And encourage it. Cause nobody comes in my first year. It helps one come. And Melissa was talking too. Next year so many people running around here.

Melissa: You put on your invite. Put down but find to me. Get your pictures and take and get a tree bag. Seriously I just put up a little tree bag, stickers, art things, and the love it. (The ideas to induce the student’s interest in the art show). But it worked that. Cause they find you. They know the tree bag involved in food or some they can find.

S: When I send invitation, I used too. Find an art teacher, a tree bag! 38.16

C: Everybody signed up the reception right? Kevin did you have to switch those pieces upstairs, did you switch those schools, so that no ones are upstairs? You did it? Okay. So they can come down. Judy is not here. Judy has not told me anything about food. I thought she is going to be here.

Rebecca: We do not have interns’ work.

C: Oh, interns.

Teachers: Okay! (They Ellenkly say what they want to. Maybe the teacher lets the interns have job in this big exhibition through which the interns can learn about what the art teachers have done for the community outside of schools. It is a good opportunity for the interns to experience the world of art teachers.)

C: You have a job. (The atmosphere to allot job to the interns is very encouraging, not compelling. So the interns become willing to accept the responsibility as a chance to get involved in the teachers’ community.) 39.58

Melissa: She did all these really cool foods.

Ann: Oh, that’s right.

C: Do you remember? She had done all the fruits and kebabs and..

S: Yes. That was very nice.

Melissa: And she is very willing to do this job again this year. So I am sure that she is going to...

C: Everybody plan on bringing like baguette and chips, cookies and some. Usually we bring to one salty and one sweet. I’ll email her this week. And we are asking you to be volunteers. And Let me remind this too. Do you have school email address yet? (Yes.) Oh, you do. If you need to see anything out, remember that there are art, are you going to be art elementary? Just double check. Cause we have had changes…Just hopefully you get everything. If you don’t, you can miss.
C: Haley, what is YAM checker? (I have no idea…) Also anybody needs help with hanging their show, Amanda is offering her expertise. She is very good. She has gotten it. She is the exhibition. Amanda: I’m now the education and exhibition career.
C: Wow! A new position.
Amanda: I have two now. So I am more than happy to help your exhibition. Because I am the exhibition coordinator now. So give a shot if you need any help, okay? It’s a pretty tough job. But I learn to know exhibition as well as education. (The community art show needs a lot of collaboration and support, help each other.)

C: We have been talking about this earlier. We still have a few copies of Leon County Scope and Sequence that some lovely art teachers put together. Some of you signed up many meetings to go for copy of this. Given the several meetings, but there are some who maybe didn’t get them. If you need the scope and sequence, sign it up first time. But I have got copies and made a few more copies in my desktop. Fill out it here.

C: If you have any questions, I’ve got all the copies of what Kevin send out. Anybody can take a look at and just check it out now. And the last thing, anybody wants to be a volunteer for Idelle’s job? Come on. (An art teacher left for different county. The job has not been undertaken by anybody. An art teacher raises her hand to indicate that she wants to be a volunteer to take charge of the job. Art teachers acclaim her, appreciating her voluntary intention to take charge of this job.) Melissa: Okay. What would you like, milk chocolate, caramel, or dark chocolate? I sell this for one dollar by the way. It’s for free for you because you are stepping up to the plate. What kind of would you like? (She is a woman of sense. She makes a witty remark all the time at the meeting. She had been charged in the role of coordinator, so has better understanding about that it is demanding lots of cares and efforts to take a role of the meeting than anybody. She especially wants to express her thanks to her, which leads the art teachers to feel a sense of appreciation to the person who willingly takes charge of a job of the community. People sincerely offer their congratulations and thankfulness on the young art teacher. )

<Plan about the last meeting: Cocktail party with secondary art teachers, the process of making-decision is democratic.>
Amanda: It is going to be a really cool idea to have and join elementary and secondary folks. I realized you guys all never get the chance to talk to each other, not sort of missed the opportunity. I thought that it is really cool if we can have that meeting. Salvage art center which is new recycling center down road square. I talked to probably the person who is sort of PEAO at the
Salvage center. And they are having a sort of plans to relocate. So we may still be able to have it. The savage art center may not be located. I don’t know. But I can’t find any reason why we can’t have cocktails and something like that and COCA will join the meeting.

**Book Study Group Meeting: February 16th, 2010, Conley Elementary School 3:30-6:00 p.m.**

6 teachers get together around 4 o’clock in Conley Elementary School. Ann, Ellen, Haley, Kate, Somebody, and Blair. They sit around a table. They unfold the book on the table with students’ works of art that they bring. There is some chips and fruits, and soft drinks on a shelf.

Somebody: Some of them we went back to painting. Some of them went to crayon. Some of them just go back in because I’m doing something else. There are varieties. I brought stamping. I don’t think I brought the stamping. I don’t think I got that from here. I think I looked this stamping cause I have lots of stamps. So we did stamping, kind of introductory. Then we do this. Just making lines, angles, and words things like that. This is for kindergarten and the first grade. And then next time, kind of model drawing people, or something, in particular, they can go from there. You will see a lot of stick people. (She shows stamping of kindergarteners and the first graders using crayon and acrylic paints) Probably first graders. That’s the first grade group. Teachers present a lot of interest in looking at the art works of kids. M: They are musical to me. Kids not to smear with that part. S: Oh, yea. They is an idea we have to talk about. M: I am happy with this smear. D: I can share the good ones. “I like the yellow one and the purple.” “.is supposed to be better.” “U-um, good idea.” “I did black one.” “There is no mix station no more.” “Oh, I love the color.” Julie takes out cookies and chocolate. “Well, I have to try one of those.” “Cause it’s new.” “So they used brush?” “That’s probably later one about. One back in before we planned, cause paint is really hard. Because the third graders can’t leave on time. So they get there 2:10 and they come early 3:05. So painting was really hard to teach. But first graders saved more time. So that’s fine.” “So they stamp and paint there or just whole a day.” “Whole, on that Monday” “That one’s nice.” “That’s first.” “The smallers are kindergarten.” “It looks like a cardboard.” “Brush card board!” “Hahaha.” “I kind of gave up something to paint for kindergarten. So it looks like finger painting and then finished.” “They are really exploratory.” “Here’s my example. What they could do when they painted that.” “These days haven’t been back in, right?” “I may not go back.”
“You know what, I’ll show you construction paper plans. I was very happy with them.” “I love construction paper.” “I put some primary in that.” “I get some black, some brown, the stuff.” “I love the yellow paint.” “I was thinking my kindergarten project.” “These are kindergarten?” “They have a group for…” “Oh, that is so long, long, long!” “The bird dropping in San Diego.” “Okay, I brought some to share. I brought BlueRed copies. Try two of these.” She gives them CD in which lesson plans and instructional methods for kindergarteners are included. “Oh, thank you.” “Try them and see. I did with second grade. because kindergarteners did already portrait things. The first thing I have done. I thought you love this.” “Hailey who thought of this idea doing the mat board with the little tweed. They did the bird type. We shared Hailey’s bird type. Everybody because everybody wanted up. Anyway they did black and extra purple and yellow colors too. Then you can do this as many papers as you use. First of all, you did your name, and then if you have a time to do, two or three more, you can do any sort of patterns. The construction paper adding, cutting, and doing collage, that kind of things. I’ll have to tell you … these at all. Not very. Part of is, my intern took over, and even she said, - “I need to show a good example.” “Yes, you do.” “You show them what you don’t want to do and what you want to do”- So there are lots of names, these are all names. We made designs. And we talked all about line directions, qualities of lines, and they’re not going to finish. Some people really wanted town, which is something like that. I was thinking of friends to do construction paper and crayons plus. So lots of the steps go to scrap paper, box and..okay here’s the example.” “Oh, cool!” “Oh, very nice.”

Kate comes late. They welcome her.
“Examples and non examples are important! Actually mines are second grades. Exactly what probably your case wants to. And I say, “we’ll not treat with a brush. We will not push back and forth. What’s this? And they ruled it. Because I don’t want you to wound yours. Don’t do this. And then construction paper I loved but I think it’s some aspect of a couple of wine design. I would do definitely to get mine shared with classroom teachers. At the beginning of the year, so much fun. Practice doing their names.” “I think black and white is good for practice.” “I think what would happen with these. If they start with 3 dimensional, oh my god. Paper together, no, no. Three dimensional.” “I like that idea, that’s wonderful idea.” “And I also had a practice that is so hard for, I think American children. Practice without paint.” “Yea, right.” “So do we just do finger drawing?” “But that’s just for whole planning thing with thinking and talking about an important piece. We are just developing the brain, work habits, and for everywhere. We start some self-evaluation too. And asking about is pretty good. I mean they really stepped up to it. That was a big issue. Because writing, you know.” “I think I want to finish this stuff. Usually my
kids come in and all on the floor. We work on it. Sometimes are open process in front of you, you are sitting and we discuss a little bit or this is next step. But I think I put them out and have kids talk about each other and have to think, pop things…” “We think about what would you change?” “If you did it again, nothing’s bad, but what would you change?”

“I did lines too. But I made the paint brush and Kandinsky that was on page 18 and 19. And I did extension of variation and we look at that. I show you Kandinsky website interactive. I get some ready for you.” “I even work with television at my class.” “Okay, never mind.” “I did it with my kindergarten. These are not done yet. But what we did is we use music and we did the painting.” “Wow.” They appreciate the kids’ art works. She let us appreciate music like what she performed with her kids. “Listen to the music. I wish I have one cutter because we can cut up, not doing that.” “Okay, they do the cardboard or…” “This is a paint brush. We talk about line. I have to play music. Music makes a difference and I demonstrate. This class is not done. Every now and then let me get some the other day.” “I love the choice of color.” “So do you start oil pastel?” “No, no. That’s polycrylic.” “Okay, that was trick for me.” “Not covering the black.” “Yea, don’t cover the black.” “But a couple of did a little bit. I just showed them. And they loved the color. All the time blending color and showing how the oil pastels are mixing, you know. And then we get the color wheel, you can just look at the color and explore and go around it. I’m just going to cut them and glue them on myself. And then they have the other they can do. They can make cards whatever they want the other.” “You can cut them a half just for one.” “I kind of a half inch square and pick the best part. Pick the most interesting part. And send a square one art.” “Good idea.” “So it’s a fundraising.” “If you do that, you can get funding from PTO?” “Oh, yes.” “Oh, good.” “Meeting this afternoon, I told them that I want money. Some of them really got into mixing the color or others did.” “I love this. This is gorgeous.” “Black and white. But their lines are so good.” “And I think that what they did that happened, I think there was a technology on it. Two things. One is for music. Cause they love music. It’s a Dave CD. Do you remember this? We got this for free. I previewed and so I got the free. (Music) And I didn’t put it that much. And take my brush and paper, and I ask, “what does this sound like? And then I go waving or waving off. Sharp and I will do a peak. It sounds like a humming, you know. It’s like hanging. And then I get also on the website.” She explains how to use the website and the good points of the website on which kids can practice composing diverse lines and colors and so learn about their characteristics. “I just like to do kindergarten.” “Yea. That’s right” “But I want to share this website with you. This is an interactive website. Try colors. Then they have to find a color and work it and blend or something else…I can’t believe it. They are coming up and turning it at all. I don’t ask them to do that. But kids think. The cooler page is this one…let’s see what kind of lines they use…” She demonstrates how to effectively use the web site for her class of teaching
Kandinsky. “All sorts of lines suddenly make that...So I think that it really helps them get done well and keep their whole page black. So one time to do black, take a long, so you can do this part. And then next time two times two colors. It’s messy before. But anyway I thought I work drawing. That’s very ancient. And the line picture here. Look at the line picture in the book. So basically you know it’s a lesson with technology.”
“A couple of years ago I took..but take modern it was beautiful.”
“Cause I established CD to take this from early paintings to later. But you know technology, making a CD is not any more. Cause it takes a long. I’m trying to save web things, buying resources.”

“You can do acrylics. All the kids do water color.”
“Well, older kids, they are like, wow, they want to do.” “I tried that. We did that for one week and painted over second grade and fifth grade. It was well mixed. The older kids get to overdo you know, they think over, think too much.”
“You know, I did it with fourth graders. The first lesson what I did, I usually did test everything, page number one, I feel sorry for them.” They all sympathize with her confession of bad teaching. “Right” “It happened to me. They were overwhelmed with a piece of paper. They wanted to cover whole things, so I kept thinking. What can I do, what can I do...I left light, entrance light and then I turned all lights off. And then I put the music. I don’t know why but that seemed to calm them down, they would not check each other, they couldn’t see everybody else.” They laugh.
“When the kids were working, I usually down the screen. So most of them were writing about like this. And see. I got to keep them calm...” “So Leslie what music do you use?” “I asked the music teacher, to put a kind of a little clips. So CD about, she put a little bit of lap, she cut it to something else. She just does a little seconds, different kinds of music. She did a nice job with that.” “There are African American, Chinese, Renaissance, Romantic, expressionism music, and so on.” “I like that. Let’s see.”

“My intern was doing all that medieval. So she did stained glass, unit of keys. She is making keys and coils.” “Keys?” “Yea.” “Wow” “There are different kinds of keys. For different kinds of dolls and castles. She came up with a really nice unit.” But I finally figured it out what to do with Renaissance. I’m going to have 5 and 6 stations. One of them is going to be 16th paintings. The other one is going to mix the egg paint. And they are going to come up with a paragraph of house, make observations of paint. The other is going to be the grid. So they are going to have still-life. I forgot the other two. So they’ll just move table to table. It will be the end of the Renaissance. One lesson.” “They can do all the stations?” “You know, it makes me crazy. I decided to do a
timeline throughout the entire year. So we started from early cave art and it’s been really impossible. So I’m crunching it. We are going to do kind of nice Renaissance units now. Impressive unit and last one is going to be modern. That’s it.”

“Do you do that all the kids or just one or two levels?” “First through fifth grade. For Kindergarten I don’t’ do the themes. With kindergarten, I do principle of art and design. I don’t do themes.”

“How do you guys make up, you do something, one kid is absent?” “Oh, my god.” “How do you make that up, especially with clay?” “They make one little extra one. I keep my demos, and I put on the side and then they get to paint it. Sometimes I do a little make it up. If I still have some firing, I’ll do make it up. But I don’t, I forget it.” “My ones, my heart goes on to reading masters. Because every day of the week reading masters accept on Friday. Whatever special they have, they go to the special area. They don’t get to choose. They go to the special area. Suddenly I haven’t seen kids for a month. Oh my god. Who are you? What are you doing here?”

“The thing happened to me. Get the kid... He really likes art. but he body … getting too close to line. So we put him in extra PE.” “Wow, I even haven’t heard that before.” “Me neither.” “Did you have to complete survey on the computer? We started asking things like that. How many times do you drink?”

“I thought I drink as much as I can do.” Julie makes a joke and they laugh. “We have to do. ‘Cause they took a machine. We have to have some type of aerobic, yoga, meditation...” “For the faculty, you must attend?” “Well, they don’t require it. But you know that we don’t require it, let me take your name. You know..” “Why don’t you say I do this this this..” “I know, it’s none of your business.” “You don’t do this. They are going to ask all these questions and our careers are so political. They say ethics for teacher’s bible. Would you look at the thing? If you got a traffic ticket, if you speed on the side road...” “You know, I came up with a couple of ideas. For the meditation. I asked them, “what time do you have class?” They said, “after 3:30” you know, I have other things to do. They don’t understand it.” Their conversation about of participation in teacher’s physical training is fervent. “But I will agree to do it after the last class. Not after 3:30.” They giggle and chuckle, talking about their schools’ situation and their opinions.”

“I started with kids making their own slabs, which took a long time. Then I got smart..cause I practiced twice. Then I just take out my old practice clay. The third time I say, “This is the new clay.” I just was able to do with my wire cut to this slab. And then they got a lot more creative…I have decided to work Majolica. They usually say that for fifth grade.” “Yea, I would not risk.” “What do you do?” “I buy it, banish, and I just put it over it.” “And you start them like do that
ground first and just let them…? Cause (publication company’s name) ‘s book is really good.”
“Yes. Background here for the detail.” They look it over in the book. “Are they light clay or
Jorge Lab (Maybe clay’s kind)?” “Jorge Lab.” “It works nicely for Jorge Lab. I got it.” “The
thing that you need to know, enough for this.” “They have to be creamy.” “Page 20. You can over
paint everything and let them draw and dry up quickly. And then it gives a little shiny, when you
put the stuff on it.” Meale brings a little green turtle drawn by cake tempera paint which is not
watery, so kindergarteners can easily use. She also shows the cake tempera paint and teachers
write down its name and company in note. “They make some glossy and wash out. Or you can
do floor wax too. You can dip it in. The floor wax is supposed to work but I haven’t tried yet.”
“No.” “I have tried.” “You can also use glass medium.” “It’s so expensive.” “After you paint, the
kids paint, then they just put it on the tray for one night, and just pick it up.” “Cake tempera, you
have them? Nice.” “That is cake tempera. They just have to be stirred and brush up and down
until creamy. And then they are really steel, not just watery. Some of them make all the colors.
They can see and watch while doing it. They can see and work out it. You dry before you go back
over. This is kindergarten.” “Um, that’s good.” “I would do that music.” “Yea, the CD makes the
difference.” “And then the next one starts in March.”

“I would do a copy right at the workshop.” “I know. Be careful about. That’s why my whole
presentation everything online on the web. Every day is real because violation is not..” “..Usually
done by varied, brittle, and something than other. I’m getting and put a thing worked up and I’ve
been teaching. He has worked as a teacher but he has also worked in a music industry in
copyright law. So a lot of things, for instance, tell a contest with kids. He says, of course kids
have to perform music. That’s educational. But when you get sticky water, you swim and video
and tape it. And put it on your open website anybody works and goes in. A few have websites
where the parents have to type in password, you okay. But that means that the parents’ film’s a
littly jonny(?) It puts on you too. It’s the school. Well they are trouble too. But the school will be
liable. My twin sister went to the other copyright workshop. Oh yea, we were just like Wi Wi
Wi…Oh my god…Her guy is a teacher. No teacher has even been sued for copyright law. He did
not say. My guy said, “But the school, your school district gets sued. (right). And they usually
settle out of court, which means they are given millions of dollars. And then look on what’s
going on your report? Because it’s going to be fired.”
“When it comes to art work, like how old we have to be.”
“I get enough things. Their own all those copyrights by Michel Jackson for his state now. So you
got to find out like photo images all the time, phone photo images. When I work with Mary
Brogan, doing the outsider art things, I wrote people a letter. I said, “I got these images off your
site, off your gallery site, I’m doing blur, blur…” “Give me permission.” “And they would like to say, please use them, but it was cited on the lesson plan. (Oh my gush!) I think we will get in trouble, if you, I do my lesson plan, my powerpoint, I bring it in here and show everybody, that’s start to get it into trouble.” “Right. If you use, if she gave us powerpoint, that’s you go into the biggest thing. You know, I take more than five images from anyone, please blur blur blur blur, there are a whole lot of very useful, so many works, poems, so much music...there is a guideline for education. What I studied doing this, try to just put it in doing this. I’m going more and more live to website. Cause you can find everything. I just go live on the web, instead of my powerpoint, I am going live. Now why there is no gray area, or whether or not violation. Almost you can get it. You can mark on it in advance. You can put your powerpoint together, link it, do this hot link. And you go to the site, a little bit downroad time.”

“Do you use TeacherTube?” “I can get teacher tool.” “TeacherTube?” “Yea, we went to up to meeting.” “The district has Youtube teacher.” “It’s not blocked. I typed in my …came up with a million thumb nails of every kind of secret star fish everything. Every color fish, 12 pages.”

“That is nice!”

“When you get hundreds of videos made, you can have access to district schools, to high tune university where they have the pod capsule, everything for free. The pod cap does not just audio. You can put images. The problem we are going to run into with the images is that you don’t have to be art samples or kits that are professional art work. Just a bit of problem. A lot of stuff is technology, to get access to the district…We talked about the fore that you guys are so wonderful, you know what I’m talking about the site?” “Larry Dumbbell?” (District web site) “We have to use them.” “Go on that all the time.” “The problem is that classroom teachers still further third grade curriculum. So you don’t have it.” “Remember that Clay Film? Use that. Just something simple.” “I love that film.” “I’m looking for something like that.” “But just simple about that.” “I think that’s what we need to go.” “If the districts do that, we start making some of those things ourselves. We own all of us and we have to share.”

“That would be great. To me, we should get points for some…” “Yea! I think so. There we go.”

“You know, I need to get points for certificates.” “Me, too.” “I have to take some college courses?” “I have nothing for me. One three day workshop in the summer, that’s all, as far as point.” “I have to take the same thing as class. Messersmith. But it was the whole times. I couldn’t go anywhere. I’m sorry..you know, give me a break.” “For how many points?” “This is a graduate course. Yea. I think you get all the points.” “It depends on how many you signed up for.” “One course is 60 instead of credits. You need 60 hours course to renew your certificate.”

“So expensive.” “I think it’s ridiculous. I have to do, when you again.” “You guys don’t have
“I’m very impressed with that.” “The clip chart is nice.” “Very easy.” “What they are coming out with, now go guys, I might go every TC. It was the Epson. It was a projective, interactive pen. I had worked on a white board, any wall, everything is going to be interactive between the pen and computer. So what we were thinking is that pre-medium or some of those places write better than software, something, smart boarder is a better hardware. What we were going to find, somebody is going to develop great software. And we will get the software like museums, get license separately down the road.” “Epson has something bright.” “Epson has a new projector and has an interactive pen, and everyone goes to extra TC. You use your white and chalk board which is basically doing powerpoint and steroids. Well you can do, make things interactive, you can have them store primary, secondary colors...” “It has sound and you can record your presentation, really. But I’ll be willing to see then develop flip chart. “Yea, they have to do…” “Powerpoint presentation.” “It will be individual study under the college of education. We need to be TEC.” “TEC?” “Yea. But it has to be…” “We got Ph.D. in elementary education. You know, They let us put something together.” “Maybe what we will do is workshops.” Their conversation becomes serious when the issue about renewing their certificate and getting points. There might be some real troubles and difficulties that they have in getting points.” “One point for an hour, right?” “Yea.” “If we do anything, if we develop through TEC, it will be earned by the county. You got to have a lot of points. Anything you do on school time, on school property, sometimes if you earn your own time, you know work on the computer, all of that there is a copyright again. It’s owned by the county. They have the copyright on it.” “The reason why I asked about this book study is because I really like to invite David Edgar, the plastic guy who makes plastic things out of recycled everything and writes on recycle. And I wrote my set up, I left workshop and came down to the workshop, I loved too. He was engaged in Arts Council person, out of Gainesville. So he knows that segment. He said that he is happy to come down. It would cost. It probably would cost some thousand dollars to bring him.” “Grant, grant, grant!” “We regret to talk, okay, Thomson said, I’ll go in hundreds of dollars, I know that…I want others. Your scope is broader than mine. She said she signed..” “If you want to do service learning, it is supposed to be money out there. We can ask for summer workshop on service learning. But that would be something we can put in there. They say there is money to be grant for the things we want to do. So this one is connected to...” “This is from the county?” “Wafa is the one who has been approached by it. She asked me because I helped...” “Who is the county contact now?” “…Oak (a teacher’s name)” “She is doing everybody.” “Yea she has fifty something job.” “I pursue service learning.” “So he could be some workshop or something.” “And I’d like to bill it for any teacher. Cause I think any
teacher could’ve ..” “I don’t know we can get it or not, but I can find out.” “If we can do something, we will make materials ’cause they passed what people do that for. I mean, take courses for points. Certainly do what else to do.”

“We’ll make back and see. We will not let them do National Board Certified Teachers, we are not going to pay them to do the workshops. They’d better cut the points we have to get.” “Yea…I know.” “What other career has to do many points in workshops we do.” “And aren’t providing them.” “Can you earn points for attending every TC conferences?” “You can, but you got to have an approval and then check up the big deal. Then you have to come back, we have to still get points…” “The music teacher did it. The paper work. It almost drove her crazy. She almost gave up because it was just unbelievable.” “They look and down.” “Tons of paper.” “Right.” “There should be something known about that.” “Tris (an art teacher’s name), she is one I contact. She tells me what to do. Ask her.” “I want to know how she expects special area teachers, how about we get points, if there is nothing, and you know the past workshops are only three days. No more than three days.” “Right.” “You know that I used to take art classes. The certificate we got from the interns, I would use it for that class. But the last time I did it, I couldn’t register special students. And they only allow me for half of it. So I had to pay the rest of the class.” “What?” “This is not worked. One whole class anymore. So be careful with that.” “Yea…” “We have interns of the university that gives us the internship certificate. It used to allow us 15 hours a semester.” “Now is 6.” “It used to be good for us.” “You have to pay for all of the fees.” “Yea.” “So you pay for all fees.” “Now it’s not like that any more.” “I have to pay four hundreds seventy dollars to finish…” “Yes. Doctoral course..” “That’s the good point. Let’s say, “how we are going to get points? I always take two classes. One during the summer, but last summer it was so hard to go out. I felt like how was I punished.” “I don’t know why we couldn’t do a short course. Like we do in university.” “Glass workshop didn’t count?” “No” “If you have priority, all that paper work, and after the all paper work, you have to do a little writing work.” “How we apply it in our class?” “The workshops are just wonderful at least toilet.” “They laugh “Yea. Exactly take away our fun.” “Email Dave. He is drilling to do responding.” “Yea. They are working, believe me. LCTA people want their raises too. But we are going to get our steps before we get a raise.”

“I’m talking about my step. Cause I am talking about a big thousand dollar job two years ago. So I haven’t seen that two thousand dollar job. And they helped me to negotiate it. I absolutely lost my money. Because if you are here, next time you will get two thousand dollars.” “I really want to know if I have a job. They start with that. What the district says.” “All about the center rose up thing?” “Yes.” “Not only LCTA meeting days I can go and I tell that.” “We start to consider this. You guys told before. But the textbook adoption thing. The state requirement. We have to adopt new textbook every five years.” “That is eating up a lot of money.” “Every five years, new
textbook.” “But when we came up with art adoption, who got textbooks for art?” “Because they still buy math and science.” “I don’t care about who catch up.” “I’m just saying math textbook don’t need to be renewed every five years. It doesn’t change that much. That is a lot of money. or history.” “But science, reading…the teachers said that we don’t need that stuff. We don’t need any more this stuff. We just barely get to use that, teaching them when we’ve got.” “Right.” “We go to Lobby Days. We are lobby, there are congressmen, we keep in touch with legislature representatives and congressman and tell them, what your feelings are. I know we get really busy and don’t do it because we are busy and go home and fall in sleep in my chair at 8 o’clock. You know?” “Yes. That’s true.”

01:07:39 “Okay. So you want me to ask Tris about what we can do it again. What’s the plan for special area teachers to gain points? Because like you said, we need to be allowed to enroll special students education.” “No, we are not allowed any more.” “I had to register as a graduate student. That is double piece.” “That’s a real good point because economic cut is all the way off.” “Let you take a regular class. If you have any bachelor’s, you have to take graduate. That’s what I found.” “Right. You can’t find special students any more. But what about me? We have to register as a graduate student.” “I have my master’s. They will be able to do that.” “Right, I took classes. I used that for professional development.” “Now you can do that. They are not making it either.” “Well they expect us to be up on this until they care about certificate. What are our choices? Tell us what we are supposed to do. You offer so many options to classroom teachers.” “Yea. There are tons of classroom courses. Or you can go and get paid and take a science two weeks and half. We’ve got no options.” “Okay, that’s wrong.” “Mine has to be renewed. I looked on the teacher certification page. They say, discipline and other things are not specifically art. Teaching, you can still use them. You may not want, but that provides teaching strategy, you can still use those.” “I know. But it didn’t follow the next certificate period. I did all of that prior to that. I could’ve renewed four different ways last time. This time I have no ways. I mean I could’ve renewed four like that last time.” “Take your pick. I have a degree, I have enough points, I taught course at university, take your pick. What do you want me to do, and now I renew again. Mine is, I graduated and finished everything. So I don’t have anything to renew, I’m just starting new period. So is nothing there. So I should do national board thing. Mostly my stuff is scattered all over the place. I have no idea what I do. I cannot list all of them.” “Once you get 10 years certificate, you can use it twice in the state. So I probably go that.” “I’ve been bonus with ESOL.” “But you got the 400 dollars poured again.” “So how many classes you have taken?” “I just take one. I have all the points every needs to be certified, but you can bank ESOL.” “We only have 18 points.” “18 hours for ESOL. You can take more.”

“I printed that article…” “So we decide what we are going to work on?” “Yea. What we are
going to do, what you want to do.” “I want to study lessons of art and share.” “Most of us tried printmaking. You did clay. You know, you can do that. you can do just randomly, if you want. What you want to do.” “This is what the art meeting used to be like.” “What wasn’t good thing…

**Monthly Meeting: March 17th, 2010, Riley Elementary School 3:30-6:00**

<Their free talking is mostly involved in their kids, school things, their current teaching ideas, and so on>

<Taking advantage of the monthly encountering as much as they can as an opportunity to share and gain information> <Sharing conversations>

Art teachers are buzzing. They are excited about talking with their colleagues who they seem to have waited for meeting for a month. Their topics are mostly about their kids, their lesson plans, upcoming art events in their schools. Their primary concerns are about teaching art to their kids. The meeting is the place where they feel free to share their teaching ideas and ask questions about problems or difficulties which they encountered in doing practices. They take advantage of the opportunity as much as they can to meet with the people who are in the field of art education.

“Instead of board drawing, ..video,...”

“Okay you guys we break up the party.”

“we’re gonna talk, let’s see. Jane, if you want to go first, you can.”

<Demonstrating minutes of a peace mural painting in accordance with the teacher workshop and Kids’ Guernica exhibition>

“You all remember, we are doing that painting workshop. I am going to work with …schools. It was commanded from the beginning just to pick on that schools. Twenty kids, from Monday to Friday I have a permission. I promise as soon as I get over the permission, sign it out, everything goes out, each school, if you could send to permission to have the students who are international, send the permission to let them stay at the FSU museum. We’re gonna have a supervision which we have art teachers, professors, adults around there for supervision, that will be in the garage at FSU museum. It will be provided by the…stamps…Then they have to be there from 8 to 4 pm parents welcome to stay. You don’t have to. Children must be provided their own lunch. They will be provided morning, snack and juice afternoon, because we already have the reception will be open at 2 o’clock on Sunday. When I worked with Sera, for the .elementary school, we are actually involved in this together to make sure that I get my child permission to attend to that from time 8 to 4, I can ..or not, to give them option. I get the permission from the media to photograph and interview my child. This is very important to put them in there. They might be
have in the..It depends on how many people who are gonna make an appointment, they will only participate in with their ..Okay, well, if you put flower in here, in tree in here, we are not sure, unless we get the whole thing...these are the kids that they will be actually working on the peace mural after 2 o’clock..1 to 4, they will be able to ..on how..maybe if we could schedule very tightly, I recommend the older one is not kindergarten, third and fourth they are gonna be tolerate more they can stay longer, just my suggestion. Let me finish that..My opinion is we have to be in there..the parents address contact information of the phone number, ..number..what kind of language do you speak? They speak in which country, the home country in there...we could make sure that ..included in the peace mural. We still haven’t decided the kids..after we work it out..but we will be representing these houses..each home, each house from those different countries will be becoming...

Leanne “Once we decide, you could maybe email the permission slits? that you made up, you and Sera made up, and then we just modify it?
“Sure, it’s done in English, in Spanish.”
“Could they also help us have translators?”
“We aren’t sent to a peace yet. No, we are?”
“We are, so do it.”
“…Permission .those two kids definitely are coming. This is their contract. (This is phone number, information..) I will meet those permission slits? Once we have them and send them to my schools. So I will have all permissions slips and check them off, once the versions are coming together. As soon as we’re doing it,...they are able to speak to their native language. They are made of their language...(Viki: any kids can come and work on it. she suggests something to Jane) That would be an idea. I am thinking I have this in my computer. I can forward to you.”
“That would be awesome.”
Leanne “cause the people can get it, save it, change it? They would be very consistent.”
Jane “Any question? Okay! Almost everything is coming together. We’re gonna ..fabulous…”
“Are you cooking” “My husband does.”
An art teacher asks a funny question that makes the art teachers hilarious. They become boisterous in a moment.
“We will be going around businesses in the …community, they are being very generous.”
“I got it.” “They would be a professor, Idelle, who is very excited about .. and come and see what we do.”
Leanne ”You say, parents still will be there. It’s optional that parents will do that.”
Jane “It’s optional. They don’t have to say. That’s why we put the permission to ..or not.”
Leanne “Did you want to say anything about the K Office exhibit?”
Jane “Begin the exhibit, email me. I didn’t put it yet. But they know I’m gonna change it onto the .has the time but has to be next week.”
Leanne “A lot of has to begin this week?” Jane “my schedule?” Haha?
Leanne “I don’t know. They have some deadlines” “Monday or Tuesday?”
Jane “Yea, Monday and Tuesday. And then Thanksgiving. Everything , activities, gets crazy. So I’m hoping to do that it’s not to be later.”
Melissa “Anyone has worked and brought what you need to.. mail and get there in town?”
“Send it to tomorrow, Friday.” “Right”
“Otherwise you hand it and delivery to you on Monday.”
“I’ll email you. I told him I need to know by today.”
Leanne “Let me know it after the meeting.” “Yes!”

<Reminding and confirming of exhibit and teacher workshop> <Business meeting>
Viki “Just make sure if you need catalogues, want some extra ones, pick up some catalogues. Just I wanna remind you again. I’ll see you again before we do if you are bringing work some museum, just grab it downstairs they need to be at the museum between December 7 and 9. If you want more information, I have prepared. If you want some these sheets, I’m gonna have a state sign, just it is a reminder, when is the first meeting in January? (the 13th). Okay, see you one more time before January 16, I want to remind you what Jane has done. This is our schedule. Everybody has to have these, This is our updated teacher workshop on May 15. I’m just gonna send you, you can take tomorrow and has it on..And Anybody who didn’t sign up for teacher workshop on January 15, I would like you to sign up, and let me know..Some of countries that will be represented... that is teacher workshop. Japan, Greece, Turkey, France, Taiwan, Italy, Australia, Northern Island, Lebanon, Those are all the countries. Educators who are involved in peace mural movements in all those countries will be at the teacher workshops. And actually I’ll be standing you more official wire …about that. Usually teachers are.. for the students. And I think I send around sign-up sheets too, If by chance you didn’t sign up you want to, just give that to me at the end of today. Anybody who has not indicated going to the students’ display down stairs at the museum and you want to participate, let me know today.”

