

Teacher evaluation and principal perception: How arts integration may be key to elevating dance

Kori Wakamatsu

Department of Dance, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

ABSTRACT

Teacher evaluation policy is a poignant and high-stakes issue. Driven by research, stakeholders are forging ahead with the premise that quality teachers are a critical, if not the most important, resource. As a result, many states are reforming procedures in response to educational reforms. The change to evaluate teachers in a systematic way has understandably led to widespread implementation concerns, equity issues, policy and procedure questions, and teacher anxiety. Teacher anxiety may be especially magnified for the dance educator who often faces perceptions that dance is an extracurricular nicety. Current trends in teacher evaluation reform may further marginalize dance by evaluating student test scores and implementing evaluations by administrators with little dance content knowledge. Principal feedback is a crucial component of teacher evaluation, yet inadequate knowledge of dance may lead to insufficient teacher evaluations and instructional progress. By strategically exposing principals to the art of dance through arts integration, teachers may be successful in improving perceptions and knowledge of dance that could ultimately result in higher quality of teaching and learning.

KEYWORDS

Arts integration; dance education; online advertising; teacher evaluation

Focus on teacher evaluation is rapidly increasing and many states are reforming procedures in response to educational reforms such as Race to the Top. Stakeholders are forging ahead with the premise that quality teachers are a critical, if not the most important, resource. Furthermore, extensive research identifies the need for highly effective teachers (Darling-Hammond 2010). Beyond the research, personal experiences can inform us about the distinctions and impacts of effective and ineffective teaching. The educational reform to evaluate teachers in a systematic way has understandably led to widespread implementation concerns, equity issues, policy and procedure questions, and teacher anxiety. Teacher anxiety may be especially magnified for the dance educator who often faces perceptions that dance is an extracurricular nicety. Current trends in teacher evaluation reform may further marginalize dance by evaluating student test scores and implementing evaluations by administrators with little dance content knowledge.

This article considers the component of in-class observations as part of the teacher evaluation process. Principals and other administrators are most often the observers and evaluators. It may be assumed that most K–12 principals and administrators have little exposure to or experience with dance in a school setting. This may adversely impact principals' perceptions of dance and consequently

lead to poor teacher evaluation results. Principal feedback is a crucial component of teacher evaluation, yet inadequate knowledge of dance may lead to insufficient teacher evaluations and instructional progress.

Arts integration may play a vital role in illuminating dance for teacher evaluation. By integrating dance with more widely known subjects, dance becomes more accessible for the evaluator. Quality arts integration builds multiliteracies and allows principals to make connections across disciplines in meaningful ways. Similarly, an Arts at the Core Research Brief revealed that roughly 40% of educational leaders surveyed said that “it is easier to prioritize the arts when there are explicit connections to other subjects” (2013, 2). Indeed, connections to other subjects may help administrators understand dance content, benefits, and pedagogy in deeper ways. This may in turn have positive implications for in-class observations as part of teacher evaluation.

This article will extensively reference two substantial publications by Linda Darling-Hammond: *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future*, published in 2010; and *Getting Teacher Evaluations Right: What Really Matters for Effectiveness and Improvement* published in 2013. Darling-Hammond's work will support the

discussions of teacher evaluation, principal perceptions, arts integration, and reform strategies that will elevate dance.

Teacher evaluation

A recent and exhaustive report by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) summarizes the teacher evaluation policy for all 50 states plus the District of Columbia (2013). According to the data, 45 states require observations of teachers as part of the evaluation process. Factors such as frequency, whether visits are planned or unannounced, the extent to which evaluators are used, and the nature of the feedback vary widely from state to state. The report indicates that 39 states offer guidelines, but that individual districts have discretion. This autonomy is generally promoted and positive (Cicarella 2014). Nevertheless, it means that teachers are experiencing vastly different implementations of teacher evaluation throughout the country. The NCTQ report offers 15 “Lessons and Recommendations” (v–vi), of which the following are of pertinent consideration for dance:

- Differentiating teacher performance is not going to happen just because states and districts have a new evaluation rubric.
- Training [of evaluators] is a huge undertaking.
- States and districts should use multiple evaluators or observers where possible.
- Good measures make good evaluations.
- Nontested grades and subjects cannot be an afterthought.

