POETRY Express

Year Three Evaluation Report

May 2007

Submitted To:

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Global Writes

Jason Duchin
DreamYard

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The POETRY (Providing Opportunities for Expression through Technology Resources for Youth) Express Project completed its third and final implementation year in June 2006. The project replicated Bronx WRITeS, an existing model in New York City's District Ten. POETRY Express (PE) was being implemented in four Region One[1] schools (two elementary and two middle) and used a quasi-experimental design with carefully matched comparison schools to provide necessary data to validate the project's impact on students' levels of achievement, attendance, motivation and interest in integrating the arts into their literacy learning. POETRY Express had three overarching goals including 1) increasing students' oral and written communication and deepening their appreciation for the arts, 2) increasing teachers' proficiency in leading literacy instruction and integrating the performing arts and technology with the core curriculum, and 3) sustaining the project beyond the federal funding period.

During Year Three, the project affected 731 students in total, including 306 students from POETRY Express treatment classes and 425 students from comparison classes. Students in the treatment group participated in two 10-week workshops that were taught collaboratively by the classroom or English language arts teacher and a professional teaching artist from DreamYard, a local arts organization. Teaching artists came into the classroom at least one time per week and worked with the students to develop and perform their original poetry. Each 10-week workshop culminated with a slam competition that included teams from the POETRY Express and Bronx WRITes schools.[2] Teachers of the participating classes engaged in intensive professional development experiences centered on the POETRY Express Project design, instruction in the arts, teaching the writing process, and integrating technology in the classroom. Students in the comparison group did not participate in the 10-week workshops and their teachers did not participate in any of the POETRY Express professional development experiences. They did, however, receive technology equipment and technical support as an incentive for their participation.

Methods

Metis Associates, Inc., a research and evaluation firm located in New York City (NYC), was selected to conduct the evaluation of the POETRY Express Project. Metis evaluators designed and implemented a quasi-experimental design to examine the impact of the treatment on students. The study followed two cohorts[3] of students through each of the three project years. Students and teachers in four Region One schools comprised the treatment group and students and teachers in four demographically similar Region One schools comprised the comparison group. Each treatment school was matched to a comparison school based on similarities in baseline school-wide demographic and achievement data.

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[1] Region One consists of schools in New York City's Districts Nine and Ten.

[2] Prior to the inter-school Slam, one team from each school is selected to represent the school using the following process: 1) intra-class competition—students compete within their classes to represent the class, and 2) intra-school competition—each class's Slam team competes to be the team that represents the school.

[3] Cohort 1 is defined by those students who began third grade in Year One (the 2003-2004 school year) and Cohort 2 is defined by those students who began the sixth grade in Year One.

During each of the three project years, Metis Associates used a multi-method approach to address the outcomes of the stated project objectives. In Year Three, as in previous years, evaluation activities consisted of program and professional development observations; interviews with teachers, teaching artists, administrators, and other key project personnel; pre- and post-surveys of students, assessing their attitudes, motivation, and confidence levels; pre- and post-surveys of teachers, tapping their knowledge and skills in teaching literacy and the arts; and analyses of student school-day attendance and standardized test scores. Achievement and survey data were collected from students in both the treatment and the comparison schools.

Results

The POETRY Express Project had a very successful third and final year of implementation. More than 300 students participated in the treatment and more than half of these students participated in the full three years of the project. As in previous years, participating adults, including the teaching artists, teachers, and school administrators, reported on the effectiveness of the program for the student participants. According to these adults, students increased their confidence, their interest in literacy activities, their public speaking abilities, and their audience skills. Student perceptions of changes also were examined through the use of surveys of the treatment and comparison students. Results of these surveys supported evidence gained through interviews and focus groups with adults. Overall, students in the treatment group were more likely than those in the comparison group to indicate that they enjoy literacy activities (such as writing poetry, reading books, keeping a journal or diary, and going to the library). The treatment students also were more likely to indicate that they engaged in good academic practices than the comparison students (such as paying attention in class, completing homework, and following school and classroom rules).

Results of analyses of student achievement test scores were mixed. Overall, the fifth-grade treatment students outperformed the fifth-grade comparison students on the New York State English Language Arts (NYS ELA) exam, while there were no significant differences overall between the eighth-grade treatment and comparison students. When examining the results by school, however, MS 145 performed significantly better than its matched comparison school. This is an important finding considering that students in this school experienced documented support from teachers and administrators and enjoyed consistency in the teaching artist and classroom teacher over the course of the three program years.

