



OPENING MINDS THROUGH THE ARTS

Opening Minds Through the Arts, Inc.
P.O. Box 41934
Tucson, AZ 85717

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The OMA Outlook

Opening Minds Through The Arts

COORDINATOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends of OMA,

What an exciting time this has been for OMA!! Just last week a crew from the US. Department of Education (US DOE) was here to film footage of OMA to be featured in their monthly TV series "Education News that Parents Can Use". The live broadcast on March 15 will include a round-table discussion, allowing parents to call in questions to the experts. Dr. Joan Ashcraft will be in Washington DC to participate with national figures from the arts organization and US DOE. The program will be aired throughout the month on Comcast Cable System, Channel 71, as well as on Cox Communications, Channel 95 and UA channel 76 on both Comcast and Cox Communications systems.

Please review the article about the OMA Showcase, our special event on April 9th. It is on the back page, above the form for a tax-deductible gift to OMA. PSA announcements about the event will run on all local TV channels.

This edition features the results of the final year of research by WestEd. The second page is devoted to a synopsis of the student achievement data from Stanford 9 tests administered in April 2004.

We also focus on OMA principals. Full support and participation of the principal is critical when OMA is being implemented at a school. This year, OMA was launched at Roberts, Davidson and Cavett. Our original research schools were Lynn-Urquides, Peter Howell, and Corbett. You will get acquainted with new OMA principals, Art DeFilippo and Pat Flores from Lynn-Urquides.

As always, we offer thanks for your continuing generosity in supporting the Arizona tax-credit program that allows you to **support OMA at a particular school**. During 2004, our OMA supporters contributed nearly **\$80,000** to fund artists, purchase instruments, and provide materials. We couldn't serve our children without your help. On page 3 is a form to use for participating in the tax-credit program in 2005. Please consider early participation this year, as children's needs don't wait until year's end.

Hope to see you at the OMA Showcase on April 9th!
Sincerely,

Active Volunteers for the Arts (AVA)



Marsie Chaiken
AVA Coordinator

Become a volunteer for the TUSD Fine & Performing Arts program. You will have the opportunity to work with volunteers and staff members of this department in a variety of exciting programs. Research over the past 3 years shows that students who are exposed to integrated arts programs achieve significantly higher in the tested subject areas of reading, writing, and mathematics!

AVA is now on the TUSD Fine & Performing Arts website. Click on Volunteer Newsletter on the left hand side and see all we have to offer. We'd love you to view our 6 minute video, featuring volunteers and students participating in integrated arts activities.

Join AVA, your life will be enriched as you actively support students in all subjects through the arts.

For more information, please contact Marsie Chaiken, AVA's Volunteer

Coordinator at email:
chacha56@earthlink.net
or telephone: 577-6646.



OMA Showcase Event Honoring 'Gene Jones' on April 9th

Do not miss the OMA Showcase on April 9th, Saturday, from 3 PM to 5 PM, at the Rincon/University High School Auditorium, 421 N. Arcadia Blvd. The concert features our amazing OMA artists performing original works, classical and pop artistic styles. Some of our talented students will demonstrate the skills they have acquired in OMA.

A "Meet the Artists" reception follows featuring tasty items donated by Café Terra Cotta, Westward Look, Eclectic Café, Blue House Catering, Son's Bakery and many other local merchants. The elegant décor, a birthday celebration for Gene Jones and talented artists and students will make this an unforgettable afternoon. Call 225-4907 for tickets (\$50.00 per person) and more information.



TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION FORM (TAX CREDIT on page 3)

Taxpayer's Name _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____ Phone Number _____

Please make check out to: Opening Minds Through The Arts, Inc.

Would you be interested in volunteering? YES _____ NO _____ (please check)

Send donation to: Opening Minds Through The Arts, Inc.
P.O. Box 41934, Tucson, AZ 85717

* You will be sent a receipt acknowledging your donation.