In addition to the recommendations, the report states strongly that: “... evaluation for evaluation’s sake isn’t enough. ... Evaluations of teacher effectiveness need to be used to inform policy, practice and decisions of consequence in our classrooms and our schools” (2). The teacher evaluation process is not the goal. Rather, it is a tool that when wielded wisely will advance the educational experience of both student and teachers, and positively affect educational reform.

A brief by the Reform Support Network (2013) studied a small cross-section of 11 different states. Their findings were similar to the NCTQ report. Interestingly, six states included additional information about the categories that would be evaluated during observations. All of the states listed content knowledge or instruction as one of the main categories to be evaluated. This speaks to the daunting task for principals and other evaluators to understand multiple content areas in a rich and meaningful way.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (2013) reported on 12 Race to the Top states implementing teacher and principal evaluation. One finding was that

“states cited challenges related to developing and using evaluation measures, addressing teacher concerns, and building capacity and sustainability.” Additionally, six state officials “had difficulty ensuring that principals conducted evaluations consistently” (2). These reported concerns are not necessarily surprising, but imply the ongoing need to address teacher concerns and principal training for the teacher evaluation process.

In *Getting Teacher Evaluation Right: What Really Matters for Effectiveness and Improvement*, Darling-Hammond (2013) advocates for the following “Criteria for an Effective Teacher Evaluation System” (144):

1. Teacher evaluation should be based on professional teaching standards.
2. Evaluations should include multifaceted evidence of teacher practice, student learning, and professional contributions.
3. Evaluators should be knowledgeable about instruction and well trained in the evaluation system.
4. Evaluation should be accompanied by useful feedback, and connected to professional development opportunities.
5. The evaluation system should value and encourage teacher collaboration.
6. Expert teachers should be part of the assistance and review process.
7. Panels of teachers and administrators should oversee the evaluation process.

Numbers 1, 3, and 4 have specific implications for dance education and principals’ in-class observations.

Principal perception

Since my first year of public school teaching, I have often pondered the role of the principal. These leaders of individual schools are key stakeholders and an important component in moving education forward. In my personal experience I have noted how much influence principals and administrators have on a dance program. Their choices regarding the hiring of dance teachers, allocating funds, class sizes, and course offerings can greatly affect dance in education. I have likewise heard many dance colleagues anecdotally express how principals’ choices have both positively and negatively affected their dance programs. Darling-Hammond (2010) further explains, “the quality of school leaders is critical to recruiting and retaining teachers, as the principal’s ability to organize a productive environment, access resources, buffer the school from outside distractions, motivate adults, and support their learning is critical to teachers’ satisfaction and efficacy” (110). The following survey research was motivated by an

inquiry about principals' perceptions of dance and how their views impact dance in education. The response rate to this survey was small and the results are not sufficient for generalized conclusions. Nevertheless, the responses provide useful discussion points and opportunities to speculate about the implications for policy implementation. Because dance is underrepresented in a school setting, it is hoped that this survey can contribute to and invite further research regarding K–12 administrators and their influence on dance in education. More research is needed in the future.

Before discussing the methods and results of the survey research, it is important to emphasize my high regard for principals in general. I have personally worked with many esteemed principals who labor under grueling schedules and demands and genuinely desire the best for students. This section is not meant to criticize. On the contrary, it recognizes the high expectations of principal job descriptions and heavy responsibilities—especially in regard to teacher evaluation. As a result, they may need assistance in understanding dance curriculum, dance teacher evaluation, and arts integration. Assessing principal perceptions and demographics in relationship to dance may help identify professional development needs and plans of actions. Recent data indicates that the typical public K–12 principal is male and has had little to no exposure to dance in the school setting. This principal profile was generated from two reports: the *Benchmarking Women's Leadership* report that shows that 70% of public K–12 school board members, principals, superintendents, and chief state education officers are men (Lennon 2013); and a National Center for Education Statistics report that 3% of elementary schools offer dance instruction and 12% of secondary schools offer dance (2012). For a male administrator, previous experience with dance may be further diminished due to the negative social stigma about men and dance. Regardless of gender, though, the limited exposure of principals to dance is a prevailing problem. For example, a principal with an initial teaching credential in science would have sufficient previous knowledge in math when administering a math teaching evaluation. Although he does not have a teaching credential in math, this principal likely received math instruction from grades K–12 with some college-level courses. Furthermore, he will evaluate the five or so other math teachers at the school, which offers a substantial cross-section of evaluations to consider. The principal's overall limited exposure to dance is often compounded by other factors such as a learning environment void of desks, the use of the body for multidimensional communication, and even media portrayals of trite or hypersexualized dance.

