



CREATIVE ALLIANCE  
M I L W A U K E E

**THE ROLE of CREATIVE EDUCATION in  
PREPARING TOMORROW'S TALENT**

Grant Report Submitted to



Prepared by  
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Project Focus**

Creative Alliance Milwaukee believes that arts education is critical to developing creativity skills necessary for leadership in today's global environment. It is widely recognized that after decades of research on the positive impact of arts education on student development, support for arts education has dwindled not advanced. To that end, the Creative Alliance Milwaukee suggested that a new approach – a re-frame from 'arts education' to 'creative education' be considered and explored, along with an awareness campaign supporting creative education. Creative Education would include a multi-sensory disciplined study of all of the arts, design, and new media technologies.

**Key Findings and Conclusions**

**Key Findings**

- ❖ Creativity skills are increasingly identified as the top criterion for business leadership success in today's complex global environment.
  - The 2010 IBM global CEO study "Capitalizing on Complexity" found that *creativity* was selected as the most crucial factor for future success.
  - Conference Board research, *Ready to Innovate* in 2008 shows that there are some significant disconnects between the creative skills schools believe they are offering in student preparation with the needs of the employer.
  - The human resources executives surveyed revealed that creativity is a critical skill today, yet the majority of them have no systemic way of assessing it in new hires or developing it within their talent base.
- ❖ The definition of creative education from the Project Advisory Council is a good start to guiding curriculum development focused on creativity skills.
  - ***Creative education*** in K-12 represents curricular activities expressly designed to foster capacities for imagination, creativity and innovation. These activities would focus specifically on the attributes of sensing what is not already in existence; thinking through applying imagination; making and implementing unique solutions through the direct experience of multi-sensory learning opportunities including the arts, design, film and media, literary and digital technology.
- ❖ Leading national and local arts education researchers recognize that there is a serious lack of consistent assessment-based evidence for the impact of arts education on creativity development.
- ❖ Strong, effective strategic collaborations and partnerships will be critical in integrating creativity into the classroom in alignment with required workforce skillsets.

## Conclusion

There is a serious communication gap between what the business community says its' creativity needs are in the workforce and what arts programs (in school and community-based) are doing to prepare students' creativity skills for workforce readiness. This communication gap affects any delivery or development of arts/creative education programming as well as value messaging.

This project revealed an issue so much bigger than agreeing on the definition of 'creative education' or developing an awareness campaign for supporting arts/creative education. The most relevant conclusion is *there is a fundamental flaw in our community when a key attribute for workplace success is identified as our creative abilities and yet there is no agreement nor assessment on developing those skills within our children in our K-12 education system.*

## Recommendation and Next Step

The main recommendation of this report is to bridge the creativity skills gap between workplace needs and student development through creative education. And then determine how to foster these skills across the creative education resources available to students – in-school curriculum, community partnerships, civic leadership, etc.

- Develop a list of desired creativity skills that bridges the different sectors including: business community, school leadership, artist educators, and arts organization board leadership.
- Develop creativity skill development assessment protocols for community based learning arts/creative education programming.

Creative Alliance Milwaukee has established a commitment to championing creativity and fostering creative education. Therefore, it is recommended that Creative Alliance Milwaukee take the lead in developing a School to Workforce Creativity Skills Matrix, with the guidance of a community Task Force. This would include:

- ❖ Develop a list of creativity skills relevant to workforce readiness;
- ❖ Distribute the above list to corporate and other relevant community leaders;
  - Ask this leadership to indicate the level of importance of creativity skills in hiring, developing and retaining talent, and for high school graduate readiness;
- ❖ Construct a matrix outlining the priority order of creativity skills;
- ❖ Prepare a summarized report and submit back to research participants for feedback;
- ❖ Present these research findings to corporate, civic, school and cultural organization leadership to commence a discussion on a shared creativity skill outcomes protocol.

Working together to ensure we have the most creative graduates ready for today's complex global environment will not only give us a competitive economic edge locally but it will provide the range of skillsets necessary to establish our talent and our businesses as ready and capable of managing within a complex, constantly changing world marketplace.



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**I. PROJECT INTRODUCTION**

Hypothesis

We are hearing from the business and civic communities that 'creativity' is a critically important competency for developing our leadership and innovation capacity. We recognize that our ability to innovate will determine how we creatively differentiate our communities and our economies in the global marketplace.

We believe that arts and other creative education is critical to developing creativity skills necessary for today's workforce. We also know that after decades of research on the positive impact of arts education on student development, the needle of support has not moved forward. There is less, not more, arts education in schools; there is less, not more, support for community arts education programming; there is no perceived value for arts education at the corporate nor civic leadership. Therefore, we propose that the nomenclature and its conversation need to shift to make a meaningful impact. To that end, we suggest that a new approach – a re-frame from Arts Education to Creative Education be considered and explored. Creative Education would include a multi-sensory disciplined study of all of the arts, design, and new media technologies.

*We need to enhance the creative and innovation capacities of our workforce – at every level. By reframing the conversation and bridging arts and other creative education studies to the creative needs of the business workplace, we believe there is potential for serious investment in long term creative arts education.*

Project Focus

The focus of the project was to explore the reframing of arts education to Creative Education, and to recommend messaging for an awareness campaign in support of Creative Education. After exploring this reframe through both the Advisory Council and the research analysis, the recommendation shifted to creating a bridge between the creativity skill needs of today's workplace and the role of creative education in developing those skills in students.

Upon initial research review, it was clear that we were going to have to make a choice about 'creative education' versus 'creativity in education' versus 'teaching creativity'. Because creativity in and across education represents a holistic, wide ranging approach to all learning, we focused on the actual creation experience given our underpinning was the role and value of arts education.



