



I am \_\_\_\_\_, a program evaluator from the Improve Group. As you know I am conducting research for Performing Arts Workshop about their Artists-in-Schools program for their federally funded Arts Residency Interventions in Special Education or ARISE project. Thank you for taking time for this focus group today. I will be asking you questions about how the Artists-in-Schools program is implemented and how it impacts general education and special education students.

Before we get started, I'd like to give you a little background about focus groups and why we are doing this focus group. Focus groups are intended to give us a sense of how a group of people feels about a certain subject. We often want confirmation that others feel this way, so I might follow up a question with something like "Do others feel this way" or "Is this important for other people to know about?" I want to hear from everyone, and so at times I may interject to help the conversation keep moving. I will be taking your comments and summarizing them to share with the Performing Arts Workshop staff and the federal Department of Education. You and your individual opinions won't be identified in any way. This focus group is being audio recorded to ensure the accuracy of my notes.

Please help yourself to food and beverages. If you need to get up to use the rest room, feel free. We expect the focus group to take 1-½ to 2 hours.

School Name:

Names of Attendees:

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6.  |
| 2. | 7.  |
| 3. | 8.  |
| 4. | 9.  |
| 5. | 10. |



### Focus Group Questions

#### **Our first few questions are about how the Artists-in-Schools program is implemented.**

1. If another teacher asked you about the Artists-in-Schools program, how would you describe it? (What if you were explaining it to a parent? What does the program do? What is its purpose? What is your role?)
2. What happens in your classroom during the residency? (When does the artist arrive? What do they do when they get there? What do the students do? What do you do?)
3. Do your students look forward to and enjoy the AIS program?
4. What kind of planning and reflection do you do with the artist? Are you using the concepts or lessons in other ways? Did you have enough time with the artist to develop or coordinate lesson plans?
5. Is there anything you do during the rest of the school week related to the performing arts in general? (Prompts: Use materials from the residency to teach other concepts? Continue lessons from residency during other class periods?)
6. Was the artist sensitive to the needs of students with disabilities or special needs? Was the artist capable of teaching to and interacting with students with disabilities or special needs?

#### **The next few questions are about how the Artist-in-Schools program impacts students.**

7. What changes have you seen in students' understanding of the performing arts as a result of the Artists-in-Schools program? (Do they have improved artistic vocabularies? Do they know what [theater, creative movement, creative writing] is?)



8. What changes have you seen in students' ability to express themselves using the arts? (Are students using new mediums to express themselves? Can they find meaning in work of other artists and students?)
  
9. How has your classroom dynamic changed as a result of the Artists-in-Schools program? (Do students get along better? Listen to you better? Respond to adults in general better?)
  
10. What impact does the Artists-in-Schools program have on students' academic performance? (Are they more engaged in learning? Do they care more about the quality of their work?)
  
11. What impact does the Artists-in-Schools program have on students' classroom behavior?
  
12. Can you tell me about individual situations in which students were particularly affected by the Artists-in-Schools program? Situations in which the program did or didn't work with individual students?
  
13. Are there special factors or impacts we should understand about working with special education students in the arts? (Can the arts have a different impact on students with special needs? How have you used performing arts to teach special education students in the past?)
  
14. How do you typically reach special education students within general classroom environments? How has that changed as a result of being part of the ARISE project? How do you think the performing arts can improve or add to your methods?
  
15. What would you want to convey to a broader audience of teachers about using performing arts in the classroom?



## Teacher Focus Group

ARISE Project evaluation  
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16. Please explain how factors in your district or school contribute to or detract from using and exploring performing arts in your classroom. (Are you encouraged to use performing arts? Are you given time to plan for or learn more about performing arts? Are there some factors keeping you from using performing arts in your classroom?)

**Thank You again for Participating!**