

ANY GIVEN CHILD EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

July 10, 2012



Executive Summary

About Any Given Child

The primary goal of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Art's Any Given Child initiative is to assist communities in developing a plan for expanded arts education in their schools ensuring access and equity for all students in grades K-8. The Kennedy Center brings to this initiative more than three decades of work with thousands of students, teachers, principals, administrators, business leaders, and arts managers across the country.

The Kennedy Center has identified five primary outcomes for communities participating in the Any Given Child initiative. Communities will:

1. Develop long-term goals for increased access and equity in arts education programs and resources for K-8 students.
2. Develop and maintain programs and support systems (including data, resources, and professional development) for arts learning providers, such as classroom teachers, arts specialists, administrators, arts organizations, and teaching artists.
3. Develop and maintain a governance structure to oversee and sustain the Any Given Child initiative.
4. Secure funding and other resources necessary to sustain the community's long-term goals for K-8 arts education for every child.
5. Influence arts and education policy in the school district, local government, and arts organizations.

The Any Given Child initiative consists of two phases of activity. The first phase, which lasts from ten months to one year, is the Strategic Planning Phase. In the first steps of the Strategic Planning Phase, the Community Arts Team (CAT), which was identified in the application process, convenes for the first time. Throughout this phase, the Kennedy Center staff and consultant visit the community monthly to facilitate CAT meetings, provide ongoing support and technical assistance by phone and email, and provide access to resources and materials developed by the Kennedy Center and other Any Given Child sites.

Once the Strategic Planning Phase of work is completed, the site enters the Implementation Phase. During this time the CAT may dissolve or evolve into another oversight group. This group is responsible for the implementation of the long-term goals to increase access and equity in arts education programs and resources for K-8 students. This Implementation Committee makes decisions about securing resources to support the Any Given Child initiative: funding, staffing, communications, advocacy, and marketing. In the Implementation Phase, the Kennedy Center continues to offer consultation advice to sites and can continue to do so for up to three additional years.



Any Given Child Evaluation Design and Methodology

The evaluation of the Any Given Child initiative was structured to be completed in two stages. The first stage consisted of in-depth field research at two sites, Tulsa, which was in the Strategic Planning Phase, and Sacramento, which was in the Implementation Phase. Site visits included: reviewing site-specific materials, interviews with the Kennedy Center staff and consultant who worked closely with the selected sites, observations of relevant activities, interviews with the Site Coordinator and other key liaisons, and a facilitated focus group discussion. The results of the in-depth field research during Stage 1 allowed for the creation of instruments that could be used across multiple sites during Stage 2 site visits.

Stage 2 consisted of conducting site visits with six Any Given Child sites, including the sites that were included in Stage 1. Site visits were conducted for Austin, Portland, Sacramento, Sarasota, Southern Nevada, and Tulsa. In addition, a web-based survey was deployed to CAT members at all Any Given Child sites which included Springfield, Missouri, in addition to the sites listed previously. The site visits included a facilitated focus group discussion with site leaders to review CAT member survey results, a Site Coordinator interview, and observations of relevant activities. In addition to collecting data from Any Given Child sites, interviews were conducted with experts in district-level systems change.

The evaluation of the Any Given Child initiative was designed to collect data using qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative data were analyzed using a multi-step process that follows the constant comparison/ grounded theory model. First, data were prepared by organizing items as responses to the key evaluation questions in an Excel spreadsheet. Next, all of the data were reviewed and organized into themes. Once all of the data were assigned to one or more theme(s), quantitative data were analyzed and assigned to themes where it supported or supplemented the qualitative data.

The quantitative data gathered from the CAT member self-assessment survey were analyzed by question. SPSS software was used to run basic frequencies for the survey data to identify trends and outliers. The data were used to support findings from the qualitative analysis. In addition, chi-squared statistical tests were used to examine the association between opinions of respondents from planning and implementation sites. This test is often used to determine if there is a significant relationship between the responses of two different groups. In this case, there were no significant differences between planning and implementation sites' responses and therefore, the tests were not included in the report.