<Finding an alternative or a new opportunity to hold an exhibition at public space>
Leanne “Well, Jeniffer In I don’t see her. We had got email from her. Just that there, classes are gonna be changing. Their winter classes are gonna be changing. I think they’re starting in January. And I’ve got the information, I’ve got the email, anyone wants to look at it, print it up here, so if you wanna anything about what’s happening, what LeMoyne I have got the email here.
I wanna skip that otherwise. And then Amanda wanted to come to talk about winter fest. As you know, if you did not turn in art work, it’s too late. Hahaha!!! I know she’s gonna be looking more into that airport space and more into that warehouse space, Jane and Ann, anything more about the warehouse space?”

“Amanda, when I dropped art work, she says she is gonna throw an idea away, because it’s limited to exactly what they want, very strict to do that, what they want. They are not flexible, all teachers doing landscape with houses, beautiful architects, or something. They say no, they want something to deal with rather disaster,(Um, Dark!) (Hahaha..), you would think if you are in a work place you want something. Unless they agree with whatever we offer as a show, like put it in a frame, she said that we only agree with, it’s like a county office given some more.”

Leanne “I’ll be feeling me airport situation similar to that…Also Idelle sent email to us, saying that people could there is a more spaces at library. Library office is signed up. (I’m sorry..I’m sorry..Somebody makes something funny..) No, that is so funny. It was just fun. (It was a monkey./ When is it due?/) I asked for the information. And I’ve gotten nothing. I don’t know if she is not getting anything from Marcia..Maybe I need to email her again and to say that people would like to know what’s happening. ..(I’ll be able to switch now) I know that they were doing that for a very long term, like three months. And it seems like a ‘wasn’t so money here?’ ‘didn’t someone just switch?’ for the law office? (No) Last meeting somebody was in there. Linda is changed. I was like you I’ve got change it soon.”

“I’m sorry about a bad track. Airport exhibition they’re scraped at then.”
“We are on it, but it’s not looking like it happens.” “Not looking good.”

“In a few minutes, once I can find and conserve and create it up, Idelle, sign in the sheet for library I’ll send it around. Cause ours are open spaces. So just give me a piece of paper. Also Marcia Blair wanted to need to update you guys on the book study. She wasn’t able to be here today. She did say that they are gonna start a book study. It’s gonna start on Tuesday December 1st at 4 o’clock pm. And the books have arrived. You know, does anybody know the book? (Kindergarten..Davis Publication and still continuing studio thinking).”
“We email maybe.” “Tuesday December First..”
“She did tell me that if you haven’t signed up, or if you don’t know about what she is talking about, want to be part of the book study, then just email her. And it’s on that list I gave you. And do you get some points? We do, right? (Yes!) (individual professional development)”
They start joking..These are not gonna move out without the art teachers..That’s really what we
did. That was great! It’s part of studio thinking. We have to start part of this.

**<Encourage teachers’ participation in the book study>**

Leanne “Also, last month meeting we talked about substitute plans, and Ann brought up the great book, you had forever gone there it was offered for the stuff plans...And we told that maybe Kathryn …I’ve got some info, anybody is interested in subplans, I don’t have any interest in it, but maybe she does, she also just started business style studio in Collan. She offers classes for kids more charter schools adults. She is also an art teacher, right? She maybe a person who has a scholarship for kids. Her contact anybody is interested in getting sub-plans, or start a studio, is T Carter. Her phone number is …and her email, I mean, is artsmethods@comcast.net. Ann, what she made …just a county thing, right, her book, (J: she was ..state conference. ..) That’s great. (G: So we can call her or?) what we are saying is we don’t know. But somebody is interested in finding out then email her and call her and follow up on it. Because it’s a really cool book. But it’s been years since she made it. So we don’t know. A lot of people are so many interested in (I’ll do it! I’ll just look into it. If I find out anything..) Thanks!

**<Sharing art materials, lots of clay materials>**

Also we’ve got lots of clay equipment. If anybody just is interested in Kate Cowon (how much?) Kate Cowon has a kiln not electric, it’s a bonfire kiln for free. (it’s electric?) Yea, it’s electric. Not digital. I’m sorry. ...(Some art teachers offer more information about the kiln.) They made…(What do their district costly do it?) Yea, I think you can work for her. (And then you just transfer the property that belong to school, not her ..One thing that you need to be careful about is, if you have another kiln, you have to do this. I have two kilns. And they came, one instructor wanted..and we said, we got started to here. It’s not legal you have two kilns. And I said, excuse me, I wired for ..so I have two plugs which ..because you can’t run, they will let you have two they think to screw up. Wire for that...right.. It’s a two-forty wire. That’s why he got it in her school wire for that kind of kiln. (So we just do we contact her?) Leanne: Yes! Please contact her if you are interested in it. (A lot of your kiln some of the …and it takes totally different kinds of water. So what she has..) Oh really. She is still at Charles. If you wanna look at the kiln, exactly what it is, I’ve got it all..very good condition. So not only...today if you consider somebody is interested in email me and I’ll send you that stuffs. Or of course you can call and ask her about it.) Also more clay stuff, did Densel washinton get rid of all kinds of stuff? (No~haha) (G: you know what she has?/ three days after that day/ nice!/ it’s really nasty/ rats/ Oh~~/you are talking about brooms and rooms../ U~~it’s beautiful/ beautiful things/ there is just still much ..walk in and you have to../there is no light/ they seem to be excited about talking about the place where they can gain lots of clay materials.)
Leanne: “Donate, she is in your pocket.” “Clay materials we can get some studios a woman died. We can bring some clay materials they say about. But it is really crowded, it’s really over messy. She is a mother of a classroom teacher.”

They talk about clay materials. They are sometimes so talkative. They do really love talking with others.

Sometimes at the end of the meeting as they become immersed in talking, their topic starts from the concerns of the art meeting to their personal topic like what kinds of furniture they bought in their house.. TV monitor. some their personal things.. they share. “This is good cause everything is on-line.. we still watch it on-line. DVD I can work…Computer here..”

“Hey, guys! I’ve got this list I just smaller so you really can read her descriptions of areas. But if you want to know the area, let you know. I’m considering and cancelling mine.. I haven’t decided yet. But if you really really don’t want any other time in February, you can let me know. Or you can sign up for area two. And then I’ll switch it out. Visit the library. And Kevin, I know you signed up for one day time with me, but it’s not on the list. So let me give it to you first to sign up with me..(who is…)

< They enjoy talking > < Diverse information is flourished>

Although the meeting is done, art teachers want to stay more and talk more with other teachers.

The last time, moment, of the meeting is so important that their exchanges of detail information can be more flourished.

Leanne: “They are interested in, Tomy found about the meeting from you. He said, Missasaka.. Anyway (he is a student?) This is a student chapter NAEA and he is a president. He said, they are very interested in, he was supposed to be here today. But he ended up doing a kind of presentation. But he wasn’t able to come.. They are interested in one thing with us to volunteer how they with art shows and I was thinking that kind of ..great time to do it. (They are from the art education/ here’s the thing Mattew. He said, he wants to volunteer…) That would be wonderful! Paltoo.. If you email him, he will help you.. His email is..mgp..(I remember the conversation because I told them he came and did observation in my class. Oh just fun. I say, Yes! Of course it’s fun but to do all that … He came to do and show all about help and you’ve got should be able to come and see extra work put in there to make it possible. Many still don’t know what kind of job… that would be a really good idea for them beyond come and see art shows and come to meet and see how much involved in a lot of things. (That’s great!)”
<Significance of Teacher conference>
“I think we are trying to go for international teacher conference a year. (I think so!)”
“We have once a week after school..seven times a year.” They talk about their school daily life and school system, events..lesson plans..
At the end of meeting, they are usually given the time to enjoy prize winning. Leanne prepares for some gifts and at the end of the meeting calls names of art teachers corresponding to the numbers. The art teachers who won prize are leap for joy like kids. The simple event makes the teachers joyful.

<Gifts, simple events>
The atmosphere of the meeting becomes more peaceful and harmonious because of the considerate simple event. The idea to give gifts is taught by the previous coordinator art teacher. Leanne learns some know-how from the previous coordinator teacher. She is willing to help Leanne all the time.
Some art teachers go outside to see the peace mural one part of which still needs to be painted.
“Wow, beautiful! Isn’t it construction materials? Could you hang it in another room? (Ann and K talk about the peace mural. K will do the project at her school next week. She is listening to how Ann painted with all her kids of her schools the big mural without doing harms to the mural. Ann: Yes and No, just we don’t have any space. Our schools are chopped up. What about you display this place and you put these sculptures, couldn’t you put it in the background one of those? You mean the window? Maybe you have boxes. You’re gonna buy a room. My bookcases? /For the background/ Yea!..

<Crayon resist work>
An art teacher shows a crayon resist work of kids which is very artistic and beautiful and creative. She is willing to share her experience in teaching the crayon resist skills to her kids. A crayon resist skill is a common and basic skill taught at the level of kindergarteners and first grade. But she changed her ways to use crayon resist skills in more creative way.
“FAEA is wonderful, but no ..at all. A lunch with Linda L../Wow, Wonderful!/ Because I was by myself...I can see she is from there. We just get together. .So we had a great lunch, great chats.. She had another person from Florida State come up and take notes and..(Good! Good! Good being advocate!) I got some great lessons, I tried to get them together. /you’re the only one to go there/
<How she did the mural, giving a young teacher tips about how to deal with the big mural without hurting other beautiful areas of the mural that other teachers were already done>

How come you printed this out? I printed this because I wanted to do Guernica Bulletin board because so many kids work on it. So I have a couple of 5th grades just pick nine photos. Put them on the table in cafeteria, kids watch, has the mural..the pictures in progress. One of my kids thought. “How did you take and put up nine photos?” Well they stayed and had a great time! Double ca.. all over the cafeteria. This my fifth grade girl! She shows her kid photo. I’ll give you copies of the photos. (She explains to K again about how she did the mural. She gets important know-how from her.) Two tables together..So I cut them into four. And they are what the paints in the water stayed on. Kids say to each other “You not touch this mural! You are given a mission to work on it today!” If I have really large tables in my supply closet, I should put it on the floor. I don’t really want to do that and use dynamics of my room. /Two tables that I have and you can hold and roll it up…
Interview Transcript of Jane: January 20th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

...The county offered art workshops through the summer, through the year, book study. But this year they are being cut because of budget. But I attended once before past a few years. (Teachers teach teachers)

Yes. Experienced teachers mostly teach teachers. (Do you have sometimes professors?) They invite professors, artists. They show videos. We also make studio arts for example, printmaking workshops, and book making. That was done. I was invited to it. We earn points if we attend the workshops to renew certificates. We have to have 120 points every five years we have to renew certificates either to go to workshops or to take classes.

1. Tell me about how you respond when the community members address their ideas different from yours. Do you think there are diverse ideas, opinions, perspectives, they express?

At the community? (Yes). Or in that meeting? (In the meeting). There is a different idea. I’m a welcoming person to new ideas. Because it always is a new avenue for you to go and explore. You don’t have to always take every opinion us that’s what it is. I’m an open-minded person. (But the monthly meeting looks like limited to time, has limited time.) Yes. It’s only once a month. And it’s only limited to those hours where we try to be there as much as we can. I try not to miss any meetings. I hardly miss them. I missed only a couple of meetings. I make sure to go and to attend these meetings to know what’s coming up, what projects we are going to be doing. I bring in more ideas to them, new things to show students art work around the community.

(I think they have enough time to discuss more) No. Agenda is limited. But we try we are best if we have something to share. There is always on the agenda the last line we say things to share. Many of us regularly, we need to go. Time is really limited. We’d like to have more time to meet, but we can’t. Because we have other meetings at schools. We have other obligations. We have troubles from school to school also bring in different issues. After teaching all day, I am tired. (But you are very ambitious.) Yes, I actually try to do more. Because it’s good for the kids.

(Sometimes some teachers don’t want to attend the meeting, because their perspectives are not
the same, different from the group?) Not necessarily, because many of them, maybe few of them would like say “oh, it’s nonsense and a waste of time. But I think mostly the people who don’t attend have a prior engagement for that time. It means that they are busy with other things. They have to do other things. At their schools or with personal life. Many of us have kids, we have to go to pick them up from schools. You will be late. But the majority of us, we attend this meeting, we really hate to miss them. We like to always meet. I’ve been going to this meeting for about seven years. Everybody is showing up all the time. When they would not showing up, because we have other things to do, not because we don’t want to go. Especially our group, that elementary school teachers, we love to meet. Number one is to socialize, to get ideas, to talk about what we are going to do next, all that kind of things. Many of us will not show up because their kids are growing, they have to go to pick them up, do this and do that. So the time is short. That’s about it.

(Do you think they express freely different perspectives?)
Absolutely. We are open. At the meeting, we really. We are not afraid to say what we think. We are not afraid. If there is an art show, we can participate. We can go ahead and say, “well, it’s too much. We can’t do it.” So we are open. we are not.

(Do you think their relationships among the art teachers are very close?)
Yes. (All of them?) Yes, very much.
About twenty. We know each other by names, each other very well, we help each other. If anybody needs something each other, we go for it. Only few they still are strangers for whatever reason that they just came in and they are new. They are still not used to the all the other teachers that we already are knowing. We joke around. We joke each other, ask about each other families, do personally. We actually, Leslie Anderson, we go for dinners. I come to her house. She comes to my house and we have dinner together. We know each other on the personal level. Many of us, we’d like to know all happen to with your daughter, with your son, when is getting married, when is going to college, when is going to kindergarten. We get to actually know each other personal things that are how we get close, we like to share all lesson plans, “Oh, my goodness. This is a great idea. It wouldn’t work in kindergarten.” So we get a sharing group. We don’t say like “oh, this is a great lesson plan, I’m gonna keep it to myself. I shouldn’t be done. We don’t have that. It was come together. If somebody gets sick or hurt whatever, we all get together and provide a little gift, send money, or calls. If somebody gets married, we all do these little personal things to each other. We are a unique group I think. I don’t know how the middle schools and high schools get together, but we do.
(How do the art teachers deal with diverse perspectives?)
They are very acceptable to the diversity. Very. (If you might have some different opinions, disagrees, do you?)
I wouldn’t argue about it. We just state opinions, I just say “I’m sorry, but I disagree.” We explain my view and share her view, and we will go about that. Sometimes we say “if you say this side of it, this point of view,” she just works it out. We don’t have disagreements, conflicts. I’ve been like said for the past 7 years I did not see that conflict. I didn’t. I am hoping we shouldn’t. We are educated. It shouldn’t be any conflicts. I haven’t seen it. We disagree on things. Don’t take me wrong. We disagree on, this workshop is useful, this workshop is not. All these art works we should be put it in the library, I am not getting it put it. We disagree on these things. We talk about it. But I don’t see conflicts.

(Why do you think there are a few or few conflicts?)
What I think is happening, there are different styles. There are different viewpoints. For example, I am teaching art for life. Other teachers teach art for its’ own sake or comprehension art or art across the curriculum or teaching art by integrating reading, math, writing into the curriculum. Some teachers would say, “I’m just going to do teaching the skills and drills.” I don’t care. I want them to know how to print, how to paint, how to do this, it doesn’t matter. Other teachers will say, “I want them to learn art history.” So that different things that they bring in a little conflicts to my group, to my school, and to my community. At my school, I see best for my students to teach them art for life. How to learn skills, principles, and to analyze and synthesize and critique, and aesthetics, all everything together. Because its whole unit together. I can just tell them, how to draw without actually explaining, why do we have to draw. We need to draw why. To express ourselves, to learn how a line is different. What other teachers like to teach through Mone, as an example, oh, let them do impressionists, Mone is the artist to ..That’s fine for them. And then it’s not fine for me. That’s different opinions. From the style comes into difference, from the thinking is different from the way they’ve worked.
(But they are really willing to participate in the project. As long as I know, there are art projects connected with the museum programs.) Yes. We all get together. I really love the projects even if we have different styles. We still come together onto community projects. (Maybe they think their projects are really good for children. Who had the initial idea for the project, the story project?)
Well, the FSU museum is a partner with all the schools. That’s becoming recently which is we enjoyed and we loved it. It depends on what they have. That’s to come from the idea for the project. The Florida State Museum. These are big projects. At my school, I have my own initial idea of the project for the whole school. It’s school cultural fair. At the end of the school year, I
go with a theme. And my theme is around the world. This year it’s “peace” around the world. So we visit different countries, learn about particular world, skills, artists, each time is different. And then all art work come together. And then I put it in the media center, in the library. And we put all around the library outside in the hallway and I have tables for making and taking the kids’ making activities and we provide food from different countries, from China, Japan, France, depending which country I am using. (Who makes the food?) Well, I made some and the librarian made some. We just go and get it all together. It’s a lot of work. It’s a hard work but fabulous. The kids everybody have fun. We have kids’ work. We have food and activities. I send invitation to the parents. It’s between me and the librarian we collaborate together the kids were driven to read more books about these countries. We do more work about these countries. We get more informed and have awareness that we are one global no matter how different we are. Still the same. We have the same needs. For example, they found weaving that the African American, the people, the African is not the only people that they weave, the Asian is not the only people that they weave, Indians, and South Africa are not the only people that they weave. So every year we get this country. We will find out all. The all find out the same reason why they did this, why they made a clay bowl, or why they made a sculpture, see bring in them art for life through this thematic approach. Because I am from the different country, it’s so big for me to make them connect. We’re not alienated. We are not just sitting in this little bottle right now, we are all together as one world.

(The project is your own project? The FSU museum cooperated each school?)

<School wide project coordinated by university museum>

You sign up for it. It’s up to the teacher. It you want to participate or not. But all the teachers are not participate. But you sign up for it. Viki will send us emails that they will be having these things: we have the story project anybody wants to participate, you should sign up first. You will say, I don’t have time for it. I’m not doing it. Then you don’t sign up for it. Also Viki really have a good idea to share a family day. That’s a big project to where I could invite my students and their families on a weekend. Ours was in March this year. We did last year and it will become depending on the show that she’s having I will gear towards works that way and she’s having Tiffany glass windows. The stained-glass windows from Tiffany. They are going to be at the museum in the spring time. So I am going to work towards hours to teach my students about Tiffany’s glass, stained-glass. I don’t have to. I’m not actually going to the Tiffany’s. I’m going to talk about Mosaic, stained-glass, what it was used for, when it was used for, to make our own projects. And then they’re going to have the chance to go and actually see the Tiffany’s glass with their parents. So some ideas come from the community, sometimes not just find the art museum, but LeMoyne sends projects and ideas, like the Greenoween. Some ideas come from
the community. There is one not even from just our community but through the State over that we send advertisements, like “Duck Stamps.” Where we study about birds and ducks, and an endangered species of ducks, you have the students participate in research on kinds of ducks, grey goose and on their habitats, if there are endangered, have a drawing, and then you send it for a competition. That’s another kind of work of study in our projects. There are many projects around. It depends on the time, the theme each teacher works.

(Helping each other in the community. Would you take an example to receive help from other teachers?)

**When I first started and I got my certificate**, we had a **program as a beginning teacher**. We had to meet teachers that have been in the field of art education for a long time and be helped by them and how to do something, how to run your class, how to manage, what kinds of some projects to work with, and we did. And it was really fun. Because they already tried some of these things.

**<Giving and taking help each other >** For example, if I’m doing a particular project, let’s say clay, I’ve never done clay before. We email each other. Have you ever done this? Would you have an idea? How do I do this about? And we have always gone and do that. I was asked, I knew the high school teacher. He was originally an artist. He took the job as an art teacher. He never worked with clay before. Somebody had told him though and the older teacher that had before told him said to him that I love to work with clay and I worked with clay so many times. I used to go on workshops and held her students with clay. And I go to school and do that, so she told him to call me or email me. “I’ve never done clay and would you be able to do clay and show me how to do this?” (his email) “Absolutely” We go and help each other in doing such things. And it’s easy and simple. We’d like to do each other. And I take it as an extra experience. I taught the students while their teachers were watching. How to do clay and how to fire clay. And after second time I went, I should, the teacher how to fire the kiln. Cause he never used it. Some of us, some art teachers, they are more towards drawing, painting, making clay, or printmaking. Each has our own experience in a particular field. When we see somebody’s art work we are sharing in the art shows, “oh, how did you do that? can you help me with that?” We tell each other.

(Have you met your mentors, or best friends in the meeting, in the group?)

**<Mentor: internship>** Leslie Anderson was my supervising teacher when I did my internship. She is an art teacher. She is in Canopy Oaks. I was her intern. I went to her school and I was working with her. She wanted to make me know and talk me how to deal with, how to plan, how to work with. She really taught me a lot. And I told her if it wasn’t for her, I haven’t her as my mentor and teacher, I would’ve been probably someone else doing other things. **She really had a**
great influence on me. She gave me the freedom in the classroom, actually teach the students, and she guided me towards what to do about materials, art lesson plans, all things that I.., and how to teach kids in a story like. We meet all the time at the meeting. We end up sitting in the same table, became very good friends. Our kids became very good friends. They went to school together. My son and her daughter. Their ages are the same. We visit each other, my kids went to her house. We became very very good friends. We talk about anything and everything. We email each other, “have you done this?” “do you have any ideas how to do that?” She emails me and I email her. It’s not like a big deal at all. If I need help, I always rely on her. To say “do you have any ideas for this?” “what do you do?” (Besides the learning, when you encounter some difficulties in your life..)
We talk about it. We are good friends. We go out for a dinner together. Just socializing. Besides no helping, or nothing, I just call her and go for a dinner. Let’s meet and go for a dinner.

(Can I hear about your more specific experience about caring and receiving care from other teachers in the community? If you have any worries..) Yes, she is one of the good supporters. If I have to talk about, for example, I come from Gaza city. And we have the war, the way happened in December over my country. I have family members, my cousins were killed in the war between Israel and Palestine. Three cousins. Other friends lost friends. We were in the war. Right here this school, everybody came in, just to say, “Sorry” and gives supports anything we could do. The art teachers say, “if you need any help and anything, we really are very close.” At this school too. My principal, old teachers, the community was very helpful. That’s kind of an example. They come and jump and support.

(You are a member and a professional art teacher. You are very ambitious.)
I have chosen this way. I wasn’t pushed to it. I was never an artist. I was never an art. I never had any art classes growing up. I thought that reap up from me as a child. I should’ve been given art classes. Just because where I am from it wasn’t provided. So when I came here, I was introduced to art in college and I had to take a class because I was in Interior design major. I had to take a drawing class, art history class. It’s part of a core. When I started to take that, I didn’t know how to draw. I thought I didn’t know how to do art work. Because I’ve never done it before. So I had no experience in that field. But I didn’t have the chance to do it. <Affection toward art and art education> I surprised myself. And I was something new to me. That, wow. This age I am capable of really doing this and expressing myself. And I started doing this art project by myself. I ended up here and I could be helping other people to learn how to do this. That’s why I have the passion for it because I understood why do we really need art in our life. As I was younger, I did not grow up with it. Automatically knowing art is this, art is..That’s
why I have this passion to do. When I hear the kids saying, “I don’t know how to do this.” Don’t tell that. Don’t limit yourself. Yes you can if you can try. Give yourself a chance. You will be surprising yourself. This is where my whole philosophy is coming out, yes you can do it. You can surprise yourself. And I’m very strong about exciting over to where our kids need that space and need that education to be introduced to the skills and ways to express themselves. That’s where art comes in. Maybe that’s why I have all that passion for it, more that other teachers. Well, I automatically know how to draw, everybody should be able to do it.

And I took it and go into college. I every year took each class seriously. To understand what it is. to understand how to do criticism, aesthetics, how to actually learn the skills. Not just theoretically, but in real things. I needed it concrete. Don’t just tell me, this person said “it has to be done this way.” I will be the person who would argue. There is a different way.

Art for life. It can save you, it can give you peace, it can give you skills, it can give you technology, it can give you all different way of reading, writing, the way how to go about. To actually come out your own decisions, because you will open your mind, be more open-ended mind.

(What does it mean mentoring in your life?) Mentoring to me gives other people the chance to learn from you and learn from your experience in the positive way. Even if you have negative experience, it still as a mentor, you have to give it to other people in a positive way to learn from you. I take advantage of it. That’s what is mentoring to me to show students the way, to show community members the way from and through our own experience and our own education, and then our own life and culture. It’s helping to lead a way or for the safe way for that particular students or open a road for them on a right path. For example, for the students, they still don’t know a lot of things. Teachers as mentors for them, it is our job and obligation to have them find a way to make them reach out what they want to be.

(As a mentor of the group, how do you think about mentoring for the community, for the group, as a mentor?)

I would’ve help them to conquer with the aiming for. If you are a new teacher, a teacher having difficulties in some way, if I already knew solutions for those particular problems, I will be more than happy to talk about them to let them know some of the solutions that I came across through my experience, my education. For example, we sometimes face behavior problems in classroom or difficulties in learning how to deal with special students. When we do try to help each other, there is a better idea instead of making the kids do this or that. Here is a different lesson or different way of helping them to do that. That’s kind of mentoring. To give ideas each other from our own experience that confronted us we came about.
(How do you feel when you do mentoring?)
Oh, **it makes me feel great! I can help somebody to go over obstacles and find the solutions.** I am a person who always looks for solutions that not make things difficult. I really believe that every problem has a solution. That’s not an end of the world. As long as we still are alive, we have a solution. There is a way. Unless the end does not end, end is not here yet. We are still going. So there is another way to go about.
You engaged them for example. You really **have to get them excited about what they want to do and come to their level.** They will be able to comprehend fifth graders. They are becoming into ...hormones. It’s very difficult to deal with them. Yet there is a way to show them what is good for their future to actually give them examples, you are able to do this, you are able to be a successful person, give them some examples. That’s mentoring. We sometimes forget, teachers get wrapped up with working and working and grades and ..We forget dealing with little minds that those are the future that is coming up. As a mentor teacher, **I always tell them to be flexible, to be patient, there is a solution for things. It feels good to give somebody to answer the questions in a short. It feels good to mentor somebody and see the success. That’s a great relief and a joy.**

(Cooperation with other experts. With whom did you work together?)
I had recent experience which is through the peace mural. Through Dr. Anderson. There is a peace mural done with experts from Japan. they wanted to have anniversary of Nagasaki. That is 6 years anniversary. They wanted between children from the United States and from Japan to do it. So Dr. Anderson contacted me and said, is it possible? It’s too late within this a frame of time. And I said, **“No, it is possible. We can do it. We can cooperate and do it”** And we did make a painting. I have my students work with it. I told them the purpose of it. At that time I was teaching about Japan, it was absolutely just perfect, perfect timing. We were doing watercolor painting, all that fun stuffs. We said, “well, this is what’s happening. When I make peace through this, we talked about it, how we can show them as an American that we do on peace, **what is peaceful to you as a student.** We did paintings and I shipped them into Japan. (Draw a painting and ship it?)
Yes. Draw paintings on a canvas. Pieces. We have been to the canvas, I put them in a mail. They paid for them. They paid for them. The Japanese school. They paid for the shipping only. To go to Japan. I bought that materials. I bought the paints, the canvas. We paint them. When we finish, I wrapped them and put them in a mail. They did finish the rest of them. And they put it together as a peace mural, they are going to bring back in January. In January, we will see the finished project.
<Collaboration with other people, art education professor of university>

( In the reception, somebody is coming from Japan?) Yes. I got to work with him through Dr. Anderson. Dr. Anderson commanded me for the whole thing. We get emails together, and that’s how it came about. That’s one part of the project. It’s still through Dr. Anderson. He had a meeting about the peace mural that went through the school. Remember? You saw in the parking lot, that big peace mural all the schools participated in? And then he asked there is another peace mural that we’re going to work on, which is the 16, Saturday. He was talking about, and I said, “I would love to work with it.” I told Dr. Anderson, I would love to work with this. And he said, I’ll keep you in my mind, and then he emailed me, and I said, “do you want to do it with my kids?” “Yes, I love to.” This is how it came about. And again he knows my work and the way I worked. I am also an international teacher. Added it to the whole thing, part of it.

(Did you ever work with artists?)
I invited artists from FSU to come and to present my students. He brought his art work and everything. We had a great time. (In the group) We had a workshop last year with the teachers, the community, and we had a book study, we painted together. Something we do together.

(How did you guys know the experts? Like artists or..) That’s available and the community is easy to reach. They are here. It’s up to us to contact them. (Who contact them?) I contact them. I just go to the university. He taught me one class. I loved his style so I asked him if he could come and visit my school and show the students some of his art work because it’s landscape, natural habitat, I thought that’s appropriate for my students. Many of the artists also have their shows in here. It’s up to us if we go and watch them or not, that’s how we know. We talk each other in the meeting. We have the artists we’ve done. We say he does this and this..We take him again.

(What is the goal of the projects the art teachers’ group has been engaged in?)
The goal is to teach the students to broaden their horizons to bring in artists and art work to the community and let them experience with it. The goal is to show students that the art still exists, artists exist, they are not old that we don’t just study about in the book. That’s one of the reasons I invite the artist to show them that. You might see him at a grocery store, you might be in the street and see him or he drives his own car. Artists are human. They do have jobs and make them understand that we are not strangers. We live in our own bobble we are not wield because that’s always like a connotation to artists, that means stereotyping, it’s a label. It’s labeled as an artist, oh, he is an artist. It’s different. We will study about them when they die. That’s stereotyped. I am teaching my students you are an artist. If you are doing what they are doing right now and participating in working, I prepare the students as an artist. Those projects with how the
students understand the connection between art and life and what is about.
(What kind of projects or events do the art teachers annually have?)
Like the culture fair. The culture fair that I am doing at my school. I do that. Other teachers have shows. They have an art day. I know Leslie Anderson have art day. She will do art all day long. She will invite somebody. I do the culture fair and I do invite their parents and eat the food and do art work. They will be doing different projects, whatever printmaking, coloring, gluing, collage and all different things that they will take with them. We also have that Florida State Museum will do family day. At the museum, look at shows and exhibition because many of my students don’t just go to the museum and to visit museums.
(Somebody helps you to do the events?) Yes. Absolutely. (Who helped you?) For me, here the librarian and I work together. At the museum, Viki and … they invite us. We just have to agree to it. We will invite the parents. And I will invite my parents and students to come for that day.
(I heard there are some art events in the community) Yes. The First Friday. (621 Gallery?) Yes. (Kids participate in the events.) Yes. They will send us information. We participate in there. Some art work in there. LeMoyne is another one, the Art and Science Museum. (They send all schools in the county?) Sometimes all, sometimes it is not. That’s why we go to the meeting. We try to figure out. If I didn’t receive something, we say, oh I received this! I didn’t participate in the 621. I have other obligations. This Friday we have Winter Festival. That’s for the community. It used to be called “festival of life,” at downtown for the holiday. And then at the court house we already have art work. Each school, elementary and middle and high school, we have to be a piece of art work that we submit. Tomorrow there is a reception for the students at 6 o’clock. We will give certificates and prizes. We have a little food and drinks. You find parents, teachers. You will find superintendent. You will be welcomed to come.
(Amanda, she is..) Amanda Thomson, she has the whole responsibility for the show. She gives us information. She puts up in the wall and labels for the reception. She will be there tomorrow, the Winter Festival.
(I heard the exhibition held at the library. What is it?) This is Youth Art Month. It’s in March. We have the whole month of March from the first .. that we will have art work. We decide and it happens in February we decide when we have the reception day and we invite our students. Each school has the section assigned to it. You will have this wall for Hartfield, this wall for Astoria Park. It goes on. It’s organized. Each school has a wall and a shelve to put art work. And we have the reception day. We decide on and we all agree on to it to go and have the students. We have an invitation for them. They come with their parents. Big pictures. Good art work. That’s another one we do. We also have another exhibition at attorney’s office of the Florida. We sign up for it. We sign for the show. It’s every three month. One school will participate and they do certificate and exhibition. But the down town library through the year we can sign for the month that we
want. I have my art work, my students’ work downtown now until the end of January.
(What do the art teachers usually do for the art show? You sign up or have to prepare frames? )
We have to do the frames. We do it with construction paper. Not frame for the library. But
tomorrow the Winter Festival, it has to be framed.
(You guys make the frames?) Yes.
(Why do you want to participate in the events?)
Because I want to expose my students’ art work and it’s good for them to know what it feels
like to appreciate the work. And to have other people look at it. For also the community to
be connected with what we do here at schools. What their children have been learning and
what we teach their children about all that. And it makes a community connection of what's
going on in art education. They do voluntarily participate in. All every exhibitions or even
competition, anything it’s voluntarily. Many teachers say “I don’t want to participate. I can’t
participate.” Like for the signing of the downtown library we have a few who didn’t sign up.
Because they have other obligations. Other shows that they have to do.
(What roles are you and your colleagues, the teachers, responsible for accomplishing those
projects? There are some lists for the art project?)
Yes. We have benchmarks. Any art projects we do and any education that we teach, there is the
Sunshine States Benchmark that we have to follow. Yes. It could be thematic, it could be
anything, but we must cover it in our lesson plans those benchmarks and Sunshine State
Standards to be valid for the art education. We will receive those from the county. So we all very
much no matter how and which way to teach and each different pedagogy teachers have,
which way to go about teaching you still are covering those benchmarks. You are obligated. This
is how the grading goes.
(for example, for the Kids Guernica Art project, all teachers in the group have their own jobs?)
Yes. They have signed up sections the peace Guernica. The theme was showing the Florida,
habitats, and the peaceful side of Florida. (Each art teacher has work for the project to
accomplish it, to work together? All the art teachers have a responsibility?) It was voluntary. (Yes.
But somebody has to coordinate this project. Who?)
The one that went all around the school, it was the coordination that came from the Florida State
Museum. Viki. They have that project through exhibition that is going to happen in January with
other peace murals. So we came up with the idea to where each school will participate so to
make it as one community peace mural. We had a meeting. Whoever came in voluntarily that
day and attended the meeting had a chance to put it input of the idea and the theme, what
do we need to do about it, we came together. Okay, each works together to come up with an
idea. There were many, many ideas and we ended up with one idea that we all agree to and we
thought it was a great idea. Then each school, when we start how many schools participate in
voluntarily, we divided the mural into some sections and then we worked it out. But it wasn’t like every school has to participate. Whoever wanted to do it, **That’s how it was coordinated through the Florida State Museum.** One is going to be in January, we had originally a professor from Turkey that was Dr. Anderson talked to her and wanted her to do the coordination, but since she is far away, I was the ambassador to do that. He was like, well you will be assigned by me to be the coordinator. I came about what we will be going to do and then I went to the teachers and I told them what we are going to be doing. I’m coordinating and I’m asking now the teachers to assign two students for their schools to come and do painting. It’s still going to be voluntary, not obligated to send students and come to the show, come to the exhibition and participate. (Almost all jobs for the project, I think you have done lots of things for the project.) Yes. I don’t mind. Nobody went over for it. But I love doing it. (Is there somebody to work with you?) Viki. **We created a great team.** (What does she do for the project?) **She is another coordinator. We meet regularly and discuss and make discussion and then we go and say what we wanted to say next, what is the next step.** That’s how it came about. We thought together since having this beautiful exhibition. **Why don’t we have teacher work shop?** It was both of us’ ideas. She says, “wouldn’t it be possible?” “It would be a great idea” I told them. And then we started coordinating it together and make the whole coordination and then we talked to Dr. Anderson, we told him, “what do you think about that?” It’s possible. We worked together as a team. It was just an idea from a small idea instead of, just because when you come for the work, **the exhibition and reception on the 16th, it’s going to be hard to see everything and anything during that time.** We thought we really want the art teachers to come and get a full experience of how these peace murals came about. This is how the workshop for the teachers came about. We just started working it together. (Some art teachers don’t work together?) It’s not they don’t like to do. I enjoy it. It’s for a purpose also for the sake of kids, for them to know. It doesn’t come easy. You really need to do work towards things..