The New York State English as a Second Language Test (NYSESLAT) results also were mixed. Both treatment and comparison students improved significantly in their performance from the baseline year to Year Three on the NYSESLAT. However, a greater percentage of students in the comparison group achieved proficiency on the exam in Year Three than did students in the treatment group. This finding, along with the qualitative data gathered from observations and interviews, point to the necessity of strengthening the program for ELL students. In order to have the greatest impact on English language learner (ELL) students, it is recommended for future projects that the teaching artist be a fluent Spanish speaker, that there be Spanish-speaking judges, and that the students in the bilingual classes be allowed to participate in the slam competition regardless of their entry point in the program.

POETRY Express is intended to impact not only on the students but also on the instructional practices of the teachers. The results in this report indicate that the program impacted on teachers' skills in teaching literacy by introducing them to new techniques and tools for differentiating instruction and motivating students to learn. While the results are positive overall for the participating teachers, the project had a fair amount of turnover in staff over the course of the three years. It is recommended for future projects that the mentoring component be continued over all of the project years so that new teachers who come on board receive the same support as those who participated from the beginning.

POETRY Express has been enormously successful in disseminating the model. By the end of Year Three, the results of the work of the project leadership were evident. Staff from schools in the tri-state area, as well as nationally and internationally, had observed the program in action and several had begun nascent programs of their own with the support of the POETRY Express staff. Regarding the POETRY Express participants, teachers and administrators discussed their plans with evaluators for sustaining the model without outside funding. The extent to which they are able to sustain the program is being evaluated through the project's no-cost extension period, the 2006-2007 school year, and will be reported on in fall 2007.

Region One POETRY Express Project
Year Three Final Evaluator's Report
April 2007

I. Introduction

A. Program Description

The POETRY (Providing Opportunities for Expression through Technology Resources for Youth) Express Project completed its third and final implementation year in June 2006. The project replicated Bronx WRITeS, an existing model in New York City's District Ten. POETRY Express (PE) was being implemented in four Region One[4] schools (two elementary and two middle) and used a quasi-experimental design with carefully matched comparison schools to provide necessary data to validate the project's impact on students' levels of achievement, attendance, motivation and interest in integrating the arts into their literacy learning. POETRY Express had three overarching goals including 1) increasing students' oral and written communication and deepening their appreciation for the arts, 2) increasing teachers' proficiency in leading literacy instruction and integrating the performing arts and technology with the core curriculum, and 3) sustaining the project beyond the federal funding period.

During Year Three, the project was implemented in six fifth-grade classes (three each from the elementary schools) and seven eighth-grade classes (four classes from PS/MS 218 and three from the MS 145 complex, which consists of three smaller schools, MS 145, MS 325, and MS 328). A class at PS/MS 218 was added in Year Three at the principal's request in order to serve all of the eighth grade classes at the school. The program affected 731 students in total during the 2005-2006 school year, including 306 students from the treatment classes and 425 students from the comparison classes. Five hundred twenty-eight of the students are continuing participants from Year Two in both the treatment and comparison schools and 357 students have participated in the program for the full three years of the grant's implementation.

Students in the treatment group participated in two 10-week workshops that were taught collaboratively by the classroom or English language arts teacher and a professional teaching artist from DreamYard, a local arts organization. Teaching artists came into the classroom at least one time per week and worked with the students to develop and perform their original poetry. Each 10-week workshop culminated with a slam competition that included teams from the POETRY Express and Bronx WRITes schools.[5] Teachers of the participating classes engaged in intensive professional development experiences centered on the POETRY Express Project design, instruction in the arts, teaching the writing process, and integrating technology in the classroom. Students in the comparison group did not participate in the 10-week workshops and their teachers did not participate in any of the POETRY Express professional development experiences. They did, however, receive technology equipment and technical support as an incentive for their participation.

[4] Region One consists of schools in New York City's Districts Nine and Ten.
[5] Prior to the inter-school Slam, one team from each school is selected to represent the school using the following process: 1) intra-class competition—students compete within their classes to represent the class, and 2) intra-school competition—each class's Slam team competes to be the team that represents the school.

Maria Fico, who served as the Lead Instructional Technology Specialist in Region One for the duration of the project, also served as the Project Director of the POETRY Express Project. The POETRY Express team was also comprised of Geri Hayes, the Arts Director for Region One; John Ellrodt, a consultant who provided professional development and technological assistance to the project;[6] and Jason Duchin, a co-founder of DreamYard, the arts-in-education partner organization.

Metis Associates, Inc., a research and evaluation firm located in New York City (NYC), was selected to conduct the evaluation of the POETRY Express Project. Metis has been providing evaluation services for NYC schools and school districts for over 28 years and has a wide range of experience with evaluating school reform projects.

This final Year Three evaluation report includes the analyses of data collected from surveys, interviews, document review, and student achievement tests. Summaries are presented regarding the project's progress toward its objectives.