## Components

The components of the project included\*:

- an Advisory Council to define creative education, guide the discussion, and make recommendations on next steps
- an internet review of how 'creative education' is being defined
- summary of top level CEO published research on the role of creativity and arts education in workforce development
- summary of local, primary research with senior HR professionals on role of creativity in the workforce
- identifying awareness messaging issues

## **II. PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

This report outline follows the list of project deliverables below:

- A. internet review of how 'creative education' is approached
- B. summarized research on corporate leadership perspectives on creativity skills and workforce development
- C. summary of Advisory Council deliberations
- D. key findings and conclusions
- E. recommended next steps

### **A. SUMMARY INTERNET REVIEW OF CREATIVE EDUCATION**

There are many different perspectives on creative education. For some, it represents the creative process – how to think creatively; for others it represents introducing creativity everywhere and anywhere in the classroom; for others it defines a range of multi-disciplinary study including the arts, design and other multi-media; for some it represents using the arts to enrich and transform a child's educational experience. There is no standard definition or approach to the incorporation of creativity within the educational experience. There is not even agreement that the arts are the key to creative education – today's many don't want such a narrow focus on creativity in learning. But one thing is clear, community leaders, enlightened parents, and thought leaders in the future of education have come to the conclusion that our educational system generally suppresses the creative expression of our children rather than nurturing and fostering these talents.

And yet, in this global community, there is a huge cry for original thinkers and creative problem solvers. You see the demand for more creativity and innovation in almost every business publication.

\*While the project was to include a baseline inventory of types of creative education programming, this was not completed because a) the local business research as well as Advisory Council deliberations took considerably longer than anticipated, and b) there is no central location for this information and it would have been impossible to collate the breadth of this information under the scope of this project.



A significant thought leader in this area is Sir Ken Robinson, and his early publication of *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, United Kingdom 1999 led the way. Sir Ken has had a significant influence all around the US with his thinking on creativity and creative education. Generally his position is that our current educational system is killing creativity. Sir Ken believes that ‘creativity in education is as important as numeracy and literacy’. Education should be about discovering and nurturing our unique talents, not just training us for jobs. He says, ‘Creativity in education will transform the system if done right’.

An interesting development is the emergence of a new word ‘educativity’ – which means the ability to merge the inputs, the processes, and the outcomes of both creativity and education. It’s the area where our educational systems utilize and emphasize our creativity in every aspect. This word emerged in 2007 along with the emerging world economic crisis. Where this goes remains to be seen.

It is agreed that the arts aren’t the only avenue to teach creativity, but the odds of nurturing creativity through the arts is a given. As Sandra Ruppert, President of Art Education Partnership observed: "Arts learning experiences play a vital role in developing students' capacities for critical thinking, creativity, imagination, and innovation. These capacities are increasingly recognized as core skills and competencies all students need as part of a high-quality and complete 21st-century education."

There are way too many individual community and school approaches to creative education to explore here, but there are three projects of significant scope worth summarizing. They are the Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity; the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills; and the President’s Committee on Arts and Humanities *Reinvesting in Arts Education*.

### **Wisconsin State Task Force on Arts and Creativity: An Action Plan – 2009**

This Task Force was convened by Wisconsin’s Lt. Governor and State Superintendent *to address the essential role that arts education and the development of student’s creative capacities play in their success in reaching full potential, in the quality of life in Wisconsin communities, and as an animating force in our state’s economy.*

After researching leading experts in the field, the Task Force concluded that “learners who exercise creativity combine imagination, creative thought and innovation to produce something novel that has value”. The report states that “the ability to imagine, create and innovate are key components of what it means to be ‘creative’ – a quality fast becoming a key to future success”. The approach they took to defining creative education will be referenced later in this report.



The final recommended strategies from the Task Force were:

### Legislative Policy

1. Recommendations to revise assessments and standards to ensure every Wisconsin school employs an interdisciplinary curriculum designed to systematically integrate creativity development into the class work.
2. Recommendations to ensure every Wisconsin student enjoys access to education in the arts and creativity, taught by qualified instructors.
3. Recommendation to establish best practices and models for arts and creativity in education that other school districts can easily adopt.
4. Recommendations for research needed for ongoing improvement for arts and creativity education in our schools.

### Creativity in the Classroom

1. All students should have access to courses in a variety of performing and visual arts.
2. Schools should implement creative processes in all classrooms and in each discipline.
3. Professional learning opportunities and support for school staff should be available to implement creative processes in the classroom.
4. Parents and the community should be involved in arts and creativity in education.
5. Universities and the Department of Public Instruction should implement creative processes in pre-service teacher education.

### Community Involvement

Develop a community partnership protocol that will expand and improve available arts and creativity programs and services in Wisconsin schools.

### Business and the Creative Economy

Foster a climate of creative inquiry and innovation in Wisconsin through strategic changes in education, workforce training, and entrepreneurial development systems.

Finally, an overarching recommendation was for the development of a common language. The full report and its executive summary can be found [www.creative.wisconsin.gov](http://www.creative.wisconsin.gov).

### **Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: July 2010**

The Partnership advocates for the integration of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills into K-12 education so that students can advance their learning in core academic subjects. To that end, the Partnership has forged alliances with key national arts educators and organizations.

They have outlined a Skills Map delineating examples of how arts study is connected to overall student achievement in acquiring 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning skills. Skills directly



connected with arts learning include: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation, Information Literacy, Media

Literacy, Information/Communication/Technology Literacy, Flexibility and Adaptability, Initiative and Self-direction, Social and Cross-cultural Skills, Productivity and Accountability, Leadership and Responsibility, and Interdisciplinary Themes.

More detailed information can be found at [www.P21.org](http://www.P21.org) and [http://www.p21.org/documents/P21\\_arts\\_map\\_final.pdf](http://www.p21.org/documents/P21_arts_map_final.pdf).

***Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America's Future Through Creative Schools***  
**– President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities: May 2011**

The premise of this report is that reinvesting in arts education will reinvigorate creativity and innovation in this country. The report found enormous variety in the delivery of arts education, “resulting in a complex patchwork with pockets of visionary activity flourishing in some locations and inequities in access to arts education increasing in others”. In a climate where better creative and critical thinking skills are needed for success in the workforce, outcomes associated with arts education have become more important. Just when they need it most, tools to help develop imagination and creativity are increasingly scarce.

After their extensive review, the Committee made five recommendations for actions to advance arts education. The goals of these recommendations are to clarify the position of the arts in a well-rounded K-12 education for all students; focus and unify efforts to expand arts education to underserved students and communities, and strengthen the evidence base for high quality arts education.

1. Build collaborations among different approaches in the classroom through national leadership organizations.
2. Develop the field of arts integration.
3. Expand sustained in-school opportunities for teaching artists.
4. Utilize federal and state policies to reinforce the place of arts in K-12 education.
5. Widen the focus of evidence gathering about arts education, especially in developing creativity and enhancing engagement.

The full report can be found at <http://www.pcah.gov>.

In summary, all of the above reports support the role of arts education in fostering creative skill sets, and they directly link these skill sets to 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce needs. These research approaches also share the concern about fostering assessment-based evidence, and the critical role of collaborations and partnerships in strategic curriculum development.





## **B. CORPORATE LEADERSHIP RESEARCH**

There are three recent and significant research studies that have an impact on this exploration of ‘creative education’. Two of them are published reports - the 2010 report from IBM – *Capitalizing on Complexity: Insights from Global Chief Executive Officer Study*; and The Conference Board’s 2008 monograph, *Ready to Innovate: Are Educators and Executives Aligned on the Creative Readiness of the U.S. Workforce?*

And the third research study is comprised of one on one interviews of local senior Human Resource professionals.

### **IBM – Capitalizing on Complexity - 2010**

The focus of IBM’s 2010 interviews of their 1500+ CEO’s, general managers and senior public sector leaders, was to answer the question- how are leaders responding to a competitive and economic environment unlike anything that has been done before?

In the previous three CEO studies, ‘coping with change’ was their most pressing challenge. In this 2010 study, the new primary challenge was ‘complexity’- that they operate in a more volatile, uncertain and complex world.

The four primary findings were:

- Today’s complexity is only expected to rise, and more than half of CEO’s doubt their ability to manage it. Close to 80% anticipate even greater complexity ahead.
- Creativity is the most important leadership quality, according to CEO’s. The best organizations encourage experimentation and innovation throughout their organizations. The more creative leaders expect to deepen their business model changes and take more calculated risks.
- The most successful organizations co-create products and services with customers, and integrate customers into core processes. Successful CEO’s make customer intimacy their number-one priority.
- Better performers manage complexity on behalf of their organizations, customers and partners. Increasing dexterity in changing the way they work and access resources is key to the more successful CEO’s.

These CEO’s recognize that today’s needs move beyond business model innovation to finding the right creative leadership to produce such innovation. To capitalize on complexity, CEO’s are:

- *Embodying creative leadership.* Leaders who invite disruptive innovation, take balanced risks, and are open-minded.
- *Reinventing customer relationships.* Prioritizing ongoing engagement and co-creation, and developing deeper customer insights.
- *Building operating dexterity.* Revamping of operations to be more ready to move on opportunities or respond to challenges.



With respect to creativity, here are some of the insights and findings from this study.

- Creativity trumps other leadership characteristics, because creative leaders are comfortable with ambiguity and experimentation.
- Based on the increasing ‘complexity gap’, CEO’s now identify Creativity as the most important leadership quality over the next five years – 60%, with the next priority leadership quality being Integrity at 50%.
- These CEO’s see creativity as more than something new – as the basis for ‘disruptive innovation and continuous re-invention’; upsetting the status quo even if it is successful; ongoing experimentation.; responding quickly with new ideas.
- Creative leaders encourage and experiment with all types of business model innovation.
- CEO’s must equip their entire organization to be a catalyst for creativity. “We need to find, recognize, and reward creativity.”
- Need to ‘seed’ creativity throughout the organization, not silo ‘creative types’ in separate departments.

The full report and executive summary can be found at:

<http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/ceo/ceostudy2010/index.html>

### **The Conference Board – *Ready to Innovate* – 2008**

This research asked the question, “Are educators and executives aligned on the creative readiness of the US workforce?” The Conference Board wanted to look at how US businesses and the K-12 school system were making the link between creative skill sets in the workforce and innovation. So, they surveyed 155 US business executives and 89 school superintendents and school leaders. The employer survey asked them to define creativity within an employee’s skill set and describe how executives identify it in employees. The school survey asked participants to identify the skills that best demonstrated creativity in their students – and which of those skills might signify creativity to potential employers.

Highlights of the results:

- Both superintendents and employers agreed that “creativity is of increasing importance in the workplace”.
- With respect to the changes making creativity more important, superintendents focused on *continuous innovation* and *globalization* while employers emphasized *rise in consumer power* and *pressure due to disruptive innovation*. It seems that the superintendents are not as connected to the current fast-paced complexity of the business environment. In any case, it seems clear they need to understand each other better so that students are more appropriately prepared for today’s workplace.
- In terms of which best demonstrates creativity –
  - Employers ranked *problem identification or articulation* #1 while Superintendents ranked it #9

- Both Employers and Superintendents ranked *ability to identify new patterns* and *integration of knowledge across different disciplines* as #2 and #3.
- Superintendents ranked *fundamental curiosity* as #10 while Employers ranked it as #6.
- Superintendents ranked *problem solving* as # 1 while Employers ranked it as #8.
- Employers ranked *comfort with the notion of 'no right answer'* #5 while Superintendents ranked it as #11.
- For most employers and superintendents, they considered degrees demanding abstract or critical thought as the best indicators of creativity; such as a degree in the arts or communications. Interestingly, for most schools, studies in these areas are only on an elective basis.
- Employers valued work and volunteer experiences that provide a different perspective, more so than superintendents.
- Interestingly, while 97% of employers considered creativity of increasing importance in the workplace, only 72% say that hiring individuals based on creativity skills was a primary concern in the hiring process.