Methods

The survey research was an online survey conducting during the 2012–13 school year. An invitation was sent to K–12 principals in several school districts representing the metropolitan areas surrounding Salt Lake City and Provo, Utah. Traditional public K–12 schools were contacted; thus, no charter schools, arts magnet schools, or private schools were included. Requests were sent electronically to principals to voluntarily complete the anonymous online survey. The survey consisted of three main sections: quantitative information about the dance program at the school; qualitative perceptions about dance; and open-ended questions regarding hiring and advice to new principals.

Results

Ten principals participated in the survey. The demographics included five middle school or junior high schools and five high schools. Two out of ten schools employed a full-time certified dance teacher. The majority, at 60 percent, employed a part-time certified dance teacher at the school. Eighty percent of the schools offered Dance 1 and Dance 2 level classes; 40 percent offered a Dance 3 level class; and 50 percent offered a Dance Company course. Number of students enrolled in dance each year ranged from 36–300, with 30 percent of the schools' enrollment numbers over 200. The demographic information of the schools represents a typical cross-section of dance in education in the state of Utah.

Principals then responded to a set of statements with a rating scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 1 lists the frequency of responses.

All of the principals agreed or strongly agreed with statements 1 (“Dance is an important subject offered at our school”) and 11 (“I believe dance is an integral component of education”). This indicates that the participating principals held positive perceptions of dance.

In the third and fourth statements, principals were asked to respond to dance fulfilling a fine arts credit and dance fulfilling a physical education (PE) credit. Although the majority of principals felt that dance could apply in both realms, the results are slightly skewed toward PE credit, with two strongly agree, and eight agree responses regarding dance as physical education. While only one strongly agree, seven agree, and two neutral responses were submitted about dance as a fine art. This poses many questions about the perception of dance. Although dance as a physical activity is undeniable, it is also an artistic endeavor that, unlike sports, is driven by expression and creativity. It is significant for

Table 1. Principals' responses to the survey statements and scenarios.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Dance is an important subject offered at our school.	3	7	0	0	0
2. Students are eager to enroll in our dance program.	0	7	3	0	0
3. Students should receive fine arts credit when enrolling in dance.	1	7	2	0	0
4. Students should receive PE credit when enrolling in dance.	2	8	0	0	0
5. Dance fosters creativity skills.	2	8	0	0	0
6. Dance fosters collaboration skills.	2	8	0	0	0
7. Dance fosters critical thinking skills.	2	5	3	0	0
8. Dance fosters communication skills.	2	8	0	0	0
9. I always attend the dance concerts.	3	3	4	0	0
10. I am familiar with the Utah Dance Core curriculum standards.	1	2	3	4	0
11. I believe dance is an integral component of education.	2	8	0	0	0
12. I have personally observed how dance can enrich students' educational experience.	3	5	2	0	0
13. If faced with significant budget cuts, I would do my best to protect the dance program.	2	6	1	1	0
14. If faced with FTE reduction, I would reduce the dance teacher position.	0	1	2	7	0
15. If given a significant amount of funding to be used at the principal's discretion, I would allocate a portion for dance.	0	6	4	0	0
16. Parental involvement and advocacy for dance influence my decisions about curriculum and course offerings.	0	4	3	3	0

principals to understand the physical demands as well as the expressive, creative, and artistic potential of dance.

Statement numbers 5 through 8 focus on the 4 Cs of the 21st Century Skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills 2011). As these skills become a magnified focus of educational efforts, it is pressing to know how principals view dance in these ways. Not surprisingly, principals agreed and strongly agreed that dance fosters creativity, collaboration, and communication skills. Nonetheless, 30% of these principals were neutral about dance fostering critical thinking skills. The neutral responses might imply that greater advocacy efforts be made about the critical thinking rigor inherent in dance. In regards to teacher evaluation, it may be advantageous for a teacher to have an evaluator that views the content area as highly creative, collaborative, and communicative; yet be challenging if an evaluator does not recognize the critical thinking components.