B. Quasi-Experimental Research Design

As mentioned earlier, the research design for the project was quasi-experimental; it used a times series design with a nonequivalent control group. The study followed two cohorts[7] of students through each of the three project years. Students and teachers in four Region One schools comprised the treatment group (PS 246, PS 360, PS/MS 218, and MS 145) and students and teachers in four demographically similar Region One schools comprised the comparison group (PS 55, PS 340, PS/MS 279, and MS 166). Each treatment school was matched to a comparison school based on the following school-wide data: school size, grades served, student mobility, minority enrollment, socioeconomic status (SES) (as measured by the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch), and baseline (spring 2003) achievement scores. Table 1 displays the matched treatment and comparison schools and Tables 2 and 3 display the school-wide data used to compare the schools. Table 2 displays school size, grades served, student mobility, minority enrollment, and SES. Table 3 displays baseline student achievement data.

Table 1
Matched Treatment and Comparison Schools

Treatment School	Matched Comparison School
PS 360	PS 340
PS 246	PS 55
PS/MS 218	PS/MS 279
MS 145	MS 166
MS 325	MS 166
MS 328	MS 166

[6] John Ellrodt's consulting company is JCE Consulting, Inc.
[7] Cohort 1 is defined by those students who began third grade in Year One (the 2003-2004 school year) and Cohort 2 is defined by those students who began the sixth grade in Year One.

Table 2
Matched Treatment and Comparison Schools
Baseline (2003) School-wide Demographic Data

School	Grades	Enrollment	% Stable	% Free Lunch	% Minority	% ELL
PS 246 (Treatment)	K – 6	961	91.4	92.3	99.0	29.6
PS 55 (Comparison)	PK - 5	964	89.3	99.7	99.7	22.3
PS 360 (Treatment)	K – 6	544	86.5	90.1	96.6	27.3
PS 340 (Comparison)	K – 6	606	92.2	90.6	98.8	23.2
PS/MS 218 (Treatment)	K – 8	891	97.4	99.4	99.6	30.8
PS/MS 279 (Comparison)	K – 8	1070	90.4	95.9	99.4	25.6
MS 145[8] (Treatment)	5 – 8	1644	92.5	90.8	99.3	20.0
MS 166 (Comparison)	5 – 8	1398	90.0	81.9	99.6	18.3

Table 3
Matched Treatment and Comparison Schools
Baseline (2003) School-wide Achievement Data

School	Enrollment	% Attendance	ELA
			% Levels 3 & 4
PS 246 (Treatment)	961	90.8	24.4
PS 55 (Comparison)	964	89.9	17.9
PS 360 (Treatment)	544	91.2	17.8
PS 340 (Comparison)	606	92.1	27.3
PS/MS 218 (Treatment)	891	94.3	23.5
PS/MS 279 (Comparison)	1070	92.7	19.0
MS 145[4] (Treatment)	1644	90.4	19.7
MS 166 (Comparison)	1398	89.5	19.9

II. Evaluation Methods

During each of the three project years, Metis Associates used a multi-method approach to address the outcomes of the stated project objectives. In Year Three, as in previous years, evaluation activities consisted of program and professional development observations; interviews with teachers, teaching artists, administrators, and other key project personnel; pre- and post-surveys of students, assessing their attitudes, motivation, and confidence levels; pre- and post-surveys of teachers, tapping their knowledge and skills in teaching literacy and the arts; and analyses of student school-day attendance and standardized test scores. Achievement and survey data were collected from students in both the treatment and the comparison schools. Each of the instruments, evaluation activities, and data sources are described in the following sections.

[8]MS 145 was divided into three smaller schools (MS 145, MS 325, MS 328) after Year One. All three smaller schools remained treatment schools in the project.

A. Description of Locally Developed Instruments

Student Attitudes Survey

The instrument, developed collaboratively by Metis evaluators and program staff specifically for this evaluation, assesses students' attitudes toward literacy, school, and learning in general. The survey was administered on a pre- and post- basis and student data were matched on each administration. In Year Three, the pre-survey was distributed in fall 2005 and the post-survey was distributed in spring 2006. Table 4, below, shows the number of pre- and post-student surveys returned by each school during Year Three.

The survey features 20 statements; students were asked to indicate the response that best showed how they felt about the statement using a three-point scale—"Never True," "Sometimes True," and "Always True." The survey was also translated into Spanish for the English language learners (ELLs) in the two participating bilingual classes. A copy of the instrument is included in Appendix A.