OMA Research Results at Conclusion of Year 3

In December of 2004, WestEd Research, Inc. published the final report of its three-year study of Opening Minds through the Arts. One of OMA's primary goals was to improve student achievement as measured on the Stanford 9 Achievement Test, a nationally developed test addressing reading, mathematics, and language skills. To better understand the impact of OMA on student achievement, WestEd compared scores of students in OMA schools with students in demographically matched control schools. Individual student data collected by TUSD Research and Accountability Department was used and focused on those third grade students enrolled in OMA schools for the three years of OMA implementation with third grade comparison students who were continuously enrolled in the control/comparison schools for the same three-year period.

After three years of participation, OMA third grade students scored significantly higher than counterparts in comparison schools on **all** of the Stanford 9 tests. OMA showed a consistent pattern of robust, positive affects. The AIMS test also showed a consistent pattern of the same findings. The graphs below show OMA schools in red and comparison schools in blue. Figure 14 illustrates all three tested areas grouping all students involved in the study together, regardless of ethnicity. Figures 15, 16, and 17 examine each tested area and extrapolates data by ethnicity. Since the schools included in the original study were populated primarily by Hispanic and White students, the remaining ethnic groups were grouped together in order that the number (N) of students involved would be statistically significant.

The other two areas studied by WestEd were teacher effectiveness (observed utilization of widely accepted "best practices") and continued strengthening of the arts to include the Core Curriculum. Teachers at OMA schools were observed to implement more effective lesson design/planning, more arts-integrated instruction, and to engage more varied student learning activities, including the use of arts as learning resources than comparison school teachers.

In its Conclusions statements, the WestEd Report confirms that during its three year implementation, the OMA program made statistically significant progress helping students at academic risk to succeed, that teacher effectiveness was enhanced through OMA, that arts instruction was strengthened, that significant gains in student achievement were made in all tested areas, and that students of all ethnic groups benefited equally from participation in the OMA program.

Figure 14
Differences between OMA and Comparison Students on the Stanford 9 Reading, Language and Math Tests: 3rd Grade Students

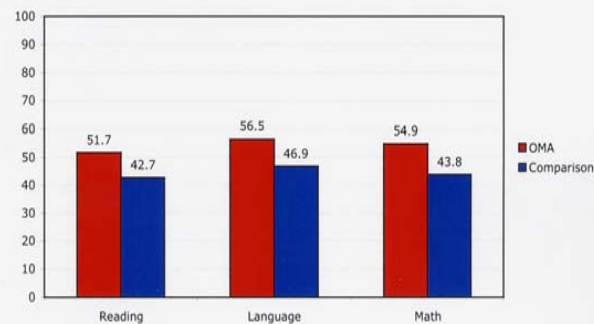


Figure 15
3rd Grade Stanford 9 Reading Mean NCE Scores by Ethnic Group

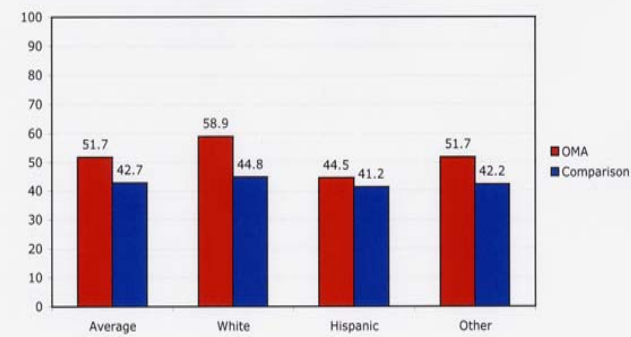


Figure 16
3rd Grade Stanford 9 Language Mean NCE Scores by Ethnic Group

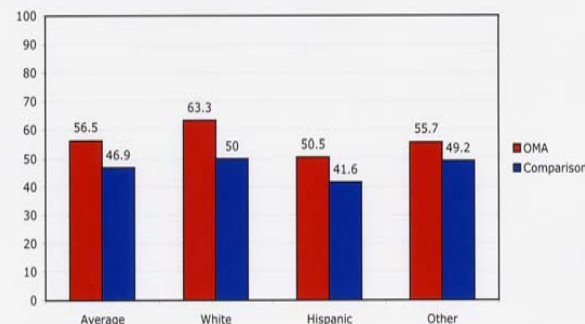
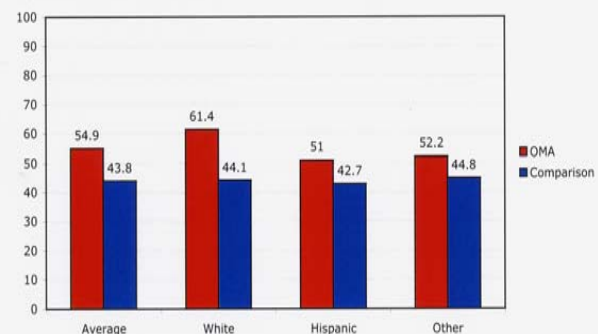