Some conclusions that can be drawn are:

- There is a serious divergence in the kind of creativity skills development that Superintendents think they are delivering and the skills that Employers are looking for. In particular, Employers want capacity to ask questions and identify problems while Superintendents are preparing problem solvers. And, given the main vehicles for teaching creativity in schools are often elective, most students are getting very little access to creativity training and it may not be the right skill focus for today's workforce.
- Creativity does not appear to be a highly assessed skill in hiring new employees, so there is a disconnect between perceived need and ways to ensure those skills are being hired.

The above report can be accessed at:

<http://www.conference-board.org/publications/publicationdetail.cfm?publicationid=1452>

### **Local Human Resources Executive Interviews**

Over the course of this exploration, seven local senior human resource professionals were interviewed. Below is the summary of those interviews. The questions, specific answers and a list of interviewees are in Appendix B.

In summary, the following observations are offered.

- ❖ Creativity is perceived as more of a ‘nice to have’ than a demonstrable need; and in the case of manufacturing, innovation is preferred because creativity is considered ‘squishy’. Often, these professionals hadn’t given creativity per se specific thought as it relates to talent acquisition or retention.
- ❖ Congruent with the Conference Board *Ready to Innovate* research (summarized earlier in this document), most of the HR executives do not hire for ‘creativity’ per se, but they do look for capacities that reflect creative ability, such as flexibility, strategic agility, intellectual horsepower, curiosity, risk taking. They use different language to understand the capacity for employees to be innovative. Many haven’t really sorted out creativity as an individual measurement. Those that do assess for creativity in attracting and retaining talent have found specific models they can utilize, such as Lominger.
- ❖ The HR professionals recognized that schools generally do not advocate for arts programs nor for students to advance into creative careers. The focus is on college-ready curriculum and achieving good test scores. They also acknowledge that arts curriculum has been diminishing and even where a good arts curriculum is offered, they are elective studies and not integrated into core curriculum. Some of the executives also observed that there is not enough exposure to design, which is so critical in today’s world.
- ❖ With regard to their use of Emotional Intelligence in the hiring process as linked to creativity, most executives do not assess for EQ in the hiring process – some because they are not skilled to do it and some because they avoid quantitative assessments at that early stage. That said, many consider that they do look for characteristics of self-awareness, empathy, temperament, etc. Most do assess for EQ in talent development, particularly in the director level and above. None of the interviewees linked EQ with creative capacities per se.
- ❖ Generally, the HR professionals expect a certain creative skill set to come in the door, so to speak, even though they don’t specifically test for it. This is congruent with the *Ready to Innovate* research which cites employers believe creativity is a primary hiring criterion but yet they don’t have their own assessment tools to find it. Beyond the hiring phase, though, most of the professionals believe it is important to nurture creativity in talent development, and they believe they have some, not many, tools to cultivate creativity growth – particularly in the area of self-expression and cross-functional opportunities.
- ❖ The majority of HR executives believe that arts education plays a strong role in developing creative skills because they help students think critically, work well as a team, and take risks. Yet, they see a disconnect between this and the role guidance counselors play in advising students on curriculum – the arts are getting shortchanged in that discussion.



An overarching conclusion with this HR professional's research is that while creativity is cited as a major, critical requirement as they grow and develop their talent force, they are not systematically assessing for it in new hires, nor have they established an integrated in-house curriculum to develop it, nor are they advocating for it with high school guidance counselors. Similar to the findings in the Conference Board report, there is a disconnect between what they say they need and what resources they are investing in to achieve their desired outcome.

### **C. THE PROJECT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The focus of the Advisory Council was to:

- define creative education
- determine education level the scope of the project
- provide advice to Creative Alliance Milwaukee staff on project components
- review project deliverables
- be supportive advocates for the project
- help articulate project outcomes

There were 22 members of the Advisory Council who met four times between September and December. In addition, there was a smaller group from the Advisory Council that convened as the end of the project neared and more specific focus on recommendations was necessary.

The full roster of the Advisory Council is in Appendix A. Those that served on the small advisory group included Laura Gembolis, Brigid Globensky, Thomas Rosenthal, Teri Sullivan and George Tzougros.

The Advisory Council determined its focus would be K-12 education. The full deliberations of the Advisory Council will be reviewed and summarized in a later section of this report.

It is important to summarize the deliberations of the Advisory Council. Suffice it to say, that given the nature of the subject matter and the wide ranging experiences of the Council members, these discussions were often very wide-ranging, spirited and inconclusive. There were no easy answers or totally clear-cut recommendations. The common thread across all discussions and Council members was the belief and commitment that arts education experiences are a critical component of any student developing their creative capacities to their highest potential, and that every child should have equal access to quality arts experiences on a regular basis.

#### **Objectives**

The entire Council was clearly interested in positively changing the perception of the value of creative education among groups outside of the creative community, e.g. parents, business, politicians.



The Council determined it did not want to work on curriculum issues, but to focus on reframing the language and definition, and messaging outside the creative community.