Table 4
Number of Returned Student Surveys by School in Year Three

School Status	School		# of participating students	# of returned pre- surveys (and response rate)	# of returned post- surveys (and response rate)
Treatment	PS 246		64	64 (100.0%)	37 (57.8%)
	PS 360		58	52 (89.7%)	47 (81.0%)
	PS/MS 218		97	87 (89.7%)	44 (45.4%)
	MS 145 Campus	MS 145	29	25 (86.2%)	26 (89.7%)
		MS 325	30	29 (96.7%)	21 (70.0%)
		MS 328	24	21 (87.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Comparison	PS 55		88	76 (86.4%)	55 (62.5%)
	PS 340		59	59 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
	PS/MS 279		117	70 (59.8%)	0 (0.0%)
	MS 166		160	151 (88.8%)	118 (73.8%)

Teacher Perceptions Survey

The instrument, developed collaboratively by Metis evaluators and program staff specifically for this evaluation, assesses the perceptions of teachers from the treatment schools regarding instructional practices; professional development; and personal interests related to literacy, arts, and technology. This survey was distributed to participating teachers from treatment schools only. Specifically, these teachers were asked in a number of closed-ended items to assess their own knowledge, skills, comfort levels, and barriers to using a variety of art instructional techniques, assessment strategies, and technological software/equipment. Teachers were also asked to provide their perceptions of the program in multiple open-ended survey items. Table 5 displays the number of pre- and post-teacher surveys received in Year Three. A copy of the instrument is included in Appendix A.

Table 5
Number of Returned Teacher Surveys by School in Year Three

School		# participating teachers	# of returned pre- surveys (and response rate)	# of returned post- surveys (and response rate)
PS 246		3	2 (66.7%)	3 (100.0%)
PS 360		3	3 (100.0%)	3 (100.0%)
PS/MS 218		3	3 (100.0%)	3 (100.0%)
MS 145 Campus	MS 145	2	1 (50.0%)	1 (100.0%)
	MS 325	1	1 (100.0%)	1 (100.0%)
	MS 328	1	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Total		13	12 (92.3%)	11 (84.6%)

B. Fieldwork

Observations

In the spring of Year Three, the evaluator conducted observations in each of the treatment schools. The visits were coordinated to occur while the teaching artists were present in the classrooms. Whenever possible, the evaluators also observed planning sessions with the full POETRY Express team in each school.

During the observations, the evaluators noted the activities in each class, the students' level of engagement and interest in the activities, the level of teacher engagement, and the interactions between teachers and teaching artists. Observers took detailed notes and, when necessary, clarified questions about the lesson with the teaching artist and/or the teacher at the conclusion of the lesson.

Table 6 displays the dates that the POETRY Express classes in each treatment school were observed.

Table 6
Year Three School Observation Dates

School		Date
PS 246		5/12/06
PS /MS 218		5/15/06
MS 145 Campus	MS 145	6/07/06
	MS 325	6/07/06
	MS 328	6/07/06
PS 360		6/21/06

Focus Groups and Interviews

The evaluator conducted semi-structured focus groups with participating teachers in each of the treatment schools in spring 2006. Separate focus groups were conducted in each of the schools. During the focus group interviews, teachers were asked to elaborate on their perceptions of the following aspects of the program: the effectiveness of the professional development experiences, their interactions with the teaching artists, the effect of the program on their students, the levels of support that they received from their administrators, the extent to which they planned to sustain the program after the funding ended, and their overall impressions of the success of the program. In most cases, the interviews were conducted on the same day as the program observations. Unfortunately, however, it was not possible to have all the project teachers at any one school participate in the focus groups due to scheduling conflicts.

The evaluator also conducted end-of-year individual interviews with each of the teaching artists and with the core team members. During these interviews, the evaluator asked participants to elaborate on their experience over the course of the school year, to discuss aspects that they believed worked particularly well over the course of the project and those that needed improvement, and their ideas for how teachers may be able to sustain the work they had begun.

Lastly, the evaluators interviewed individuals from "dissemination schools," schools in which the program was disseminated and nascent programs were begun. Administrators from these schools were asked how they learned about the POETRY Express program, how they implemented the program in their locations, the successes and struggles they encountered, and their plans for the future.

Evaluation and program personnel developed all protocols collaboratively. Data gathered were content analyzed for response patterns.

C. Description of Treatment and Comparison Participants

During the 2005-2006 school year, 731 students participated in the program, including 306 students from the treatment classes and 425 students from the comparison classes. Table 7 displays the number of participants in Year Three and the number of students continuing for two and for three program years. Tables 8 and 9 display the demographic and gender distributions of the students who participated in the program in Year Three. As shown in these tables, the percentages of students in each of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) groupings (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, ELL status, special education status, and the number of those qualified for free or reduced lunch) are very similar in the treatment and comparison schools, despite the influx of new students in both the treatment and comparison school classes.