The statement in number 9, "I always attend the dance concerts," was asked to assess principal involvement in the dance program. Most dance programs in this demographic area produce one or more dance concerts per year. Undoubtedly, it is unreasonable to expect a principal to attend every after school event. It is relevant, though, to note if principals are experiencing and observing dance as mentioned above (and indicated in statement number twelve). The dance concert is an authentic assessment in which one can overtly witness student accomplishment, skill, aesthetic nuance, creativity, and even parental involvement. The data implies that principals might need greater encouragement not only to attend dance concerts but also understand their significance in teacher performance assessment.

The tenth statement is revealing, but not unexpected, data. Forty percent of principals surveyed say that they are not familiar with the Utah State Dance Core

curriculum. Another 30 percent responded with neutral, totaling 70% who are not moderately or significantly familiar with the curriculum and standards of educational dance.

Statements 13–15 represent scenarios featuring complicated contributing factors. These statements asked principals for their reactions to budget cuts, full-time employment (FTE) reduction, and additional funding. The mixed responses speak to the realities of education. Even though principals had responded positively about the importance and value of dance, when faced with weighty decisions, dance may not be a top priority. There are some ambiguities in this section of data that could be addressed with refined questions, open-ended options, and additional interviews in future studies. One curious result is evident in number 16, which addresses parental involvement and advocacy. Only 40% of these principals agreed that parental involvement and advocacy for dance influenced decisions about curriculum and course offerings.

The last part of the survey involved two open-ended questions. The first question was: "When hiring a new dance teacher, what are the top three qualifications you look for?" The answers varied widely; nevertheless, there were noticeable trends. Eight of the principals listed qualifications that focused on the teacher's ability to connect with students and being student-friendly. Five principals referenced knowledge and skill in the discipline. Five spoke broadly about energy, passion, attitude, and love for dance. Experience was listed three times. Professionalism and motivation were each listed two times. The answers offer insight into what principals value. To reiterate, 80% of the principals listed the ability to connect with students and being student friendly as opposed to 50% listing skill and content knowledge. It is intriguing that interpersonal skillset was stressed more than content

knowledge. Although charismatic approachability is an important factor for the success of a teacher, Darling-Hammond (2010) explains that teacher skill and achievement has direct correlation to student achievement.

The second open-ended question was: “What advice would you give a new principal concerning a dance program?” Seven of the answers positively supported incorporating a dance program at the school. One interesting response was: “Make sure you either create one or keep the one you have. Students of the arts tend to be better in academic classes.” This addresses the appealing nature of the arts to enrich educational experiences and skills that extend beyond the discipline. Arts integration may thrive in environments where these perceptions exist. One principal revealed an understanding of dance curriculum by commenting: “Ensure it is not about ‘popular’ dance—but about the art of dance using all methods of dance.”

This survey research presented limitations such as the small amount of responses and Utah-specific demographic. This is, however, a beginning step to understanding principals’ perceptions of dance and may indicate trends. It is suggested that future research continues to address these issues for the dance educator.

Implications for teacher evaluation

Overall, it is evident that the surveyed principals perceive dance as valuable and important. These positive perceptions of dance could prove beneficial for the teacher evaluation process. There is an apparent gap, though, between principals’ qualitative beliefs and their content-specific knowledge. Dance educators can build upon optimistic views of dance by targeting the following issues: linking dance and critical thinking; informing evaluators about national and state dance standards; and offering direct experience with and exposure to dance. It is crucial that dance educators create a strategic plan of action in order to positively impact teacher evaluation.

Referring again to Darling-Hammond’s “Criteria for An Effective Teacher Evaluation System,” numbers 1, 3, and 4 are of specific interest in considering the principal survey results. First, “Teacher evaluation should be based on professional teaching standards” (Darling-Hammond 2013). If principals are unfamiliar with the core curriculum and standards, they will not be able to evaluate dance educators in a holistic way. The Professional Teaching Standards for Dance Arts as published by the National Dance Education Organization (2011) and the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (2014) offer strong guidance concerning quality pedagogy in dance. It is imperative that we better inform principals of these standards. Indeed, a diminished view of dance and critical thinking may lead to poor results in categories that