Key Findings

Sites' participation in Any Given Child is strong and leads to success in the initiative

By deliberate design, Any Given Child brings together a range of sectors, organizations, and stakeholders to work towards the shared goal of improving K-8 students' access to arts education programs and resources. The Any Given Child application provides sites with detailed guidance on the recommended composition of the CAT. Sites are instructed to involve leaders from multiple sectors, including arts organizations, school districts, local government, and philanthropy. Additionally, representatives on the CAT must either have decision-making power within their organization or access to decision makers. Sites reported that the Kennedy Center guidance has allowed them to assemble a team with the right people and organizations involved to create change in K-8 arts education.

CAT members feel that their teams include the right people. A majority (91%) of CAT members surveyed felt that their CAT or Implementation Committee had the right people involved to improve arts education in the community, and 83% felt the right organizations were involved. Sites identified that having the right mix of people at the table was extremely important to the process at many stages.

Sites had most of the skills, knowledge and resources needed for successful planning represented on their CAT. Sites were presented with several skills, knowledge and resources that should be represented somewhere on their CAT throughout the Any Given Child process. These include marketing skills, fundraising skills, knowledge of how to influence change within school systems and arts organizations, research skills, community connections, and access to decision makers. Some sites shared they had not used all of the skills, knowledge, and resources listed above in their Strategic Planning Phase, but thought that they would all be needed in the Implementation Phase. In the CAT member survey, most respondents reported that the collective skills, knowledge, and resources of the CAT were at least sufficient to help their site move forward with their Any Given Child work. Many reported that the CAT's collective skills, knowledge, and resources accelerated their site's ability to move forward and improve K-8 students' access to arts education.

CAT members contribute to Any Given Child in a variety of ways. When asked about their key contributions to the Any Given Child initiative through a member survey, CAT members were most likely to cite time and expertise. CAT members contributed their time by attending meetings, participating in sub-committees or working groups, and creating and distributing surveys for the resource assessment process. Those who described their expertise as a key contribution were most likely to report their expertise in the field of arts, education, or local government. CAT members also shared that dissemination of knowledge to outside parties was a key contribution, and part of the buy-in process. Much of this was in congruence with community connections that previously existed or that were forged through the process. Some members reported that their participation on multiple arts and/or community boards helped them to get the word out to different community members about Any Given Child.



Kennedy Center Facilitation is Exceptional and Provides Critical Direction for Sites