Sometimes you have to do lots of things and have to do portfolios and it’s a lot of works for promotion. But we are assessed every year on our job, on how we perform. That’s every year requirement in order for us to continue art teachers. We don’t get points, but we get to where we continue to work. We continue to do our job through that. (The art teachers in America, they are really satisfied with teaching students. In your opinion) We do get observations from our principal and an assistant principal. He walks in and through. They are required to come and see the class. **We present whole lesson plans and we are teaching and they note. They are not doing enough.** They should be doing more assessment to teachers. This is my opinion. Sometime I don’t get lots of visit in my room, which I like for them to come through at any time. There is nothing to hide. It’s right here and I’m doing here. Because they see and I’m doing and
I’m going above and beyond. I’ve been taking art work every year from banks to publix, to the library, to any exhibition where we are invited in. I make sure my kids work, I’m doing the culture fair again, I’m doing all these things. I’m helping with other, we have a performance at this school. I do have a club, it’s called Hoxy Club. That’s an extra thing I’m doing on my own, not paid for it. My principle had seen that. That’s part of my assessment that she saw and I was doing. (Can you get some rewards?) It’s verbal. Thank you and wonderful. You mean financial? No. I think art teachers should be rewarded financially, they will get a boost because we are not paid enough to what we do. It’s the case not just here. I’m not saying here. It’s all over. It is a profession. It is very noble. We are taken advantage of as I feel it that way sometimes.

Interview Transcript of Nora: January 28th, 2010 1:00-2:30 p.m.

1. There may be different perspectives. How do you respond when the art teachers address their ideas different from yours?
That doesn’t happen a lot. I’m pretty vocal. I pretty speak up and give my opinion. But I can’t think of anytime we disagree. We usually come to consensus when we do together like the city, what brings to my city hall show, they just had a reception last Friday night. Elementary used to get prizes for second and third and money. I supported that. But a lot of art teachers didn’t want that because they didn’t think it was fair for elementary to be judged. Elementary just get certificate and are all winners. We used to get money. There are schools and their kids get money as for being the best of the show. I used to win a lot. I disagree. But we came to consensus. Now elementary is judged. They are just displayed and all get certificate. I win a lot and crowed, but I let them know that I like to do that. That’s only thing that I can think of that we disagree about. We stand a lot of disagreements. (Why you guys don’t have disagreements that much?)
We pretty much teach by the same sequence. What’s wonderful about our group is we share lessons. Like lessons I do, you give a way. You teach this too. We share ideas. Because our children transit 03:54 in this county, we have a lot of kids move around and we want consistency in our programs. We also want quality art programs and that’s one of the reasons we are such a strong, we have a strong arts group. Because we do monthly and meet and share. Most of everybody comes to the meeting. We have a few teachers in this county. They never go, but it’s only a handful. Just two or three that don’t share. We mostly are friends. We get along. You have to understand that the art teachers are isolated persons in the school. You have first grade teachers, five or six first grade teachers. They are a team. But usually the art teachers are by themselves. Lots of time I am a low-cost music teacher. In some schools art and music teachers are so close. For us having the monthly meeting, it is like a mentoring each other.
Especially for the younger ones, for people like me who, this is my 36 years. So I’ve got lots of experience. And I’ve been a focus leader. We don’t have focus groups. I’ve always been with the beginning teachers, art teachers, music teachers. That’s strict in the Leon county.

(Do you think the art teachers’ meeting, how do they deal with diverse perspectives, they really want to hear, listen to the different perspectives?)

One of the ways we do that is we have a sharing actually to solve that. People bring lessons, share ideas. That’s one of the ways we used to. We don’t do any more. We need one school every time. We used to meet at different schools every week and every month. But gas is too expensive. It’s easier to meet at one place, but it was nice you go to other people’s rooms and to see their environment, my room’s messy. I don’t know I apologize because I am too busy people. Keeping it clean is not my priority. And I miss that.

I think one of the others we do is that we share a lot, our scope and sequence. Lots of activities that I do here at my school can’t be done at school of low-socio economic. The children just start. Some of lessons aren’t appropriate and you have to gear them down. It’s because they do with more I think, and I am dealing more and more with that. Dealing with all the issues besides teaching in your classroom. We share that strategies, disciplines. Well we didn’t do focus meeting. We don’t have so much art meetings. Working with each other, how to deal with, how to handle discipline problems and still teach your lesson and get a quality lesson in. That’s what I used to work with beginning teachers. More classroom control, how to disperse supplies, keep your eyes on everything what’s going on, still behave to have it in that quality art lesson. There used to be money in our county for teachers to put into having a day-to-go-visit. The County would pay teachers to go out and watch the art teachers. But the budget cut that. Two years ago they have that available.

(Do you think the teachers’ teaching philosophies are different or similar?)

<Similar Philosophy> I do I think they are pretty similar. It’s because we are pretty much Discipline-Based Art Education County. Kind of focus. We’ve done so many workshops. Summer workshops in the past that I think most of us are on board, not more on scope and sequence in elements of art rather than the base of work of art history. But everybody does not too different degrees of implementation. I am probably one of the stronger DBAE teachers, Fran Kautz, Julie McBride, Jean McGoogan. Some of the teachers are more not so much, they do some of it. But not as much. But as far as philosophies, we embrace that philosophies. It’s just different degrees of implementation. …I’m very beg on literature. In cooperating literature. In my class. Lots of books. These are children’s books that I read. Usually my lessons are based on the little literature books.
(Asking about helping each other, not only learning or professional development but also privately or intimately helping each other?)

Are you familiar with the LeMoyne Foundation? I was on the board of LeMoyne for six years. I worked very closely with the educational director. We started the Greenoween exhibit last year. It was around in the fall. It’s related to recycling. I went to the art meeting and said “You guys, I am on the board, and come on it and help me out.” And they all did. And they do it more work. I think they do because they respect me, now I am on the board, they want to support the community involvement. We do things like that each other. Julie represents the museum of art, the Mary Brogan and whenever she comes and says, “be involved, we do it. Because Julie is part of that.”

I am close with Viki Wylder at FSU. We are working on the new project. Not next year, but the next year. A new exhibit. “Generation” is going to be the title of it. We work together in the community as an art teacher and also as an artist. So I’m a member of the, I was at the art antic this week. Did you go? (No) I was selling my art work. It was amount of artists around the community, too. And come back and share what’s going on in that perspective. With art teachers, and then we’ve just formed a new group. There is about five or seven to go painting together on our own. We started that last year. We have a book study, and work together. And this summer several of us just went out and planned their playing which helps, develops ourselves personally as an artist. I voted the workshops for the teachers before. I teach them how I did things. There is a lot of. It’s a nice group.

And the other thing we do, we have an art teacher that he is a musician. Some of us go in and listen to him when he plays. His band is in town. So we support each other professionally.

(Do you have an experience, other than art show? Do you have intimate meetings, not formal like that the monthly meeting?) We have an over-fifty’s group. We meet and have lunch on Saturday once a month. Some of them already retired. Viki comes, and some teachers who retired, we do that. There is a few high school art teachers who I do pottery with. She is …at Lincoln high school. We do red ..pottery. We do workshops together.

(Do you have financial support from the country?)

We used to write grant. It mostly comes from grant. (Where do you can get?) Foundation grant from the Leon County School Board. I’ve written a grant from J. Pall Getty. Three schools received J. Pall Getty grant. We received two hundred thousand dollars. Buck Lake, my school, and Florida high school. Back in the 90s. But that money dried up.

(Experience to give your help to other teachers?)

I was a focus group leader. That’s why I worked with the beginning teachers. And then I’ve
done summer workshops for teachers. Last year, in June. I retired. This is my 36 years. I like to teach art. I’ve been taking lots of FSU students. I graduated from…College. We were on the same campus with TCC. I teach art to elementary teachers to help elementary teachers to incorporate art in their classroom. They are not going to be art teachers, they are going to be classroom teachers. They’re going to be school teachers. I teach them how to incorporate art at the college. I am an adjunct professor. I teach 9 classes at Flager College.

(Have you ever met your mentors or best friends?)
I am pretty close to several of them. Julie, Marcia Meale, Jean, Bet, We’ve all been teaching for 25 years together. We get close. Viki, we are close. (How can they support you?)
We all help each other with ideas, planning workshops, we do teacher workshops together. We all help each other out. We are going through the National Board. We went through the National Board process. Julie and I just got through it renewing National Board. Yea, that was a lot of work. I just renewed.

(How did you become a member of the community?)
Our county always had curriculum meetings. And four years I used to live them. I was the person who led them. It’s kind of required that we go to them. It’s encouraged that we do to them. That’s the only why the district can get information out to us, it’s easier. Before we had an email that was besides mails, that was the only way. We’ve just always had a strong group. He kicks around and the county heard about this. That’s why we have people from private schools who came to our meetings, and people from Ocala county. They don’t have that many art teachers. It’s nice to be around people who have the same problems, issues that we did.
(What kind of issues or concepts the teachers have?) Usually scheduling is a big one. Some teachers only have 30 minutes. I have 45, some have 50. How do we teach the same we teach the same thing? How do we do in 30minutes? Some people don’t have any money. I have a plenty of money. We share supplies and sometimes some of us who have a lot to share. Especially, there are several teachers that teach and lead them. They teach art. We listen and it’s nice for them to have somebody. Let’s them bent. We call a bent to get their steam out. Yayaya…Crying their problems. Let me tell my problems. Cry on my shoulder. It’s okay. It’s nice to do that.

(What kind of support does the meeting need for its development?)
We need the Leon County office. Art supervisor. But we never have it in this county. (Other county has the art supervisor?) No. They don’t have the money. (If art supervisors work here,
what do they do for the art teachers?) 26:36 (What are their roles?) One of the things that they do is to help and to equalize the scheduling for the teachers who annoy for that. I also think that they can help organize and take up. Some of the community shows we do and help get those set up, and we can go out in the afternoon, after school, and hang show they can do that for show and our day is extended. We are not doing that, too. We revised our scope and sequence last summer. We never have had a chance to go and do questions about the sequence working well with the scope and sequence, what’s not working. Communicating with other county, helping us to get supplies, there is a lot of things supervisors can do.

(Who should be a supervisor? I mean who can be qualified as a supervisor?)
I think it could be an art teacher with experience, with some other administrator skills. You’ve definitely needed somebody who knows the view. We have somebody in charge of art. She doesn’t know anything about. We’ve never had one at the county office that is an art person in charge of us. We do have somebody at the office, who represents us. But she is a reading teacher. Even though she is a supervisor of art education at the state of Florid, it’s a music person. We’ve never had an art person at the state. We’ve had a music person representative of art education.

(How do you understanding mentoring in your life?)
Well, I’ve been the mentor. I have been through mentoring training. I have taken interns or student teachers, participated in ..I’ve been working with teachers. That is just offering, your support, helping, advising, listening, and just giving feedback, helping another teacher to become the best teacher, I can do it. Sharing their knowledge. when I retire, I wouldn’t be laid on my secret. Give on my way tricks! Take my lessons! Take it up! Let me teach you, let me show you how to do that! You won’t go teachers continue. Helping people grow and often, it’s nice for somebody to be out there that hears. You know they are not alone. I will help them and listen.

(Working together with other experts like Amanda, or Viki? Just not within the community. Maybe there should be some people who helps the community.)

<Diverse communities>
In the past, we’ve always had in the last years we had people. Community people come, Guki, and Amanda. In the past, we invited artists to come and state, and to share. LeNan, do you know? Students we had in the past we had people from the community, come and bring their art and demonstrate and be speakers. Yes. It’s wonderful that we have community-involved support. (What kind of local community are you involved in?)
Well, just FSU. We have FSU and FAMU, the city and county, Commission on County
Culture and Art. I worked with the Tallahassee Community Hospital, and do work with them. I work with the local supi helper, we work with the lawyer from downtown. They always come to the meeting. Sometimes they introduce themselves. County office people sometimes come to our meetings. They took him things are going under the community. LeMoyne usually shows up. That’s wonderful.

<Community art events>
They usually come in exhibits. Hang on display, lots of time they come and want us to do contests. We don’t do contests. Usually it’s for us to be involved in community events like openings, shows, come down and do. We’ve done art and part of things at FSU art teachers, given their Saturday up and gone down and done demonstration, hands-on activities for students like for doing with Viki, we’ve done that at the Museum of Art, we’ve done that at LeMoyne. I host other art teacher meeting at LeMoyne. Last year we had wine and cheese in a reception and we did the tour of the Museum. We do things like that’s to help. Art teachers become more involved in local, you know, become a member of museums. Because a lot of art. They don’t belong to the Mary Brogan or to LeMoyne. It was my way to try to get them to come be more involved in the community. Because a lot of art.
(What do you think the art projects or students art exhibitions?)
Get them more involved. Absolutely. (Why do you guys try to hold more student exhibitions?)
Because number 1 is our programs are exposed. Number two is parents out there. And it feels credibility for our program. We are out there and exposed to our community to the world of art. And we are trying to build art community. We are such a football community. Tallahassee all about football. Well arts are growing. It’s been a slow development. As we are becoming, there are more and more arts in Tallahassee. And also the more exposure we can get out there the better the program is. Plus the parents’ support our programs. Art has been cut in this county. A lot of county, the art program’s been cut because of funds. We have developed. We’ve got a strong group. We build art programs in our schools with those supports from the parents and as long as principal see the parents want art, art’s going to be in our school. Really it’s up to us to promote our program. That’s what we have already it in elementary schools in this county. Not every county instead of Florida has art. In South Florida, there is no art in elementary schools. They got rid of elementary art teachers to save money. So it’s very important we promote our program and have it exposed to the community, because the community, I don’t think people in Tallahassee will pull up with them and cut art programs.
<Promote out program ourselves>
(Do you guys need the help from the Leon County Education Board?)
That’s why we have **public library show**. That’s why we have art show. That’s why we had the opening the other night and invited the superintendent to come and give out certificates. So we involve them in that. **We invited our principals. Their exposure is our school’s and makes our schools look good. And they like that. They make it look good to the public.**

(As a **mentor**, what is the role of mentor?)

That’s one of the things I tell young teachers. Expose your program. Share your program. Display art work. Get it out there and put up your national standard. If you put up your national standard, you put something up, hang your national standard up. Like do it is. **Tell them what you are teaching, not just teaching and cutting and gluing. Put your standards out there and let them know that. We are more than pumpkins in October. We are their substances of art. We teach children critical thinking skills. We teach higher-order questions. We get them to describe and appropriately analyze and interpret and talk about works of art. You know, the AFCAT is everything. You have to have a whole, well educated, well-rounded students.** Students need to learn I think how they behave creatively, and be able to think after the box, problem solve. Everything is not black and white, pencil and paper, and right answer and wrong answer. That’s what is a mentor. I tell them. Hang your art, put some writing out, put your standards out, hang it in the office, get it in the community. **Let them know why art is important.** We don’t do it, who is going to do it? Nobody.

(Your own teaching philosophy) I just want it still as **just love of art in the children.** By doing that, I feel like I’ve much accomplished, my job. **I want my children to be successful.** I want them to realize that everybody can be successful in my classroom. They can all be successful with art. **It’s a place where they are allowed to be creative.** I do and embrace DBAE educational approach. I teach art history, I teach aesthetics, they learn to talk about art, they learn to respond to art. They learn to question art. They walk out of my room, my kindergarten kids learn about their first day. I do want them to have a respect for art and learn to talk about it without making judgment. All art is somebody’s creation. And then these are respect before you make judgment about it, let’s learn a little bit something about it. Just still that love of art. You know, you’ve done your job, you have students come back and they are in an art field. I’m an artist and architect because of you. You know. (Your teaching philosophy is more than DBAE). Oh, yea!

(What is the goal of the art projects?)

One of the things is our scope and sequence, you know, I tell the kids all the time. “I’m an artist, I go home and work at my studio. And people create art for different reasons. I like to get them and have the students involved in the projects, number one, the peace mural project. **Number one is it’s a school-wide thing. It brings a whole school together in optimatic.** Work and every from kindergarten through fifth can understand all the works everybody’s doing. Plus we
have an art festival this spring. You need to come to my festival. **April 23rd to 24th**. We have a **school-wide festival** to celebrate art every year and they also get to see and I invite artists. So they get to see, “this is how people make living, this is how people work with like Viki is going to come, work on display at the museum, they are invited to the museum, it gets some exposure to museum, it gives family a reason to go out and do something related to art. When they get there, they get to talk about art together, which parents and kids get to do that a lot. **It also gets to see how something takes collaboration and cooperation.** It’s just like last year we created art for the sky work. We were together on the field, as a huge crocodile. It is all that about impermanent. We came together and made art. The concept of art in us coming together and making it beautiful that doesn’t hurt the earth. And we use natural things. It was a wonderful concept. Embracing such a concept like impermanent, or collaboration, and cooperation and be the part of it. these are major things that help you to become a better person in life. **More well-rounded, understanding, caring person that embraces beauty of life and takes it in. working together with different community, having people come and see the children see they care about and enough to be involved with the little kids.** It’s really important. We are important enough for you. **I work to go and hang there and you do come and talk to us.** That’s all very important for the children. **It will be the only exposure that they ever get. A sense of community through art.** When they grow up, they will go to visit a city, and they see the museum, I think **I’ll go on that museum.** It’s continue to keep art as the part of their life and those are consumers. I want them to be art consumers. That’s why I bring my art in. Look! This is what I make and I show it. It is important for them. I don’t want them to grow up and want beauty of their life.

**Interview Transcript of Grace: January 5th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.**

There are **some younger art teachers** and there are some older like me teaching for a long time. The younger ones have a lot of energy. They are full of questions because they are just starting out. They do pretty well attending the meetings. Some years we have more attendance than another year.

(Do you have some disagreement because they are different?)

U-um. (It means ‘I don’t think so.’ Why do you think they don’t have not too much disagreement?)

I guess we are all like teaching art. And they are only ones in their schools. So all we have each other. School like this, classroom teachers all have support from each other. So there are five kindergarten teachers, five first grade teachers, and there are four third grade teachers. They have each other. But art teachers, you are the only one at the school. So when we get
together at the monthly meeting, we just support each other. As far as I know, there is nobody who disagrees with anybody.

(Do you think they have similar art education philosophy? What might you demonstrate their art education philosophy?) It’s changed over the years. When I started out, it was much more free expression. They shouldn’t try to standards that actually are teacher lessons. And it just changed over time now with benchmarks and testing and checking benchmarks. It’s sort of combination of having fun and enjoying self-expression yourself. But at the same time, we have to show that the kids actually learn some. So we give grades to evaluate whether the kids have and show understanding what we are trying to teach. I think some of us do more cultures than others. And it just depends on personal preference. What we are doing is just like the all elements or whether you are trying to teach different cultures. It just depends on where they went to school. If they went to FSU, then they have strong Disciplined Based Art Education background.

(How do you think when the teachers show different ideas or opinions, how do they respond to the different opinions or ideas?) They just listen. They just listen. I mean we are allowed to express our own opinion. It’s a safe place to talk and give your opinion. I haven’t seen anybody put down or anything and talk badly about because they have different opinion. They are polite and respectful. (When you have different opinions, do you really freely speak up?) U-mm. (She says, ‘yes, of course’). We are a pretty agreeable group.

(Did you receive caring from other teachers?) I don’t know. We help each other with lesson plans. Freely and willingly. Now somebody gets sick. Do and help that person. Take food or something.

(Can you tell me about experience in relation to giving and receiving helping?) Handle lesson plans to each other, now with computer, we can email lesson plans to each other, help each other with projects that way. They ask a lot? We don’t share as much as we used to. We used to bring like lessons that we like to do lessons that we had gone. We bring lessons to the meeting and then we share with each other. And then everybody tells we give us a lesson plan that kind of thing. They don’t do as much as of that we used to.

(What is the difference between teacher workshops and the monthly meeting? Like summer break and the monthly meeting. The art teacher’s meeting.) Usually we are working on exhibits and monthly meeting is more of getting of calendar straight. Framing and getting frames for art work, dates for FSU show, dates for Winterfest, things like that. They are more business meetings. There are teacher meetings, whereas the workshops are like book making, clay, it’s our topic what we actually make up and relax. We don’t talk business in the summer. But during the year we’ve got so many people warning us to do things that are more like that.
(Why do you think the art teachers have to learn?) Because they don’t get it all in schools. Art in particular FSU because of DBAE, they get a lot of curricula, but they don’t get the studio classes that they used to have. FSU closed a lot of art studio courses. Ceramic studio, they don’t have weaving any more. They used to have fiber’s lab. They had metal’s lab. They don’t get as much hands-on making art in a variety that they used to get. So when they start teaching, they don’t know as much studio work as they need it.

(Who teaches the art teachers?)
Linda Johnson..(Is she an art teacher?) Yes. So we have done things. We’ve done printmaking. We’ve done ceramics quite a bit. We did book making in the past summer. (So the art teachers learn the artistic skills?) U-um from each other.

(Do you think the knowledge and skills that they learn from the workshops they can apply to their classroom workshop?) They have to. When the workshop is over, they have to teach something that they learn from that workshop and turn in lesson plan with pictures to prove that they learn something. The county requires.

(How do you teach the art teachers in the workshops?) We set up tables and we demonstrate the process of a like wheel mill or hand building. We’ve done glazing techniques, underglazes and overglazes. We do. Just like we do like kids on a higher level. Just like we will do as children. Only we make it more adult. We demonstrate. We have samples set out. We demonstrate the process. We give them written lesson plans. And then they actually make their own things.

(Did you take like workshops somewhere?) I have master’s degree in teaching. Actually I was an administrate supervision of teachers of art. (What subarea of studio art did you take?) A lot of ceramics. I did some drawing and water color and a lot of clay.

(Do you have good friends or mentors in the art teachers?)
Yes. Those of us have been teaching here for a long time. Good friends each other.

(How did you become a member of the art teacher’s meeting?) Just showed up. We have an announcement that we have a meeting. Once a month. We just go. It’s voluntary. We are all invited. I was a chair person for a while. For a number of years I was charged of the meeting. I was a chair person for quite a while. (Like Megan?) We take turns doing that job, which is who ever wants to do it. We don’t care. We get along very well. I mean when you get hired, you are still just going to the meetings. (Naturally know there is an art teacher?) They send a flyer. Now it’s on the computer. It used to be a piece of paper come to your school.
(Maybe there are some mentors or leaders in the meeting? What does it mean mentoring to you?) I was a NBCT. So we used mentor quite a bit when they paid us for mentoring. But now is all volunteers. If you want a help, another teacher you can.

(I want to know about your experience as a mentor. Would you tell me about that?) I would go observe like a mentor of Sunny. She was a brand new. I would go observe her in the classroom and watch her teach. And give her some suggestions.

(In the U.S. even after they become an art teacher, they have some mentors?) yes. For the first year. (Is it a rule?) Yes. Some counties do more. Leon County used to have a very big first year teacher program. We got a lot of meetings. They had portfolio. We were going to keep cons..paper to prove that kind of things. They’ve cut back. Because of money, they’ve cut back on it. So it’s not as bad as it was.

27:34 But beginning teachers all have to have mentor assigned to them. Now pretty much mentor at your school rather than another art teacher from somewhere else. They will pick up a classroom teacher to be your mentor. Instead of art teacher that now to save money. Cause we live somebody got us paid for us off to go visit. Now pretty much mentors are at your school. To save money. I want to help a beginning teacher to set up her classroom and organize furniture and supplies and that kind of thing.

(Do you often go out for dinner with your friends in the community?) Some. (How do you think the relationship with the art teachers is?) It is not so much personal. There is a few of us who have known each other for a long time. And we are personal friends. We see each other in occasion. But we don’t see each other occasionally, go out for lunch occasionally. But we don’t see each other on regular bases. Some of art teachers just know each other because of the meetings. We see each other at meetings. The younger teachers particular. They have kids and families. They are busy.

(Did you cooperate with other experts?) Yes, I did. Charls Don did study about digital portfolio assessment. There was a big study with Dr. Don at FSU about digital portfolio assessment. Do you know what that is? We take pictures of kids’ work. And then keep it in digital files instead of actual keeping the work. Instead of file all of my art work, I’ve had digital pictures of my art work in the computer. And then you keep track of kids’ progression or learning by looking at the pictures of these art works. Instead of having the all of these art works. We did that for two years with Dr. Don at FSU. So I proved whether it was valued or not. We found to be too time-consuming. We didn’t have the time cause there are hundreds of kids at grade level. So we did fifth grade. We tried to take pictures of all their work. Just taking pictures, putting all in the
computer, and organizing all took too much time.

(Do you think it is more time-consuming using computer for assessment?) Yes. It is taking of the pictures and down load all these in the computer and putting in each kid’s file. It is terribly time-consuming. Because we have too many kids. If they are high school, they can take their own pictures and keep their own portfolio. So digital portfolio at high school, even middle school could work. But not with elementary school. We have five grade levels. We have thousands of kids. Just too time consuming. Someone else to do photography. Parents or aids or something. It will work. But we will work on that long project.

(Was that teacher workshop? Or did you take universe course?) No. He just asked for volunteers. Marcia was getting her doctoral degree. We were working with her. We was getting her doctorate. And Dr. Don at FSU. I am trying to think about artists. I had a couple of artists when I was at Oak..elementary. I haven’t had one since I’ve been here. Come to the school and work with kids.

(Did you work together for the community art projects? Like the Story project, Guernica Project..) Not both, but I have one. One of them was Native American Art and had a big exhibit. We did Native American Art at school and they displayed at the museum. One of them was something about fire images of, fire was Chinese ceramics. We made clay dragons and displayed them at FSU. It was African American Exhibit. There was a black American woman. Fiber art at FSU. I participated in that, I guess five I participated in (workshops or projects at university).

But that was only those at elementary.

(I realized that the art teachers really want to participate in the community art projects. Why do you think the art teachers want to participate in the project?) Well it’s apparently for kids’ learning. Expands their learning. Especially, the peace mural, the Guernica all of that. It expands their learning. It’s go for the families to be involved. And it shows the community and it is actually teaching a viable curriculum in the schools. Cause people outside schools think that all we do always is pictures in art. People outside schools don’t realize how important art curriculum is. So we work in the community. We can show the publican, inform the public as to what we are doing. The depth of learning actually happens in art, the importance of art in the public schools.

(People, parents are interested in art education?) It depends where you are. The more educated parents seem to care more for. Parents who don’t have a lot of money, they are struggling just for providing for family. They don’t tend to participate as much in their child education at all including art. They don’t care much about art. Their focuses more on putting food on the table, paying the bills rather than more educated people. People of higher education seem to more about the child education.
(Do you think what art teachers have concern about? What is challenge of art teachers?) They need to be worried about they are going to be cut it out. And I don’t think they really are, or need to be. Cause it happened before. Back in the 70s. There was one recession like this. The county I was working in cut it out from the schools. And there are still some county they don’t have art at all in their public schools. And they need to be worried about it. They need to pay attention to that. I think they are naïve. They don’t understand that could happen, has happened. **They need to get certified something else so that they can have job, if the county guess in such a severe financial strategy** that it would consider cutting all completely. They need to prepare for, they need to have degrees something else. Just in case. That’s one of the first things cut unfortunately.

(Based on the financial situation, what is important for the art teachers to do?) **They should communicate with the public.** Do the show like FSU and Youth Art Month. Work up in the school and really communicate with parents. How important it is. And have the kids enjoy it. They do home and talk about it. They are trying to put pressure on the politicians to keep in the schools.

(Youth Art Month, what is that?) Youth Art Month is national celebration of the arts in March. Everywhere, all over the country, it’s music and art both. The Leon County, we have a big **exhibit at public library. Every school hangs our work to show to public what we are doing.** Like art festival. There is a reception at night for parents to come and see the art work. But it just shows the community how important it is. That’s for this way that haven’t exhibit. And it’s a public place. It’s free. Cause it is a library downtown. Again **that’s one of the first things gets once budge problem** is in art. So it’s important that they participate in. In their school as well as in the district. Almost all art teachers participate in the exhibit.

(Do you think the art teachers attend the monthly meeting?) All of them? No. There is about maybe ten at each meeting. There are some never come. Never. But there is a group all the time. A lot of younger teacher seem to go over time. Some of us they are getting older, a kind of got lazy. Gotten tired! (Hahaha...) 40 years.. **When you are younger, just start out, meet to help and need help, you need to build your program that’s the place you need to go. Meeting with the other teachers. For the new art teachers, it is just really important. Because they are only one at their schools. There is nobody after school who can help them. They get help from another art teacher. So they go to the monthly meeting that is the place they can get help.**

(How does the community of the art teachers affect their professional growth?) They learn from each other. Every time we need, we should learn something new. **Hopefully learn something new.** Learn about new lesson plans, learn about new materials, something like that. And then we learn about the outreach opportunities at the meetings too. Like the peace
mural things like that. Cause FSU museum comes and sometimes LeMoyne comes and sometimes the 621 gallery people might come, so other museums people, the curriculum COCA they come, it’s not just learning from each other but it’s also other museums and galleries contact.

(Why it is important, as you said, many museum people and COCA they come to the teacher’s meeting?) Yes.

(Why is it important to build connections with the community people?) Again, support. For those important programs. Because they support us, and then we get to broaden the kids’ knowledge by participating with them. The kids did peace mural, for example. They go to the FSU. They had their exhibit, art exhibited, there was a family reception. So they got the experience something that they wouldn’t otherwise experience. Besides community supports for us if we should need it.

(Teachers need that support, but what is the benefit for the museum?) That’s a good question. The Brogan people saved something with us. Get visitors to them. So for them it’s money. (They get money?) Yea, they have to pay to go to Brogan. Not from us. The people who go to the Brogan have to pay. Part of it is financial. They would get money for people coming to museum. But it supports people who get to go to the museum, who might not otherwise go. The same as FSU. A lot of regular people in town don’t go to the museum. If there are child’s art work there, they’ll go to the museum, learn about the museum. So they help us, we helped out. They get community support because parents go, because kids’ art work is there. And kids learn a lot because they participate in.

(But there are a lot of kids in the county. Even in Tallahassee. All kids’ work cannot be exhibited there. They get just tiny chance to exhibit their art work.) But the small chances are better than nothing. A hundred of kids exhibit their work, that’s the hundred kids that exhibit their work. If they didn’t have it, the kids wouldn’t be there. That’s something they remember all their lives. If you did another project, you wouldn’t pick those same kids again. You pick up different work of kids. So wouldn’t be the same hundred every time. And there is always a project. Elementary every other year would be FSU. In secondary every other year at FSU. They are all different. Like I said, I’ve done with Native American one, there was African one, was African American artist’s one. And Chinese ceramics one, and past one, the peace mural, it’s a different project. Every other year for the elementary art teachers. It depends on what they are doing. It’s FSU’s decision. What the project is.

(Many art teachers want to try to do participate in the projects.)
I would say about a third, or maybe half of the art teachers. Not everybody.

(To participate in the program, you have to teach, or to bring the theme in your classroom?) Yes. (Do you have any your own program in your school?) We get to write it on. Each school is different. Cause we write it on curriculum. For me, I do world cultures’ approach. I started with Egyptian art. So everybody did something. They had to do Egyptian art. And then I did Hispanic art. And then I did the middle age’s. Right now I’m starting African art. I am in the middle of switching everything around African art. So every grade level will do something with African art. And then I’m gonna do African artist and then Native American artist. So they learn about other countries and cultures along with producing art. <DBAE: School Wide art Program based on DBAE>

(You teach from K2-8th grade? Your curriculum is consistent with all grades?) Right. The middle school kids they come every single day. The same kids come every day. (They are really good.) But some of them don’t really come. They just put it in here cause the schedule couldn’t work the other way. So they don’t want to be here necessarily. Some of them do but some of them just be here because there is no place to put them. So some of them work really hard. And then they do really nice work. (They are gonna be an artist?) Some of them want. They go to high school and take art. Quite a lot of my kids go to Salen …(school’s name) and take art. (Is there any special high school or middle school for art?) Some. Not here. Raa middle school. Art focus school. But it’s not a true art school. Some of the bigger cities have an art high school or art middle school. We just don’t have the money here. There are not enough people. It’s a small city.

(How the art teachers know there are programs at the museum. There are a lot of programs. How can they get the information?) They usually come to our meetings and tell us about it. Plus COCA. Do you know who they are? (Yes.) There is a news letter on line. So you could check those news letters on line to find out about those stuffs too. But usually they come to us. (What art programs do they have?) They tell us when there is something we might want to know about. It’s in that news letter. It goes out to everybody. It’s anybody who wants to know news letter can get it. It’s not just for art teachers.

<Collaboration with artists> (Do you have experience to work with your school wide art programs?)
Not here. I had an artist’s name come from FAMU. He drew with my kids. I had a wild life artist come. And draw and paint for the kids. I had a woman. I don’t remember her name and come to the school. We had some illustrators come here. I didn’t bring them. We had them come here. We just don’t have any money here. It’s a low income school.

(When you collaborated with them, what was your role as an art teacher?)
We bring them in, and they talked to the kids about what they did, and how they did it. And then we would have them make art once they left in their style from something that we had learned about them.

(What was the artist’s role?) They talked to the kids and they showed how they did their art work. How they want to make their art work, where they got their ideas from, ( artist’s name ). He is a black and white photographer. He photographs Florida landscapes. He did a big project with the schools. A couple of years ago. And came and talked to the kids. When he left, then we did photographs. We did black and white art work landscapes. (Do you think it was good for kids?)
U-um. Because they get to see somebody who does that for living all the time. A person who does ceramics all the time it’s better than me. I don’t do that is what I do all the time. I teach a lot of different things. But I don’t spend my whole day making pots and selling what I make. Whereas professional artists, that is their job, can bring more to the kids. Motivation and knowledge that I can’t. Cause their skill level is higher than mine.

(Art teacher’s art education philosophy is more about teaching art cultures, art history, rather than making art.) I think it’s mixed. I think the art history is part of it. But art production subject is not just art history. So it’s a mixture of both. When they teach about some larger community, the world and the general, and then you can appreciate other cultures by studying their art and then making something yourself helps make the learning meet more.