Table 7
Year Three POETRY Express Participants

Group	New Students	Repeating Students			*Missing*	Total
		Years 2+3	Years 1+3	Years 1+2+3		
Treatment	83 (27.1%)	54 (17.6%)	4 (1.3%)	164 (53.6%)	*1 (0.3%)*	306
Comparison	104 (24.5%)	117 (27.5%)	11 (2.6%)	193 (45.4%)	*0 (0.0%)*	425

Table 8
Demographics of Year Three POETRY Express Participants

	Grade Level			Gender			Total N
	5	8	*Missing*	Male	Female	*Missing*	
Treatment	121 (39.5%)	172 (56.2%)	*13 (4.2%)*	128 (41.8%)	170 (55.6%)	*8 (2.6%)*	306
Comparison	147 (34.6%)	262 (61.6%)	*16 (3.8%)*	196 (46.1%)	212 (49.9%)	*17 (4.0%)*	425

Table 9
Demographics of Year Three POETRY Express Participants (continued)

	Total N	Race/Ethnicity						ELL Status	Special Education	Free/ Reduced Lunch
		Black	White	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	*Missing*			
Treatment	306	67 (21.9%)	1 (0.3%)	228 (74.5%)	5 (1.6%)	1 (0.3%)	*4 (1.3%)*	61 (19.9%)	0 (0.0%)	154[9] (97.5%)
Comparison	425	116 (27.3%)	4 (0.9%)	283 (66.6%)	15 (3.5%)	3 (0.7%)	*4 (0.9%)*	56 (13.2%)	1 (0.2%)	361[10] (98.4%)

D. Description of Student Achievement Data and Analyses

In the spring of the 2005-2006 school year, English proficient (EP) and ELL[11] students in grades 3 through 8 took the New York State English Language Arts (NYS ELA) test to assess their literacy achievement levels. The NYS ELA is a criterion-referenced test; results are expressed in scale scores and Performance Level equivalents. Scale scores are equal-interval, criterion referenced scores that create a continuous scale that extends across grade levels. Performance Level equivalents are derived from the scale scores according to grade level. There are four performance levels: Level 1: *Below Basic*, Level 2: *Basic*, Level 3: *Proficient*, and Level 4: *Advanced*. Performance at Level 3 or 4 is considered at or above grade level.

In prior years, only students in grades 4 and 8 took NYS ELA tests and students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 took NYC achievement tests. Because students took different tests in 2004-2005

[9] Based on an *N* of 158 students in treatment schools for whom relevant data were available. Table displays valid percent.
[10] Based on an *N* of 368 students in comparison schools for whom relevant data were available. Table displays valid percent.
[11] As of 2003, all ELL students admitted before January 1, 2000, are required to take the NYS ELA tests, unless a school requests an exemption for a particular student, in which case the New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test is used instead.

and 2005-2006, comparisons across years could not be made for this report. However, differences between the spring 2006 achievement of students in the treatment and comparison groups are analyzed and presented in this report. In cases where statistical comparisons of means are made, the effect size is computed to show the extent to which differences in scores are considered educationally meaningful. The effect size (partial η^2) is computed as the SS Model/Total SS, i.e., the proportion of the total variance in the data attributable to the effect measured. The conversion to Cohen's *d* is as follows: $d = [2 (\sqrt{\eta^2})] / [\sqrt{} (1 - \eta^2)]$. Effect sizes larger than .33 are considered educationally meaningful.

Most ELL students took the New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT), a criterion-referenced test that is specifically designed to measure the progress of ELLs toward English proficiency. NYSESLAT raw scores fall into one of four proficiency levels: Level 1: *Beginning*, Level 2: *Intermediate*, Level 3: *Advanced*, and Level 4: *Proficient*. Students are considered EP when they perform at the Proficient level. Significant differences in performance level movement from pretest (2003-2004) to posttest (2005-2006) between treatment and comparison groups were assessed using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test.

Table 10 displays information on the achievement tests that are used in the evaluation of the POETRY Express Project.

Table10
POETRY Express
Academic Achievement Assessments

Skill Area	Assessment Instrument	Type of Instrument	How Results are Reported	Students Tested
English Language Arts	NYS ELA Test	Criterion-referenced	Scale Scores and Proficiency Levels	3rd- to 8th-grade EP and ELL students
English Proficiency/ English Language Arts	NYSESLAT	Criterion-referenced	Raw Scores, Scale Scores, and Proficiency Levels	K to 12th-grade ELL students

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

Participating students' ADA was provided directly to the evaluator by the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE). ADA represents the percentage of time that students are present in school and is calculated by dividing the total number of days that a student was present by the total possible attendance days. Differences between treatment and comparison students' attendance rates were compared and analyzed for significant differences using a series of analyses of co-variance (ANCOVAs).