### Observations

Various observations of the Council discussions included:

- teacher capacity to integrate and teach the arts is often too limited
- in MPS, less than 50% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders have arts experience 3 times/week
- the arts are part of Wisconsin's Dept of Public Instruction requirements, but these guidelines are often not followed. There is a new set of Art and Design curriculum standards
- the ICI continuum is important:
  - o imagination – conceiving of what is not
  - o creativity – applied imagination
  - o innovation – novel or unique creativity
- there is a disconnect between school support for curriculum arts education and employer interest in finding better creative skills

### Discussion Points

- There is a need for common language for discussing arts/creative education as well as creativity. It was determined that this Council would focus on a multi-disciplinary creative education approach rather than tackling the much more complex issue of creativity within the teaching curriculum.
- Defining creative education is complex and there is not an easy answer. There is no agreed standard definition or approach to the incorporation of creativity within the educational experience. There is no commonly accepted definition of creative or creativity education - it ranges from individual creative arts subject study to a totally holistic approach infusing creativity throughout all teaching.
- What is the role of creativity development for anyone entering the workforce or those destined for 'creative industries' jobs.
- The HR professional research demonstrated that communicating to companies the link between the value of arts/creative education and a strong employee creative skill set needs to be more effectively illustrated.
- Northwestern Mutual presented its recent research on the Emotional Intelligence impact of Milwaukee Arts Education Programming. The purpose of the research was to determine the effect of arts education on the emotional intelligence at-risk MPS students. Relevant conclusions include:
  - o Roughly half of the sample experienced positive EQ growth.
  - o There was significant improvement in EQ with the most at-risk kids.
  - o Those students who struggle the most with self-awareness, self-management and self-direction seem to derive the most from exposure to arts education programming.
  - o Arts education programming can clearly make a difference in reinforcing students' toolkits for doing well now and in the future.



- In a discussion with Northwestern Mutual Foundation leadership, questions raised for consideration were:
  - How can we make a difference with CEO's in the community?
  - How do we measure success if we reframe from arts to creative education?
  - This seems to be a good opening of the door to buy time for increasing receptivity
  - There is a strong connection with creative education and the EQ research

### Recommendations

1. The Council deliberated and then finalized a *working definition of creative education* as below.

**Creative Education** in K-12 represents curricular activities expressly designed to foster capacities for imagination, creativity and innovation; focusing specifically on the following attributes....

#### SENSE what is not already in existence (imagination)

Curiosity  
Imagination  
Ability to identify new patterns  
Ability to see a bigger and bigger picture  
Team/group collaboration

#### THINK by applying imagination (creativity)

Problem solving capacity  
Capacity to identify or articulate a problem/need; or unanticipated need  
Capacity to move from divergent to convergent thinking  
Capacity to originate new ideas  
Originality and inventiveness  
Critical thinking  
Tolerance of ambiguity and paradox  
Emotional intelligence  
Team/group collaboration

#### MAKE and implement unique/novel solutions (innovation)

Evaluation of methodologies, processes  
Multi-disciplinary integration  
Positive risk taking capacity  
Resilience  
Strategic agility  
Capacity to communicate new ideas to others  
Completion of work in creative endeavors  
Presentation of work



...through the *direct experience of multi-sensory learning* opportunities including music, visual art, theatre, dance, media technologies, literary arts, environment sustainability, and digital technology.

Elevator Speech – *Creativity in education is as important as numeracy and literacy.* Sir Ken Robinson.

This definition and a graphic representation are shown in Appendix C. An important grounding for this definition was the Wisconsin State Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education.

2. We need to link the value of arts/creative education to civic and business priorities.
3. Laura Gembolis and Brigid Globensky presented and recommended a ‘case for creative education’; developing a strong case for creative education through WHY – the research; WHAT – successful, model programs; HOW- the call to action. Their paper is presented in Appendix D.
4. The Small Group of the Advisory Council recommended an awareness campaign:
  - address the ‘why’ first; build consensus on why we need creative education
  - interview board members from arts groups about the role creative education played in their professional development and leadership skills
  - work with a professional creative production company, incorporating high school students, in the interviewing/producing process
  - create a short, professional video that can be presented at key influencer events

## **KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Key Findings**

- ❖ Creativity skills are increasingly identified as the top criterion for business leadership success in today’s complex global environment.
  - There are some significant disconnects between the creative skills schools believe they are offering in student preparation with the needs of the employer.
  - The Human Resources executives researched believe creativity is a critical skill today, yet the majority of them have no systemic way of assessing it in new hires or specifically developing it within their talent base.
- ❖ The definition of creative education from the Advisory Council is a good starting point to guide curriculum development focused on creativity skills.
  - ***Creative education*** in K-12 represents curricular activities expressly designed to foster capacities for imagination, creativity and innovation. These activities would focus specifically on the attributes of sensing what is not already in existence; thinking through applying imagination; making and implementing unique solutions through the direct





experience of multi-sensory learning opportunities including the arts, design, film and media, literary and digital technology.

- ❖ Leading national arts education researchers recognize that there is a serious lack of assessment-based evidence for the impact of arts education on creativity development.
- ❖ Strong, effective strategic collaborations and partnerships will be critical in integrating creativity into the classroom in alignment with required workforce skill sets.

## Conclusion

It is important to note that this is just one study, with a finite number of research reports reviewed and persons interviewed. And yet, much has held consistent across this exploration. Reframing the conversation from arts education to creative education opened up an entirely new vista on the role of arts education in student development and its relationship to the current needs of today's workforce.

This process revealed that the core issue is really not how we define arts/creative education and promote its value proposition, but rather, how do we connect the growing demand for a more creative workforce from the business community with the highest and best development of each student's creativity capacities? Promoting the value of creative education (or creativity) without a shared understanding of its role in preparing students for today's workplace is putting the cart before the horse. The arts have been key and perhaps the most visible in developing creativity skills and yet their role within schools (and support from the community) has been increasingly diminished, at a time when these skills are arguably most needed across our workforce.

There is a serious communication gap between what the business community says its' creativity needs are in the workforce and what arts programs (in school and community-based) are doing to prepare students' creativity skills for workforce readiness. This communication gap affects any delivery or development of arts/creative education programming as well as value messaging.