All the bigger school systems do that (they have art teachers’ community). (Do you think the community like the monthly meeting is all over the states?) U-um. They were doing when I was an intern. I interned in Saint Petersburg. But in the 60s. They had an art center of art teachers. You go actually make art and they had a monthly meeting. As I was back in 1996, this was going on and at least in Florida in the bigger school systems for quite a while. Cause small school systems don’t have it elementary art. The classroom teacher has to teach. So the salaries come out of classroom teacher’s salary. If the school gets so much money to hire classroom teachers, let’s say there are 25 classroom teachers. If you take money from hiring those teachers, they then hire art and music and PE teachers. It comes out of the whole salary bundle. So you can have
more classroom teachers, if you don’t have art, music, and PE. So the small school systems are really financially in trouble than don’t have art teachers, music teachers, and PE teachers. Just they can have classroom teachers.
That’s why art is in jeopardy; they talk about cutting it out constantly. Almost every year they talk about cutting it out because they can hire more classroom teachers. If they do all with art.

(Art teacher’s meeting is important?) **It’s important for yourself to learn from another art teacher. But it’s also important to have it outreach into the community.** But it’s also important to demonstrate to the community how important art is in the schools. And we do that through the monthly meetings. So we don’t have art supervisor at the county office. (Do you think art supervisor is really good?) Yea. It would be really good. Because that person, they would go around and visit all the schools and provide help. Mentoring. And they hopefully work with budge for all the same for every school. So no matter what schools you went to, you would have the same supplies and similar curriculum in every school. But right now it’s very different. It depends on your school. How much money you get for supplies, the materials to teach with, it’s all different from school.

<Art Supervisor> (Do you mean depending on the budge, school’s art curriculum can be different?) Yes.
(Why don’t they have supervisor?) Money. Cause you have to pay somebody 60 thousands or 70 thousands to be art supervisor to go around visit. There is none for music either. One person does both. 1:2:33 But they spend their whole day helping the teachers, visiting the classrooms, working with the budget people, to make sure we all got the same budget so it has supplies to teach with. They don’t have one. They had one. They used to have a supervisor. Right now all about test scores. We don’t impact the AFCAT. I mean directly we don’t impact. So we are just there (The AFCAT they don’t have a test for art. Do you want test?) No. because they come only once a week. The elementary kids have art once a week. We do something different every time and walk in. And we don’t do it again. Ever. You can’t test somebody in March about what you did want. Back in September. That they have a practice every single day. It’s just not fair. They wouldn’t remember it.

(How often do they learn art a week?) Once a week. **45 minutes.** So they have art maybe 30 times. In a whole year. You can’t test they are involved in. It’s impossible. In the classroom they have math every day. They build on scales and start with addition, subtraction, then is something you can practice at home. You can’t test something that in frequent something that they don’t do every day. They don’t have enough practice. They don’t have time doing it. If we did have to do
AFCAT, it’s a bubble. Bubble the answer sheet. How are you going to do art? It would have to be art history. And then we have to memorize facts and rules. That’s not the purpose of being creative. Memorizing facts, that’s silly. I’m glad for not doing that.

I’ll be at the February meeting. Because that will be Youth Art Month. We’ll be talking about where our spaces are going to be. The library. All that. So I’ll be at the meeting. (Maybe a lot of teachers will come in February meeting?) They should. Yes. Probably you will see more than that you have year long. I have to attend high school meetings. The school, middle school faculty meetings. There are on Wednesdays also. So sometimes I have a conflict between the middle schools that I have to go to, the middle school’s room is out there. So sometimes they overlapped with the art meetings. If I have middle school meeting I have to go to, faculty meeting I have to go to, I can’t come to the art meetings. It’s a big job doing middle school and elementary school. Much time-consuming. Middle school and elementary school art curriculum are very different. Plus they come every day. So there is a whole a lot planning and preparation, whereas at the elementary you just repeat the same thing all week long. All your first graders do the same thing, All your second graders are doing the same thing. Planning is a whole a lot easier than that situation. Cause I have been doing just elementary for 23 years. I got three years to retire. (Do you want to retire?) U-Um. (After retire, what would you want to do?) Maybe I want to make my own art and relax. Raku firing: wood firing.

**Interview Transcript of Melissa: January 26th, 20102:00-3:30 p.m.**

Talk to me about how you respond when the members of the community address their ideas different from yours. I usually keep my mouth closed. However, if it is something I feel strongly about I will speak up with my own opinions.

Tell me about how the members of the community of practice deal with diverse perspectives. Art teachers in our group respect each others’ opinions. We understand that schools in different areas of town have different challenges and different demographics which directly affect what we teach in our individual schools.

How did you feel when you received help from other members? I was very appreciative. I often send small gifts to those art teachers that help me out.

Talk to me about your experience of giving your help to other members. As coordinator of the elementary art teachers for 5 years, I was especially sensitive to our new art teachers in the group. I tried to include them in group discussions at our meetings and helped them with lesson
ideas. It is very overwhelming to attend our meetings as a new member. When I was a new art
teacher, I hated attending the meetings because I felt everyone else knew so much more than I. A
few art teachers took me under their wings and helped me to feel more a part of the group. They
helped me with lesson ideas and included me in meeting discussions.

Have you ever met your mentors and best friends in the community of practice? Tell me about
them. Yes! Julie McBride was my supervising teacher when I was an intern. She now teaches at
Gilchrist & I teach at her old school. She taught me everything I know as an art teacher! She is
an awesome teacher & friend. I have the utmost respect for her.

How did you come to become a member of the community of practice or a mentor? As a
beginning teacher of art, I found out there was a job opening at a local school. Julie was kind
enough to contact the art teacher there and asked her to put in a good word to the principal for
me. That is how I got an interview with him. Out of 10 people interviewed for the job I was the
the only beginning teacher interviewed and I got the job! I taught Art at Sabal Palm Elementary
school for 14 years.

Given what you have said your life before you became a mentor or a member of this community
and given what you have said about your work now, how do you understand mentoring in your
life? <Mentoring> is very important in our art teacher group. People will not be active
members of our art teacher group unless they feel they are a part of the group first.

Tell me about your experience when you are done art projects or activities with other experts
within the community or out of it.
What do you actually do on the job of the community of practice? Presently, I am the groups’
secretary – I take art meeting minutes and send them out to the groups’ members. For the 5 years
before that I coordinated the art group’s meeting and was the information contact for the art
group.
With whom did you work together and how did you find those experts? I have worked with
many different art teachers in different workshops. I worked closely with Haley in a primitive
clay finishes workshop. Her “out of the box” creativity was infectious and inspiring. In the scope
& sequence workshop, it was nice to work with art teachers from similar and different school
demographics. We respected each other’s opinions on what our students were and were not
capable of. It was very enlightening.

What were the goals of the art projects or events? The goals of most of the workshops for art
teachers have to do with enriching our art lessons and our knowledge with regards to teaching the subject. The scope & sequence workshop had the goal of constructing benchmarks that are realistic & representative of the demographics of all the schools in Leon County. We tried to make a scope & sequence that could be easily used by all the elementary schools.

What roles were you and your colleagues responsible for to accomplish those projects? In the art workshops, everyone had similar responsibilities and objectives. We all shared creative ideas. However, we each had to attain our own individual goals to accomplish the projects. With the scope & sequence workshop, we went through the benchmarks together to make sure they were representative of all schools in our area. We also were given individual tasks – editing, typing, researching other subject area benchmarks. I was in charge of tying in other subject area benchmarks with the art benchmarks.

Interview Transcript of Blair: January 18th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

My focus is to see how the art teachers work together. Maybe they have different perspectives or opinions. Their motivation, goals, and practices of the community.

1. Tell me about how the members deal with the different perspectives in the CoP. (Business: Common Concerns) Because joining the community is optional, very often the people who come have similar interests. So we don’t find very often much conflict. But if someone uses different, I think, we just try to listen and accept, and think about it, in most of the time. Because engaging in community is optional, some people just don’t come. So I think that we reduce conflicts. (I try to look at conflicts in the monthly meeting, but I couldn’t find.) The other reason we don’t have much conflict is because we need to know we work together to keep our job. We have a positive presence of the community and I think that keeps us pretty much united. We were fighting each other, then we would be a very difficult to deal with a large community. Continue to exist. (How long has the community been?) The learning community changes probably each year somewhat. Because we pick a different book, or different group, to focus on, and so the groups are varied each time. I mean, we have the big group, that’s all the art elementary teachers. That’s one group. There is a good salad core consistently come, with some people who come and go. And going is totally voluntary. That one is more like a business meeting, not very sometime sharing art projects. That big community. That’s really what is purposes. Signing show and jobs. That is kind of a business program.

And then the other book study community, those are someone who comes to me, Julie or
someone says ‘will you do a book study?’ Otherwise my school, we have to do my professional development every year as a teacher. And so one of them is by choice and one of them is determined by the school as a school goal. Some of the teachers come to one of us and say ‘will you do a book study?’ We have a book study. So we can do professional development in our area, in art. So that is how that comes about. National Board Certification not last year, but years prior to that, about 8 years prior to that, we were getting mentoring bonuses in the State of Florida for holding the book studies. We were motivated to do that because we earn money. Now last year and this year there is no money we are doing it for free. I do a book study, I am doing a book study this year, last year, that Fran and I did. There was no..The only thing that we got would be the district picked-up books. Districts pay for the books we’re gonna study. This year they are picking up the costed books and maybe having guest artists. So really come and go. ..So the conflict we don’t have too much. Reduced budget

(Do you think I can see some different points of view in the meeting?)
Sure,  (In the monthly meeting or the book study?)
Different points of view you hear a little bit. In the meetings as far as do we want to do someone shows. So there are different opinions there. We had differences in the opinions in the past over …should be mounted. So we have had some of those we work those out over the years. The book study is coming up, we may or may not have different points of view. We’re going to be looking at kindergarten curriculum, may be very different things from what people have been doing. So we may or may not have different opinions whether that goes or not. But that’s a kind of discussion we want to have. So we’ll see where that goes.
(A few years ago you guys had some different perspectives. At that time what happened?)
Some other things are hanging art shows. Working out, I can tell they are still an on-going one with hanging art show. That’s why somebody doesn’t show up. And an art show we left them space, like youth..and there is a big hole there. That’s really important PR show for our district, for the public. So someone just not comes, not communicates is not good. That left some concerns, send an email thing, please make sure let us know you’re not gonna be there. That’s fine. But tell us, but we really need (09:06) …The other thing is whether we should mount on more professionally like on a map board, or should be on construction paper. Over time, it’s resolved that most of us is construction paper. (Construction paper for what?) Well, wanted to add more color. Number two, we don’t have to cut a map. It looks more childlike. <Little things to do> When you add more colors, instead of that, we discussed and ended up having, we can do it in advance, and roll the construction paper, put the long paper and then we go and just put it up at the space instead of having to try out each piece. We found it actually stayed on the wall is better and a map board kept falling down. Now what we do, city hall, have the requirement is
that it’s framed and it has to be hang walls in the back. The only time people get upset, there is on the frame following a party and it has a glass in it, or something like that. Otherwise, there is no any conflict. But those are requirements now for the show, so over time we work it out, what was portable for everyone, what hung up on the wall best, stayed on the wall, I think it’s trial and error, we try different things and people are different opinions until we figure out what actually works. Once we figured it out, we are pretty much agreement now. There is the learning stage, people thought this would be better, no this would be better. (Do you think the art teachers express themselves, openly in the meeting?) I think most of them do, we talk once over each other. We never see each other, so what we do, cause we are isolated. The only person in our school when we get to talk about and stop this one more, we do one more each other. I think most people do. Sometimes there are someone who advocates and come and ..group. But then often they talk to someone, they know already, and whatever say, go ahead and forward.

I think in fact one part of reason why we are doing the book study that we are doing, is trying to get people just see it’s been changed in the pedagogy of teaching and shipped away maybe from some other places they are right now, because we don’t have any art supervisor. The only way we can try to ship them toward that is by offering this service and have them commit and participate. Will they, won’t they, I don’t know. But there are people who approach to art education very differently. Some of us should be unaware education is moved toward lately. They’re still doing, making and taking activity, they’re doing probably before DBAE kind of lessons, they still basically, line, shape, color, things like that. More heavily that meaning-based for looking at the purpose, artist’s purpose, some are those higher thinking. That the shift, I think that, we are trying to have the book study forward. Fran, Julie, and Evelyn, We had that conversation about what can we do to encourage them to participate in it and to move things a little bit. Unfortunately, some other ones that we think we need to move are moving. But it’s not our role to do anything more than try to lead and provide opportunities. So we are trying to provide an opportunity for the growth we can make anyone come.

2. How did you feel when you receive help from other members?

When I first came to the district, Evelyn Pander, Julie McBride, Evelyn particularly was doing discipline workshops in the summer in the early 1990s, Discipline-Based Art Education. DBAE was just coming in, Florida Art Education Institute was viable. And one other thing that I did I think I learned how to teach art from them better. Because when I went to college was whole different theory. If you don’t have that, continue to learn in community in grow, you don’t grow over the course of your career. You stay whatever you learned in college. And so I think I am an art teacher today because of learning from them. Absolutely. (Beside learning
privately, when you encountered some difficulties in your life..) Oh, there there..(Did you ever receive caring from them?). Oh, sure, absolutely. (She moistened at her eyes, Tears fall. She cannot say anything for a while. She is just emotional. I had to bring some tissues to her.) Yea, my son had a very tragic accident. And he had a brain injured. The group was very supportive. (She is dissolved in tears. She cannot hold back her tears.) You can write. Tears, tears, tears…Yea, very very supportive. When someone has a divorce, we make sure that, when people retire, we started over fifty lunch group. You know so that. So that they retired, but they still are part. (Do you need napkin or ..Her tears were endlessly falling down during our talking) Maybe. Thank you. Yea, this is a very supportive group. (He is okay now?) Now he is okay. He has a hard time keeping his job. When he can do, he is absolutely amazing far more than..The group is very very good.

3. Tell me about your experience giving help to other members.

I guess I am starting with the way that one way is taking student teachers. They are coming up.. profession. Another is working within a school, doing book study, workshops, within the school. And then the third way it’s been a course of doing book study within our community. Those are the three main ways that we do it. They ask, what are you looking for, you know, it’s a mixed feeling to do it, because it adds a responsibility to give mentoring, so there is an extra preparation, there is all kinds of forms to fill out for the district, you know, a lot of things like that. They are unbeatable headache. But on the other hand, I haven’t seen so my buddies for over months. And I am feeling a huge, a draw. Because I didn’t make, I am feeling their absence. Because I hadn’t had a chance to talk to them. Because I missed the last meeting. We didn’t have a Saturday lunch. So I haven’t had.. You know. I miss it. Actually I won’t be able to go tomorrow. I’ll get a seat at the end of the day. A couple of weeks I have seen everybody. It will be good. But I do, I become used to being with them. I think that’s important to have that interplay. So it also has headache of doing the mentoring and trying to get to paper work done, clearly finding out what they can meet, I think that has a kinda given a way, it’s very satisfying. (So you mean the mentoring is a way you can help some art teachers, novice teachers, and that means also you can be satisfied, you can feel a sense of satisfaction.) Yes, that’s what I have said. You know, it’s give and take. You give up something, but you gain something too.

4. Have you ever met your mentors and best friends in the community of practice? I think you are a mentor in the group. I think.

I am now. It wasn’t always. Yea. My mentors are like Julie, Evelyn, some others span around for a while. Some who have already retired. Certainly they’ve also become friends. We do things. Call each other, and so and so. We do things together sometimes. They are not far related. (You guys have some meetings, beside official meetings.) Yes, we just have a lunch group. Yea, it’s not. We just go to lunch. Yea, we just go a lot. (Would you invite me to the lunch
meeting?) Okay, I’ll let you know. We haven’t set a day. The next one may be Somebody’s retirement. That’s supposed to be October 31st. But that didn’t happen. Cause she was sick. But I can let you know. (Maybe the lunch meeting would be one of the best sites for this research.) Yea, you can hear what we really talk about. (Hahaha,...)

(How do you understand mentoring in your life?) **It’s time for me to get the next group ready.** I’ll be retiring. I hope eventually 7, 8, 10 twenty years. Probably it would be 8 years. 8 years from now. Might retire. Some of my friends are actually retiring now. One of our concerns is that shift in pedagogy, we say something is gonna be lost. When our generation move on, how do we go on, **preserve some of practices we found very effective.** There is a sometime very different practice. You know, translate that into the practice. I think it’s an important thing. We are going around different ideas for preserving that. Especially, since last year, we couldn’t have workshops for regular teachers. So we felt out a huge hole. This is going to be lost. Evelyn’s retiring. Someone else is retiring. As they retire, who is going to take the next step, keep some of this practices alive, and you know the enthusiasm that they have, you know and so I think we all kinda feeling that’s part of what we need to do now. **It’s pass on the practice.**

Tell me about experience when you are done art projects and art activities with other expertise. Maybe there is expertise. Maybe art teachers are experts within the community. The art teachers can work together with other experts.

Right. We can talk about. We’ve done a number of things with the community. A lot of them are through VIKI at the museum. Museum-base, some of them are, some of them are not. Some of them have been coupled with Brogan downtown. Winterfest. It’s another one. So those are activities and projects we’ve done with other community groups. They are responsive by other groups. Usually what’s unique working with Viki is that it’s alternate high school, secondary one year elementary next usually, But what we’ve done in past years is that we actually go to Viki and say, we want a show, this is a theme we want, we became curators for the show, and Viki was an expertise how to do the museum stuffs. Get the work and you know build the timeline, all those things the museums do. You know arrange for the artists to visit us, and everything. That has been and then **usual very exciting partnership.** And it will be in which every teachers are interested in the project. There was a vision to North Florida. The Buck Lake get a pretty much on their own. Most recently the story which we just did and knew it with us a lot of that (15.04). But that is a three-year project. Right now we have a group. Fran and I met with Viki a couple of times and we’ll have a large group in December, meet with her and coming up new theme, Generations. For another show within four years from now. So we are looking at doing another one. Where the idea came from the teachers, not from a show already at the museum. That would be kind of build a backward, from the school to the museum. And of course between there are shows which Vlki does, has a show they’re having, and invite us to do
activities with them. So kinda those broke away, which is a little different I think that most museums do and are willing to do.

(In specific, what did you do actually on the job of the community of practice? When you are engaged in the art projects, would you take an example of what did you do in that project?)

<Working together on common practices>

Okay. Depends on the project, if it something like Winterfest, then we all have to get our own work get on already and drop it off. If it something like the story project, we are involved in that, we actually have to carry to show, wrote sections on a catalogue, we each wrote each section, we wrote lesson plans to go in the packet and went out to schools in Leon County and then we did our projects with our own students and taught lessons based on the artworks and shows. Then show them at the museum. So involved in all different levels.

(How did you find those experts?) Well, Viki came to us and ask about partnership agreements. So I think that got the ball rolling. She came to us and asked us, what would you like to do in partnership? So then we talk about and decide and that’s about how a couple of the shows started through that. The other way we do word them out, you know one person tells us “I know someone who.” And then we look into it. Other ways we find out is someone is taking classes at FSU something, that’s how we get new titles for books, You know Tom Anderson a years ago, come and do workshops, …with Mark Messersmith, I think we’ve done. Workshops with us, maybe watercolors, printmaking, sometimes Viki connects us with someone at the university. Do with workshops. Bookmaking or something like that. Being with university in town is a little easier, because someone is going to class, or knows someone, we can go to someone who says Who should we call? FSU is a big resource. FAMU, the university being in town, and then some other artists people know.

(What were the goals of the projects or events?) From the school perspective, one of the things is to make the art really visible to the community. So we can build support to keep art in these public schools. The other is to engage students with something that makes it seem more professional. Like what we do at the museum, we are taking the work and putting it in a professional setting. It’s from being …to do something a little more. A little more sophisticated. Instead of just a thing which goes in the refrigerator, the little art work that you take on the mommy and mom says, “Looks good.” It makes a little more formal presentation of it, when we take it in the museum. For kids. Because of a formal arts presentation of opportunity. (If they do presentation, how do they feel?) They feel wonderful. I mean, they feel fabulous, having that work selected for something like that. It is obviously one of the reasons to do it. (Do you have any responses from the kids or parents after the art projects?) Yea. I can give you one word. I had a show at my school with parents. That’s what I am thinking. I had Viki brought a community artist actually hung in real art works in the school I used to teach at where the big office area and
big walls and they brought the art works to our school and it was caught expressive structures, it was none representational art works and one little boy, this was a title one, a franchise community. Likely go to the museum on their own very little. So all the art works were hanging there and this little boy comes in one day and says, “do you know what my mom’s favorite art work was?” Not only did he keep proud of which one was there, but their parents were picking out favorite art works, these were many parents would never go to art museums or galleries. So it **brought the arts to another population and audience.** They normally would not see it. And I think but that’s one of the things, they seem like “I am an artist.” When they see the work there. I am not just making art projects, I am an artist. (Do you think there are some connections between drawing children’s pride on their art works and your professional minds?”) Yes, I think they feel a lot of pride in their work and we are proud of them too. Take the pictures, say cheese..Otherwise why we do this work, cause a lot of extra work, hang work. **Obviously** so they build that **sense of self, pride, and confidence.** (How long have you working in Leon County?) I started in Leon County in 1989. (At that time I was a middle school student.) Right! Now I have not only children I taught come back to me. (Ah, as a teacher!) Yea, teacher! As an art teacher! I have children of children. That’s really putting there.

(What roles you and your colleagues are responsible for accomplishing those projects?) The **Youth Art**, that’s a big project. Each year we sign up for jobs usually. And we split the jobs throughout the year. We kinda rotate it through us. This year I am not doing things. Last year I didn’t have a major role except book study. Other years I might be in charge of who hangs at the library. Individually, all of us every year I am in charge of getting work on certain shows we want to participate in. You know, fitting in a mount, taking it into Winterfest, mounting and taking it to the **library** and filling in my space. But someone else is ready in that’s the jobs we rotate and measure it out the spaces and find them, and things like that. We kinda rotate some are those roles. We have a **job’s list.** Different roles of it and different people at the beginning of the year, each school year, first meeting, or at the end of the last year, we decide people volunteer to do different jobs. Like Judy Jecko’s gonna do refreshment for Youth Art. Someone else is going to be in charge of Youth Art ..’s spaces. Finding spaces. Someone else is gonna check and see if art works are hanging before opening night. Someone else is the sign up for the library, the monthly rotating show, and then remind you, your turn. Someone else is gonna do the **attorneys’ general office.** They’re gonna tell you your turn. Someone else is in charge of hanging art works at the county office, so their job would be to let us know to bring two pieces of art works to the next meeting. And they ask volunteers to help them hang the show. So there is someone else kinda like a **main contact person** for that series of job. And the each person has to do their part for that. So that’s what you’re thinking? (yea, what’s your job this year?) This year my only job is the book study. That’s my only job this year. A number of years ago, I did what Megan’s doing.
Now the contact for the agree we rotate that too. And then Margie did it. (A coordinator?) Yea, a coordinator. We transfer that job, too. I mean we take turns. Which shows we will show it.

**<Natural conversation reflecting their new theme>** (You have had an exhibition every month.) Well, every year we know we have an opportunity to hang at the library, Youth Art, Winterfest, the County Office a few times, those are always there year to year. (Those are mandatory or you guys are voluntarily?) It’s voluntary whether you participate in or not. Those of five once it always there. And then some two years, it’s some two years to work with the FSU Museum every other year. So there are five or six that pretty much are always there. (I have a question about the theme, “generation.”) For the next project. So usually when do you guys decide which project to do?) Okay, Fran wanted to meet a teacher how to oil painting this summer. She is really good at water color. But she had taken a class at the Senior Center I was gonna teach. But it didn’t make. So she said, “why we paint anyway?” So we went to over house, just kinda basic. We met a day to go and hang with Evelyn. Meet her house. We walked down a lake and we talked in her house, and I say, “I am having a trouble in turning Fifty-eight. It’s been a dramatic year, being fifty eight year. Fifty eight years old. I’m having hard time turning fifty eight. I wasn’t fifty eight. It still a month away. I’m gonna have a hard time with this, almost sixty. Well, I want to do from my sixty birthday, what I want to do a show with my daughter or with someone. She goes generations! That’s how the show came about. So we can just talk with Viki. So Fran and I went to Viki, made an appointment, and said we got another project for you. That’s how it happened. It was serendipity. I mean we were gonna show how to paint. The next thing we are planning the show. So we’ve met several times, seeing if there was not enough information about artists out there. That the theme we are going to do big brainstorm section, I think January 5th. We’ll be back from winter break. It’s a day before we go back. January 5th, at 11 o’clock, at Panera. That’s where we invited a number of other people, Fran and I and Viki to come to brainstorm an idea of what we think about the theme. All that kind of stuff should be. <Next project >(I want to see the meeting. I’ll just observe it. I don’t want to interrupt you guys. If you don’t mind.. ) No, we don’t care. (I’ll just observe.) You can say something. We don’t care. You probably have more histories on the generations we do. So you may have some more ideas. Give us. It will be fine. (You guys do a lot of things.) Yea, we all feel overwhelmed with what we already have done through the year. But that’s okay. (Do you enjoy?) Yes! This book study should be a lot of fun. It’s gonna be looking at curriculum for kindergarten, and I think we are goning to do some other stuff. It is in the book, talk about it. what we think about it. how much joy is born in on. I think there are more relax. Last year one session was a little big we had. It was having an artist come and do workshops during the book study. We’re gonna try to do it again. Have someone come in. We decide who during that first meeting. Instead of just dictating it, we ask people what they
Interview Transcript of Kate: January 6th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

(1. Tell me about how the art teachers deal with diverse perspectives in the community. Do you think there are a lot of diverse opinions or discussions) I think so. I really think so. I think we have a nice group of different backgrounds. And that always helps when you are preparing for projects, you know, if I’m stuck with something or I don’t know much about those subjects. I always am comfortable to go back to any of them and ask questions, ask for their opinions. So I think we have a nice diverse group of art teachers.

(What kinds of diversity do they have?) Well, we’ve got diverse nationality. We have a lot of people like me. I’m from central America. … is from Middle East. We have a lot of African American teachers that bring a lot of their culture into it. I think that’s about it. I think we have a nice diverse group. A lot of the art teachers are kind of encouraging new cultures, new ideas to bring to the curriculum. I feel comfortable with that. (Do you think they are open-minded?) I honestly think so. In my particular experience, I’ve seen a lot of acceptance. I really have. They are very open-minded, they always listen to other perspectives, things like that. I think so. (Would you tell me about how do you respond when the members of the community present ideas that are different perspectives from yours?) Honestly, when I don’t agree with something, I just listen to it, but I don’t necessarily participate on that. I just hear points of view or whatever was brought up. I haven’t had to stand out and say, you know, maybe I’m not verbally say I don’t agree with that. I quietly don’t agree with that.

(In particular, what aspects or what perspectives didn’t you agree with?) I cannot think of particular things. But I know I have had like one or two issues which I kind of think of to myself, “what’s this?” You know. This is not what I am here for. But I don’t really recall any particular right now.

(For example, art project or art show?) You know, it was more of how a situation inside the group was handled. It was like probably a gift for somebody and the way they are collecting money, something like that. It was not anything related to projects. (Do you mean those disagreements are little things?) Yes. It wasn’t any important thing. I’m just like I have been paid attention to that.

(Are you in line with their art education philosophy or a little bit different from the
community’s?) I think the main philosophy, we share **the same way of thinking**, I don’t quite share the way of “DOING IT.” I do it in a different way. I have a theme for the year. Based on that theme, I introduce all the subject knowledge. You know I develop it throughout my themes. And I think I’m the only one on that. I don’t think anybody else uses the theme. I have **the same philosophy as they do. I have the same teaching materials and ideas. I just do it in different way.** (A big philosophy and diversity in developing their own practices. They have **infinite freedom** to develop their own art curriculum, which is very welcoming to the art teachers when the creative and diverse art practices are introduced to them in the monthly meeting.)

**<School-wide art program: Theme-oriented>**
(More specifically, do you tell me about your art education philosophy? What was your theme?) Okay. I have five year rotation. I start with art through history, art around the world, art from the masters, art from the United States, and I finish with art from yourself. I go from the biggest part, art through history, all the way to their personal art and they do more of self-portrait, things that are related to their personality. It takes five years for them to go through the whole rotation. (It’s your own curriculum?) Yes. But the base of my curriculum is on the DBAE. DBAE program. I do the same disciplines and I do my history unit, my aesthetic criticism, and production.

(Do you think the art teachers’ philosophy is based on the DBAE?) Yes. (Mostly?) Yes. I think so. Most of them are based on DBAE. (The art teachers agree with that their art education philosophy mostly is based on **DBAE**, but their art practices are so diverse.) The majority is to encourage the DBAE program. (Personally, I think the creativity of students and self-expression is still important.) Yes. I totally agree with that. But you can encourage them using the DBAE. For example, **I always encourage them to use their own idea.** And I am constantly repeating myself, that’s my idea, because when they see you doing something, they want to automatically copy it. So I always say, “that’s my idea, now you have to come up with your own idea.” I think it’s a process of teaching them to use their creativity. (So your art practices in your classroom are based on your own ideas. But do you think your ideas are related to the community activities?) No. I don’t think so. (The degree of art teachers’ participation is so diverse. Some art teachers’ practices in their art class are highly influenced by the community activity. But there are some art teachers whose art practices are so independently planned unrelated to the instructional materials and art ideas shared in the monthly meeting.) See. A lesson plan that another teacher has done. I ask her, “**Can I have the lesson plan? Can I share it?**” Yes, I have used that. Art lessons, you know, I have shared with them that. Even when I do some of my lessons, some of them ask me, “That’s great! Can I use your lesson plan?” I will share it. Because I have a theme, **I have many different projects that are what they are**
teaching. <The same concept and different themes> But I think it’s the same thing, the same concept they taught, but we have different themes, I guess, or ideas, I think I don’t have that many lessons the same with the other one.

(About helping each other in the community. How did you feel when you receive help from other teachers? Did you receive help from other teachers?) When I just started working, it was so nice to have many of the teachers helping me, giving me, tips, and sharing materials, sharing ideas, it was really nice. Now I don’t need as much as help because I feel like I have the hang a bit. But when I do, I’m working with the clay which is not my area. I always call Evelyn because I know that she is clay mastery. I have a project that it was not working, the clay was broken. She told me, “No, you don’t leave it dry in there. You have to take it out of the more…” And I figured it out then it worked out great! I think they are very helpful. VERY VERY helpful. Extremely helpful. I LIKE IT.

(Tell me about your experience to give your help to other members?) Whenever I can do it, I always do it either in the email or sending copies of my lesson plans and sharing with them. I pretty much open to that. (Would you take an example?) Wafa needed some projects to be done or I think it is one of the Peace Mural activity. And she sent me the clay to paint on and she asked for my students to paint that couple of pictures. And I did have my students come up with the ideas and then paint them and then send them to her. She needed my help with that couple of art work. So I kinda put it together and send it to her. And lessons that I feel like they’re successful, I make copies and take them to the meetings for them to share. So that’s pretty much do so far.

(Did you go to workshops?) Yes. I usually go to the workshops at the museum Viki Wylder has done a lot of paintings, glass workshop I’ve done, multicultural workshop, and I love to attend art teacher’s association, NAEA and FAEA. Yes. I like to attend it as much as I can. This year I couldn’t go, but I like to go to those conferences.

(How did you become a member of the meeting?) When I came to Leon County, one of the teachers called me and told me that they meet once a month and they send me an email and then I started going. (Is there any teacher who doesn’t attend the meeting in Leon County?) Oh, Yes. I think that there are a lot of them who don’t attend. Sometimes I think myself “I don’t go.” Like for an example, I have to pick up my son and it becomes really hard but I like to attend as many as I can. I don’t know why they don’t want to, I mean they won’t go.

(Why do you really want to attend the meeting? Even though you are really busy..) Because I get something good out of the meeting. Most of the time. I do I feel like I guess
something out of it. Something that will help me. In my classroom, or teaching, or anything that will help me.

<Isolation-I want to attend> (Do you feel a kind of isolation in your school because there is one art teacher?) Yes! I love to share! That’s probably why they go there most. Because I like to share with people what I like to, you know, what other people are doing, other teachers are doing. That’s the reason why I always have interns because I like to have that conversation every day, talking about things, and ideas for teaching. I do.

<Mentoring: From the experience of their internship> (What does the mentoring mean to you? I think you are a mentor within the community as an art teacher for interns.)
Mentoring. I think it’s a lot of work to have an intern. But the reason why I do it is because when I had my internship, I had my best teachers that I do ever have. Helping me. I think I learned most of what I do know from them. So I always promise to myself that if I was going to be working, I was going to help interns and try to teach them as much as I learn when I did my internship. It’s really important for me. (Art teachers are affected by the teachers who they met when they had internship in the initial stage of teaching. So it is important to meet good mentors when student teachers begin their teaching career.)

(What help did you get from the mentors?) They taught me how to manage the class, behavior management, how to get everybody to stop and clean up and have them ready to go, get the other class, how to deal with behavior problems, how to be punctual, like being on time for things, turn everything in on time and I really think I learn a lot from there to be professional, to be a professional teacher.
(So they were from the community?) Yes. … was my supervisor teacher. Mr. Wallel, he is not with us anymore. He still works in some type of art related work.

(Do you feel a sense of satisfaction, when you teach interns?) I do. I really do. All of my interns have gotten jobs. Even once they have gone out of the county, they have gotten jobs. And I have really positive experiences, but I didn’t really have a good experience with one intern, but other than that, I have very positive internships.

(Do you have good friends in the community?) Like friends that I’m going to hang out with. No. It’s more of professional relationship. I could go and have dinner with some of them, but I don’t think I would do that. It’s more of professional. Maybe because I’m so involved with other things, I don’t have the time for that. But they are very good friends who don’t get me wrong.
I have very good friends there but I wouldn’t call them on Saturday and say, “Hey, let’s hang together.” But I like them.

(Why do you like them?) They are very helpful, they are funny, they make people feel comfortable, they are sincere, you know, they are very helpful. So I appreciate that very much.

(About art projects, or art activities, with other experts like artists…) Actually, I had some students come and talk to them. I’ve had real artists come to the classroom and share with them with students what they do as an artist. So I have that a lot, and I try to bring that a lot as much as I can to the classroom.

(How did you know those experts?) Many of them that once I brought have been like grandparents, parents of my students. So I invited them. They come and share with us.

<School-wide program..Art Day>
(Would you explain about the experience by taking an example to bring the other experts like artists?) What I do, I have like an art day. I invited a lot of artists for that day to share. For example, the person that makes pottery, so I set the pottery and they come and look at..They have another lady that the glass, and she came and talked to them. I did do during that day, like a special presentation day, like art day. One day, a year that I take for that. (All the children in the school they do art on the day?) Well, they come to their special area. They all come to the special area. We do in the cafeteria. But not all together. I have all the fifth graders together. All the fourth graders together. All the third graders.