III. Evaluation Findings

This section of the report presents all data gathered from evaluation activities conducted during Year Three regarding the POETRY Express Project's efforts in addressing its goals and objectives, as stated in the grant.

A. Program Implementation

Observations

As had been done in Years One and Two, the evaluators observed POETRY Express classes in the spring of Year Three, shortly before the spring poetry slam. During this period of time, students were engaged in practicing the performance of their poems, selecting students for the slam team, and/or supporting their classmates who were selected for the team. The evaluators observed the classes while the teaching artists were present, making careful note of the activities taking place in the class, the teaching artists' instructional practices, interactions between the teaching artist and the teachers, and student interactions with the adults in the room as well as with their peers.

All class periods began with full-class warm-ups, during which students, the teaching artists, and (in most cases) the classroom teachers engaged in vocal exercises and other stage preparatory techniques. In general, these preparatory exercises allow students to adjust to the major change in classroom activity, to warm up their voices, and to practice dramatic expression.

In one eighth-grade class observed, the teacher and poet followed the warm-up activity with ten minutes of free writing time. Students used this time to write in their journals, to create new works of poetry or other free verse, or to edit their current poems. Following the free writing period, students who had already been selected for the slam team practiced their poems, while the teacher, teaching artist, and students responded. Nearly all students' topics were sensitive or highly personal, such as peer pressure, death, and abortion. The middle-school students responded maturely to these topics; the evaluator did not note any instance of giggling or unsupportive actions. In fact, the environment was noted to be completely open, trusting, and supportive. The adults allowed the students to make the first comments to the performer. Students often responded by starting with positive comments and giving targeted feedback, such as, "We could hear you better this time. Now use more gestures." According to the teacher, the teaching artist had coached the students on this practice.

After the students practiced their poems, the teaching artist presented a mini-lesson on what comprises a good performance. She asked the students what they liked about the Def Poetry Jam poets that they had seen in a previous lesson. Students responded by pointing out the poets' voice projection, energy, eye contact, and attitude. After discussing these attributes, as well as others such as the necessity of memorization, the slam team students performed their poetry again.

Other lessons observed in this time period followed much the same pattern. Perhaps most notably, in all lessons observed, the teaching artists and teachers worked together, with the teaching artist taking the lead and the teacher supporting the lesson activities. In addition, the

adults in the room were able to find ways for all students to stay involved in the lesson by being good audience members, by acting as in-class judges, by videotaping performers, and by assisting their peers with forgotten lines.

B. Teacher Outcomes

Objective 2.1: By the end of the third project year, 100% of the participating teachers will demonstrate proficiency in leading writing workshops and using authentic assessment strategies.

Objective 2.2: By the end of the third project year, 100% of the participating teachers will demonstrate proficiency in providing performance instruction and coaching student performance.

Objective 2.3: By the end of the third project year, 100% of the participating teachers will demonstrate increased proficiency in integrating technology into literacy and arts instruction.

Objective 3.1: By the end of the third project year, 100% of participating teachers will be equipped to serve as mentors to new teachers within their own schools or to teachers in other schools throughout the Region.

Teacher Survey

In keeping with the evaluation design, the teacher survey was administered to participating teachers in the treatment schools only. As had been done in previous years, the survey was distributed in the fall of the school year and again in the spring, following the culminating poetry slam. A total of 13 teachers participated in the program in Year Three. Of these, six were returning teachers and seven were new. Twelve of the 13 participating teachers completed the survey in the fall, representing a 92% return rate, and 11 of the 13 teachers completed the survey in the spring, representing approximately an 85% return rate. Teachers were asked to indicate their use and perceptions of instructional practices related to arts, technology, and poetry. The complete pre- and post-survey findings can be found in Appendix B. Highlights from the results of the post-survey are presented below.

Table 11 displays the percentages of teachers who indicated they integrated art, technology, authentic assessment, and poetry into the core curriculum on the post-survey.