address critical thinking, higher order thinking, and problem solving. Next, “Evaluators should be knowledgeable about instruction and well trained in the evaluation system.” Incomplete knowledge of dance teaching standards could foil even the best-trained evaluator. For example, I recently sat next to a former administrator as we observed a pre-service dance education student teach a rambunctious fifth-grade class. Because this individual has had extensive exposure to the arts, I was slightly surprised when he had concerns about the students being able to see the teacher, students’ ability learn the movement quickly, and the wait time involved in cueing music. I quickly shared some simple strategies used in dance pedagogy such as rotating lines, changing the orientation of the room, active repetition, imagery, and review methods. Discussing these strategies seemed enlightening to him. It was a reminder that someone who is extensively exposed to the arts may not fully understand the methodology unique to dance. Last, “Evaluation should be accompanied by useful feedback, and connected to professional development opportunities.” Danielson (2012) discusses the idea that even if evaluators are trained well in observation techniques, they might not know how to facilitate a meaningful post-observation conversation. This may be a major obstacle for dance educators if the principal is unfamiliar with curriculum, terminology, or strategies common in dance. High regard for dance with incomplete knowledge of the content and effective instruction will likely lead to undifferentiated evaluation results for dance educators. This may create an overabundance of dance educators receiving moderate-to-good evaluation scores, with little evidence that will distinguish the meritorious teacher from the unsatisfactory teacher. As a result, dance educators may be poorly directed in the post-observation discussion regarding accomplishments, areas of improvement, and professional development.

In revisiting the demands of the principal, it is not realistic to expect principals to understand all the nuances of dance education. It is, however, reasonable to incrementally broaden their understanding of dance. The NCTQ recommendation to involve multiple evaluators is another significant consideration. This could relieve some of the pressure on principals to be experts in all subject matter as well as encourage collaborative, peer-reviewed work.

Arts integration

Arts integration may be a key factor in increasing awareness and evaluator training for dance teacher evaluation. High quality, co-equal arts integration (Bresler 1995) speaks directly to dance literacy by building content

knowledge and experience in dance, while simultaneously connecting to other disciplines that may be perceived as more cognitively challenging and essential. If principals are provided meaningful arts integration professional development, teacher evaluation processes for arts disciplines will be elevated.

Multiliteracy and dance literacy are foundational to understanding dance curriculum, content, and methodologies. Multiliteracy theorists have sought to broaden the scope of literacy to include the multiple cultural and social ways of knowing in which individuals interpret, access, and communicate in their world (New London Group 2006). Dance literacy is considered part of this multiliteracy framework, and “a more encompassing and conceptual understanding of literacy allows us to accept dance as a literacy, where each dance element (rhythm, form, structure, style, tempo, theory, notation) is considered an important piece of that language” (Provenzo 2011, 129). Arts integration can be a powerful catalyst for multiliteracies. When dance intertwines with other disciplines, it can become more accessible for the principal who has had little exposure to dance. The principal who is well versed in mathematical literacies might find new connections to the “form or structure” of dance literacy while observing an integrated lesson plan. In this way, arts integration can serve as the translator between two languages—a perfect dual-immersion approach that fosters inroads to understanding dance on a deeper level. A high quality, co-equal, and fully intertwined fusion of dance with other disciplines can ignite enthusiasm and expand literacy (Bresler 1995; Davis 2008).

Arts integration may also positively impact the perceptions of critical thinking and cognitive processes associated with dance. By infusing dance with seemingly more logical and traditional content areas, cognitive congruencies may be enhanced. Furthermore, the complementary relationship between the arts and the sciences may be highlighted in specific and profound ways. The Root-Bernsteins are a research team who study the arts education of scientific Nobel Prize winners. They speak about the *habits of mind* that contribute to the success of scientists and explain, “finding ways to foster arts education alongside science education—and, even better, finding ways to *integrate* the two—must become a high priority for any school that wants to produce students capable of creative participation in a science-dominated society like ours” (Root-Bernstein and Root-Bernstein 2013, 17). These *habits of mind* support multiliteracy theories and include “elaborative and creative thinking, fluency, originality, focused perception, and imagination” (Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles 1999, 43). Burton and colleagues further explain that the “[habits of mind] term captures more fully the flexible interweaving of intuitive, practical, and logical modes of thought that characterize arts learning” (43).