- While the business community recognizes the need for creativity skills, it is neither effectively assessing for it in new hires nor developing systemic approaches to foster creativity through on the job training.
- While school superintendents believe they are offering creativity skill development, the skills focus they have chosen is not in total sync with the needs identified by today's business community.
- No concerted effort has been made from community-based artist educators to collate or coordinate assessment around creativity skills.
- There is no currently relevant assessment-based link between arts/creative education programming and creativity skill development.



This project revealed an issue so much bigger than agreeing on the definition of ‘creative education’ or developing an awareness campaign for supporting arts/creative education. The most relevant conclusion is *there is a fundamental flaw in our community when a key attribute for workplace success is identified as our creative abilities and yet there is no agreement nor assessment on developing those skills within our children in our K-12 education system.*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Arts education per se has not been seen as relevant in today’s schools nor in the workplace environment for some time. With increased focus on the role of creativity in our lives, this offers an opportunity for a new conversation to create a relevant connection between school experiences (including community arts programming) and workforce talent development.

Because of the gap between student preparation and business expectations regarding creativity skills, the conceived awareness campaign on the value proposition of creative education seems premature. We have learned that a bridge of understanding needs to be built – in both language and measurement outcomes.

- there is no system wide commitment to creativity education. Even with arts requirements there are no outcome links to workforce creativity skills nor systemic program quality assessment;
- the business community has not effectively articulated its creativity needs and talent expectations;
- assessment protocols with in-school arts education and community arts programming are not focused on an identified core of creativity skills.

**The main recommendation of this report is to *bridge the creativity skills gap between workplace needs and student development through creative education.*** And then determine how to foster these skills across the creative education resources available to students – in-school curriculum, community partnerships, civic leadership, etc.

- **Develop a list of desired creativity skills that bridges the different sectors including: business community, school leadership, artist educators, and arts organization board leadership.**
- **Develop creativity skill development assessment protocols for community based learning arts/creative education programming.**

## **NEXT STEP**

The most important next step is to fully understand what the business community wants and needs with respect to the creative skill capacity of its talent base. It is clear from the research that while creativity is identified as an extremely high talent priority, there don’t



seem to be well-defined strategies on how to find it, develop it and retain it - both within the education system as well as the workforce talent pipeline.

Creative Alliance Milwaukee has established a commitment to championing creativity and fostering creative education. Therefore, it is recommended that Creative Alliance Milwaukee take the lead in developing a School to Workforce Creativity Skills Matrix, with the guidance of a community Task Force. This would include:

- ❖ Develop a list of creativity skills relevant to workforce readiness based on current corporate research, creativity skill development research, and arts education research;
- ❖ Distribute the above list as a survey to corporate leaders such as representation on the UPAF board, GMC/MMAC leadership, large cultural organizations' board members, and other relevant community leadership. In addition to this list would be a preamble describing the link between arts education and creativity so that this becomes an awareness vehicle as well;
- ❖ Ask the above leadership to indicate the level of importance of creativity skill in hiring, developing and retaining talent, and for high school graduate readiness;
- ❖ Construct a matrix outlining the priority order of creativity skills relative to student education and workforce development;
- ❖ Prepare a report summarizing the research and submitting back to research participants for feedback;
- ❖ Present these research findings to school and cultural organization leadership to commence a discussion on developing a shared outcomes protocol based on creativity skill development.

Working together to ensure we have the most creative graduates ready for today's complex global environment will not only give us a competitive economic edge locally but it will provide the range of skill sets necessary to establish our talent and our businesses as ready and capable of managing within a complex, constantly changing world marketplace.



CREATIVE ALLIANCE  
M I L W A U K E E

Appendix A  
CREATIVE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL CONTACT LIST

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION	EMAIL	PHONE
Denise	Callaway	Coordinator, Business and Community Partne	MPS	callawde@milwaukee.k12.wi.us	414-475-8650
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Teri	Sullivan	Founder and Co-director	Arts at Large	teri@artsatlargeinc.org	414-763-7379
George	Tzougros	Executive Director	Wisconsin Arts Board	george.tzougros@arts.state.wi.us	608-266-0190
Steve	Vande Zande	Co-founder and board president	RedLine Milwaukee	stevenpolkadot@aol.com	414-559-5015

## APPENDIX B

### SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES INTERVIEWS

#### Persons Interviewed:

Denise Domian, BonTon Stores - retail  
Regina Blair, Manpower Group – staffing services  
John Hokey, Kahler Slater – creative services  
Brad Mahoney, Rexnord - manufacturing  
Claudia Paetsch, Northwestern Mutual - insurance  
Joe Mauthe, Plexus - manufacturing  
Kurt Thomas, MGIC – mortgage services

1. The recent IBM CEO study of 1500 global CEO's identified creativity as the most pressing need in managing within a complex world - both at the leadership and general workforce levels. Do you believe that creativity is a serious issue that needs addressing within your workforce?
  - a. yes, but we don't hire for it 'per se'
  - b. we do have 'creativity' as a competency but we tend to directly apply it only to 'creative' areas of the business, such as art direction, marketing, etc.
  - c. a part of our competency hiring but not expressly
  - d. more focused on management development
  - e. looking closely at this now; lack of creative, conceptual flexibility – don't seem to be able to move the business forward in changing environment. Not enough willingness to take risk.
  - f. yes, we believe creativity is a skill set; conducive for creative dialogue and sharing.
  - g. a top issue affecting productivity is change management and creativity is a key talent
  - h. in a creative services business, look for it in the hire (portfolio, etc); then need to assess capacity for creative problem solving
  - i. consider creativity a synonym for innovation; using creativity seems too 'soft' and 'squishy'. Innovation critical to be more productive, and find the 'game changers'. 'Creativity' is too soft to be used in corporate/industrial world
  
2. What do you identify as the 'core creative skills' most critical to being successful within your organization? Why? How do you link these skills to an individual's innovation capacity?
  - a. language for competencies we look for we would consider 'creative skills', such as: learning agility, strategic agility, intellectual horsepower, innovation, risk taking, discipline to convert divergent thinking into convergent thinking, collaboration, perspective, adaptability, ability to challenge traditional methods, dealing with ambiguity