(Don’t you need some support from homeroom teachers?) Yes. Sometimes they do. Sometimes they don’t. I use my special area teachers. And they stay with me. Music and PE. We can have volunteers. Parents they come and volunteer for that. So you have volunteers, you have the special area and then any other aids that is available are also working with you.

(Do you usually participate in the projects? The community art teachers commonly do like Guernica Project, the Story Project, like one that museum provides.) Oh, the Peace mural? Yes. (or Story project..) I have worked with some of them. In the project, like that they go from school to school, I really like it. I enjoy it.

(What projects did you participate in?) Mural, we’ve done printmaking with the museum, we’ve done paintings, we’ve done clay, almost about any media I’ve done with them. (For the project?) Yes.
Missing answers about the questions were added.

1. What was your role when doing art projects or activities in the community? For instance, do you do research, plan activities, select artists or books and so on, when you participated in the art projects such as the Guernica project, Story Project, or Art for the Sky? I try to include as many parents around the community to work with us. For the art in the Sky I had to fully rely on my community parents for help. (For example, what did the parents help for the school-wide program?) Also, I work with the Library to display art work and involve the whole community around the school. (Specifically, what did you do for the Library exhibition to involve community around the school?)

2. What do you think what the goals of the art projects or events are? (Why do you think the art teachers want to participate in the art projects including the Kids Guernica Project, the Story Project, or Art for the Sky project, Winterfest, or Youth Art Show?) It is very important to educate our parents as well as our community about the importance of the arts. This is a good way to do it. I think that when we involve students, parents, and community they get firsthand experience on what a great experience this is.

3. How do the art teachers emotionally and physically support each others?

By helping each other when we need help, Asking questions, sharing materials, lessons or simple sharing a meal at a restaurant and asking about our families.

Interview Transcript of Idelle: January 11th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

How do you feel when you hear some different opinions among art teachers? Well, I haven’t had too many problems with community members. I guess, sometimes art teachers feel like they have to defend themselves against community at large so that our programs are valued. There are actually in a time of real task crunching, AFCAT something. All the numbers on AFCAT test. It’s so important. How art program doesn’t directly get tested or laid. There is not a state-wide test for art. I think all art teachers pretty much feel that. What we do helps children learn in a more broad sense and we’ve been better problem solvers. So we have had defenders ourselves against community at large that their art programs are valid programs. The only other really counters are all positive. When I display art work in the community, they are just more of it. They are happy whatever they see. The students are happy to be part of the art shows, winterfestival, Youth Art Month we just had. That’s all good. Last year I participated in Art for the Sky. We made the turtle over there. That was good for the most part. We did have some parents complain that the artist came. Daniel Dancer was, a
religion spiritual, like a based on nature, spiritual things. My principal and my assistant principal pretty much back this upon and says. As far as we know, this part is, you know, religion. This was something that everyone couldn’t participate in. Those are only problems that we have.

Absolutely. Everyone has **different perspectives**. From what I see, I think everyone has pretty well their opinions and the way the teachers are value. Everyone goes about things in a different way. What’s great about those art teachers’ meeting is everybody shares, so you can bring from what you want. As an art teacher, I go to the meetings. People other art teachers share lesson plans, ideas, their philosophy, **you can take or leave it**, valued discussion without agreeing with them. (They can say anything without any hesitation? Freely say everything?) I think it’s a very welcoming, broad minded group of individuals. They really cooperate. They really offer consistently anyway what they can do to the members. When I was becoming National Board Certified Teacher about five years ago, I think I had about 8 art teachers who helped me with my certification so much. <NBCT process> They review my student work, review my papers, Julie McBride actually put together, power point from what I used. I just didn’t have time. She physically did the work, gave me the power point, I mean, they really helped. It’s a great, cooperative, community of teachers. I’m really happy to be part of it. I know my music teacher, there have been a music teacher group here. They get together. They do a big honor’s course in March. That works out a little well. But she said they tend to not share as much. You know, this is kind of my stuff. I don’t want give it. But art teachers really share. We even put together substitute lesson plan recently for everyone to use. We’ve got a lot of driven art teachers, Marcia Meale, you know Ph. D. And they tend to go extra mile to do some research, they’ve laid out all the benchmarks, and different activities that could be used, shared that whole file, like 25 page file so it’s available to anybody, they put it on CD for you..Really nice group. Really good support.

(Why do you think they don’t have too many disagreements or conflicts? )

**Subjects of art are so diverse. Sort of all encompassing.** All teachers themselves tend to be a little more open-minded. As an art teacher, we’re always looking for different things to happen. Maybe it’s a mindset. I don’t know. (Mindset?) You know, How we think, difference is good. There is a math class. You get one answer. <Difference is good> **Art teachers are looking for different things.** I know. I intend to learn everyday from other teachers, other students, I have two interns this semester. I learn so much from my intern. Probably more than they learn from me. You do different ways to do things. (06:05)

(Do you think they have different philosophy or common senses to art education?)

I think it’s really a **broad, similar base and then everyone goes about teaching differently.**

(What is the common area the art teachers have?) Well, most of us make sure that children enjoy art. They think it’s fun and enthusiastic. They do things with their hands and technology being at the forefront. Technology is good. Kids now do Powerpoint again and again. They want to touch the clay. They want experience of the materials more than technology at this level, K-5, that’s what I found. I think most of the art teachers feel the same in that respect of technology. Also experience in different materials as many as possible, it’s good. A broad overview of our history possible and how cultures, you know, how do we learn about other cultures through their art.

(Did you receive help from other art teachers?)

<Help! NACT Process> Yes! Lots of help from them. Anything you need really helps with there. Good group! There is some not going to do. Some is too busy. Julie is best at that, Evelyn is best. I know when I did my National Board I had, Evelyn Pender who is Kate Sullivan, she was a National Board Leader. So she is a good one to read my papers cause she knows exactly how they grade and score them. Four big papers and three video tapes and two tests. It’s like a short term of one year and six-month master’s program almost. It’s a lot of work. But then you become certified national for 10 years. Because State Certification is only for 5 years. We renew, I’ve never renewed, I have five more years on my certification. But the renewal is similar but it’s smaller, like maybe one or two page papers and one video.

(Besides the learning as a professional art teacher, when you encounter some difficulties in your life, as a friend or as a mentor, did you get any help or caring from other art teachers?)

Other than art education? Yea. I am a good friend of several of them. We go out sometimes. We moved into Julie, not too long ago. We had a meal. We go to the conference, National Conference with a few teacher friends. It’s a good community.

(Tell about giving your help..) About the same. Whenever the monthly meetings we are requested to bring materials to share what I do, substitute lesson plans, I’m the PR person for Youth Art Month. That’s how I help public relation, publicize Youth Art Month. I send a letter or a newspaper, contact all of our school board members, superintendent, try to ask them to come and plan a program. I do that.

(Is there any difficulty when you work as a PR person?)

The only difficulty is that their responses, they are trying out as low as grades. I think I sent out 25 invitations. We got two people to come from school board, and that kind of thing. So we, the art teachers generally do not think that the program is highly supported at the district level, but at my school level my principal always comes to all art shows. So at my school level very much supportive. Not quite as much as the district level, although the superintendent of school, he is very supportive at the arts, and trying to keep the art especially at
high school which has just been cut from seven period to six period. But he doesn’t always get and come to art functions, come to Youth Art Month Show. As far as things we are planning, budgeting, he is supportive at art. So that’s good. But actually he does not come to events so much. Art events are a little different from music that he, the superintendent, usually comes to, goes to the music honors, chorus, concert. But that’s no event that you can sit and he can get up and speak. So last year what I tried to do was speaking portion of Youth Art Month program so people could speak. That didn’t work so well. I needed to get in touch with the library again. They would let us speak in the library. Cause it is supposed to be quiet. So they put this in an open side room. And not as many people as came through there so it was very high visibility. People who are very busy, you know, the district level to come. Some to come, they don’t get a lot of visibility. It didn’t work very well. So it could be part of the problem, it could be there they are not making time they visit. Part of it could be there, just not that visible because art show runs several hours, it’s not like a single of get up in, meet everybody.

(You are one of the mentors in the community. How did you become a member of the meeting?)
Well, I was invited. As soon as I became, I taught at a private school before I got to a public school. As soon as I started teaching at a public school, I was invited. The invitations come via email and in mail. All the art teachers, especially, the elementary art teachers, I think, in the old days used to include middle school and high school teachers also. But now I don’t know if they need, they don’t typically need it as much as, their claims are a little different, and their schedules are different. Basically I was invited. I decided to go, and saw great resources, great experience would be so...Art teacher had a group person. We have somebody who is in charge. Margie Grussing was last year, and that person calls all the meetings. There is a school. She sends agenda to them. That person is responsible for sending out to them invitations, agenda, and reminders. We are organized enough. We have a secretary that takes minutes. But the head, the art teacher organizes the meetings. So they care of all that.

(What does the mentoring mean to you in your life?)
Basically to be a guide, other people. When you are a mentor, your benefit’s also created. So give and take. This has been a wonderful experience to be part of the art teacher community and certainly recommend my interns to come to the meeting not only do they benefit from what said in the meeting, they also meet other art teachers and find out job openings. They can go, like Alison goes observe some other art teachers’ something. So that’s a wonderful community. It’s nice to have support. Because the school, although the music teacher and I support each other pretty much, we don’t have like all of the first grade’s team, have first grade teachers. We don’t have any other art teachers at our school to work with. So it’s nice to have a
(Would you tell me about your mentor or good friends?)
Who mentors me? (Yes) **Different people, for different needs. It changes, it fluctuates.**
(Mentors are changing.) Um.

(About the art projects and activities you were engaged in with other experts within the community. What are their concerns? Why do they want to participate in the art projects? I heard that it is not mandatory to participate in the art projects.) Well, I think there are a lot of reasons. **One is to enrich the experience children have. They can see real life artists working. They can see what they are working on, could actually become a profession.** Exciting for the school, for students to get together to do project that is **community-based.** You know, like the Art for the Sky. And they are excited to see other people have a portrait artist come in spring, for the students to see working artists without taking them off campus all the time. Fieldtrips are good. But **we really don’t have the funding, our money for that. So we use great resources in town. Artists visit school for free or very little. They just bring another dimension to the art education students receive. Yea, it’s fulfilling for me to see that I can tie things to the community resources.**
(Do you think it is important to connect you with other communities?) Yes. As much as I can. Basically when I bring artists to school or my students display art? (either way) It’s just an extension of what they’ve learned and enrichment. Going one step further so they see that **their work is you know valued, displayed in the community. So they can see what’s happening in the community with other artists.** The excitement. (Do they really like to do that?) They do. (How about parents?) **The parents are very supportive.** Anything extra or more that we want to do and they offered. Sometimes parents give me ideas of, you know, either other contexts within the community that they know about or artists come visit. I think it’s just a kind of more well-rounded art program, more complete, more rich program.
(When you do the art projects what did you actually do? What was your role?) What did we physically do, you mean? (Yes) That’s particular part of a lot of work. Apply for a grant, wrote a grant, apply for a grant of Leon County school foundation which was funded. The artist came for weeks. So **we planned a schedule, pretty much rearranged the schedule of all that students so that they could go to three assemblies, arranged lunch schedule, pre-teaching started November, pretty much I started pre-teaching environmental art, living paintings, things like that. Students did a lot of work. We learned all about the Lug Sea turtle, which is the featured that we are going to become. So it was a lot of work. It was very fulfilling. Pretty stressful that particular one because the weather had a lot to do with it, we had a big crane in here, a lot of community resources we used, really I think I paid for one batch of red clay,
everything else was donated, all the materials, parent volunteers came and helped, get the field ready, students got to the field with an artist, the artist came and worked with students. It was a lot of work. But I got so many students, even teachers a little skeptical about changing their schedule. not too happy, originally changed their schedule. After we say, “I’m so sorry for complaining such a great experience.” Kids this year say, “what are we gonna be this year? Instead of a turtle, what are we gonna do this year?” They wear turtle necklaces, made a little turtle clay things, we are turtle crazy. And it’s something that you always remember. We have turtle t-shirts. So it was a lot of work. But in the end, it was very worthwhile to me. It was really rewarding just to see students to be very engaged. And they do something so different. They are very engaged in art, art learning, they are walking around books about sea turtle, and they started researching another animals, life drawing objects and animals, and learning about conservation, how we can save, you know, turtles and writing to legislators about laws that maybe could be put into place to protect sea turtles, learned about their immigration, their hatching, it was a huge project. Integration of art into every, science, literature we read a lot about turtles, we did a lot of turtle art work about enlarging from scale, we had the small drawing to that they had enlarged onto the field. A little math components to it. It was a big project. It really took probably five months. Teaching and doing things.

<School wide art program> And in the end we also, after the Art for the Sky, two or three weeks later, we had Mark Fletcher come, who is a local artist and poet. He came talk the kids about poetry writing, we wrote about sea turtles, he donated his art work to our student gallery. So we did really a lot to enrich the education that way. This year I’m doing a project, a big tile, the mural project. That’s a kind of integrating with the FSU Guernica project. We are doing like a peace tile mural. I’ve got some of them started and the work graded out. That would be that kids mostly learn about peace and how to get along, you know, they work more cooperatively, cause it’s been a lot of a group project. So what do these projects bring things is that you might not typically doing typical art lesson. They are great and rewarding for me.

(With whom did you work together and how did you find those artists or experts?)

I think Daniel Dancer last year, I got an email, I don’t even know from whom, somebody. And I checked out the website. Actually I think he sent an email through the Leon County schools, art teachers, everybody email to say that he wanted to be in Florida. Probably a year before. January and February. Anyone would be interested in. I checked this website, called some of its references, talked to some of people who would hire him, called and talked with him, and then I
got together with Julie McBride, Evelyn Pender, Leslie Anderson who are other art teachers. “Hey, what do you think? He wants to come to Florida, to make it worthwhile.” We didn’t have money to bring him in. It was supposed to be 3000 or 3500 for a week. Nobody had that much money. So I said, “maybe if we all collaborate and get together to bring him for a whole month, we have a place to stay, we can cut this deal.” So that’s how it happened. Everybody jumped on board and we looked for a place to stay, Evelyn Pender’s garden’s council, a full house she was willing to loan him for a whole month. So he had a beautiful place to stay in Tallahassee when he came. You know, free-charge. We had meals ready for him, each school pretty much provided them the week that he was with us. Art teachers or volunteers. I did some, we had some, we got some gift cards from PTO, local restaurants, we had parent volunteers to do some. Each school really organized whatever they could do for all they feel like to do for him. (What local communities supported?) We have business partners at each school. So business partners donated, I think like Subway gift cards, Brittos gift cards, so a lot of partners with the school donated gift cards for that. Publix I think did. Subtrail for one day, so each school did a little bit differently. I guess the community really really was very supportive. Came out we had the crane, the person who came for the crane, it was 200 feet up. He was not a partner with my school, but he is from Gilchrist. He was willing to come to my school also. So even the photographer who is Gilchrist’s parent came to our school, too. We also had a local parent photographer to take pictures. My husband is pilot and he flew over and took some pictures, we really got a lot of people involved. We had local business partners and parents invited by the day for the Art for the Sky. It was a big band. Actually when I was thinking I really wanted to bring him so then I contacted all art teachers and those three other ones first which wanted to do with us. Now I think of returning it again this year. I plan too cause there is other school that wanted to do it, Art for the Sky experience. (He will come again this year?) He might come again. Not to our school, but..I need to actually check with the art meeting. I think he is supposed to be coming back. I know Chairs Elementary, she was interested in. That was a big, good experience.

(What kinds of goals do they have? What are the goals of the art projects?) Again just extension. Enrichment. That kind of a thing. I’d like to coordinate with Viki Wylder. FSU does great job with her. Education packets. They are so good that I like to coordinate some of my teaching with her materials. They came this year. And the theme of peace is really good one I think. It’s sort of hard for such young children to understand what that is. That really surprised me and kind of brought it to their level so that they can really understand. And it’s been good for classroom discipline, too. There is any disagreement. “Is that peace in the classroom?” You know. They know what that means. So the theme is really good. And I just want to do the entire project that school involves everybody. So I kinda combined that too.
(How do the art teachers decide the theme?) It’s up to us. (They do discuss a theme before they are engaged in the project?) Well, the FSU packet already decided the theme. The FSU Museum of Fine Art. They do use art teachers from our local communities to do a lot of research planning, bring a show to FSU, and then invite some of local community children schools to participate by displaying some of their own art work. But this is FSU pretty much pre-plans what they are going to do and we can use materials or not. So those are kind of already planned for us. Like I said, they are really very good. That’s why I typically use almost all of them. There was one my class to exhibit glass teaching packet I didn’t use just because I really don’t have the materials to teach for that. But otherwise year-long themes each school can be different. I know Leslie Anderson at Canopy Oaks had a six-year plan that kinda covers art history from cave art through the modern art time that she segments and each year teaches one section and then rotates back. I attended to do more themes that my approach like during that Olympic year and my study, Ancient Greek Olympic. Last year we were doing environmental year because the budget was so low I thought of using recycled art, the materials to make art. So just as kind of catch as I can the themes.

(What is the difference between the workshops provided by universities and attending the meeting?)
Yea! Big difference. The monthly art teacher meetings are more like business meetings for sharing that way you know what’s coming up, who is doing what, what monthly projects we have and then some sharing of lesson plans, whatever. And the workshops get down to the natty grid. I can give you information that you can actually use in your classroom. That’s more focused on teaching. You know the art teachers’ meeting focuses on teaching but also trying to keep momentum in art show, you know we show work at the downtown library, at the superintendent’s office at the different places. It’s more business.

(Do you think it’s important to attend the monthly meeting?) I do. Well keep up on..I think it’s good for the arts to be in the forefront in the community. And one way we can do that by this regular advance that we plan. Most of those plans are from that meeting. Once I’d like to do have to mess for other commitments and their minutes come out and then I usually look through the minutes and email somebody if I have questions about something that needs to be done. But also they’re motivational. You know you get to see colleagues and it’s fun. You pick up a lot of more from the meeting than from reading the notes.

(Do you have friends?) Yea. We have friends. I’ve got friends there. Everybody is really sweet and nice. We have a refreshment you know which by the end of teaching day, really good
drinks and chips and snacks, whatever. And it’s like a social gathering as well as a meeting. It’s not cut-and-dried. (They support you?) Oh, very much. Very much. It does a kind of keep you energized. (By the colleagues and friends.) Right. The colleagues really keep us energized. And also we’ve got some that put together workshops and book study that we can do, that help our individual professional development plan which is a school-wide. Something that we have to do annually for our school contract. So we can learn about those things there.

(Annual contract? What is it?) When you are employed in Leon County schools, you have certain things you need to do, you have to be continuing education basically every year. Everyone calls it individual professional development plan, which is professional development for me. Basically they say, “what are you gonna do to earn some this year?” And a lot of things can be taken care of through art teacher book study’s workshop things like that, which I attend anyway. It does keep me learning. (Do you feel the need to learn more as an art teacher?) Oh, yea! (Why?) You know the world changes, first of all it keeps interesting. If I taught the same thing every year, I would go crazy. And there is a new different way to do things all the time. And the more you are exposed to different ways of doing things, different people, the more you keep things fresh and new and interesting. I would be personally very bored if I taught the same thing all the time. So for me it helps and I think my enthusiasm then transfer to the students. (How does the monthly meeting affect your professional growth?) It continues enthusiasm. I do learn different techniques, different ideas, different ways to present something that maybe I’ve been doing all along different way.

(Do you like to participate in workshops provided by university?) Yes! I do. (What do you learn?) It’s just the materials they provide, teaching materials and resources, really convenient to use, the themes are usually really good. It’s just a lot of benefits for the students. (Do you mean the Fine Art Museum of FSU?) Yes! Cause I bring back and I learn there and implement it in the classroom. (It’s kind of Guernica Project, Art for the Sky, it’s kind of a community based art project. The school as well as the local community) Exactly.

(Do you feel a kind of isolation in your school? You already said) Yes! Somewhat. We’ve got some teachers who are interested in arts and happy to learn their kids out a little bit longer. They do some art projects, some do not. For the most part, the school is a very busy place a day. It’s almost like a factory. One class in and out, in and out. That part is a little hard thing sometimes. So the more you can kind of be enthusiastic to what you are doing in the classroom, the more the kids did the better this. Yea, I do feel like sometimes lonely this room. So that’s why the monthly meeting is really good. Kind of a touch base with other people who do the
same thing. Just busy with them, talk with them, it’s a good community to keep everybody.

(Some art teachers don’t attend.) I don’t know why some don’t attend. I don’t know. If they have maybe professional another group or professionally they work as artists that keeps motivated, if schedules get in the way, the distance sometimes you know, Leon County school is big. So a lot of traveling to the school sometimes. If you do have children, you probably don’t go. If their schedule does not allow it. Could be a lot of different reasons. I know my children get older. I mean I’m making more and more time to go to them. When my children were younger, I couldn’t attend. Because they don’t have day care for them in the afternoon I did bring them. Some of it, it’s both I think. Not meeting the community may be or not having the time. But I’m certainly very, very happy with that activity part of that community. It’s really a great group of people. I feel like a good relying on anything. I can rely on them, can ask them anything. There is always somebody in the group. It is an expert or something who is willing to share something. Like I said, the community helps us from you out different way, email, you know, Julie McBride, my friend says, “if you have trouble with it, talk to Evelyn, talk to this one,” you know. So somebody regenerates the direction within that group. So that’s a good group. Really happy to have it. I taught in North Carolina for a while, but way back when I was much younger. They didn’t have a group like this. (Other area in the United States?) So I don’t know that’s typical. Evelyn taught in two States. There were not. Really happy to have the group. Maybe other counties don’t have like this group. Yea. You can be busy with your own school, plenty busy enough. It’s a good group to be a member of it to take time to participate in.

Interview Transcript of Ann: February 9th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

What do you think about their different perspectives? Sometimes there are conflicts. But I think as a group we realize we all have a common goal. We want to teach kids. We want to be consistently successful in art. And we want to show the kids that art work is valued through the community. Those are common goals. Even though people go back other different ways sometimes, I think as a group we are mutual enough, wise enough to know it’s not more than disagree too much. I would not be, I think even put this down as much as I am. Without all of these colleagues, not learning so much from so many other people. I was at a little school far away. And it was just me, and I never got to speak with any other teachers. I know it wouldn’t be as good a teacher at all. Because it’s a lot harder. Teaching needs that support. So when people disagree, yes we argue sometime. But not to the point where people’s feelings are terribly hurt, we are not mean. We respect each other. Disagree, that’s okay! You can
choose to do this or not.
(Do you think there are some different perspectives or opinions in that community?)
Yes. I think some of art teachers who are not coming to the meetings they have different perspectives. So they are not coming. I do. I think that’s true. You have to get in touch with others that don’t come to the meetings often.
(Even though they have different perspectives, they come and exchange ideas.)
In my facets a little bit, we never do that. But I think generally we know we need to get along.
There is a new person Miss A (Apthe Grow). She brought her son. She said, “I am very happy to come to the art meetings. Because I wanna learn more about this community.” She is making sure that she is not isolated. She talks to people, enjoys in. And we have new people, pretty new people like Kathy, Yeates, who were talking to us in the parking lot. This is her second year of teaching. She is still doing a lot of .very young, and wants to know more and eager. It’s good because our group is, you know, we have a couple of guys, we have a good range of ages, like Megan, she is very young. And so Kathy. And there are old people like Evelyn, Jean, and me. She’s been teaching for 42 years. She’s still doing great things.
My mentor was so wonderful. Her name is Barbara Roberts. She learned into instructional design. She is really good at. But she is a photographer as well. She took me to my first conference, a state conference. She introduced me to people “the movers and shakers.” She just took me under her wings. She explained things to me, pointing things out to me. I am always to be grateful for her. And then my friend Barney Barno. She is coming for Thanksgiving maybe. She taught at Sealy Elementary. She taught at a middle school. Now she is the education director at Harn Museum in Gainsville. I saw her teach, and I thought, “Oh, that’s what I want to do!” I saw her teaching a little kindergartners, and learning everywhere, so much fun. Many years I told her that later you really were a sparkle to me to be a teacher. She is just amazing. Great, great inner strength.
Blair’s that way. She is so wise. She is Ph, D. But she is teaching at elementary school. She does a lot. She is pretty credible.
(Next question) It’s very grateful. Thankful. Reaffirmed and reassured. “Oh, this is the right thing to do.” That’s a different perspective. “Oh, I should try that.” Evelyn Pender is very good at that, getting people right on target. We call her Miss Professional Development. She is great. Because she would go to the superintendent of school’s conference for the state. All the schools are superintendent .10:00 As a teacher leader. Because we don’t have so many in that position in the county. But Evelyn would go. Sometimes she speaks and she always brings back ideas and what was happening in education. She always makes sure that we knew what was going on.
(Received help? Cared by them? in your personal life..)
My friend Ellen, she is a very good friend. I think that’s what happened when...In teaching you develop strong friendships with other teachers. My husband is a computer guy. A database analyst. He works with people. There are not good friends. Individually working. But I think teaching is so social and part of being human. I think a lot of time you talk to teachers and you see teachers as mentors, you make those barns of friendships. You make that barn of friendship. To go beyond just being colleagues, just being teachers together.

(Could you take an example to show your friendships?)

My friend Kautz, we used to teach together. We do Disciplined Based Art Education, sort of themes or units, sort of like this peace mural. We’d do throughout the school. Like the classics so teaching Greek and Roman mythology art to kindergarteners and first graders. So we did this. And we presented it at the National Conference. This is many, many years ago. Afterwards we met with young people who you could think the Classics are so boring. How could you make them unique and interesting to little kids? So we sat down and talked about, you know, we come, take, talk in presentation. We finished sentences, She would take sentences and I would add on. We have such a strong bond that we could do that. And then the other thing, we would go to museums together. Yes. **We are friends and colleagues.**

(What does it mean to add a sentence on?)

To end each other sentences to finish the thought. She would have a thought, and then I would finish it. Cause we were thinking the same. A funny story is, because we taught at the same school and at my S school, it was a kindergarten. We were tracking home, “Mom, do you know who my favorite teacher is?” And I thought, he was going to say me. And I said, “Me.” He said, “No, Mrs. Kautz. I love her” And I thought, “Crazy! Not me!” I am just a mother. You are talking strictly about in the art education community or in the school community.

(I call this meeting a community of practice.) It is! Because I have the people of my school who always I consider my mentors. But they don’t teach art. That’s off topic. What they teach, they might teach 5th grade, they are classroom teachers, not art teacher. But I still consider them my mentors.

(Did you ever give your help to the art teachers?) Oh, yes! In this community? **Well just Kathy tonight. She went to my school to get the things, not official capacity to lend advice, how did you do that? How should she put and approach that project? How should I put that is problem for Kathy. She worried about how should she set up the mural in one part room and still teach the whole class.**

(There are some teachers who will retire and have some problems with their health. How did you help them to overcome those difficulties?)

Her marriage was breaking up. Because of that, her health became very bad. I would email her, call her, and we would talk. I would listen, and she would talk. How are you doing? How are
things going with you?

Evelyn had a heap surgery. Several years ago maybe 10 years ago. She couldn’t hang her art show at the library. There was a big beautiful show. Everyone set up an art show at the downtown library. She said, “I can’t, I can’t. Art work have, I don’t have together. It’s not put together.” So we said, “don’t worry, Evelyn.” We went to the school, and I asked some of the art teachers, “can we get some art together?” And I hung the show up that her school would be represented in the show. But she couldn’t do anything. Really nothing. She was in a surgery. So Yes. We help each other. We lift each other. Even the guys do that. Because people think us I am talking to you and I am thinking, this sounds like a very famine thing. Woman would do. We don’t mind sharing the power. Man might not want to share. But I don’t think that’s true with our community. Like Jason McMillan, he is the shorter man. He coordinates the library show, Youth Art Show. He does very willingly, preciously. He is great. He plays a music. He is really good. So you have to get with him, because he is a great art teacher, too.

There are some men who don’t come. Richard McDaul. He got mad at all of us. Because his wife was the leader. She met the art group. Sonya McDaul. This is many many years ago. He goes to bed early. In one of the meeting, she was talking and he said, “do not call my home after 8 o’clock! Do not call our house!” He didn’t usually come. But he was the very mad at the teachers who called to ask her questions. I didn’t call..

We’re taking too much time, taking her time. He was not happy about it. So he didn’t come very often. And the other man, Billy Pan…, that was last year. Is at Appalachia. I can’t think of the other one. They don’t usually come to meeting. Billy Pan just has a second new baby. So he is busy. You should get the guy’s perspectives as well.

Jan. He’s a partner. He does something else we don’t know. But he is not a teacher. He is a partner. Jason is about to have the third child. (I heard)

<Efforts to advocate art in community>

We used to put shows together. We have done breakfast for assistant principals. Children’s works on the table, we fed them breakfast. You know, came together to do that. To advocate for our cost to let our principals know art education is important. And we should value it. Because they don’t know always though that. So yes! We come together to advocate to be our own public relations people, to be our own voice. That’s been pretty successful, but we don’t do that every year. We should. We should do that.

<Experts> (You guys work together with other experts, like Viki, or other experts. How did you find these experts?) There is one who retired a few years, Ron Illbedra. He was an art professor at FAMU university. Beautiful artist. He could tell you stories about art history and he would make it come alived. He was like a pipe piper. Do you know that term, pipe piper? You play the pipe and everyone follows the play. That was Ron. He was part of the group. Disciplined
Based Art Education. He was sort of art historian and artist’s component. He loves working with art teachers. He loved it. He would sometimes get together with us. On a project, Viki by far the most important because she would take an idea, she will keep it going, she will ask us about questions, “how do you think about how should she handle with the goals?” “This is how we are going to do it. What can you add to it?” But she lets the schools and the teachers to do what they want to do. They do as well as much. But she keeps the border. She’s so great. 28.38 I think she used to be a teacher. She is strong, but not driven, hard. She is open-minded. She accepts that we are all different minds, different kinds of art teachers. (She is really good at coordinating.) Oh, she is amazingly. Like this peace mural, all of different people are coming from all over the world. That’s so exciting.

**<Partnership with Viki>** I wasn’t sure. You are at those first meetings. The first meeting was how we do that? what direction we are going to? But Viki folded it together, we have a guideline. But we can do it just like the mural today that you saw. All kinds of things like UFO, (It’s really an amazing mural. There are so many ideas about peace. They made connections between their own ideas and other’s ideas.) One of my kids at the bus today said, “Mrs. McBride, we could do some clouds in the sheep of a peace symbol. Little clouds in the sheep of peace. Oh, great! But we have finished it. But I love that idea! It’s gone.” Kids’ ideas are funny thing. They don’t really want to see the end for the project.

(How many kids participated in?)
Probably 450. (But really small space!) Small, I know. They would go. I will say to you, “You do the eyes. Stop! Okay that’s it. Just the eyes. Okay.” So they really worked together. They realized everyone gets a little tiny spot. You can say, “I did their hair, I did the whooping crane. Everybody gets peace.”

It came to us with cross squares, early traced, and the people. So we filled in H9 people and two cross squares and we had blue sky. So one of my students, “we should do that whooping crane, Ms. McBride.” They are so proud of that. They say, “we are the whooping crane school.” Once we were working on the whooping crane and I thought we were finished and one of my girls, she was looking at, and said, “Don’t they have a red head?” I completely forgot so, “come on, hey, come on. Let it have here. Let it have here” It’s so funny. It was very important for them. She knew it.

(What does mentoring mean to your life?)

**<Mentoring for beginning teachers><Mentor’s mind and role>**

I think it means helping each other. Really to make sure, “are you doing okay?” I do love to do more. Evelyn Pender is that way too. She should be a great beginning teacher mentor. We did that together. For several years for people who are brand new teachers. We would need brand new teacher mentors. We would tell them things about how the county works, how to order your
supply, and what to do at the end of the year. We need to do the inventory. The basic things that
people don’t always tell you. What does that to be a mentor is really to help people and to see
that they are doing, not just okay but the doing well. If I think of my supposed mentor, I want
you to succeed. And they will do and could help you to succeed. Like Kathy, Kathy at her old
school, the kiln was not working, it wouldn’t work. I said, “you can’t do any clay?” and she said,
“No, I have to take some clay to your school and other school to have it fired.” This school is a
pretty new school. And the kiln is beautiful, brand new. And she just plugged it wrong. I read the
direction and plugged. And it was working. She tried and said, “oh, it does work. We are going to
work with Craig that will be electrician for the county came to me and said, “I heard that you
fixed kiln.” I can’t believe I did that. Plug things in and change battery. He said, “how did you do
that?” “I just read the direction.” He was laughing and he said, “don’t tell anybody you do that.
That’s my job.” She was so happy. She just needed someone and some help. Whether something
like that or here is an artist that would work with. This artist did do well with the unit of study
that you are teaching your kids. Things like that.
Too many things to learn. Too many new things, I don’t know enough yet. That’s what I mean.
So many things to know. I am not finished. But there are so much more.
(What did you really do for the project? What projects?)
The art of the story, we came together. That one was, not just elementary teachers, but elementary,
middle and high school, everyone brought in something a little bit different. Everyone selected
artists to invite to the story project and feature their work. That’s the most recent. Again Viki was
the catalyst. And the idea of the story project came from my friend Fran Kautz. She said in one
of the last meetings, “I have a lot of ideas. I just don’t see them and always through.” That’s what
Viki does. Viki takes a good idea she is through. She makes it happen. She organizes,
orchestrates, and coordinates really well. Just right can it be done. She is a good mentor. She is
in the community. She affected so many of us. (I need to interview with her. She is a member of
the community!) She would appreciate it. Viki’s really good responses. We’ve worked on so
many projects together with Viki. There is a ceramic project, the Story, the Peace Mural, and
there is more.

Interview Transcript of Rebecca: February 11th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

1. Would you tell about how do you feel when the members of the community address
   those different perspectives from yours?
   When we have disagreements within the art teacher meeting? Yes, we have disagreements.
   Mostly I feel like we agree or disagree on certain things. Usually it’s nothing big. I know that
   some teachers have ideas about how to grade things. We might not have the same ideas. A lot of
art teachers feel like we should have no grading, just come to elementary. And they don’t earn grades. I feel like they shouldn’t be that way. I feel like if you are teaching something, you can assess. You don’t have to be hard graders. So we agree to disagree. There have been a few times because I’ve been here for years, when we had a couple of major disagreements.

A teacher who wanted to put something in a show. We did not think it was appropriate. This is about 10 to 12 years ago. Then we had to stand for what we’ve done. For most of the time, later the last years, I think we just do not agree on everything. But it’s not big enough to make difference, and we just agree what we have different ideas. But it’s okay. Usually over the years, we had something really big. It’s been difficult, when we have to do that. Somebody had to say, part of that we had to say, “no.” It’s just not going to be okay. When it’s at a meeting, when it’s something a person doesn’t meet at the program, okay we do differently. When the group is going to do something together, we have to agree a little bit.

(Do you think there are teachers who don’t want to attend the meeting because they do not agree with the decisions the group made as a team?)