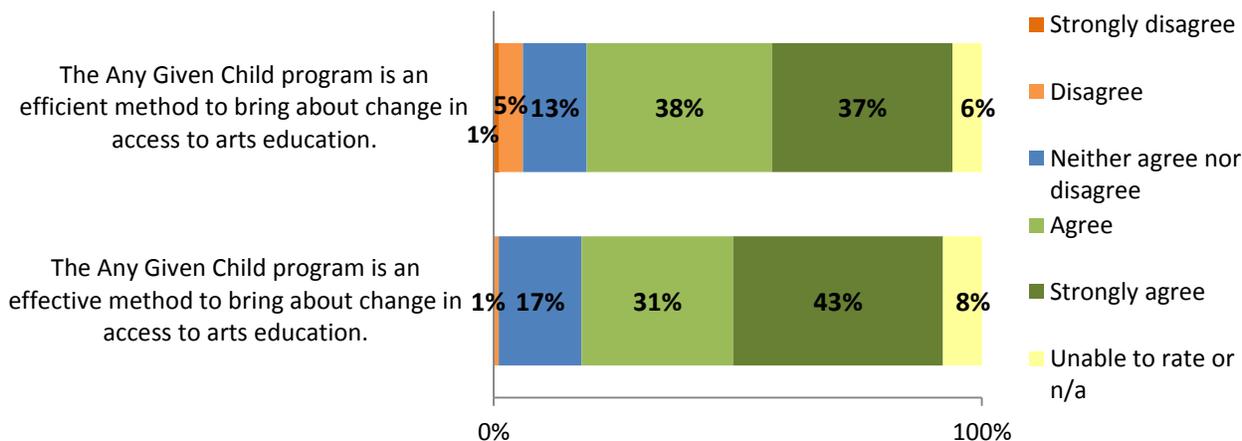
Across sites, Kennedy Center facilitation was viewed as exceptional and critical to providing needed direction and moving the initiative forward. Sites have provided extremely positive feedback on their experiences working with the Kennedy Center staff and consultant through Any Given Child. Sites appreciated that the process was a true partnership between the Kennedy Center and their site. Early on in the Strategic Planning Phase, the Kennedy Center facilitators set a positive, collaborative tone for the meetings that helps CAT members leave their personal interests “at the door” and work for the common good of students. Sites shared that the Kennedy Center facilitators provided the right blend of guidance, support, and flexibility tailored to each site. Throughout the Strategic Planning Phase, the Kennedy Center staff and consultant help guide the Community Arts Teams through several decisions about their site’s mission and vision, resource assessment surveys, and long-term goals. It is no easy task to help a group of 25 to 30 people come to consensus on these decisions. When issues arose or the group needed to get back on track, the Kennedy Center staff and consultant were able to step in and help sites focus on the task at hand. This kept the CAT from getting lost in an endless flow of ideas or a disagreement over small details. This also kept momentum going in the group because they were able to see progress and outcomes from their work.

The Kennedy Center staff and consultant have learned many lessons from early sites’ experiences with Any Given Child; these lessons have been used to improve the process for future sites. As a result, the current planning sites have had a smoother experience with Any Given Child. Some early implementation CAT members felt unprepared for the work they were that asked to do, but current planning sites have not experienced this issue to the same degree. The Kennedy Center learned from early sites, kept what went well, and improved upon areas that were challenges. For example, the Kennedy Center staff identified early on that the Site Coordinator role would need to have easy access to office supplies and materials needed to support the CAT. This was not the case in an early site, which made it difficult to perform the Site Coordinator function. This issue has not come up in future sites because the Kennedy Center changed application criteria to reflect the need for office support.

CAT members report that the planning meetings were viewed as an effective and efficient way to bring about systems change to effect K-8 students’ access to arts education. As shown in Chart A below, three-quarters of CAT members surveyed agreed that Any Given Child is both an efficient and effective method to bring about change in access to arts education (75% and 74%, respectively).



Chart A: Effectiveness and efficiency of the Any Given Child initiative



Any Given Child Process and Tools Support Sites as they Improve Students’ Access to Arts Education

The process and tools that the Kennedy Center uses to structure and carry out the Any Given Child initiative, including meeting agenda templates and sample resource assessment surveys, support sites as they engage in creating district-level systems change. Sites have been able to move from creating a vision about how arts education should look in their community, to collecting data on current arts programming in schools and the community, to setting goals for the future of arts education, and finally, to implementing action steps designed to achieve their site’s goals. The process for the Any Given Child initiative was created based on best practices for systems change. Based on the work that has been done by the seven Any Given Child sites so far, the process and tools work in multiple community settings with different needs and goals for arts education. The process is flexible enough to adapt to each site while still focusing on the same overarching intent, to increase access to the arts for any given child.

Kennedy Center Involvement Helps Generate Momentum and Excitement in Any Given Child Communities

The association with the Kennedy Center name enhances community support and excitement for the Any Given Child initiative. Sites feel that their partnership with the Kennedy Center and the visibility and status it brings to the Any Given Child initiative are a big reason why they have been able to garner support and leverage funding in their communities. Sites have been able to leverage the power of the Kennedy Center’s name to garner buy-in and bring people to the table to serve on the CAT. One Any Given Child site shared that they had previously tried for years to bring together a coalition of leaders to improve students’ access to arts education. They credit the Kennedy Center for their site’s success in generating the excitement needed to assemble a team that will make their long-time vision for arts education a reality. Sites believe that the on-going presence of the Kennedy Center helps keep the momentum going for their Any Given Child initiative.