- b. sometimes it is challenging to use ‘creativity’ beyond for creative staff positions as some see it as scary, squishy, not understandable
  - c. don’t hire for it per se, but do assess creative capacity in talent development. More and more creativity is being seen as an opportunity to move the organization forward; culture is changing as more accepting of differences
  - d. the link to innovation is not directly measured, but is anecdotal. Finding more links between arts education/experience and ability to innovate (music and IT systems thinking)
  - e. look for risk-taking, conceptual flexibility, managing through chaos and change, having a vision, capacity to search for what is not there, intellectual curiosity – because these are critical business skills. However, we don’t do a good enough job of assessing or measuring. Look for arts/design background and try to ask the right questions.
  - f. we haven’t really thought this through but do look for capacity to question assumptions, comfortable with risk-taking, comfortable with intuition as well as analysis, strategic agility to navigate an idea to completion, translating a value proposition into a product that generates wealth
  - g. enthusiasm and open-mindedness; flexibility – find a way to show me you are flexible; ability to ask questions
  - h. don’t do a good job today; hard to assess for creativity and innovation
  - i. haven’t really thought this through entirely, but we do look for questioning assumptions, comfortable with risk-taking, use of intuition, ability to articulate the value of innovation
  - j. use the Lominger competency model, which has #14 Creativity. Each job is identified with 4-5 competencies. Creativity includes learning agility, intellectual horsepower, challenging traditional methods, improving on current procedures, risk assessment in cost/benefit, dealing with ambiguity, organizational agility, ability to work as a team. We hire for, review and promote using these competencies. The link to innovation is anecdotal, easier to see in ‘creative’ positions than more routine jobs.
3. Do you think schools are adequately developing creative skills in their students by high school graduation? Why do you think that? Could they be doing anything differently to enhance creative skill development?
- a. Used to have strong high school programs, but can’t afford them any longer – so these students don’t have the business creativity experience they used to
  - b. Usually good opportunity to get involved in school but pressure for college prep work and advance classes usually means not enough time
    - i. Some opportunities are slipping away with budget cuts
  - c. Counselors are not advocating for arts experiences; they push for college; don’t think these courses are being fostered within the school system
  - d. Need open mindedness, ability to work within a team in a small business, which the arts provides, but schools don’t seem to ‘get’ this
  - e. Seem to do a fairly good job, but have disappeared from a ‘core’ curriculum
  - f. Could do a better job engaging kids in problems needing solutions; more open ended testing

- g. No – not enough exposure to design, and the value of design in everyday life
  - h. Art is too much on the chopping block; need more active expression because smart people are comfortable with expressing themselves and have a better chance of success
  - i. Used to have high school co-op programs with good mentoring but no longer
4. Do you evaluate a candidate's EQ (emotional intelligence) score during the hiring process? How much credence do you place in Emotional Intelligence when assessing candidates?
- a. Don't really use EQ per se, but facets of EQ are included in assessments; the organizational development department does more than the hiring department. Make sure we pull out some facets of EQ in the interview process.
  - b. Not really much in the hiring process; usually incorporate into managerial development. We don't assess for it. There are specific management development courses.
    - i. Managers have to 'present' themselves in some way, how do they 'approach' something.
  - c. Don't do it in hiring process. Some concern about such specific testing in hiring.
  - d. Only test for it in director level and above. At other levels, it is more of a personality assessment. Looking for cognition and personality, temperament, cooperation. And, haven't yet incorporated it into an internal talent development program.
  - e. Don't test per se, but do look for self-awareness; fluidity between functions; connected with 360 assessment tools. Struggle a bit with the correlation between EQ and performance – assessment doesn't always allow for gaps in perception, and studies on effectiveness aren't always reliable
5. Do you think corporations play a role in developing a creative skill set or should that come with each hire? Do you have a talent development program that includes fostering creativity skills?
- a. We expect to hire basic skill set coming in, generally
  - b. Have to have it for the job at entry level
  - c. Encourage personal development; cross functional, for growth
  - d. Opportunity to shape it from entry level; company can influence learning; corporate culture can reinforce it
  - e. Need time to develop innovation talent in the company
  - f. We look at gap analysis in talent management program; identify most growth potential
  - g. Yes, a program that grooms for advancement
  - h. Tend to look for greater creative competencies after some time in company
  - i. Creativity can be nurtured in everyone
  - j. Businesses play a huge role as they provide avenues for expression; want to give employees opportunities to express themselves, such as through cross-functional committees and the executive development program. Trying to give more flexibility in their roles so that have more creative opportunities.

- k. Do have an obligation; doesn't just start with finding talent, but need to create talent – build skills going forward
  - l. We put a high filter on entry level expectations, so don't have a strong connection to building from within. Expect people to absorb from others when training – apprenticeships, for example.
6. What role do you think arts education plays in developing a student's creative skill set?
- a. Yes, although can't really see it directly. Know there is a correlation, but can't prove cause and effect
  - b. Closest we get is asking if they have a hobby, which tells us if they have different perspectives in their living
  - c. Yes, arts ed adds to and develops perspective; allows natural creativity and self-confidence to emerge
  - d. Despite budget cuts, haven't seen reduction in creativity from grads; we need to foster their creativity and give them a voice
  - e. The arts help kids think critically and ask questions; get to a higher level of creativity
  - f. The arts in school are an important access tool for creative development
  - g. Would help if teaching culture had more of a role; offered more process work and less rigidity in job framework
7. Have you seen any change in the quality of creative skills within new employees versus those you were hiring, say, five years ago?
- a. Find that college grads have a broader perspective in orientation and knowledge
    - i. More informed and connected
    - ii. Searching for stronger employee value proposition
  - b. Not really
  - c. Current college grads have a broader orientation and knowledge; they are more informed and connected
8. Other comments
- a. Everyone is having to do 'more with less'; and more documentation and standardization. Average person is doing 1.2 jobs
  - b. Companies have to draw out more flexibility and creativity because time is so limited; jobs are being more and more routinized



## **APPENDIX C**

### **CREATIVE EDUCATION DEFINITION**

#### **Creative Education Definition – A Template for Communication**

**Creative Education** in K-12 represents curricular activities expressly designed to foster capacities for imagination, creativity and innovation; focusing specifically on the following attributes....