No. I think people don’t attend because they don’t want to put the time into it. They just don’t do that. That’s what I think. Because the big disagreements we have are about things like our show: How you should put our work up, that should be laid certain ways so that the whole county looks we have a good, strong our program. Occasionally, somebody either doesn’t put anything up or put up messy things. But I don’t think that gives for coming to art meetings. They just don’t want to spend time at the art meeting. They are busy. Or they don’t feel it’s important. I don’t think that keeps me out. Maybe something’s going on.

Over the years, a couple of times we had conflicts. (How did you guys solve the conflicts and build up the harmonious community?) The one I can think about was quiet a number of years ago. Somebody wanted to put up a big entire war poster. It was away back to the Gulf war. It’s been a long time. Forward the Iraqi was called the Gulf war. It was done by the third graders. We just statements written up real fast it wasn’t. We usually put up the work that we thought it was very political. We had a lot of children who would be there, whose parents were military we had. So the way we solve that was just majority rule because majority group felt like it wasn’t inappropriate for art work to be in the show. It’s supposed to show art, that kind of skills, that kind of learning the children when we have a show, that kind of shows, how we are contributing to be educational process what children are learning, rather than making political statements. You know it is about specific incidents or something that happens. That was the big thing we had a few disagreements in our time. I think it was usually a majority rule. We have more people feel run away that we can bring the others a lot. I’ve just we have them
handled that I’ve known about any big conflicts recently. I haven’t thought that anybody stayed away from the meetings.

(At that time the decision was not to do the art show?)

Not to put this one piece up. It was very political. It wasn’t what we all agreed. We agreed that art should be certain caliber through the show. That showed the educational process. We had some agree on the idea. This didn’t meet them. That was the biggest disagreement I can remember. Many teachers are no longer. She didn’t stay in the Leon County for very long. She’s not as many here for years. So the reason I’m going to fight that was she. She was upset. She didn’t get to do that. But It was just what most everybody talks was right. I’m at the majority.

(How long have you been in the county?) Since 1987. I’ve been here long time. This is my last year.

(How do they deal with diverse perspectives?)

Recently it seems like we are pretty much comfortable and very similar perspectives. Although we don’t talk about a lot of things that just for our program, so we might be very diverse in our perspectives at our schools. But it doesn’t come up in the things that we deal with as a big group, as a community. Art teachers are generally pretty open-minded about different perspectives. I have not called (8:46) a lot of real diversity we’ve thought I haven’t heard. <open-minded about different perspectives>

(What perspectives to art education do they have?)

We’ve been the DBAE. That’s interesting. I think most of us have been a long time 9:14 We’ve been through DBAE training. So we are probably pretty similar and we are towards that. When that was new back in the 80s, that closed to a lot of dissention. Because some art teachers, older art teachers were so against it. They said that it wasn’t good. We just should do production. We shouldn’t be doing things like history. But those teachers retired. I think most of us pretty well DBAE trained. We don’t use it religiously. Step by step the way U was taught to use it.

But I think they hold a philosophy of DBAE. I use different disciplines. I’m not just having children do production. I just over the years found. When I graduated from the college, it was 1960. A long time ago. Everything was just creativity. Nothing gives them patent and creativity. That works for kindergarten. Maybe first grade. We don’t teach them some skills, make it interesting by show art work other artists have done, what they do another cultures. It’s like the good arts that keep on being creative. But part of class needs more. But we had just a little bit of time so I have really adjusted. I don’t do Western’s art history. I don’t put it as much time into that. I used to. Because just the only place they get to be creative to use the paint brush, to use clay, and to do hands-on, everything. The system now at least Florida is so much to the test. And they have classroom testing. Classroom teachers used to allow kids to do the things
like that. Now they don’t have time for it. That’s one of the reasons I still like the DBAE, but if I have a little bit time, this is the only time we get to paint, draw, use clay. I just go really cut down and amount of time we spend discussing and learning art history. So I get more production. Because they don’t get it any place. Production takes more time than. I think the way I taught DBAE. We split the time 25 percents for each area. They have 5 year olds and 6 year olds talking about aesthetics for 25 percent of time. A little bit goes along way. I think I’ve reached the point and run comfortable with it. I would not become comfortable with though, with totally leaving it out. We’ve been looking at Vincent Van Gogh, my 5th graders do printmaking. We looked up Andy Warhol and multiple prints and I like to show art from other countries and ours, too. We’ve been spending our much time in it. I still not be comfortable because of doing stay away from production. I don’t know what they get good to have that. (Maybe the art teachers have diverse perspectives towards teaching art.) I think so. (Basically they have DBAE) It looks like when I go to the show I see their work. You can see that they’ve studied a county, a culture, or an artist. I would just think that we don’t sit and talk about it. We don’t say how everybody is teaching. But it seems like mostly we are trained that way. I don’t know much about the community-based art education, and some other things that are, you know just that came along after I had gotten to graduate schools. So I’ve really kept up with and I read a little bit about it. I know all other approaches I have been trained.

(Knowing about relationships among art teachers, How did you feel when you receive help from other teachers?, Did you even receive help from other art teachers?)
I think the art teachers are just wonderful that way. When I came in 1987, I had not ever taught elementary. I taught 7 and 8th grade junior and high. I just really wasn’t sure how to set up a program. There were teachers who share their ideas and lessons. Julie McBride came right over. I was going to have art at night. She just came over and showed me “How I did it, give me some idea.” If you need any help, it’s a wonderful group that way. Very supportive. If somebody is sick, people go to the school and get their work put it up to the big shows. I’ve had a lot of help. I really think this group is good that way and sharing. That’s why I go to the meetings actually because if somebody needs help, I need help, somebody is there, I wish everybody went to the meetings. Sometimes I am disappointed that they are not so well attended.
Another reason people don’t go is I’m very closed to that school where we have the meetings. Some schools are so far away. They have to drive 45minutes. I can’t do that. That’s another reason. We used to meet at all different schools. If you knew that school, you will go that one. Now we have one school. There are some people very far away. They just don’t go.
(Take an example for receiving help from other teachers?)
I was going to have a big art night which for the whole school we have tables and in the hall hundreds of kids demonstrating art work. Julie McBride had done that regularly. She came over and she was the one that came over and helped me and gave me the ideas, “this is how I did it.” I’ve gotten a help of lessons. People just give me what they put together, that materials, things I’ve shared lessons, that’s a second way. I found the very helpful group. Certain people, especially, are very helpful, and very good about sharing and stepping in and giving their hands.

I’ve always gone since I had been in Leon County and since I’ve been to elementary usually, very regularly attended the meeting. When I taught before, there was a junior and high teacher. We had no central meetings. We had no support systems. The long ranger type person, there would be junior and high school one music teacher, one art teacher, and they were very kind of outsiders. I’ve really appreciated the fact that we have the support group that way, and meet and I love gaining ideas people. I’ve been doing this for 23 years at elementary. I still see what people do. There are lessons and substitute lessons, whatever I get, really good ideas from other people. So I did have time when they were in the meetings, when I taught at another grade level, it wasn’t end in Leon County in Florida State, North Carolina, and New York. It’s much better we have a support group. I don’t know how I would’ve taken a long time and figured out that elementary school people give me their ideas and lessons, telling me how do they had done something. I’ve always just relied on that there is a support group.

(Have you ever met your mentors or best friends in the meeting?)

Before I came here, this school, I was a part time art teacher. A brand new teacher. There was an older lady that was a full-time art teacher. She was definitely my mentor. She always took me those meetings and said, “this is my part time teacher at my school.” Now we are good friends and sometimes we meet there and go out afterwards or get together, things together. Yes. I had a lot of fun that place too (the monthly meeting). (After the meeting you guys go out sometimes for dinner?) We have sometimes go out for dinner, or we get together and work on something like we are given a workshop together several of us. We get together after the meeting. Or we just have a fun and go out for tea. That happens sometimes, not all the time. Everybody has such a different schedule and everybody is busy. But we do that sometimes. It’s fun.

(How did you become a member of the community?)

I was a part-time teacher. I was a brand new. This mentor was a full-time teacher. She is gone now. She is quiet old. She took me to the meetings.

(I think you are definitely a mentor.) Yea, I think so. Because FSU students, the younger teachers. I had two years ago. She teaches at Pine View now. Yea, I think I am a mentor. (How do you
understand mentoring in your life?) It would have to do with professionally being an art teacher, working with new teachers, and working with classroom teachers. To get them our perspectives and help, including what they are doing. The third grade teacher was here doing Native American. So I gave her a lot of materials and gave some ideas. So they just don’t a little color sheet. I mentor classroom teachers and always have them come to me and ask for ideas. So I think I appreciate that. I guess that makes me feel something good. I feel like to be helpful to the community. It is a good feeling that you can be helpful, that people respect your opinion and come to you and ask for something and ideas. It’s a good feeling to work with others that way.

(What concerns do they have?)
These budget times. This year I’ve been through times Florida economy is not good. Florida relies on tours. If tourists don’t come, our budget is way down. We always worry about that art or music will be cut from elementary. So that is always a major concern. And having your schedule time cut. Even if they don’t cut you, sometimes they make you do work, that’s not art work, work with reading or whatever. You’ve just got a little short 20 or 30 minute time with students. That’s been always our concern.
I guess schedules, the main concern just that you have. They just still have art program at the elementary level. I think we are very lucky that we still have part. Because Florida it has been cut in many places unfortunately. That’s been a concern.
(Do you have a pathway to communicate with the people of school board or governmental educational institutions?) We do that. We go down to the Capital one, the law makers, when there are sessions. We’ve taken a little bag and children’s work, notes from parents. We write to senators or representatives. Our group hasn’t formally done that. There are groups in the State. Individually we work with. Whenever there are issues like this we have, try to influence the law makes.
(So they informally meet law makers.) It’s true there is a state organization called ACE Art Completed Education. A lot of us have worked with that group. That’s one of the things we did work years ago. We write down to the offices where they work in session in Tallahassee. We go and take them art from children and try to meet them face-to-face, and try to influence them to keep and to know that art is important for families and children. Our group doesn’t do lobby things usually as a formal group. We usually do that type of things we do individually with other larger groups. Other arts groups. We’ve long done this with the Florida Art Education Association a lot of us belong to that and National Art Education Association. Those are associations, are also lobby for the arts. Lobby means to try to push for something. Politician groups go and lobby them to try to get them vote certain ways, like the health care
thing. They (FAEA and NAEA) have efforts to put forward the arts and see that. Better get considerations. I don’t know they are higher lobbyist. But they certainly have ways to try to make the arts known to the public.

(Sometimes the art teachers appeal to the associations?) Well, they talk about and write issues and a lot of us go. There was a conference of Florida one in October. I’ve gone to the NAEA most every year. When you go, there are a kind of committee, there are different things that you can do either find out what’s happening, or maybe get some ideas. Those are the groups I think that would have a more powerful influence. We as an art little group deal with just our world, just we are going to have a show, participate in the FSU mural project.

31:31 I used to participate. But I have not for last a couple of years because I am getting to retire. I have more on my schedule and less help. I have all these beautiful art work that should be up in the hall. I don’t have parents. And there is no teacher aid and teachers’ help. I have been trouble with time here. So I just don’t participate in outside because I pushed to get things done here. Somebody younger could do things better and faster. I used to participate in all those things. I have not that last a couple of years. It’s worthwhile. It should be done. I just haven’t found that I have time to put everything in.

( Cooperation between art teachers and with other experts.)

Over the years we had a lot of projects and activities through the FSU museum. Viki brought in different art shows and we have worked using that as an experience for children and having them do their expression, not copying art work. The mural project would be an example of that. We’ve been that through the years. It is worked very well to have our students work with the people of the university level and to have them display their work over there and go over there. That’s the main thing I can think of what at the library we have had an illustrator that she brought in somewhere. She is a famous writer of children books and illustration. This is several years ago. Another artist Faith Ringggold was here at least twice. I don’t know. How we brought her in here. Once here, and the other Jacksonville. We’re talking that over the years. I have two student teachers. Three of us drove all the way Jacksonville. I think that’s what makes happen that university is here. A really great thing provides these opportunities I don’t think we have in another county. Even this mural thing that’s through the university. So many these things are happening through the university. That’s mainly accept that one illustrator did come from. They contacted two illustrators who write children’s book that came through the library. Leon County Public Library. I had gotten to hear and to talk and saw demonstration. I read the books and showed children style of the illustrators. We had done some illustrating. Not copy, not doing the same book. My experience is that that is important. It brought into the new program, exciting
children’s exhibits.

(At that time was there any separation between art teacher and artist?)

What they are here to do, both times, Faith Ringgold explained their artistic process, and how they express themselves, and how they got started, their life experience, their art and their stories. **That was something that influenced me and influenced children. But they didn’t work with children. I was learned that took their experience, tried to translate for the children, but not to say we are going to copy this book or we are going to do the same illustration.** One illustrator did folk tales and maps. We read, and she illustrated, and then why and what was the more of the story. I found some other folk tales. That work is what they have done kids know about and we did our own, not copy. I found quite difference. I did not have the times I’m thinking of. I did not have the artists come in and actually work with children. **It was the artist was doing teacher workshops. By influencing the teachers and sharing their experience, then we share those with students.**

(Did you use those workshops in your art practices?) Yes. But they didn’t come and work with kids. I think there are our cases you can get artists come and write and work with children. **That’s exciting too. I have not done that. But I know they used to do that.**

(How did you find those artists?)

Both examples just I gave you were brought into the community either by the university or the library. They were brought here. I just sort of plug in that. But I have I like in the community I have parents who were artists. If I find that out, they will come in. I actually have them as experts come in and demonstrate things and share things with the students. What do my students have now, the mother who does printmaking. That was her college degree. We were doing printmaking a couple of years ago. She came in and showed how she can do silkscreen, let everybody make a little print, she shared a lot of things about printmaking beyond my little art. As far as we know elementary we don’t have equipment for the silkscreen. When I headed all the times I have parents. They come in and I can find **artist-parents.** That’s good source. Once we were talking about, we have big name people. The illustrators’ books were brought in through someone else in our community. I just went to and took advantage of it. (Some art teachers kept in touch with them?) No. These are big workshops. These are pretty big name people. So that’s not somebody have been kept in touch with. Like Faith Ringgold. There are people who have connection like that. **Viki has more connection that regular art teachers. She is one of the community people who comes to the meeting pretty regularly and would like to work with us. Her connections are broader than us. (How about Amanda?) Yes. She has connections. That’s her job which is to stay and to see what there is. She is the one that brought Faith Ringgold here a couple of years ago. That is her job to do that. She works for us. Her work is to our advantage because it is making these things possible for us to take advantage of.**
(What is the goal of the project?) That’s too broad. We just had a lot of opportunities here. Last year I did not take these. Last a couple of years I haven’t participated that much but they had a big exhibit called Story. They brought in the artists. They worked with artwork that had narrative that told a story. But there are all different artists they brought in. **Schools participated with that. Students were exposed to those artists and learned how to express their stories in their own work.** That was the goal of that. With Faith Ringgold, there was a whole teaching unit about her books, Tar Beach, I Can Fly, and How You Can Do Anything, how that story is told in how she expressed through her art work. So they all had different goals. They depend on the artists brought in. Usually sometimes students get exposed to the artists and a lot of times studio art teachers. Their art teacher comes back to the classroom and share how an artist and why an artist does, and things certainly how do they do like that.

(Generally why do the art teachers want to have those projects? Why do they want to do art projects?)

I think it is a lot. It’s brought what we can do in classroom to connect with the university. **That mural project connects with other cultures and with expressions about peace around the world. I think it’s brought horizons for the students outside there and little table and their little classrooms. That’s why I think people do it.**

(How do the students feel about their participation?)

As I said, I’ve done this last for years. When I was participating in these types of things, it was very successful. **The students were very excited about it and I think it made them learn more and they were more enthusiastic about their own art. They responded very well.**

(All students can participate in these things?)

Yes. I like mural thing. They are going to have students there. Sometimes they can be there and watching the artist’s tools there. The case I don’t think that case is mural one. **They have been times to have artists right there at FSU. There is always reception for students and their parents and their activities. They will go with it. There are educational activities to go with it. It’s very good things.** In the evening reception they had tables and activities. Even brought in schools. Maybe there could be music. Chorus came over and sang. If it’s concerned about another culture, we had one on Japanese. I can’t remember the whole things, but everything, the activities all have to do with Japanese art form and there were dancers who came in. So really broadened. What we would do in the classroom, of course, the whole school can’t be up there because we got many schools. Nine kids per school. They send video, **powerpoint.** You can show them before. While we’re studying it, art teachers go with digital camera, take pictures and come back, and share. **Some of it is second-hand through sharing because I never get all students from a lot of schools to go.** Usually we pick certain groups which are going to do art work. Those of students are invited to reception. You can invite them. Even if you invited the
whole school, the parents most likely bring their children who have art work there. If you have student exhibit, they much more have to go, especially from where I am to go over FSU does seem like far but these people who are invited are miss 47:11 neighborhood. There would be more after to do that if their child’s work is there. Even if you invited the whole school, you can get that money.

The colleagues’ role.. It’s just been a few years since I participated in. I did not participate in story project or this mural project. But I know that the story project, they started meeting two years before that project. They decided on what artists, they narrowed down the artists that we were going to use on the focus on the exhibit. Then they have committee to write curriculum and to write materials, given to the schools you can teach lessons but have to do that exhibit. So they helped everything. Some of these are very collaborative. Sometimes someone else brings in someone and you just can keep going. Sometimes the art teachers take very active roles in designing the exhibit, making the educational packets, all that. Sometimes the art teachers do all kinds of things like that.

(Salad group?) We’ve always met. Even when other like the music teachers for several years they just had meetings. They just had their own thing. We have always had meetings. We never stop. We’ve always been and I’ve always participated in it. We’ve done different ways. We still have met different schools. We’ve always had art big youth month exhibits. We kind of coordinate that. We coordinate other opportunity coming up in the community. I’ve done FSU museum workshops, regular FSU workshops. I’ve just done that recently. But over the years at the sculpture they had a teach workshop often. It was very interesting. Casting, metal, or something. Very unusual thing. (Where was it?) In the sculptural studio, which is down stairs from the art museum. Maybe it isn’t now. That was several years ago. It was a teaching studio. They teach sculpture class. A professor taught. I’ve taken classes at FAMU and taken ceramic workshops.

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(So you applied or a little bit modified what you learned to your art practices?) Again this is something cut back on because I am get ready retired. I’ve cut back on some of these things that I used to do pretty regularly. I am just getting ready to another face of life.
Are you going to do something for the group after your retirement?)
I think I will stay in contact with friends because I have good friends. There is a group of art teachers. We call this Older Teachers, Over Fifty. We go out once a month on Saturday. We go out for lunch. There are one or two retired art teachers. That’s the way we stay in contact with people that we worked with and then they retired. We still go out with them. We still have that.

(Do you think how long this community has been?)
Ever since, when I got here, that was 24 years ago. That has been never stopped. We meet at their schools. Different times, the summer, we worked on the benchmarks and the standards for the county, scope and sequence, that type of stuff. Maybe every five year some of us get together the summer together things like that. (They did voluntarily) We used to get paid for that. We’ve gotten money for putting together. We still have people that offer workshops in the summer. Other art teachers can come and learn from our lessons and get credits. Because we have to keep our certification, we have to keep getting credits. So it is “more than just monthly meeting.” The monthly meetings have been going.

(To keep the certification, what should you do?)
You have to take equivalent to university courses every ten year. Instead of taking class from the university, you can get these education credits by taking workshops, keep up with points. I forget 160 points might be equal to university course. So there is a couple of ways. You go to university and take classes. Most teachers just do gradually take workshops here and there. The workshops that we offer to these art teachers for each other. Julie, Fran, and I had offered workshops summer. We hadn’t last year because they stop paying us. I think it is a lot of work. It was a lot of work. I know this summer art teachers offered their workshops about bookmaking and out of Buck Lake teacher offered ceramics workshops. So we offered workshops and then we can go to get points and we can be learning in our field without going and paying the university. It’s hard to get over there and take classes. When I got my master’s degree, 7:47 I know trouble with those keeping my certificate because I had all those at university, university classes. It was easy. I think there are people who are right now more active than I am. I am still enjoying what I am doing here. I have cut out a lot of the excited activities.
The art workshops help us to teach kids math, reading, science, etc. and to get all of the subjects together to teach art. This one is at I guess Raa Middle School. (The teachers who provide workshops for teachers get some money from School Board?) Before our budget was a shortfall in...when the last year. I know you are familiar with that. Pat Ellindar, National Board Certified Teacher, they would get paid to give us workshops. Last year the state announced. We can’t afford to pay for the National Board Certified Teachers to teach teachers these workshops. So they wouldn’t have but did have it anyhow for the love of art. But yes. Most of time they pay. I try to think of what I’ve gotten paid on any workshops. I don’t think so. I can get paid. I worked..But this is not a workshop. I’ve worked on a project at Mary Brogan Museum. A few years ago we did an educational project with their folk collection. So it’s like outside artists we have. Some may have Stone Age huge folk art collection. It was really cool stuff. They let us in there to look it up all the stuff. We developed a curriculum, lesson plans, to go with that. So I got paid for that, which was nice. But it wasn’t connected with school. But I got 1400dollars for that. That was good. (You developed classroom practices, but they were not directly related to your art lessons?) There all lessons were. But it separated from Leon County School Board. The museum itself is building educational programs. A teacher right now I just want to show you. (She showed moss over branches in a plastic bag.) I just give you a copy of my lesson plans.

<Collaboration with art teachers of different levels through developing a joint art program>
(She is glad to talk to me about an educational packet she developed at the museum. She just seems to enjoy studying how to teach and what to teach with other teachers and talking to each other.) (Smells good! I smelled the natural moss she picked it at her yard.) Is that fun? (Yea.) Do you like my dust, too? (She is very humorous. She is very friendly.)
This is the lesson plan. One of the lesson plans I developed while we were working together. (Can I have this?) Yea, you have that. I have a copy of this. We are just on-line. Bessy Harvy. The artist has a site on-line. ‘Cause part of it is technology. Is this going to be part of how we use technology in art room? But anyhow you welcome to that. We developed these lessons for the all teachers pretty much to pick it up and be able to teach with the Website, the State Standards. (Who participated in the work with you? I mean is there any art teacher from the community who participated in the work?) I can’t remember their names. This is a couple of years ago. There was an art teacher from private school, we had a high school art teacher, Marylyn Proctor, she was one of the teachers. I forget someone remained. We had a FSU student that participated in. He kinda got all of art technologies together for us. I forget what his name is. I can get all
stuff's together for you but I don't remember right off the back. (Some of elementary art teachers participated in the project?) Actually no. Not in this project. We had six art teachers, some middle schools, high schools, and private schools. So they were elementary but they ran private schools. One little lady was from Forquarter elementary school. I think one is from Arts and Sciences.

**<Difference>**

(I would like to ask some questions about the community. Tell me about how they deal with diverse perspectives in the community. Maybe they have some different ideas, opinions, sometimes. At that time how do they deal with different opinions?) At the art meetings, people bring their ideas to the art meetings. If I have a question about my practice, the lesson I am developing, for instance, is it okay? Or if it might be somehow cultural ideas, I will call, maybe Julie McBride, she was my mentor, when I became a teacher. Or I’ll call Pat or somebody else. We are just touch base. When I come to art meetings, I bring samples and tell people what I’m doing. Now as like diversity with our population, school population, you know I find a lot of times, for instance, the ESE kids, the kid with specialty, autism, or handicaps somehow, low IQ, whatever their handicaps. There are a lot of times most kids do better in art. They may fail in reading and math, but they think visually, and they come in, and they love doing art. So a lot of times art would be A. They might flunk everything else, but they can do good in art. So I found I don’t have problems with diversity. Sometimes people expect us like the regular classroom teachers are expected to have a different lesson for each group of kids. (In one class?) In one class. They may have to low learners. They have to have for them visual learners. They have to have different learner lesson. So we have to have lessons..I don’t know how they do it. Cause it just left us develop one lesson. But I try to, I talk to my kids different ways, I say it different ways and might say different words. So they can understand one way, not the other. That’s what you are asking?

Mainly the art teachers are a pretty tied community. The weekend like Kimberly Brock you are talking about her. She was substitute. She is from A (Colum Lakes). She’s worked on a tile project. I did the tile project two years ago. So we’ve been emailing. And she asked all the questions. What tiles do you use? What paints do you use? How to decide the theme? What kids did you do? So we just collaborate. Through emails, or the teacher’s meetings.

(You don’t think there are not many differences or disagreements?)
I don’t know people. We respect others’ ideas. And I got remember. I mean sometimes I disagree with people but it’s a warning. I disagree with administration. Some ideas the administration has.
Or some of the like, federal mandates the government comes down and then says, you know, “no child left behind.” I disagree with some of that stuff. Because I teach the kids and I know and I am not negative, but some people the way their brains are wired, they are not going to learn how to read. It’s not gonna happen. But that’s not the same as we will not teach them to make and learn. But the government comes back and says “every kid can read.” You know they must not know some of our kids that..you know we have.. you know there are kids with disability. So we are not gonna have to do it. But as like disagreements from the art teachers, I can’t remember of one. That must have been some? (No, I am not sure. Actually I)

But I think we all can just agree or disagree like civilized people and just talk it out and say well, “that doesn’t work at my classroom but this does. Oh, I’m gonna try that.” 12.15 Cause I always ask, I do have any problem, when you do and kids do this. And then I go. This is how I handle it. That’s not a disagreement, is it? That’s an agreement. I don’t know what other people say. Other people have different answers for that? Our lesson plans would be totally different. Everybody teaches different artists. But they are really likely that “oh, that’s a great idea. How did you do that?” So I don’t see it.

(You mentioned that every art teachers have different philosophies toward art education. I am wondering do you think they have some similarities?) Oh, yes. I think a lot of philosophies are the same. We can say there are transits of art education. Right now big ideas. So we try to formal projects like the last year, “hero.” That might be a big idea. So I talked to kids what is the hero. They might say “Colby Brian. This is my hero.” Or and I am like “Wait a minute. Just because you are idols, you are stars. That doesn’t mean hero. What has Colby Brian done to help other people, the hero help other people?” So we delved into what, just like this year, we were doing peace. You were there the peace thing. (Yea) All of our projects are peace but all of arts we show are different. The philosophy, I think, is the same but we can just go different little paths.

(How do you respond when some art teachers present ideas that are different from yours?) I look at their ideas. I listen to their ideas. I think about how I can use in my classroom if they would work with my population of students or not. So I try to. Cause most of these other art teachers that I work with, they’ve been teachers for 30 years. And I still just feel like a beginner. (It has been only 6 years since she became an art teacher. But she has experience as an artist and an aid of school library.) I just have my 6 years now. So I always want to be here now to hear how they do things. Cause kinda I came in here in the middle of the year. And the other art teacher retired in February. My kids didn’t really like her. And so I came in. There were a lot of hating art, which was like I am here and I feel like I have such a great time and come in and upon,
and then the kids like drawing stuff. That was a kinda hard but I try to learn for them. I also sometimes disagree but in my head I go, I don’t think that’s going to work at my school. My kids are too wild whatever. (now?) It depends on the class. This year we really have very nice population. The kids are sweet. I’ve only written two or four so far. Disciplinary referrals. So other years I would’ve written 10 or 12. So our kids are great. But is’s gonna be different if you go maybe to the Saver Palm or to Riley. Cause they have different population, students. So they probably have to deal a lot with behavior issues. Kind of classroom management.

(I’d like to ask about caring each other among the art teachers. Did you ever receive caring from other teachers?) Definitely. Especially, when I started teaching, everybody was willing to help. Julie McBride was my mentor. So I can call anytime. Christa also. But I can call anybody in the teachers. I call and also the County pays for me to go observe so they would get a substitute to do here and send me to observe Ann actually her class or Nora. Then I would go visit her class to see how they managed everything where they stacked whatever. And see how it worked, which is a big help. So there is a lot of caring. We just have a really tied group of art teachers.

(She regards learning from her colleagues and their help as caring. She seems like to feel when she visits her colleagues’ class; she has a feeling of receiving caring. Maybe she would be welcomed to them and get a lot of information and useful advices). You know I love all of them but I don’t do very well. I don’t go out a party with them. But we friendly help each other if we need help. But other teachers are best friends, you know, go often to beaches and houses stuff together. (How about you? Don’t you go out for dinner or lunch sometimes very much?) Well, I could, but my life is just a little different. Cause when I get done, I get to work in my garden. I help my husband’s job, fire woods. (You have a garden!)

(Your experience about giving your help to the art teachers, would you tell me about that?)

<Help each other, exchange knowledge, share knowledge which cannot be learned in books> Yes. When I was telling the role about the tile project. Kim Brock just started her tile project. We’ve emailed back and forth probably twenty or thirty times. She calls and asks what tiles do you use?, kids make their own tiles?, No, I bought premade tiles. The Majolica technique. You can use the commercial tiles. It’s an Italian technique painting on top of the glaze. It begins in Italy. (Did you do that in your class?) Yea. When you came in, there is a stuff of this, for the drinking fountain. That was the last year, tile project. (What paints did you use?) It’s glaze. Special glaze is made to go on top of other glaze. So it actually says. I’ll be right back. See. You spelled right. (She brings a sample of glaze she used for the tile project. Do you use this glaze for clay and Majolica?) U-Um. You can put this on a piece of art which is already fired or already
has glaze. You can paint right on top of that glaze. We fire it and it works. (So is it already fired?)
The tile we used are already fired. Just like bathroom tile. It’s got a glaze on it. I try not to use
the glossy like satin. And then you have the kids just glaze right on top of it. Because what I felt
is so hard to make tile. That does curl up the edges. To be perfectly straight. Because I get one of
students’ parents, he is a tile guy for career. He put some on the wall. The tile guys don’t like this.
They want to be like this straight. So I found for my projects I’d rather get my kids do, make
their own things like, pinch pot, and all these kinds of sculpture things. Well it’s not so formal.
They’re not ready for that. Maybe high school or college to make something that stuff precise.
So that’s why we do this way. And one of the art teachers call me how to do it. I forget who did.
Do you know about warehouse? Leon Country has a warehouse that has a lot of basic supplies.
So we can order it to do that. I usually give some money. Like they have glaze but they don’t
have majolica. I had a fundraise to order and buy.

<Inequity of financial support> So we sold magazines. (Magazines?) Every kid in this school
got a little thing to sell magazines. So then the art room got. I think we got the first year 14
hundred dollars which was really good. And the second year I think we didn’t do as good, we got
12 hundred dollars. But that money set aside just from me to use. But it would be nice, but we
don’t have to do that, if I just make art. (She is so ambitious for teaching art.) But that’s how I
am able to get nice big jars, and special stuff. (Can I see the magazine after this interview that the
kids made?) No. We didn’t make magazine, but kids sold subscriptions. There is a company
called American Fundraising Opening. And they come to me and go. Would you like to make
some money for your classroom? So he sends me all forms and catalogues to show, “do you
know archeology? Do you want National Geography?” People ordered them. You know some
schools do car washes, some schools do cookie dough, sell gift wraps..(Ah, the parents
purchased the magazine.) We got money for it. (That’s great!) It is great. (Some parents just
don’t agree with that?) But we always ask for supplies, always fundraiser going on. Especially in
our school, we don’t have a whole bunch of rich parents. If you go to Buck Lake, we call that the
pretty school. (hahaha!) Because the parents do better jobs and a lot more money. So when you
go to their schools, they have gardens everywhere, have you been there? (Yea!) I mean it looks
like a botanical garden. It’s beautiful. In our school, the parents are more working class, so they
don’t have much money. (But I like this area.) Yea! I love it. I’m not moving. (hahaha!) So just
depends on that. So we did pretty good.

(Have you met a mentor or good friends in the monthly meeting?)
Yea! You know, I consider again. **I am not best friends with anybody. But we are friendly.**
**And acquaintances.** I can call them if I need anything, make a call Conley. Even though I
don’t go out drinking with them on Saturday night, I still feel friendly to them. But I don’t have my best friends there. (Where?) At the meeting. We bring food that’s good. And then the Youth Art Month we all meet there and meet at workshops. That’s why I get to know people the most the summer workshops. We sit down for 8 hours a day and they just make stuff and chat. That’s where I get to really know people.

(The monthly meeting is a touch base. But as she said, workshops are the places to give them a chance to know the most people each other.)

In March, it’s one that we hang up a big show at public library downtown. (I want to go see there! I want to see.) Oh, it’s incredible. The reception is March 9th this year. I think I just got an email about it. (Do you think you are isolated in your school because there is only one art teacher?) Yes. Plus how far from our town the school is. So we are very isolated. Like a lot of schools, for instance, Buck Lake has a middle school right next door. A very close. And Roberts is close. And in town you know a lot of schools seem like they are only a mile apart. You know, from Gilchrist to Ra, they are very close in and where we are like 8 miles from the other schools. So I do a little bit feel isolated and being only art teacher. I don’t a lot of bother me. Sometimes I feel isolated out here. But it can’t bother me. You know, people probably would, if we are gonna hold our meetings here. We would be probably here a little bit more grumblings because they have to drive. They feel like they drive clear out of town to get out here. Other we had meetings out before. We had one.

(Some art teachers say that they want to see other teachers’ classroom.) It’s very helpful. (There are ideas.) I wish I could do. Cause I always come back. Oh, I see something. I’m gonna do that. I’m gonna make that. We trade lessons. Yea. We have a good group.

(What did you learn from Julie? She was your mentor.) I learned all about classroom management. 31.12 Cause I know I have though art under my belt, but give me kids to behave is classroom management. Just behave how to get them clean up. We can’t have all of them run over the sink once. It would be plashed and a big mess. You have to be organized. I learned about, you know, cartoons, see all those cartoons have, how they make a great palette. You … different paints in there. And then I have crash close about them stack it and make crash, you could come open it up. So I learned little things like that. Those blue trays are from hospitals. And those are perfect for giving each kid paints whatever. So it’s kind of containers. I learned about the bread trays. Ceramics. I mean I’ve learned so much it. But mainly behaviors, what rules they have in art room, how they discipline kids, just how things run. I learned a lot from them.
<Learning from book study> (What do you think the difference between book study workshop or teacher workshops and the monthly meeting?) At the book study, we focus, it’s more like workshops. **We focused in one book.** We talk about what we read. Most of the times in the book study we even do art too. I mean we do art projects. Like the book study we are doing now on this book. (She shows a book they are studying together.) This is great. **Because kindergarten is one of places that I need help.** Because they have short-little attention spans. And so you kinda can do just one lesson you got to do like lots of little segment things cause they just start rolling around and go crazy. They act like rolling squirrels. So I’m doing this one with the kids which is going to be a good one. But I’m going to do a lot of them. A lot of exercises with the kids. But the difference I think it’s we are more focused. This is a little bit different ‘cause it’s curriculum. Last year we did Daniel Pink, which was changing art education. So it’s more discussion rather than actually hands-on, more philosophy, brain research. How does the brain do art? How does the art help your thinking skills? That kind of things. So it’s a little bit more discussion, thinking rather than this one which is just going to be more doing.