Each Site Demonstrates Ownership of their Any Given Child Initiative

The Any Given Child process takes into account sites' individual characteristics, context, and needs and allows the sites to make the initiative their own. Any Given Child does not take a one-size-fits-all approach to improve students' access to arts education. The Kennedy Center staff and consultant make it clear that the initiative belongs to each site. They do not prescribe a set of actions each site must take; instead, the facilitators get to know the community, and offer support, resources, and guidance that fit the community. The facilitators share examples of previous Any Given Child sites' experiences when relevant, and encourage sites to make the best choices for their community.

The Any Given Child planning meeting structure is tailored to each site's needs. While the facilitators work from standard agendas for each of the seven planning meetings, they tailor the agendas to accommodate each site's needs. Some sites needed more time coming to consensus on the vision; others needed more time discussing results from the resource assessment survey process. Sites reported that the Kennedy Center staff and consultant understood their community's needs, and appreciated the work that they put into planning. This included the time the Kennedy Center staff and consultant spent gathering sites' input and through conversations occurring in advance of CAT meetings.

Any Given Child influenced, and was influenced by, other art related initiatives in the community. Several sites came to understand the importance of aligning Any Given Child with other arts initiatives in the community. One site recognized, in hindsight, that it would have been helpful to look at all of the other arts initiatives in their community and assess how they fit together. They felt by not doing this in the beginning it took them a long time to move forward. Another site also felt like an existing arts initiative in their community both helped and hindered their work. Instead of looking at the bigger picture, they sometimes got stuck looking through the lens of the other initiative, which narrowed how they thought about their Any Given Child goals. For a third site, one of the challenges they faced was incorporating the new Any Given Child initiative into the community while respecting the work that had already been done in the arts education field. However, the same site also said that the Any Given Child initiative has become concurrent with an existing pilot project and provided real time data and ideas that may or may not have sprung from the previous process.

Participating Communities have Experienced Impacts of Any Given Child

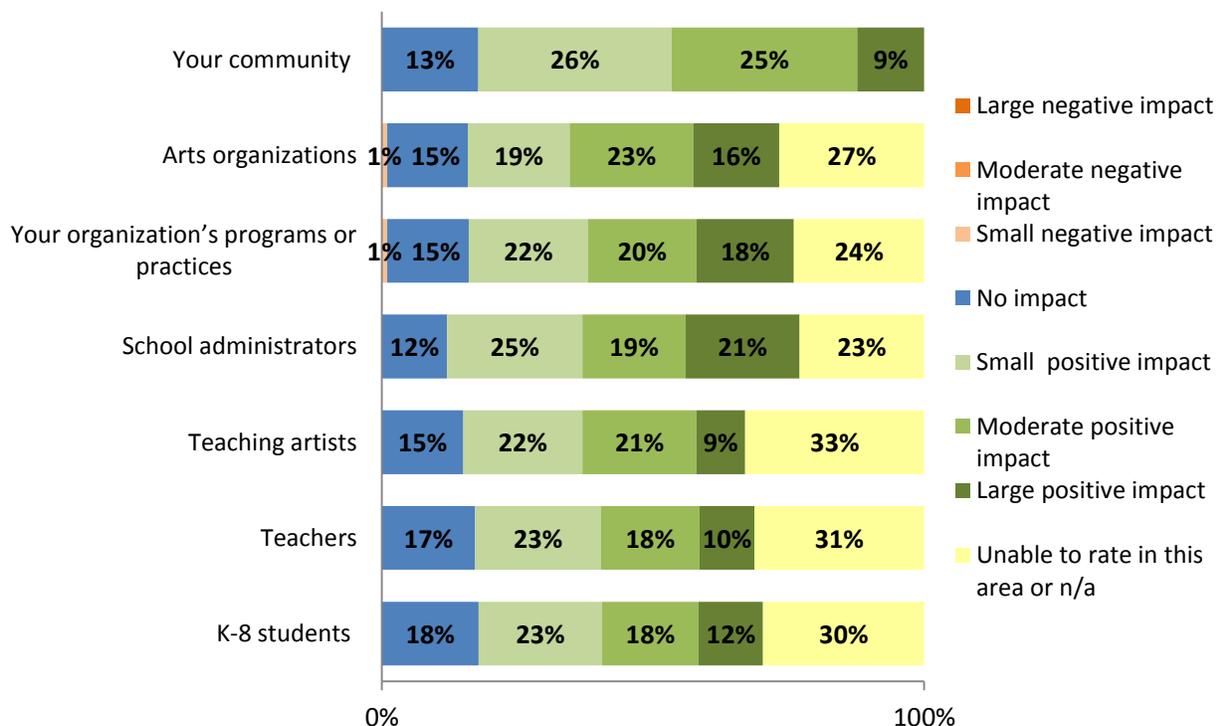
The Any Given Child initiative has generated excitement and increased demand for arts education. As a result of their work on the Any Given Child initiative, participating sites are seeing more excitement for arts education and an increasing demand. Professional development provided by the Kennedy Center for teachers and staff from major arts organizations has been very successful. In addition, events have also brought many people together, such as teaching artists, community leaders, and school administration, to generate excitement about the role of arts in education. There has also been an increased demand in school districts for arts education through Any Given Child. In addition, it has brought arts education to the attention of educators outside of K-8.