##### **SENSE what is not already in existence (imagination)**

- Curiosity
- Imagination
- Ability to identify new patterns
- Ability to see a bigger and bigger picture
- Team/group collaboration

##### **THINK by applying imagination (creativity)**

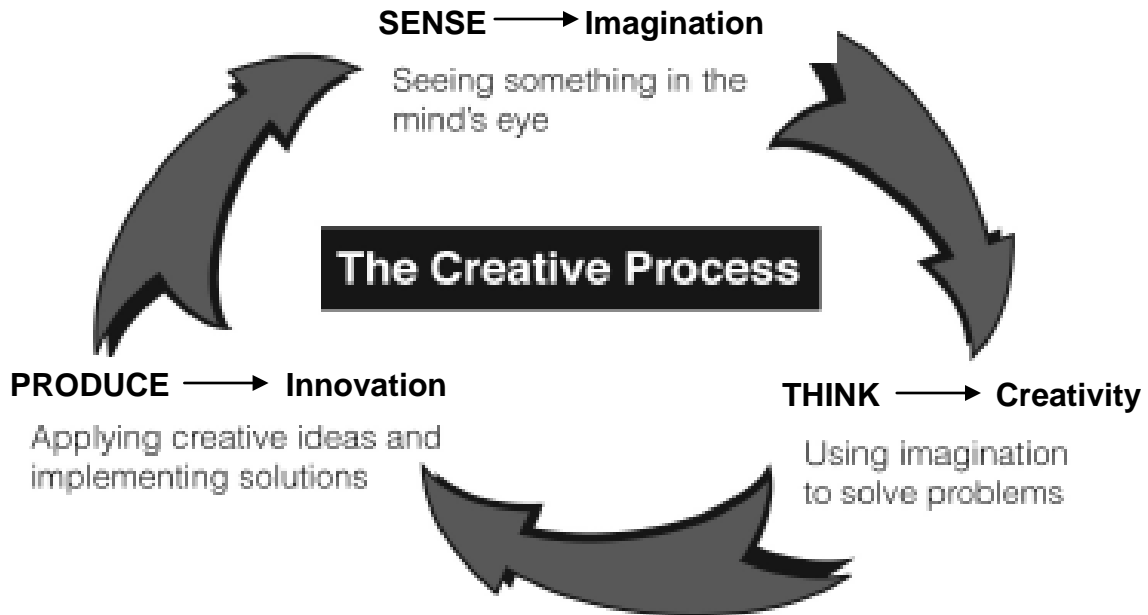
- Problem solving capacity
- Capacity to identify or articulate a problem/need; or unanticipated need
- Capacity to move from divergent to convergent thinking
- Capacity to originate new ideas
- Originality and inventiveness
- Critical thinking
- Tolerance of ambiguity and paradox
- Emotional intelligence
- Team/group collaboration

##### **MAKE and implement unique/novel solutions (innovation)**

- Evaluation of methodologies, processes
- Multi-disciplinary integration
- Positive risk taking capacity
- Resilience
- Strategic agility
- Capacity to communicate new ideas to others
- Completion of work in creative endeavors
- Presentation of work

...through the *direct experience of multi-sensory learning* opportunities including music, visual art, theatre, dance, media technologies, literary arts, environment sustainability, and digital technology.

Elevator Speech – *Creativity in education is as important as numeracy and literacy.* Sir Ken Robinson.



## Appendix D

### The Case for Creative Education

Designed and prepared by Laura Gembolis, Herzfeld Foundation and Brigid Globensky, Milwaukee Art Museum



Goal: Develop a strong case for creative education in order to increase support and funding for creative education programming.

The Why Section : Provides the elevator speech why creative education is important. In this section people could find up-to-date research, talking points, great quotes. Great for anyone writing grants, talking to politicians, school boards or parents.



## Research:

James Catterall found significant advantages for arts-engaged low socially-economic status students in college going, college grades, and types of employment. (Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: The Effects of Education in the Visual and Performing Arts on Achievement and Values of Young Adults)

Arts-Integrated Model (AIM) schools in Montgomery County, Maryland reduced the reading gap by 14 percentage points and the math gap by 26 percentage points over a three year period.

The What Section: What's happening. Model programs at the national, state, city, school neighborhood levels. This could be information and links for people who want to get more involved and see what's already happening. This is basically the group sitting around the table.

## Models:

School –Elm Creative

Arts Partnership – Milwaukee Arts Education Directory, A.W.E., Milwaukee Art Museum, Danceworks, First Stage, Neighborhood—UNCOM, Denver's PlatteForum

Networks of Schools – CAPE, A+ Schools, ACE

School District – Arts@Large

City -- Dallas Big Thought,

Region – Milwaukee Arts Directory, Scientific & Cultural Facilities District (throughout the seven-county Denver, Colorado metropolitan area)

National – Kennedy Center, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

Environmental Science – Growing Power, Urban Ecology Center, Schlitz Audubon Center



The How Section: Call to Action – How to get involved. This section could be everything from writing to legislature and school board complete with sample letters to sing a song, dance with your child, put on a neighborhood play. It could include places to contribute and other ways to get involved.

**Actions To Take:**

- Timely letters to politicians
- Contribute to an arts program
- Volunteer in an arts program
- Make art with friends
- Share art
- Take an arts class