Donahue and Stuart (2010) elaborate on these ideas and identify *studio habits of mind* that: “develop craft, engage and persist, envision, express, observe, reflect, evaluating, stretch and explore, understand the art world, and communities” (4). Indeed, arts education and arts integration foster multidimensional ways of thinking that encompass cognitive processes and intuitive nuance that are then manifest through real-life problem solving. If a principal is not yet fully dance literate, it will be difficult to discern all of these cognitive processes. That is why arts integration may be a key component in providing scaffolding for the dance experience and contextualizing principals’ views of embodied cognition. Embodied cognition theory connects physical and mental capabilities and assumes that they work interdependently (Garbarini and Adenzato 2004). The National Dance Education Organization (2013) stated in a recent report that “the notion that all cognition is embodied, and that the brain lives in and with a complex, thinking and feeling organism that sweats, feels, moves, and learns should lead all educators to understand the value of dance education” (45). The theory of embodied cognition correlates with the methods of *Making Learning Visible* as set forth by Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (Donahue and Stuart 2010, 58–67). This kind of learning documentation seeks to capture student thought processes during and after artmaking. Cognitive mapping, emotional reactions, and transformative experiences in dance, especially in an interdisciplinary context, will help administrators better understand the critical thinking involved.

Beyond principal perception and exposure, arts integration can contribute holistically to teacher evaluation and educational reform. Although not explicitly, Darling-Hammond repeatedly advocates for arts integration. She heralds many of the tenets of arts integration as critical school reforms for improvement. Her references to global awareness, stakeholder collaboration, project-based learning and assessments, and holistic education are exemplified in arts integration.

The pursuits of dance education correlate with many of the points made by Darling-Hammonds (2010) about global awareness, diversity, and equity. Driver (2010) explains that, “Arts integration can help enrich learning, but more important, the practice can . . . *democratize* classrooms—enabling each student’s voice and perspective to be represented on equal terms through their artistic expressions” (vii). Dance education seeks to educate every child, the whole child, as an individual that is part of a greater community. The study of dance can contribute to a greater knowledge and awareness of oneself, the community, and the world. Likewise, Robinson (2013) suggests that in context with the Core Curriculum, now is “a perfect time to implement arts integration as a targeted effort to close the achievement gap for disadvantaged

students” (194). With this claim in mind, it is interesting to read Bamford’s definition of Arts Education:

Arts education aims to pass on cultural heritage to young people, to enable them to create their own artistic language and to contribute to their global development (emotional and cognitive). Arts education therefore affects the child on both an academic and personal level. ... Education in Art implies teaching the pupils the practice and principles of the various art disciplines, to stimulate their critical awareness and sensitiveness and to enable them to construct cultural identities. (Bamford 2006, 21)

Darling-Hammond promotes teacher collaboration, teams, and single-minded curriculum goals. Co-equal arts integration demands this kind of collaboration and preparation. In short, “A number of studies have found that, all else being equal, schools have higher levels of achievement when they create smaller, more personalized units in which teachers plan and work together around shared groups of students and common curriculum” (Darling-Hammond 2010, 238).

Project-based learning and assessment is highlighted by Darling-Hammond. She specifically uses examples of music, poetry, and drama as applied assessments. Certainly, the arts manifest many forms of applicable assessments that deepen student learning and motivation.

Lastly, Darling-Hammond emphasizes holistic education, whole child-focused education. Dance education models whole child pedagogy. That is one of the most impactful things that dance education can offer—an authentic experience to express and manifest oneself through the most basic medium—the body. Darling-Hammond draws on global examples from Singapore, Finland, South Korea, and even UNESCO that approach holistic education. Perhaps we could make a paradigm shift and learn from South Korea. They recognize the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical domains; as well as the lesser-referenced spiritual and aesthetic domains. They offer a wide range of subjects that “are to be integrated into three broad areas: disciplined life, intelligent life, and pleasant life” (Darling-Hammond 2010, 175). Certainly, students learn these principles through the arts. Thus, arts integration may be a paramount framework which fosters a balanced and holistic life.

Conclusion

The educational atmosphere in which valid teacher evaluation, elevated perceptions, and meaningful arts integration can occur for dance may take years to be fully realized. Teacher evaluation is a complex and harrowing issue. The dance educator may specifically feel vulnerable throughout this process due to misperceptions of dance in education. Arts integration may contribute

significantly to elevating dance and improving perceptions and knowledge in dance. It is suggested that this hypothesis be researched and tested in future studies. Until further studies and arts-friendly reform take place, it is recommended that dance educators target their local schools and principals to instigate improvement and change. By strategically exposing principals to the art of dance through arts integration, teachers may be successful in improving perceptions and knowledge of dance that could ultimately result in higher quality of teaching and learning.

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