(The monthly meeting is just a meeting?) **It’s meaningfully to talk about like we have the lady from COCA come and tell us “we want you to show your kids’ art work at the law offices or at the county government, Youth Art Show. There is a show to keep abreast of local happenings and local art events, we share lessons. So it’s not focused as this is focused right on this curriculum. In the art meeting, anybody can bring any subject that is concerned. You bring some ideas, Viki come always from FSU and talk about the Peace Project. Wafa tells us try to get us and tell us what she needs for our kids to do for this project. And somebody else will get up and go “This is my project.” So 36.01 It’s not a focused one in this meeting.**

(Do you like the meeting?) I do. I love the art meeting. Yea. **Because I am not isolated when I get together.** Cause everybody is busy. People have kids. That’s why I get my collegial conversations with art friends. Conversations just like this. “Oh, this happened in my art room. How would you handle that?” You would go out. This is what’s happened.

(Tell me about experience when you participated in art project or activities with other experts like Viki or artists?)

Well, I can tell you about the Peace project. I think it’s great. I took the kids and we went to the Guernica International Kids Peace project website that shows all different pictures. **We talked about peace, the big idea of the peace,** what does peace mean to you, and I got to tell you this thing. A couple of years ago I also did peace. Cause it’s big. And it was right at the start of the
Arabic world when the president Bush was a president. I say, “we are doing study on peace.” And two little fifth grade girls, raise your hands, and say, “Ms. Munn, we cannot participate.” “And I’m like who would think about the same thought we are protesting the world. Their parents believed in war. And they say, “this is quote…”

This came from the book making workshop last summer. (She shows her kids’ art work exhibited at the Museum of Fine Art of FSU during Kids’ Guernica Peace Mural Project exhibition. She learned the skill to make books at a workshop and applied it to creating the arts for peace in her classroom.) And I’ve been working on accordion books. And I’m like “Accordion books as long as the kids can make their own many peace murals.” That’s where we went from there. So they started and they made theirs. This is the third grades. They just did rubbings. (They used the skill of rubbing pastel powder in their book making.) But the fourth and fifth grades did (mervalized…) paper for their books, which is really pretty. Then we did crayon resist for their art work. …I am happy with that. That’s of course we touch base with Viki cause she is a curator at the museum and I try to go to there workshops, and get all the information I can do what’s going on, I try then to send all the kids in the school invitation to the reception, I try to get parents and students involvement, and then I go. The Reception.

You know, I don’t do every single art project. But they’re usually good. So I usually try to do it. <Interdisciplinary art education>
(Do you try to connect your school’s curriculum with the art projects of the meeting?) Yes. I believe that art teachers are everything. I mean you have to do math to do art. I bring the rulers out. Every artist that I know wants to make straight line, use these rulers. And they also measure like the ruler three, You do want your picture to be in third and about half, I try to teach concepts about shapes and geometry, and all fits in. We also read a lot because I do PowerPoint. It would like the history of artists. So I have the kids take turns reading. For instance, third grades we go social studies like teaching Egypt now to third grade and then teaching Greece. And I tried to do Thailand. I actually emailed the regular classroom teachers and asked them, “What are you teaching?” Like what are they learning in science? And come back and say “they are learning about ocean animals. So then I’ll say “Okay, we are making Taco Fish.” We are gonna do something to do what they are studying. Cause that makes more sense. Kids can connect. So they just do their ruler work and math cause rulers are on the AFCAT. So they have to learn that. I tell them about it. They come and act like they’ve never seen a ruler before. So it’s not connecting with their lives. And I use rulers all the time as an example. So that’s trying to get these things connected together. You are not just learning because the teacher, we don’t know why the teacher teaches and says. So we need to get the kids to know. It’s just gonna help your life. This is why
we doing this. That’s not just fluff. I do try cross to cross the curriculum. I teach all the subjects. (To be an ant teacher, do they have to take a lot of courses? Not only subjects related to art education but also others not exactly related to art education?) Yes. I took teaching music to children. Cause I like music too. If I was going to master’s in art education, I still have to take the test everybody takes together in master’s course. GMAT, GRE, you probably took that too. I will take them, here is an old lady. I am always with kids who just graduated.

(Many art teachers want to participate in art projects like the Story Project or the Peace Mural Project. Why do you want to participate in the projects?) I think it’s to let my students know that and it gives some opportunity for their art to be shown all over the county. Or it makes something bigger than just our little chairs like the International Peace Project. Here is kids from Israel and Palestine. They made a project together. So kids all around the world are doing this. That’s not just something I made up. This is big, it’s international. (She values understanding of the world, people in the world.) It’s trying to get them to be more attuned to what’s going on in the whole world instead just we are playing baseball here and I go to school. They need to know more about what’s going on all over the world, what other students study, what other cultures do, how the cultures are different in art, but we can still all get together and learn together. And I also I can tell you art students at FSU, my art work is at the FSU Museum. And I am telling the kids, “Your art work is going to be at the museum. This is so great. You know what a privilege it is at the college museum.” So I make a big deal ’cause it’s a big deal that they have their own art work at international exhibition, at university. ” I guess I am trying to sell art to them. I just wanted to get the kids out of the little boxes and see the world to experience more things. <Efforts to encourage kids and parents to participate in community art project>

(Did you hear about their responses about the Kids’ Guernica Exhibition?) The kids came up and told me. Three families came. So I don’t get a lot of participation, but it doesn’t mean that I am not exuberated, and I try to be excited about it. I have more people in Youth Art Month. More families come to that reception. (Is it like an art festival?) Yea. ’Cause every school in Leon County participate in. So we fill up the whole library. Art work is on every wall. Exciting. A lot of kids do sports. Their sports are so leisure-oriented (resonant). They cannot miss practice. You know, the kids love it. So they like, “oh, sorry. I’ve got soccer” And they go. But I don’t let them bother me too much. I mean, it bothers me a little bit, but I don’t have much participation. You know Margie Grussing, she is really cool. She likes making a little gift bag. And she shows them kids, “if you come today to the art meeting, or come to the reception, you get that!” (Hahaha~, art teachers do their best to draw students and parents’ attentions to art exhibition in their local community.) So she gets a little more participation.
I hate to give bribe to kids to come. But all we can do our best. I present and give them invitation, this is what’s happening. The parents did not go in, come back. Because the kids had such a good time in “make and take tables” Kids had a ball, music, and the food. Especially it was a rainy funky day. If they would come, they had fun.

(Did you collaborate with artists for art projects?)
Like local artists? I do not pull that into my program. So that’s my future I want to get. You know, Mary Proctor, some local artists. They come and do projects. We used to have a visiting artist. They had a program in the county. They had. And they send the artist over. They would come into one of my classes and show their art work. And then do art project with kids. So those are pretty nice.

(Did you contact first them?) Actually the Leon County did, so these are the three artists. ‘If you want them to come to your school, call them and make an appointment.’ Then they come. But they stopped that for some reasons. But I think that’s good. A good idea. I go on the artist’s website with the projected computer and show them artworks. But actually so many come and talk to them. I think it’s very good.

(What roles did you take for the collaborative project as an art teacher? Maybe you had to collaborate with the artists.)
When a visiting artist would come, I usually step back and act a little bit just classroom management like ‘Jenny polite things to do’ or ‘Suji, come on.’ Quit talking and set your chair that kind of stuff and unable to do personal speaking to speak. So I kinda step back or I ask them of what do you need to do? After the thing is all set up, calls I have to do to the principal, fill out activity reform, ask principal, “can I do this?” “Is that okay that the artist come?” and she asks some questions back and forth. And we have an activity report. If I need a substitute, is it going to cost school money? all the paper work, administrator that kind of thing we have to do first. And then sign in an appointment like Daniel Dancer last year. (Art for the Sky?) Wow, but we didn’t do it. But we are going to when he comes back. Like my principal said, “Oh, why don’t we do that?” But it was after that everybody done it. We didn’t have the money to do it. Cause it costs 2000 bucks a week. For him to come and do the project. But what a great project.

Along with music, special areas, we feel like I don’t know you know this term. “The red head stop children.” Have you heard that term? (No) Just a term like you know, you got married to a guy already, you have some kids, you and I would be like ‘wow I love all kids.’ But some mothers would be like ‘why do I have to have the kids around?’ So we feel like here so teachers have their planning times. Sometimes as attitudes we get, that’s why kids have special area. So
teachers can have their break, so to speak. A lot of time why we are so active with research, brain research we feel like we have to prove to the administration and the government that art is important. Art is not a luxury. It’s not just fluff. Kids need art. The more kids have art the better they learn. That’s what I like Daniel Pink’s book we did two years ago. We actually invited people from the State Government to a thing at LeMoyne Gallery we presented them with the book. Why we’re telling them, why the book is important, why they should give more funding to art. Cause every a few years time gets rough here and springs about “Oh, just get rid of the special areas. That’s how we can cut the budget. We don’t need art. Cause kids can do art in their classroom.” So that more like ‘that’s not true.’ It’s unsure. It’s world-wide. Now people do more research on the brain, how the brain works, how students learn, 01,00,15 They are finding out that kids who listen to classical music they are better at math. And kids who learn about art connect more with the world and do better another subjects. If there is a research behind us that does not just send, we don’t lose our job. It’s important whether I am here or not, art is important. <Advocate art program, strong advodator of art program>

(Why the community based art project the art teachers do is mainly because they want to show that art is important for kids and people?) Yes. Art is part of my life. It’s not just in..You know, it’s all over the world. That’s why I do a lot. Just get my kids and show what we are doing. If you didn’t do that, people just see little balls out here (She means sports), kids projects they take home. So we have to talk it up.

(The art teachers are really engaged in doing better art projects? Do you think the government considers art as really important? Are they influenced by some art projects?) If they hear about it, I’m not sure it still struggles. People in government and they make all the rules for schools. So it’s not just art. But all of the rules and laws, how we teach and what we are gonna teach. But a lot of them, art in the classroom now, They were in school thirty years ago. I know they think this way. ‘I went to school. I know what should happen to school.’ But they are thinking like 30 years ago. Now how we have to teach the kids today. I don’t think teaching is a really respected career. We can tell by what they pay teachers. I know you heard this thing. I’ve heard a lot lately. People who cannot do teach. Whoever it is. Somebody who makes one million dollars be a scientist. A research whatever they work for ex-honored somebody, be a scientist. And their attitude is ‘oh, who would be a teacher?’ That is not respected. They act like it’s really easy to do teach. There is a saying those who can do, you can do what I’m doing. So you are just gonna be a teacher. I know you know all those things. Teaching in America, when we first started public education, teaching was designed more for women, it was a career that women were allowed to
do. Just before feminism came before, you know, woman had a right to vote. We used to not be able to own property, money. If we got married, it’s all your husband’s. But teaching was one thing that was women were allowed to do. Teach. But the government also paid their minds, ‘oh, there are women. We don’t have to pay on that much.’ And I think that’s why it’s always been hard teaching but you get paid for how much work you have to do, you don’t get paid much. You are not compensated as much as other careers. <Teaching is not a career people respect and value in the USA>

When I came to the convention in Orlando, everybody is excited in their sharing, what they learn. If they have a great project, they teach to everybody. They were until they let go of it and spread it around. I think art teachers are a little bit different. Florida is totally different from California. Because the States all have their own boards. The States governments make most of the rules for the teachers. And the federal government sends them on their mandates. For instance, if you knew race starts, whatever Obama, he is gonna billions of dollars to education. But you have to compete for it. So each state has to do stop to try to say this is what we are gonna get this money. So it’s kind of chopped up to a little bit more. So it’s a little different. Some states may have class and books in art room. Some schools of Leon County have these in art rooms. But I don’t have them. But I’m gonna use this. (She shows a teaching book that they read in the book study workshop for teaching kindergarteners art. But I think I can do all this without the kids having the book. And I think the transit in education already get out of having books and do everything on computers. You can do a little art on computer. The kids need the manual dexterity. They need to develop their fine motors skills. You can’t do that on the computer. You need clay. You need crayons. I love to make stuffs or growing things in garden. That’s more fun going to publix. It’s satisfying. You are actually connected with the earth. Instead of being separate. Often internet somewhere. Who knows where that is. It’s fake. I mean a body of information, you are not really doing your research or you learn somebody else.

(Why do you think art teachers have to learn more?)

I think there are so many different techniques, for instance, if you look up the Sunshine State Standards, for fifth graders like 5 pages we are supposed to teach to kids. There is no way when we see once a week. But you know we are expected to learn ceramics, paintings, water colors, acrylics, tempera, there are so many different techniques we have to learn. And we also have to deal with art history, cultures, Cause we teach the day of Mexico, and next week we are teaching Hokusai, Japan. But I think classroom teachers also think they have to learn more than we do. Cause they have to do reading and .I think art teachers just want to learn more. Cause we are life-time learners and we always want to learn new things ourselves. That’s why we go to all workshops. Cause we want to learn more. I know I do. We also have to keep abreast of what’s
going on art community. Like one of my last professors that I took at my master’s class, the first thing he said in his classes, “throw away all those old dead white guys.” We focused too much on art history that we need to be showing the kids what’s going on in the art community now, in art world.

(How does the art community affect your professional growth?)

**It only affects me positively.** Because I go to the workshops that they present. When they learn something new, they share it. So we go to the art meeting. Somebody is going to go. “Oh, look at this new product that I saved. Everybody try it. Look how they are great. This is where you buy it. This is what you make with it. Or I found this new artist or website of this school side walk artist.” So it affects **professionally cause we just share and it’s a learning environment**, ‘you have to get the workshop. You have to get those points to be recertified. (Kind of information)

Yea.

(Do you think it’s important to cooperate with some other people or experts?)

I think it is. You can’t just do it by yourself. Because that’s not a way the world is. You have to cooperate with experts to learn what they have to offer you. You don’t have to cooperate with everybody. **Art is personal but it is a community thing.** It’s for people to look at and view and learn from. So definitely you have to cooperate with lots of different people.

My professors that I’ve never had like Ron Yebedra, he was art ed. at FAMU, an art professor but now just does workshops with this. I talked to artists. I developed things with the museum. So I cooperated with those and I had to contact those artists and their organizations, to get permission to use their materials and my lessons. Yea. We have to cooperate. I’ve always had big plans to do more and to get artists out here to work with me. Cause we have some fine local artists around here. **Then I think I can really teach new ideas to the kids.** Thomas Brewer, he is art education at Central Florida University. Professional art teachers I haven’t had anybody come in. Evelyn Pender works with him a lot at her workshop in the summer. We have had a visiting artist probably four years ago. We had a mural painter come in. He painted all day.

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*Interview Transcript of Daniel: February 16th, 2010, 12:30-2:00 p.m.*

1. How do you feel when you hear different perspectives?

When I hear different perspectives, I enjoy hearing what other people had to say. That’s interesting. I think that when the art people get together, everybody is very creative. They may have different ideas about **how problem should be solved.** I think that is interesting. Just I see all different points of view. Typically that’s what I like to do, just listen. I don’t usually voice my
opinion. I usually agree with somebody’s and I have a similar point of view to somebody. I would rather listen. More of listening type person.

(Did you ever see some conflicts, but maybe not so many, different perspectives?)
No. I haven’t heard. Not really. Have you seen any in our meetings? I really haven’t seen any.
I’ve heard about people who really have conflicts with people at their schools. I don’t think there are any between the members of that art group. I don’t think I see many conflicts.
2. How do you think the members of the group deal with diverse perspectives? How do you think they each other?
I think that for the most part they are very accepting as well. There are more there to hear the different ideas rather than truly have some conflicts. We spoke about having work of art at the airport. A kind of exhibition there. It seems like a lot of opinions. How easily we could handle that. It just seems really, I feel like, everybody was able to say rather than there are particular schools was going to be participate in something like that. It didn’t seem like there are any kind of conflicts. That something that seems to me like my required, some kinds of discussion about whether we be able to do that as a group. We were able to come to a conclusion people wanted to participate, but we didn’t want part of guidelines of having only art work that show airplane. (That topic?) Because it’s difficult to, that kind of, stay with the guidelines like that, when you are creating the art in your classroom. Or it’s difficult to create, to have the students create one specific topic for certain exhibition in sort of just having something you could take any way related to be showed anywhere.
(what the art teachers wanted, there might be a gap between the art teachers and the airport.)
But as a group, the teachers are able to come up with what they really want. I didn’t really feel like that any teachers that were really interested in, going in trying to put something together that airport. I think that they would’ve been at the airport that was able to.. their rules and what they want.

(Did you ever receive help from other teachers?)
When I started, the Florida State, the Leon County, I taught elsewhere in Florida. And then I moved to Tallahassee. I wasn’t able to immediately get a job, teaching. So I met Julie McBride. I volunteered in her classroom. I was able to help her out. She introduced me to that art group community. I was attending some of the meetings with her as a volunteer of her room before I even became a teacher in Leon County. I feel like by meeting with Julie and by meeting some of the art teachers, I was able to get my name in their minds. When they were open at other schools, I had a bog opportunity to have a job there. In that way they are very helpful too. Another example, just the programs that they put together like over the summer, we had a class where we did a book making activity. It was at a middle school. One of the art teachers, I think the school
district put together class about making different sizes of books. We attended that. A lot of teachers earn TCE points. The points to recertify our teaching certificate. And I just received some emails from one of those teachers reminding me and following up with that. That’s very helpful too. Because of it’s like they are looking out for other members of the group, which is really nice.

(Why do you want to go the meeting? It’s far from your school.)
It is really far. I know that my school, it’s expected of the teachers as the art teachers I am attended to the community art meetings. There is a science committee that I meet. There is one teacher from our school that I will attend the science meetings. One teacher will attend the music meetings. It’s kind of expected. But I also would prefer to get information from somebody to actually see them, instead of just getting emails or just getting a little flier or mails. It’s important to see them to find out the exhibitions, we have that spring festival to be coming up, winter festival and what’s going on FSU with the peace challenge. It’s more interesting to hear about it from an actual person in that meeting rather than an email. <A sense of Belonging>

Belonging to people that are doing the same thing as you are>It’s nice to meet other people that are doing the same thing as you are. Sometimes being the only art teacher at my school, you might be alone and you don’t feel you do a good job. It’s also nice to be social and to talk with some other art teachers and to see how they are doing as well, you can be related to all and do a little better.

<Interdisciplinary art education> Even here in the USA, it’s a lot of places don’t realize arts can help to teach math, and help to teach science, help to teach social science, is that students can gain a lot of knowledge, draw their learning about art to other subjects. There are a lot of crossing of the subjects. Just recently in my second and third grade classes we made some cut-paper projects, like a little snow flakes. It’s just kind of silly things I think. I wanted to show that it’s not just an activity that we would do in the USA so we learned about (15:18), which is like a cut-paper, decoration, and Mexico. I tied that in. We talked about other cultures that might use similar activities and why do they use that activity too. When I do, water color paintings. We talked about how some other techniques work in and how that works with science like an evaporation of water, and how salt interacts with the water, in that ties with science. And then I was just in a home room today. They are teaching math. And they were talking about photographs, horizontal photographs, vertical photographs, that’s something we talk about all the time, different types of lines, we talk about art. We describe how to make something as we are using similar language that is used in math, in other area. Just having that kind of common vocabulary is helpful.
(Did you ever give your help to other teachers?) I haven’t really yet. I don’t think I’ve been around long enough. It feels like being helpful is something that you have to grow into and I’m still learning a lot. I’m still relying on the help of others. But I do hope to do someday when I can be helpful to somebody else. <Helps gives birth to help, caring gives birth to another caring>

(Do you have any informal meeting, not that formal monthly meeting?) I haven’t. No, I don’t think that I have ever met anybody just informally, not here anyway. I used to teach in central Florida. There is a similar community of art teachers they got together. One of my really good friends, it is an art teacher that I had met through those meetings. I talked with her quiet often about how she is doing, we talk about classroom problems. We also share more social type of conversation, which is very nice. I like that. (What do you think you have gained through the informal meetings?)

<Informal meeting>
I’m not sure about knowledge. When I met with my friend outside of meetings, we do still talk about school, we still talk about different activities we are trying, what things work for us. Maybe checking upon each other to see if we are getting materials for different exhibition. I know that through her, I also learned more about the Native Americans. She has very strong interest in Native American, which I would’ve never really thought about. She shared what she enjoys about learning about Native Americans, and how she incorporates it into art. I can take a little bit of that back to my classroom. She is also very interested in archeology. I’ve gone with her to find fossils. I would’ve never thought to go and look for fossils.

<Learning through natural conversation in informal meetings>
(Have you met mentors or best friends?) Do I have a mentor? (yes) When I think about a mentor, I think of somebody who is assigned to you as a mentor. You are going to have this person as a mentor. So I don’t think that I have a mentor. But I do know that when I have a question, I often ask Julie McBride. Because she is the first person that I met. She is a kind of like a mentor to me. But it wasn’t somebody that I was required to go see. When I think about mentors, somebody is required to see. But She is somebody like that I choose to go.

(What does it mean to you, mentor, in your life and as an art teacher, as a just human being?)
As I said, when I first think about a mentor, I think of somebody that you prepare with. I had a mentor teacher when I first started teaching. Someone that I was assigned to go and to learn from. But I think a mentor can be anybody that you can learn something from that, can help you out and show you different way in doing something. So I think that being a teacher is being a mentor to students or if there is another teacher or colleague that can help you out to be a better
teacher than. Of course they are mentor to you as well. I think of somebody that you look up to and you try to be more like that person as a mentor. At my school, I know that sometimes I have a hard time with students’ behavior in my classroom. And there is one teacher that her class always is on their best behavior and I look up to her and I try to emulate the things that she does. So she may not know it. She is kind of a mentor to me in their respect of student behavior and trying to get them to be certain way.

(Have the art teachers worked many art shows and art projects with experts? Why do the art teachers want to do art shows or art projects?)

For me, it is important for students to see their art work show somewhere. That makes the students still go about themselves and build their self-esteem. That’s one of the primary reasons that I participate in. Really there are a lot of projects that we’ve been trying to work on here in the Leon County, school district that I haven’t participated it in. The peace challenge I have some art work to put in. I know that there is a mural, kids Guernica. I didn’t have the mural come to my school. I was afraid of what I would be able to do. I was kind of intimidated actually by how and about what the other teachers in the area do. I think they are really great art teachers. I kind of didn’t think that I wouldn’t be able to get my students to add as well as I didn’t do it. Now I am looking back. I really wish that I had because my kids would have been doing a lot of good things. I would’ve liked to participated. But at that time I chose not to. So instead we have a couple of pieces to hang in the show that goes along with kids going to the peace challenge.

(Do you think that the art teachers have teaching philosophy? What ideas do they have for their teaching? They may have many different art education philosophies or their philosophy is similar to each other.)

I think there are a lot of similarities. The philosophy that I think of is the Discipline Based Art Education. I think that a lot of art teachers follow that thought. The teachers are incorporating the parts of the DBAE, aesthetics, art history, art creation, and criticism. Maybe some art teachers enjoy certain parts of it more. So they focus more like. I’m sure that there are some teachers that do lot more with history. I can’t remember the teacher’s name. But at the last meeting she was showing us a book-clipped Egyptian art. It was fantastic. I love to try the idea and that seems to me like something that somebody who is really interested in the history of art and once there are students to know more about history, that historical aspect. Maybe another teacher would be more interested in just creating something that was Egyptian and they wouldn’t really go much history of it. So maybe that would be difference is just that different teachers focus more on different parts of that, the DBAE. I do more creation. I just would rather have the kids create something. I really think that has something to do with the school that I teach at. Woodville
is a kind of rural school. Some of the younger students that come to my school have very limited knowledge of simple things using scissors and holding pencils and holding paint brushes. For me, getting scissors in their hands, getting them to use pencils and pens, it’s better for them to not let them use the materials to create something and teach them history. I think that it’s more important to teach them history. It’s more important to let them be hands-on. But if I was at another school, when they are home, there is making lots of things. We will probably do more history. I would probably do more talking about art but because of the students that I have, I choose to do more of that, the creation part.

(Do you think the art teachers’ meeting is really helpful for me?)

I enjoy going to the meetings because I want to see what other teachers’ rooms are like to get ideas of how to teach things like. I can’t remember her name, but the teacher who currently is hosting. (Megan!) She has posters about drawing the facial features in a portrait, I am stealing that idea. I’m going to use that. Because I have a hard time to remind the students to include all of the facial features. I’ll just make a poster it works for her. So I’ll try that. When Ms. Grussing was teaching, I got a lot of ideas from her about how to organize my room. Because I was just starting out and I had all of these materials that work, put together by somebody else. The last teacher had them organized the way she wanted them to be organized. I was looking to the room. It is a story of park that I can remember her see. I was looking for how she organizes and how she use materials, and then I could go and reorganized my room. So it was easier to use. I also just really like to see the art work that teachers bring for the exhibition, for the show, because it gives me ideas of different things the students can do. I just keep things fresher. Those are my favorite reasons I am going.

(Do you have a good friend beside Julie?)

I think they are very friendly. For me, I will be able to have more friendships with them. But I also work another job. There are a lot of things that take the time that I would normally have a friendship with other people in a way. So it’s difficult to have a friendship with them. It would be very nice. They are very interesting people They are very friendly. So it would be nice but it’s hard to do.

(I want to ask about art activities and art projects with other experts like Vikki and Amanda. What do you usually do on the job and the art show and art project?)

I haven’t really had a job. I think that is kind of like a mentor. I don’t feel like I have been a part of the group long enough to take on a role I’m doing a whole lot. I feel more like a participant. I’m there to give what I can do for the students but I can’t be proactive like Wafa. She is very passionate. I have no idea about how she does it. She does a lot of things. I have a hard time to just keeping up with like her. But I think that if I am in it more and I do, I spend more time with
the community and get more comfortable with it. Then I can take it more activities like that too.

(What kinds of experts, how do they make connections with experts? )
I think that would be the case. I mean just networking with the people that we know for example, my friend, who is from Central Florida. She is interested in fossils and Native Americans. If I want to do, I can contact her. She would know who can help with learning about different artifacts. If I want to do archeology type activity, that would be art related. I can go to her. And I think that all of the people in the group have different friends and different contacts that would be willing to reach out to if we need something. I also think that Amanda from Coca. I think she has lots of information, she has lots of different contacts. The variety of people that she can be a contact to have to help us out. That’s how we bring other people in because we are meeting people. The Guernica project. I am sure that they’re going to be interacting in that working with people from around the world and can draw more than. So we are always building that work like that.

(Do you think the connections with other experts are important for the community? )
I do. I think it’s important for the same reasons that I think that meetings are important when I talked at the out. Just going and getting other people’s ideas and to see what other people are doing that I think the connections with other experts are important that way too. Because they will have a variety of ideas that I would haven’t been able to think about by myself. They inspire me to think about it. I am excited to go to the Kids Guernica at night to hear the different speakers from different parts of the world. Because I would like to know a little bit about their perspectives in art and how they feel about the projects they’re working on it, be able to bring that back in the classroom, too. They are important for the same reason, just being another source of idea.

(The teachers have some concerns and needs as an art teacher)
One thing that I think that would be nice with the Leon County is to have some better guidelines for the information that students in elementary level shouldn’t know before they go to middle school. That way all the middle school teachers don’t know that when they get their students, they will all have done this this this. And then the middle schools all do this, all the high school teachers 43:48 will know that when they get their high school students, their high school students would be experts in this, this, and this. I don’t know if we really are aligned like that, everybody really focuses on the same things that we can kind of track. Another thing with Woodville where I teach, we have a lot of students that come in the school and transferred to another school, are transferred to that. It’s difficult to know whether they have learned like whether they are on the same track as I am. Sometimes I’ll get students who are the same grade level, they seem very
advanced for what my students are doing. Maybe I will get students from another school that has
done any of the things instead what I ‘ve done this, amazing is that grown knowledge for my
students to build on because we are not consistent, we are not all in the same, collective page.
That would be one thing that we can do.
(What support for the community do you think is required?)
When you ask me about what types of resources we need, that something also I feel like I
haven’t been in the community long enough for me to be able to tell. What kinds of need we
have, I am going to just feel comes with being around a little bit long, being with the community
longer, having more experience, with them.
(For professional development, the meeting is important.) Yes. I think it’s more important for the
social aspect of it. It is helpful for professional development, too. Because that's how I learn
about different activities, professional development. But I would rather go for social and then
mean just learn about the different ways that we can earn professional development.

I think supervisor is important. More tune to what is going on in the State like if the
Sunshine Standards are changing, she would be on top of that, share that with us. She could be
more purpose on that and let us do the teaching art. It feels like we have to be on top of that. It is
individual and we do the teaching. That was a nice thing. She was visual art, she also taught, she
was in an art classroom. She is there to be more like a liaison between what’s going on the
state level, and what needs to happen in the classroom.

Interview Transcript of Leanne: January 21th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

1. Do you know my topic of my dissertation? My topic is Art teachers’ Professional development
In their learning community. I call this group as a community of practice in my research. I focus
on watching interaction and among the art teachers and I want to see your perceptions toward
different perspectives the art teachers have and how to work together with other experts. If they
have ideas different from mine, it depends on how to involve and need to be with their ideas.
Because there are several ways to teach art and several ways to exhibit art and different
methods in art education. So I don’t believe that everyone has to agree with my way. I think that
there are many ways and many of them are good. If they address something else, they want
me to do something that I don’t know I agree with, I usually have a discussion with the other art
teachers. And I usually well go along with what the other art teachers, what we all decide at
discussion, we will usually talk about the good parts and bad parts of that idea, we will decide as
a group, whether it is good for us to do or not good for us to do. But then always there is an
option that I don’t have to do. I can say, it’s great for all of them to do it, and I will support
to do it, but I don’t have to participate in myself if I don’t want to. So I always have a freedom to still run my classroom the way I want my classroom to be run. And I have the freedom not to participate in a show if I don’t want to participate in a show. If it’s a small disagreement, then I let it go and I still participate in. But we compromise a lot by just talking things through. (Do you think there are many different perspectives?) I think so. Many different perspectives. Some teachers focus more on studio, so more on production. Other teachers are more focus on analyzing art works. The dark processes behind our work, and there are other teachers who are very experimental, and they want their kids to experiment as many materials as possible. Other art teachers are very structural and they say they need the skills. Other teachers are saying, we just want them to do that experience. But I think really there seems to be a respect amongst all the different types and we work together well in our chose because we are usually still have opportunity to participate in what we want to participate in or we don’t want participate in.

(How long have you been engaged in the meeting?) With the group? Since the first working at Leon County, which was this is my fifth year. So less than five years. This is my fifty year. So four and half years. When I first came, I didn’t know anyone, I didn’t know anything, it’s very scary. But they are all so nice, so helpful. Immediately they teach things and show what I need to do. So this county is very unique I think.

(Why?)
Because the art teachers are so organized and work together as a team, so well I’ve never seen that before.

(Did you teach in other county?) Yes, I taught in Louisiana, East…County. But Louisiana is strange. And they call county as Parish, instead of county. It’s a Louisiana thing. It’s French I think. (So how long had you taught there?) I taught only one year. I taught in high school. So when I started teaching elementary here, it was very different. And when I was in high school, it was a very small school. It was completely different. But teachers from another school never talks to each other. We weren’t enemies, but just didn’t organize so we didn’t meet each other. Cause we are all different schools, we all had different things happening.

We didn’t have collaboration with the university, did not have collaboration with the community, art organization, like COCA. This county is very unique. When we work with, how closely work with the university. How closely work with COCA and LeMoyne, and with other organizations like that. It’s really unique.

The educational opportunity that the students have here in art is higher than other places, because of how well organized we are. Because one person is very difficult to put together in art exhibit and find a place like the public library to do an art exhibit, you have to do all the work by yourself. But when we are organized, then we say, “you do this part, you do this part, and
then each do much easier we end up doing much bigger exhibit and very involved lots of work. But we can do it because everyone does a little bit of a work.

(Did you ever feel or see conflicts in the meeting?) Yes, mostly when person thought like the other person wasn’t doing their part of the job the way that you do, they feel like if you sent up this email, you did not send up early enough or you organized where other one goes in the exhibit, but I don’t like where you put me. Those kinds of things. There are usually small arguments. I know usually one or two people that have this problem. But yes, it does happen. That personality doesn’t quietly work together. Or people are disappointed in the way someone else is done their job.

(If there are some conflicts, how do they harmonize each other?) Well, that’s difficult. I think it’s different everything, it’s different every time. I think that again, they compromise, I’ve noticed, first of all, if one person is doing a job, and the other person is not doing the job, and this person has complain. Often we say, “You should’ve done the job. This person is working, you are not working. So you cannot complain about the way to do the job. If you want to do it better, then you should do the job.” So often the team, the group, often kind of side, takes the side of the person who took the responsibility of the job. Not beside of the person who didn’t take any responsibilities instead you did a wrong. (They say?) Yea. (Frankly). Right, very frankly say, “if you want to do the job differently, then you should do the job. Don’t tell her who is very nicely working; she is doing the job right now. So often the group kind of helps back. (How do they say that? When the person who complained hears about that advice from other art teacher, how do they respond to that?) I think that they are still upset but they stop complaining. (But they attend. They continuously attend.) Some teachers, as you noticed, coming, some teachers often are always here. They are regularly in our community. Other teachers don’t attend very regularly. That doesn’t mean that they disagree. That just means that they maybe don’t like meeting, don’t want extra work. Because these are extra work. So some people don’t attend very often. The once they attend very often, even if they disagree, they still attend. Because they are usually the people who are most involved. Even if they still have hard feeling about something that happened, they may have get over that. It’s usually a small thing. It passes and then they focus on new things. Often people really don’t disagree, then don’t attend. We do have some people that really don’t attend. We have many elementary art teachers and we have about probably over half attend on a regular basement, more than half.