The Any Given Child initiative has already impacted students in some communities through increasing access and exposure to the arts. Sites are already seeing the impact they are having on students through increased access and exposure to the arts. One site talked about how they have increased the number of students that are exposed to the arts and how they see this as a small but essential step; instead of learning specific art forms, there is more of an emphasis on arts exposure for all students. This site has been able to increase the number schools who receive one to two art exposure experiences a year, reaching a total of 37,000 students. Two other sites mentioned that schools are working to add additional opportunities and increase the number of schools involved. However, they are also conscious of the investment they make in arts education. These sites are continuing efforts to leverage resources in the community to sustain programming. For one planning site, their plan is to also increase the number of students served by replicating best practices from successful arts integration programs county-wide as opposed to doing bigger or longer programs in only one school.

A majority (87%) of the CAT members surveyed said that the Any Given Child initiative has had at least some positive impact on their community. In contrast, very few (13%) respondents reported that it had no impact (see Chart B below). Survey respondents were less sure about the impact of the initiative on the different organizations and people involved in the process. Of the CAT members who were able to rate in these areas, most said that the initiative has had a positive impact with only one person responding that it had a negative impact.

Chart B: Impact of Any Given Child on community, organizations, and individuals





Conclusion

Any Given Child sites are already seeing the impact of their work in their communities despite the relatively short amount of time some sites have been working on the initiative. Across sites, the initiative has generated excitement and brought visibility to arts education. Additionally, there has been an increased demand in school districts for arts education through Any Given Child, as educators outside of the K-8 levels have been learning of the work being done through the initiative. Sites have already seen how the initiative is impacting students through providing more art experience opportunities. In addition to impacting students, many CAT members feel the initiative is already positively impacting others in their community including arts organizations, school administrators, teaching artists, and teachers. These early impacts are promising since many sites are just beginning the Implementation Phase or are still in the Strategic Planning Phase.

Much of the initiative's successes can be attributed to the strengths of the Any Given Child program structure, as well as the effort put in by the Kennedy Center staff and consultant and the sites themselves. Data show that the structure of the Any Given Child initiative has several strengths including high quality facilitation, participation from partner sites, and strong tools and processes. Any Given Child sites report feeling ownership for the initiative, which also leads to its success. Finally, many sites specifically mentioned the Kennedy Center involvement as a key contributor to generating excitement and momentum for the initiative.