Figure 17
3rd Grade Stanford 9 Math Mean NCE Scores by Ethnic Group



Principals: Art DeFilippo and Pat Flores

Davidson Elementary School is fortunate to have Art DeFilippo as its principal. Members of the OMA team especially appreciate this enthusiastic and highly energetic leader because of his strong belief that arts-integration makes schools more effective and students happier and motivated. This is the first year of OMA implementation at **Davidson, one of OMA's newly identified research schools.** Gerry Petersen, the OMA Specialist at Davidson believes that "Dr. Art" is the "right person at the right time" for Davidson, a school with many challenges, including the upcoming move into the new building being constructed to replace the aging and compromised current structure.



DeFilippo has been in education for over 30 years and has taught all over the world including several years as an elementary teacher in Bolivia. In 1982 he was the Arizona Teacher of the Year. It is great fun to walk the campus with him to see how every child respects and trusts him.

As a student at the University of Arizona, "Dr. Art" studied theater arts and painting before completing a degree in elementary education. He grew up loving the arts and plays several instruments, many by ear. He is thrilled to have OMA on his campus because everyday he sees the excitement that the arts generate for students, parents and faculty.

"OMA should be in every school in the country", he asserts. "The arts have been pushed to the back burner and this program of arts integration is a great way to demonstrate **the many ways kids benefit** from interdisciplinary study with arts at the core. I love walking into the cafeteria, the music room or a classroom with visiting artists and observing how engaged and happy the students are". Clearly, "Dr. Art" is sold on OMA!

Though Patricia Flores is a first year principal at Lynn-Urquides, she has been on the OMA team at Lynn since its inception, nearly 5 years ago, and she is a **huge fan of the OMA program.** Patricia served as assistant principal for 4 years. She loves her job, the faculty, the community and every one of the students, all of whom clearly return her affection.

When asked what about OMA has made her so enthusiastic, she was quick to reply, "**Everything!**" As one of seven children born to migrant farm workers, Patricia spent her childhood moving between schools in Arizona and California. The opportunities available to students through OMA were not available to her. She still relishes the memory of a small school in Huron, California, that had music for third graders. She was given a flute to take home so that she could practice. The awe she felt, along with the sense of accomplishment when she finally learned to play, stands out in her mind as a happy but all too brief experience.



Patricia's parents insisted that she learn English, and she credits their support for her many successes. She is convinced that participation in OMA has tremendously assisted the many ELL students at Lynn in rapidly acquiring English. She also cherishes the impact on student self esteem noting that most often, through experiences in OMA, these students feel successful, giving them the confidence to take risks in the classroom.

Patricia firmly believes that the children's interactions with the OMA artists enriches and impacts the children in ways that are immeasurable. "Every one of our artists is simply outstanding," she said, "and **I can't even fathom the loss to our kids if this program were to ever go away.** Too, our teachers are so supportive because they have seen first hand how we all benefit from having Lynn-Urquides immersed in the arts". Thanks to you, Patricia, for your outstanding work.

Send Your OMA TAX CREDIT Contribution to: Dr. Joan Ashcraft
Fine and Performing Arts
2025 East Winsett
Tucson, Arizona 85719

Taxpayer's Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Social Security Number (required by the state of Arizona) _____

In order to receive a tax-credit, your check must be made out to a school.

(Please write: "OMA" in memo section) OMA schools include: Booth/Fickett, Cavett, Corbett, Davidson, Dietz, Duffy, Kellond, Lynn/Urquides, Peter Howell, and Roberts.

You will be sent a receipt acknowledging your contribution