(How many schools are in Leon County?) All of the schools are elementary schools. (Many teachers came more than 25 though at the first meeting) The first meeting is the biggest meeting every year. So one said that they don’t attend regularly. They came to the first meeting. But also we have many different people who come from to the meetings. The first meeting we had
representatives from LeMoyne, visual arts, we had of course Viki, and Amanda. Sometimes we are studying to get the NAEA, the FSU NAEA will be starting coming to the meetings also. The first meeting we had a few private school teachers. Because private teachers are welcome to our meetings. And they attend sometimes, but not often. So at the first meeting, there are some teachers from different religious schools, private schools. And we also have some teachers from other county. So we have two teachers who attend regularly from another county. Just because they are interested in what we are talking about. And they want a community so they drive a long way to get here and attend. (They don’t have a meeting like this in their county?) Right, so they attend ours. Also they are from a smaller county. So they will be much less. Maybe only five art teachers in the whole county. We have 25 just actually two of the schools have two art teachers. Some schools have two art teachers. Just elementary schools. We have just public elementary schools, 27 art teachers. And then private schools, maybe another 15 art teachers and then high schools more and middle schools more. (Compared to high school art teachers’ meeting in here, there are lots of talks and they bring their stories in the meeting they really want to share.) Yea, it is almost difficult to start the meeting, “Hello, hello!” Yes, I know. Cause we are really, for the most part, friends. In colleagues that appreciate each other are saying, We get a lot of ideas each other. I think most part people respect, the skills of other teachers, every person has a different style, a different teaching styles. So talking to different people can improve our teaching a lot. By just having a conversation, saying “you know, I’m trying this, really mess up, how do you do it?, I say, I did it like this.” So we thought a lot of problems share a lot of methods and how to make something successful, a lot of lesson ideas, just having conversations. And we say “I had a really bad today, whatever.” (How did you feel when you received help from other teachers?) All the time, all the time. When I first started, because I’m from high school, my experience in elementary school was very minimum. So I asked for tons of help. Every teacher, really many of teachers were so helpful that they would come to my school either. After school, they come and help me to do things. Or they call me or by emails and tell me how to do something or share lesson plans. They are very helpful every day. Of course there are certain teachers that are more motherly. They take me under their wings. Some teachers help me very often. Others maybe only once a time. But I can think of maybe 10 or 15 people helping me different times. And really it’s helped me to become much better art teachers because so many things that I didn’t know how to do with such young children. When you are trying to get them to paint, they can’t tie the shoes, they can’t do anything. Oh my gosh! Do I get them to know how to do this! I wouldn’t have been able to do it without the help. So I think that’s why you are here when we walk in and we are not only just discussing all day but are getting help for little problems, asking questions, giving each other resources, like books, art lessons, things like that. And I think that why the meeting is so
important. Because anybody who need a help, that’s the time to find somebody who can help their problem. So it’s really nice. I got so much help, and I usually accepted very quickly help. I don’t know if I have given as much help as I take. I enjoy getting the help. (It’s the time that you receive help and a few years later you will be able to give them help) Yea. Definitely. (I think actually you are giving help now as a leader or coordinator.) That’s true. (You look professional.)

(For your life, what does it mean to your life to have good relationships with the art teachers? How do you think they have helped you generally? Not necessarily related to art education.) Most just socially, because even though we have a very close community professionally, we don’t at least I don’t, some do, I think, small groups. For the most part, we don’t see each other outside of the meetings or art exhibits something like that. So I don’t see them, “hey, let’s go have dinner” We don’t do that. But the all involved my life, they know who my husband is, they know what I’m doing, they give me rides home before, let me borrow things, just general, little helpful things. But mostly and personally they feel like I have friends and I have people that need something, I can always go to. Even if I don’t hang out within the weekend, I know that if I did it, I had a great time, and I know that if I will need something, it would be right there.

(Tell me about your experience of giving your help to other members.) Okay. It’s often. I get lots of things for help. Margie, for example, loves to give gifts, like you. She is very appreciative anytime I do help her anything. She thanks me and thanks me. If when that doesn’t happen, there is still an appreciation. If I like to give my help, I feel like increase our friends. It makes me be very proud that I have something to give to help. When I came in not very long ago, I was definitely the baby of the group, definitely the least experienced at the group. (33) Now there are a few new people. Okay, I’m not a baby. But I used to be. So I really appreciate now after I had some experience. Now they ask for help. Because that shows to me that they respect something that I’m doing which makes me feel good, maybe I’m doing my job. Yea, they are usually very thankful. If I do something, maybe people don’t know it, they just don’t notice, I mean maybe like with the work with coordinating, people always notice, what and how much work this is. Margie used to do the job for years. I think anybody knows what the job is and knows that is difficult. I think that’s why she is supportive and thankful whatever I do because she knows that is a difficult job which is a time-consuming work. But I say the same thing to her because she helped us for so many years.

(Have you ever met your mentors or best friends in that meeting?)
Definitely. All of them are my mentors. All of them. Art education mentors that I currently go to
for any advice are at the meeting. And I’ll say my mentors are Viki, Julie, Margie, Marcia, Fran Kautz, maybe. But just **different people** who have more experience, different things, they are definitely my mentors. Not just even they tell me things, but I watch how they do things. That teaches me a lot. I really feel like I wouldn’t have learned anything. I mean I would be much further behind. And much lonelier knowing am I doing right things, I don’t know. If I hadn’t met this group, and I really do things they are definitely my mentors.

(Do you think the teachers are colleagues and friends? How did you know that meeting?)**They reached out to me.** When I first started here, they sent a letter to the school, and they just say “art teacher.” They knew that there is a new teacher. They knew the last teacher left and then I was new. They sent a letter that was a just general announcement. “we have an art meeting. it’s gonna be at this time and at this place. And that’s it. Then I got an email saying the same thing. Just announcement. They didn’t know my name and know who I was. But they did send the information to me. So I **went to the first meeting and I didn’t know where I’ll find and find again like a high school meeting which is going to be serious and boring. But then I noticed that they are all talking and friendly having fun, but I was still nervous. So I was quiet at the first meeting. I didn’t talk much. But I would back because I thought this is something I wanted to be part of. So I everytime got the same announcement again. I always returned. And the more I returned the more I talk to people, more adapt me people, and then I **became a regular member of the group.** It was funny, because the first meeting I went to, there was Viki Wylder. She talked to me and I didn’t know who she was. I didn’t know anybody knew what school I was from. She talked to me and said, the last art teacher had agreed to do the art show and she said, “would you like to do it?” Because she left now and your school should be part of it.” Okay, I said. So I became part of another group. A different community. The last two years. With the FSU museum, so I became part of that community also. Because Viki came to me and said, “we want you in this, in this program.” They came to me. The nice thing is that part of my job, new teachers at the beginning of every school year I send emails and notice the jobs of teachers so that they can come to the meeting. Once they come and hopefully come back.** (How do you understanding mentoring in your life? You can be a mentor or mentee.)**Well, I am a definitely mentee. I think that being a mentee has made job much easier and more confident in what I’m doing because I have the support from other people. I guess I increased my confidence which that I think help me to become more a mentor to other people if I need it. I’m still a mentee more than a mentor. 

(Did you ever think about your life without the meeting? If you didn’t meet the teachers..) I think that my idea about different ways to teach hard within much different, I think that I wouldn’t take any risks in the classroom because I wouldn’t quietly know, I wouldn’t know I
have the **confidence to know how to do it.** In knowing I can ask other people about how they might have done it, it always make me feel like “I can try that” Also I feel challenged by the mentors because they do such fantastic big things that I almost feel competitive. They do it, I will do it. They set a very high bar, so we have to. I think a lot of the work I’ve done has been to catch up to them to get to be as good as them. I think I worked a lot harder because of them. It’s easier for me to work less and I say “Okay” and go home. **Because of having mentors that really push me to do more and do more**, then I do more and more and more and more... They work much more. **I think that’s a big difference.**

(Tell me about your experience when you are done art projects or activities with other experts within the community or out of it. Maybe you have an experience like working with other experts, like more professional artists or people from art organizations.)

**<Collaboration with artists>**
The Museum and Coca. I have a few years ago we did. Our group exhibit called “story exhibit.” With that exhibit, we worked a lot with the museum but then a lot with different community artists. With Viki’s help, Viki is really good at helping with, putting the contact with different artists, I worked with Viki, not on the actual art projects but on setting up the art projects, getting it organized, getting all the contacts. Once I had that, when I started working with artists not only really enjoying working with the kids but also the kids really enjoy working with artists and it wasn’t always an artist that had lots of experience working with kids. The kids, they are knowing this is not a teacher, knowing they are professional, a professional artist only makes art, engaged in much more prestige, gave them more prestige, and they gave the kids more private. I get you work with real artists. Not a teacher but an artist. It was really one of the best experiences I had. Because we were able to go outside of classroom, and I think made the students’ artwork much more deep. I think they know artists, working professionally. Now I did organize all the stuffs so when I work with professionals, I’ve been more set up more of the plan and I organize, and I make the structure, but I concentrate more on the structure, and making sure that the students are behaved the students know what they are supposed to do, and the students are prepared for lesson things like that. And then **I let the artists be more creative and really learned of creative aspects of the project. Instances are different. Because usually as an art teacher, you are in charge of all on the project.** When I am in collaboration with another artist, I set back on that part and I just keep the students doing what they are supposed to do, planning where to be supposed to be, whey they are supposed to be there, keeping the schedule things like that. **So the artist gets to really become the teacher, the creative teacher.**

(Did they have problems with working with young kids? Because they don’t have much
experience to work with young children.)

<Collaboration with writing and English teachers>
First of all I had taught older than the students, which helps a little bit, they are fourth graders, you don’t have as much as just being really a little baby (47). They don’t do completely lessons. Yes the artists that I’ve worked with did very well with the kids. But I think that he has some experience with RDT. They would be able to think about the experience. He knows what the kids might be able to do, what the kids might be interested in, he got it about the great way. But I also collaborated with the English teacher and with writing teacher. She was the one who really taught students how to write, poems. I am the one I really taught students how to draw the nature. (48.28). The artist didn’t really have to teach the lesson, only inspire the lesson, only make the kids excited about the lesson, and show the kids how they do it as an example. So they did more methods of just showing this is how a real artist does it, this is how I do it, an artist’s example. The artist didn’t teach the lesson. The artist mostly creatively said, “this is how I make art, this is what I do, what I make art. And they help them to do art the way they did. But the lesson about the questions that the students have to think about to do the writing were from me. I worked the questions with the English teacher, put the questions into a notebook for the children to write.

Without teachers there, it would’ve not gone on line. With a smaller group, it probably still would’ve gone well. But with the big group like that, only teachers know how to prepare for teaching that many children one time. But the artist was really great to get the kids excited about it, the kids to see that what we say is real, like people actually professionally write, professionally do these things. If I take them to the museum, and Viki gives them materials at the museum. They see Oh, this is a woman who is not an art teacher, also say the same thing as the teacher says about art. I think that enriches the classroom quietly more. (Viki has lots of knowledge about kids?)

Yea, in much more, not as much as teachers’ way, but she does know how to talk to kids, explain to kids. When Viki does a program, I don’t do anything except make sure that the students are behaving themselves. But she does the lesson. She talks to kids, she teaches the kids. I don’t do any of that. She asks the questions everything. Viki is an experienced with education. (51.29) More than museum studying, she used to speaking with the kids.

(Amanda, she is from COCA. What does she do for this group?)

Amanda, she does a few things. She organizes one of the biggest art shows, which is the Winterfestival and organizes with the City. Viki is more about contact with the university, Amanda is about contact with City. She works a lot with the government. Also with the school board, and with high school teachers, private school teachers, community artists, she is kind of
contact with everyone in the community. Anyone involving and anything creative goes through COCA, goes through her organization. **Amanda focuses definitely towards the teachers, she organizes a lot of art shows, but also we have a lot of people that ask for art work, a business.** Let’s say, “we will like elementary school art works to be exhibited here. She will go as our representative, and say “this is what they need, this is what they like. She looks like a space and then she comes back to us to present to us, and says, I think it’s a good idea, it’s not a good idea, this is what they want.” She is definitely a liaison between us and the city, between us and businesses, us and professional artists, us and even sometimes school board, because she talks to higher and of the school board we often speak to them. She usually gets to meetings with the important people. She really has so much work to do. She is one of those people who have so much energy and is ready to take on so much work. She does look just anything that we need, she says “okay, I help, I help, I help..”

…You have to show professional development **to renew your certification.** So the meetings don’t count. Taking classes at the universities, for classes given by the school board of education, or you have to show.. You have to renew it every five years. And then you just earn points similar to your credits at the university. You can earn them in different ways. (Do you think that the art teachers in the meeting, they can gain some benefits from the monthly meetings for their professional development? )

**<The need of art supervisor>**

I think so. I think it would be valued for professional development. There is the difficult to convince the County, the School Board to say “Yes, we will give you points for a meeting.” Because they don’t really know what we do in the meeting. We used to have a representative from the school board always in our meetings. She was wonderful and was great. Well once the budget was cut, she did lose her job, she moved to other area. Now there is nobody, there is nobody art person. There is never really art person in the county. There was somebody who did art, foreign language, music, all different types of things. Now one person that does maybe twenty different areas. So she doesn’t have the time to come to the art meetings. But it used to be that we had a great representative who came to us, talked to us, and then she goes to the school board, and anything that we needed, any communication between them. She would communicate. But now we are very separated from them. Everything is done just from the people who want him to do it. Really no one tells us that we have to do it. It’s not mandatory. We don’t get any credit for money at all, for points at all.

(It’s really amazing because it’s not mandatory, but the art teachers really want to attend
But they won’t give us money for anything. Because all professional developments, we are employed. We have to keep our certifications. We don’t get paid for it.

(If you can get money from school board or government, what do you want to do?)
I don’t know. Go on the vacation.

It’s very rare. I mean I think it’s rare. Teachers that like what they are doing and like each other, work so well together. I don’t know how even it started.

(What are the goals of the art projects or events?) Usually it has a few goals. Usually to make art education, especially elementary art education more visible in the community. Because that provides support to us to keep the art programs going and keep parents and community members feeling like art education is important for the students to have, because our programs are of optimum pregnant by budge cut. So just diability of scene, what grade stuff are students are able to do. It’s one of the big motivators to put it out the community. Another one is to motivate students, really make them feel a sense of pride in their work. Because they get to see their own art work in more adult spaces, which is very professional. They’re exhibited very professional manner. The kids are used to stick a tag in a board with their pictures, it’s not professional. You put it on the refrigerator. But when we have an art show, in a frame, label, they get an invitation, and they receive certificates, we invite their parents, and we have a reception. It’s a very professional. It’s really exciting for students. It is most motivating for them in the classroom to want to do more. I think it helps the parents to see that their child enjoying art in doing well. I think those reasons will be main goals.

My school is a little different from other schools. We have a population that it’s difficult for them to travel. They don’t have cars. A lot of that. their parents work at night. The first thing that I do for events is to try to contact parents as much as possible ahead of time and really encourage them to attend cause when I first got here it still is difficult. It’s difficult to get my students to see their art work in the community. Because it’s difficult for them to get there. When we have things like that at public library or at the city hall, it’s difficult for their parents to organize time and transportation to get there. The first thing I do is to try to communicate with them as much as possible, send letters home, send directions, send them to classroom teachers to help them to remind them, and I really kinda try that pump it up classroom. It really encourages them to attend them and tell them how important it would be. With that, I’ve got attendance much higher, still not great, much higher than it used to be. And then the other thing what I do for the events is to make the art work, frame the art work, label it, take it up. And then the kids often meet
their standard art work and meet their parents. Sometimes I give them certificates or little name tags as an exhibiting artist, which again encourages participation, but also makes it more important.

Interview Transcript of Ellen: February 18th, 2010, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

1. We are talking about the community. How long has it been?
The monthly art teacher’s meeting? I have taught 18 years here. They were meeting before that. I don’t know how long before that. At least 5 years before that. I don’t know how much longer than. When I came, Ann told me you really should go to that. Every month. And I did. I go. (I don’t see many conflicts there.) No. Most of the time I think they have one. They have been some time people have disagreements about whether or not they do contests something like that. I think there were some problems. One time when they work, somebody was doing too much more than. Other people more do than enough. But the times I have been there. I haven’t heard that. Kind of before my time. Very conflict-free. People have the same ideas about, generally same thing.
(The art teachers’ teaching philosophy in relation to art education is almost the same?)
Probably. Very similar. Generally speaking, they get more, kind of changes in philosophy that come down and pike. It takes a while for people to adjust. We are right now kind of working from product-oriented to the idea of concept, process, and thing more important. Big idea being more important. Skills being more important than having poor things at the art show. Most of us still love making. The thing is hard to get out of that. I want to do this and this and this rather than skills or idea-oriented things. I think art is conceptual now. Teaching the idea, thinking about creating. That’s new to the people. There are some differences between all art teachers. But I think that’s because not really knowing having a change. That’s why I think about learning community is good to help with that.
(Most of the art teachers in the community want to participate in art show? Even though they have different perspective..)
It just depends on what it is. I’ve noticed winterfests have much participation this year. Sometimes winterfests get a lot of students, bring many parents. You give up a night for one or two kids that may or may not show up. It was not a lot of bank for the book. Just it depends on what it is, they are interested in the show for the most part.

(What are the goals or purposes of the art show or events? Why do the art teachers want to participate in the art show or art projects?) Pretty much for the families, for the kids. For the most part, that’s more than anything there are a few of us who really like the idea of our art work being out there in the community. Just because people think it’s important. They more can see
what happens in art classes, because it’s very different. I think LeMoyne, most of the parents were in school. **We want to show and tell what we are doing.** I think that’s important. Not just for parents but for general community. The taxes come up and they asked them to vote for extra tax. So we would have to cut special area programs and still haven’t been understanding. That’s important. In a way **self-preservation.** (What does it mean the taxes?) Local community supports school. A lot of tax local, income tax, sometimes special taxes, levy sale-taxes, for the schools. When they start talking about, you know, cutting back, they don’t have enough money. One of the first things they try to talk about this, you know, art program and music program. So this is the way to show the community, how important it is. So they won’t be cut.

(Do you mean the community is not only limited to arts community? Maybe the community you mean includes other institutes? What kinds of institutes are involved in this community?) Specifically there were past 8:28 schools taxes. Just for the schools. A lot of times that gets used for extra building. Sometimes there are extra. (They give money?) Yea. Tax fairs. That’s how schools are supported. They can add more depending on how about I guess the legislature doesn’t want to give money.

(There are some different perspectives in the meeting. When you hear some different perspectives, some different opinions, how do you feel?) You know, everybody gets their opinions. **They don’t have any animosity. No anger anything like that.** Usually those meetings are, everybody is very getting along.

(They are really open-minded? Open to the different perspectives?) Everybody has different situations. Just because everybody’s lots of different. They come from different places and things that perspectives from somebody. Some of the schools, some of the kids have a lot of **different situations.** I do. Some stuff that people are saying might this go in one year. The other cause that’s not my situation.

(Do you think the art teachers express their diverse perspectives very freely or without any hesitation?) Yea. I think they say all things they think. I don’t think it’s the way of any of our **working relationships.**

(Working relationships?) Yes. Being able to get things done. We have things that need to be done.

(Maybe you have some experience to receive help from the other art teachers?) Have you ever had a chance to get help? Oh, Yea. (Can you tell me about the experience?) **Especially when. I started teaching here,** having an opportunity to observe what Ann was doing, have extra stuff that she does. We worked together for a long time. Ann McBride and I worked in the same. I was a part-time. Actually we split. She was part-time as well, when I first came to Buck Lake. She was here. She just had a baby. I watched what she did. As she did her grades, **I was kinda trying to do what she was doing** for the kids. So there wasn’t so different
and there were **back and forth between us**. That’s been one here I got help. It was particularly early on.

Blair and I, she was doing a painting class. She was going to do summer at the senior center. She was going to teach a class there. I was going to sign up, but didn’t. People who are interested in were not enough. So she didn’t do it. I wanted to take it. She says, “well, come over. I’ll show you the powerpoint that I was going to do.” We will still go paint. So then she emailed out. Kind of **impromptu workshop**. She just says, “okay.” So Evelyn and Blair and I got together and painted because I haven’t painted. Because I have painted oil paintings in years and years. She was like “Oh I’ll do that.” So on our own we just do that. This year that was kind of translated to classroom. I used some of those the same ideas. Some of the fourth grade students were doing landscapes. And a lot of work we’ve done. We were doing oil paintings, but students were using acrylics. We were doing small, tiny landscapes with the acrylic paintings. I started those just this week. That was the case she started her own. She is doing, and someone and I said, “I want to do that.”

**<Personal caring>**

(Besides learning or knowledge or skills, from the art teachers, your friends, when you have some difficulties in your life, did you ever receive care from them?) Oh, yes. That’s definitely what we do. **When my mother died**, they came in and brought food, basically looked after what was going on. The teachers give that generally. Not just the art teachers. Generally. School community. They do that as well. We do that. Linnie who retired this year. She’s been very ill. She has been getting physic and cares from different art teachers. But **mainly people who are older**, who are in her group, as friends, not as a whole team as much. (You mean there maybe some groups) Generationally. Some of us are getting ready to go and retire. Other’s just coming in. 19:21

(Do you have a celebration party for new teachers? ) No. Usually what they have that first meeting. Introduce to everybody. They have perhaps groups during new teachers. There are people who the county assigns and helps. Intentionally to help new people. Ann McBride and Evelyn Pender. People who elementary art or music teachers. They are new. They have the beginning teacher program. They have meetings with them. For this group. (They have to do that?)

Yes. Ann and Evelyn get paid extra. But the new teachers have a group. What they like it, **<Caring for new teachers>** somebody who is not in their schools. So they can be more open about demonstration, problems they are having, they are having problems with their peer teachers. Somebody is not in your school. Ann McBride, she is over there. She teaches the whole bunch of people. She can talk to me more about my problems with these people on this group.
Rather than somebody is right here, be your mentor teacher. In this Buck Lake community, in your groups also there are different teachers. Generally speaking, even if I was like a fourth grade teacher, I would have somebody who is helping me to learn the books for the Leon County and all of the school system stuff. So my first year teaching, the off-campus, they wouldn’t be from my group, from my school. So I could say, I just complained about everybody and wouldn’t hurt everybody’s feeling. Because that person was over there who doesn’t know all of the teachers. So basically they have someone. That works far away. That works with them. Ann is that person for any of art and music. So is Evelyn. In K-5, there is another team of people who work with new teachers to middle school and high school for teachers. (So they are a kind of leaders of..)Yes. Leaders of just showing, making sure they understand different kinds of things about ordering about a just kind of day-to-day life with teaching. (What do you think about the caring from the art teachers? Do you think they care about each other?) When somebody is sick, a lot of times, get her like meals, arrange food, get her food card. So you can order meals out. Not necessarily. Sometimes. Hand-made food, but most of the time is like we are busy. Just the persons doesn’t have time to get themselves food. We take up the collection and get them whenever they go to restaurant and order out, take out. I know that what happened is. We collect money for somebody who is ill. They stop going on, have had an operation, they have a family, they have a baby, things like that. They need more attentions and some helps. 24.52

(Would you tell me about giving help to other teachers?)
Like Leany. She was sick, was unable to work large part of. Last a couple of three years. Some of us got together. She was doing not really well. Took food over to her, had lunch with her. Like her age group. Some older art teachers. The younger ones still don’t know. She was pulling out.

<Officially professional close>
(Do you have best friends and mentors in the community?)
Officially there are people who are close. But most of the time, a lot of time I notice a lot of teachers’ friends tend to be more their schools. Because I see day to day. My closest friends there, they travel a lot, get together. Ann, Evelyn, Blair, and Jean. Those five of us are different travel group. Good friendships developed that way. We go to the conferences.
(Why do you participate in the community?)
I want to know what’s going on. That is my own opportunity. We are really busy. Friends like Ann and Jean, Blair. That’s the best shot to see him once a month. We just want to know what we can be ready for the next thing that comes down and pike. The art shows come up. The chances to put art work on a display. We don’t have any buddy that looks after as far as a main
supervisor type of a leader. So we just sort of have to do. **Do what we can keep each other formed.** (The supervisor, you don’t have, you guys don’t have a supervisor? What role do you expect the supervisor if you guys have one?) *<Supervisor: Having an advocate person>*

We never had an official one. We have somebody who’s been like the coordinator for music, PE, arts, and math, the four. They come to the meeting. And they just listen to us. (They don’t support?) Some better than others. For the most part, they have too many other things go on to do much. (So what do you want them to do for the meeting? The community.) I am not sure cause I never had one. Don’t really know. I think part of the things would be finding more with the latest information, research about what’s going on another school district, about teaching, grading, dealing with schedules. Trying to make sure that there’s more equity among schools. Some schools just treat their art teachers specially. You know special area gets to know a lot of schools and other schools are highly respected. Think sometimes if you have an advocate person who is at the county office. **Kind of pointing that out.** Making sure there is an art teacher at all the schools. Some schools, middle schools particularly guilty of once somebody quits, they don’t bother the field leader take a couple of years to fill. They are opening in the meantime, there’s an interest in that program totally gone. Things like that. I think the county would be **more level-oriented.** (If there are some supervisors, you can have some communication with the county or teachers.) Even in our county, there’s a lot of inequity. I think we have **a lot of inequity.** Other county have less interest in keeping artists and art teachers. Our county is fairly good about making sure we got it. Ocala county cut back. They got rid of half of the art teachers. So the kids have half of a year and they have music for half of a year. And they switch. So art teachers go to the school. That’s you know another county, what I am saying is even our county, there is a difference in amount budget. We get a lot of money for our school program. There are money they get to work with the students various.

(Next question is a little bit repetitive. Before you became a mentor or a member of this community, given what you…what does it mean to you in your life, mentoring? )

Ann was kind of a mentor for me. I remember when I was in a lake city. Unofficial. **It’s not official thing.** You don’t call each other that. I had a friend who taught for a longer than I had. She knew more about having dealt with especially the younger ones. I was always over her school after my school is out to find out what’s going on, how you do this, how you grade, how you do parents. You know, I learned a lot from this teacher over a lake city. And then I came in this city, I also did that with Ann. And then I became that for more some teachers in these groups’ doing, in these groups’ what we are doing, in these groups what you’ve been to. That’s happening more now. For me, in that group situation, rather than **informal one-on-one,** we are going to do book study, we are going to do a learning community about this or that. (A learning
community?) You know, you might or might not have a book. A learning community get together and talk about these things. (Kind of informal meeting?) That’s one of the things we are more supposed to do. Book study or a learning community are part of the how we grow as teachers now.

(Why do you think teachers have to learn more? Why do you think are teachers have to have professional knowledge and skills?) Definitely. A lot of profession just changes. Kids change. Technology changes. The idea of using that stuff I used to use big pictures that used to be the main way we teach. Now I hardly get those up. Mostly we are working from the screen, projector, computer technology. You know, you just even that stuff. It’s just constantly changing and you have to be up on how can that help you rich and your kids better. It’s need that way.

(Based on the situation, do you think the art teachers’ meeting is really important?)

Yea. It’s important for me again keeping up with what’s going on, it’s not as much for making kind of contact, keeping contact with people who are spread all over the county. As far as my professional development, that’s not the place that I grow so much. It’s more about kind of a quick finding out what’s going on, talk to people, make connections, make plans for doing something else. But I think growing things are more in those book study and coming these workshops. Going even traveling together somewhere to be in a conference. Those are more important professional development to me. Just a monthly meeting which is more about what’s coming in next.

The difference between the monthly meeting and book study>

(You maybe have experience to work with other experts, not only the art teachers but also experts from other different area.) Not so much. Artists in the community? Definitely we have an opportunity to get together in the summer with people. They do workshops with this more orient towards..I have taken one of them yet. I would like to do. Glass one. The glass workshop. Leslie was doing in the summer, so I wanted to do that. That would be getting together was somebody in the community, not really teachers, of the teachers. But we do that.

(What support do the art teachers’ group have?) Viki. She is probably the most to me understanding. She knows what we do. She is really respectful of time and understanding that work. You know, what she has to do get us to work with them. She is so good at that. She has a time frame. Like something to do next week. She gives you a lot of warning, she tells you what to do. A couple of days before, it’s really good. She is not going to be there, she knows how we work and can accommodate that. She is good at organizing things, she’s got crack to follow through these work with..
(What kinds of art projects do you guys work with her?) The peace show. The peace mural stuff. We did the story project. That’s from beginning to end. It was an idea that we had. She said, “let’s go with it.” Working on another one right now for years from now. We already started thinking about what the next project is going to be. It’s called “generation.”

We’ll see how that one goes. She is super easy to work with. What’s not good about Viki, she doesn’t have connections to the county. She is in a university field. There is a separation.

(Maybe if she has connections with the county, what do you think makes the community better?)

Well, I think the story project, one thing. I don’t think anybody in the county, they really won’t interest in, there wasn’t their idea. I don’t think they came, were not supportive to all these schools, all these kids not so much. I think the county pays more attention to Brogan. The Science thing. Art happens there, but it’s not much. So I think they have a little bit more interest in science.

(What do you think you are going to do for the next project? What roles are you going to be in charge of?)

What kinds of things I am doing? (Yes.) Probably we just try to get teachers interested in helping to participate. That would be the main thing. Especially classroom teachers, looking for people out of the community, can be part of it. Looking for artists, that’s the very next thing, kind of come up with artists. My role is helping identify them. and I identify schools which want to be part of it. Maybe looking for things like run in serve grants. The grants that would deal with kids serving in some way may be going in the homes for elderly people doing some kind of projects. Generations that way having people come from elderly folks come into our schools to teach kids how to do crochet. Pass on the generation the knowledge that kids maybe don’t have because parents skipped it. Maybe their parents’ parents skipped it. I did learn it from my mother. A lot of kids don’t. Their parents don’t know. They are looking at grandma’s that maybe come in it. Learn something, teach something, they are different. Art is just about grandma’s and grandfa’s that they are lessons, passing that love down. That’s kind of work that project is about. There are a lot of ways in that..

(Art teachers are participating in the project. Viki is going to be a kind of leader?) Yes, totally. She is the other thing. She kinda gives us like “oh, cool!” I’m here for what you want to do. She checks and makes sure it’s okay. It would’ve heard of what do you want to do? She whole the meeting, she runs the meeting. She puts calendar together. Here’s what we need to buy this, this...Censor and reminders. She’s totally the leader. She is really.

(I know Amanda, she is always in the meetings. What does she do for the community?)

<Amada’s role>
I think she is more about **connection to artists in the community**. Kind of community art aspect. As much as anything. I think of her spent that community art connection.

(What projects is she in charge of?) She does the Winterfest. She puts together. She is in charge of getting artists for galleries around the community. She does that too. Mostly she is, I’ve heard that COCA is just the local art group and tries to just keep an eye on an idea of what’s going on elementary community, and how can art teachers get involved in that. I think one of the things that she has a broader base because she is all the arts, not just visual arts. She just needs theater around and dance as well. Viki is pretty much visual art field. And put shows together.

(With other community, to make connection with other communities or other experts is important for your professional development?) you mean like the artist community? Cause I can think of any I really know any communities for my professional development. you know, working artists, other teaching fields. Sometimes we have to go to workshops that are more general aids that kinds of things because that’s all there. (Who provides the workshops?) The last one I went to was, they paid me to go. It was two days. And **it was FSU**. Special aid group, they talked about reaching all the kids. Making sure you can teach children are just not mere people. Showed you a lot of different techniques that differential instructions. That was a general workshop. Not just for art teachers. You know it could be applied. Sometimes not, sometimes very well. (you don’t know much about people from different fields?) No, not so much. (What are the difficulties and concerns of art teachers? What difficulties and concerns do they have as an art teacher?) Time. The lack of time with their kids. That’s the biggest complaint I hear. Lack of the time with kids, lack of time for prep. I’ve been hearing a lot about the equity idea. Having bus duty every day. In-classroom teachers don’t have. That kind of thing happens. We take turns more or less. Some teachers have excessive amount this year. 55.21

(Do you think you are **isolated** in your school? Because there is only one art teacher at your school.)

Sure. Definitely. Absolutely. (Do you enjoy going to the monthly meeting?) Yes, I do. (Share information, knowledge in the meeting, they can get many things in the meeting) Yes. They get information and knowledge from each other. (You said, the practical learning like ideas, lessons plans, you can gain the knowledge of art and artistic skills you can get in the book study. What is the role of the monthly meeting?) I think it’s connection. **Not isolated. That’s the biggest role.** You know, there are certain things like the 58.02 making sure how they know their art work on display and the Youth art month,
make sure everybody’s got something out in the community on display. That’s important again. Just **being visible in community is important**. 
(That the community participates in the art show is not mandatory? Yes. Why do many art teachers want to participate in?) Just because we really feel like it’s a way that kids, parents and general community see what’s being done in schools. How important art is. Really that’s a huge thing.

(Many parents and children, they go and see the art show?) Yes. Usually. It depends on schools. Some schools can’t get the parents to come in. Just not their population.

(Do you think kids and parents consider art as important for them?) Most of us, they do. That’s generally speaking. Not everybody. But most of us think it’s important.

(The idea about Story Project is from you. How do you come up with the idea?) I think years ago it was being a lot of emphasis was been placed on reading and writing, and trying to come up with phrase, we could be loaded in the classroom. That was the one of the things. I remember **being at a Florida conference**, art teachers’ conference. There are quite a few things on writing, using reading, integrating that into, and then just sitting around talking, not just with the people went with the some of the Leon County High School teachers. I was at a workshop. We just started talking about, you know, “what about making books?” She taught computer art. “Can you make these books? On the computer how could you do that?” We just started talking about just different things. We can do it, we can have, we could have really needs. She did it in her school. Cause she has been in Charles. They had a project with Viki. And what I did in our school with, we have visions of North Florida, it was the first project we did with Viki. In our school, we just started talking about what if we did something, kinda **County-wide**, to pull them in lots of schools. Used the ideas of narrative stories. It’s really big. A big idea to co-work with as an artist in schools. Basically, it came out of talking to art teachers **at a conference** as much as things. Just sort of seeing and then trend of what’s important.

(What did you do for the project? What was your role? Actually what did you do?) I went to meetings, picked artists. All of us picked artists, decided what we would like to do. Projects with these artists, what we would do to work with each other. That’s part of the whole process that we **do as a team**, going to be with Viki. Starting years before.

(How many teachers participated in the project?) About 13 or 14 or 15. (Half of art teachers?) No. Cause high school too. So would’ve been. (Kind of that project is County-wide project.) Yes. It was **County wide and private schools** also I think involved.

(Do you do County-wide projects?) We had our Buck Lake art show that worked up with the Story project. Both art teachers did artists from the Story project. We trained classroom teachers to use some of our lessons do projects in their classroom as well. **We trained art teachers also as a team to work with.** We did. Ann, Jean, Sonian, Blair and I trained art teachers, we trained
some Blair’s teachers. We trained the **home room teachers** how to use these arts in their classroom. Do writing stuff like that.

(Do you think the home room teachers they need to do something for art class? How do you want home room teachers to help you?) I think just mainly working **with the big ideas** more than anything else.
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Jeonghyo Kim majored in Elementary Education at Gyeongin National University of Education in 1996 for BA, and in Elementary Art Education at Korea National University of Education in 2001 for MA in Korea.

She served as an elementary school teacher in Korea for 10 years. During her career, she studied art education at Chiba University in Japan as an accredited teacher from 2001 to 2003. In 2006, she entered the Ph. D program in the Art Education Department at Florida State University (FSU) in Tallahassee, Florida. She taught art education theoretical foundations and practices to pre-service elementary teachers in method course classes for two years as a Teaching Assistant. She has enthusiastically engaged in scholarly activities, most notably conducting presentations at the conferences of the National Art Education Association and at the International Society for Education through Art. In addition, she has published scholarly articles both in Korea and Japan.