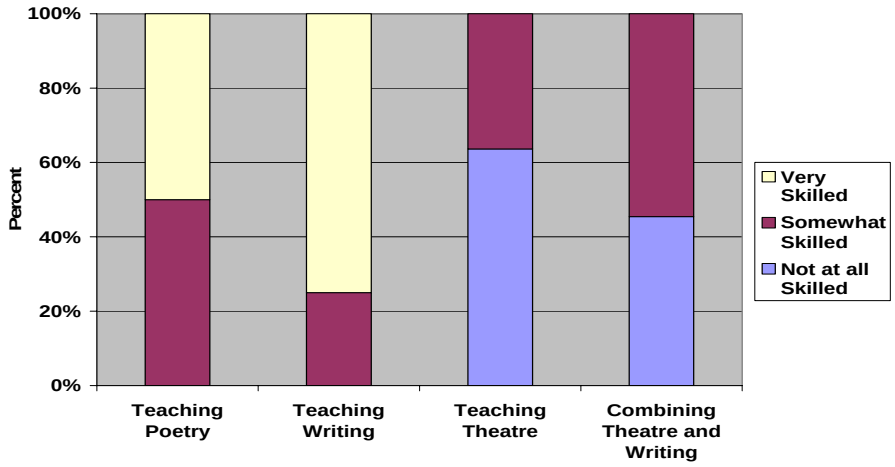
Table 11
Spring 2006 Teacher Survey Results
Integration of Art Instruction, Technology, Authentic Assessment, and Poetry

Do you	Total N	Yes	No
…integrate **art instruction** in any of the core curriculum areas?	11	8 (72.7%)	3 (27.30%)
…integrate **technology** into your classroom activities?	11	9 (81.8%)	2 (18.2%)
…use **authentic assessment** strategies in your classroom activities?	12	12 (100%)	0 (0%)
…include **poetry** in your class lessons during the school day?	12	12 (100%)	0 (0%)

- All of the responding teachers indicated that they integrate poetry and authentic assessment strategies into their classroom activities and more than 80% indicated including technology in their class lessons.
- While the majority of responding teachers indicated that they do integrate art instruction into core curriculum areas, 27% (3 teachers) indicated that they do not.

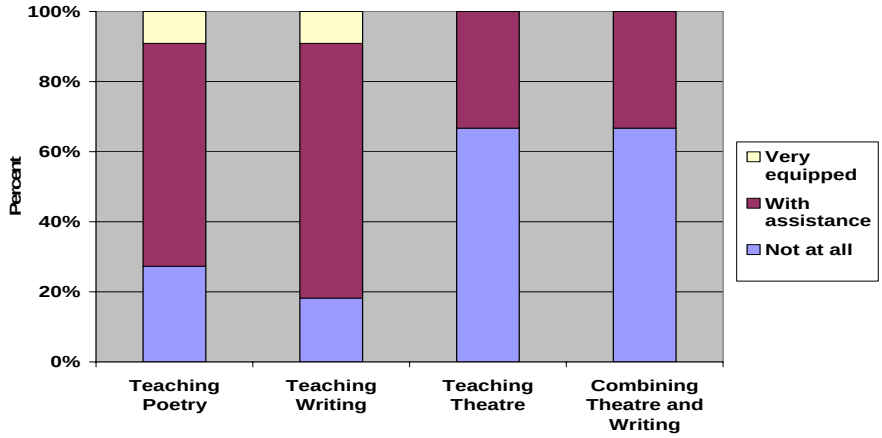
Teachers were asked to assess their skills at teaching poetry, writing, and theater techniques, and combining theater techniques with writing, using a three-point scale—"Not at all Skilled," "Somewhat Skilled," and "Very Skilled." Regarding these same instructional strategies, teachers also indicated their confidence level in mentoring other teachers in these areas using another three-point scale—"Not at all Equipped," "Could do with Assistance," and "Very Equipped." Graphic representations of these results are presented in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1
Spring 2006 Teacher Survey Results
Teachers' Perceived Skill Level in Instructional Strategies



- Teachers reported being most skilled in the areas of teaching writing and teaching poetry, as 100% of the respondents indicated that they are at least *somewhat skilled* in these subject areas. Of these, 45% reported being *very skilled* at teaching poetry, while 78% indicated feeling *very skilled* at teaching writing.
- Nearly 40% of teachers said they felt *somewhat skilled* at teaching theatre techniques while the remainder indicated being *not at all skilled*. Similarly, 58% indicated being *somewhat skilled* at combining theatre techniques with writing, while the remainder indicated being *not at all skilled.* These items showed evidence of the skills where teachers felt least confident.

Figure 2
Spring 2006 Teacher Survey Results
Teachers' Perceptions of their Capacity to Mentor Others



- Teachers felt most confident in their capacity to mentor others in the teaching of writing. Ten percent of teachers felt *very equipped* while 72% felt they could mentor *with assistance*.
- Teachers also felt fairly confident in their abilities to mentor teachers in teaching poetry. About 57% of teachers felt they could mentor *with assistance* while about 10% felt *very equipped*.
- Sixty-four percent of teachers did not feel at all confident in their capacity to mentor others in theatre techniques or combining theater and writing.

While the program did not meet its goals in having all of the teachers demonstrating proficiency and feeling equipped to serve as mentors, it is clear that the teachers felt they experienced a great deal of growth as a result of their participation. In open-ended comments on the survey, some teachers wrote about their positive experiences with the teaching artists. For example, one teacher wrote, "[POETRY Express] has helped by allowing me to co-teach art with an expert in the area who [sic] I can learn from and with. Also it helps me observe my class in a different learning environment. I am able to see and share qualities that I might not have experimented; this improves my future teaching." Another teacher wrote, "Honestly, watching our teaching artist work with our students has been a rewarding experience in that he has a style that allows the students to write freely. He plants a seed and allows the students the time to explore their own ideas. As we are often pressed for time it was nice to see this occur." Other teachers indicated that they are more comfortable with using different techniques in the classroom, such as drama, ice-breakers, poems of the day, and speech techniques. One teacher wrote that the program allowed her to better differentiate instruction and motivate students. Another wrote, "It has reaffirmed my belief that poetry is a critical subject that leads to greater student participation in and enjoyment of language."

Interviews and Focus Groups

As described earlier, the evaluators conducted a series of end-of-year interviews and focus groups with participants in the POETRY Express program. The paragraphs below summarize the data gathered from these interviews about the impact of the program on teachers, the elements that make a successful program, ways in which the program could have been strengthened, and ideas for how teachers may sustain the work they had begun.

Effectiveness of Program for Teachers

POETRY Express teachers participated in ongoing professional development activities over the course of the three program years and had the benefit of having a teaching artist in their classes who often brought new teaching techniques and energy to the class. During interviews, program participants were asked to discuss the impact of the program on teachers. Several of the teachers who were interviewed indicated that the professional development was very helpful to them. They were able to use the poems, lessons, and activities that were presented in the professional development with their classes. They also reported learning new techniques from the teaching artists. One teacher reported that he used some of the ice-breaking activities in his other subjects as well as with POETRY Express, as these activities help to put the students at ease and get them engaged in the lesson. Another teacher indicated that she did not do much group work with her students prior to getting involved in the POETRY Express program. While she did have the students engage in "table work" from time to time, the teaching artist was able to show her how to lead a full lesson using group work.

Other teachers described how they were able to integrate the arts into core subjects, allowing students to write poems in their social studies and science classes. One teacher elaborated on how the teaching artist helped him in his profession by introducing him to new strategies and tools that could be used across all subjects, saying, "Being a good teacher is being a good teacher regardless of the content, getting the students engaged, bringing them to be more active participants, getting them to write and edit what they write…sometimes you just need the right tools for the job."

Elements of a Good Arts Program

During the end-of-year interviews, participants described the elements that comprise a high-quality, effective arts program.

- **Teacher buy-in and participation**

In the POETRY Express program, teachers are intended to be fully involved in the lessons along with the teaching artists. The extent of the teacher involvement varied, according to program observations and interviews with the participants. Some teachers truly *co-led* the lessons with the teaching artists, working together with the teaching artists on all aspects of the lesson. Others were less involved but stayed on hand to help with behavior management and to assist the teaching artists where necessary. In the evaluators' observations, the

> *"You need [a teacher] who is strong and is ready to take this and learn. You don't want to waste this program on someone who is not eager or energetic about it."*
> POETRY Express principal

more involved the teachers were, the more involved the students were and the greater the overall energy in the classroom. In end-of-year interviews, participants agreed with this assessment. According to one of the teaching artists, "A teacher participating in the warm-ups helps. Teachers who write along with [the students] make the kids appreciate it more. There has to be as much buy-in and the teacher [must be] present supporting everything you say or at least [having] a conversation about it. Everyone [must be] there." Along the same lines, a participating teacher offered this advice for implementing a quality program: "Kids will only be good if you are an active participant. Let the kids see you doing the poems and playing the games…You have to want to be involved, dabble in it yourself. Be the first to volunteer. It has to be a team effort." A principal from a participating school further emphasized this point by saying that when selecting teachers for the program, "you need someone who is strong and is ready to take this and learn. You don't want to waste this program on someone who is not eager or energetic about it."

- **Teaching artist and teacher planning and preparation**

Preparation, organization, and communication are key to quality programs. Because the most energetic and engaged classes involved teachers and teaching artists working closely together, it is necessary for them to spend time planning prior to the sessions. Some teachers and teaching artists consistently planned ahead of time, making time during the school day and/or communicating over the phone and via e-mail. Planning sessions included discussing individual students' strengths and weaknesses, appropriate and inappropriate poems and materials to bring in, pacing the lessons, putting the activities in context with other lessons that the students are working on, and more. One teaching artist recommended that it is important to discuss the adults' relative strengths and what each one can offer the students.

- **Interest and involvement of the administration**

According to the participants interviewed in the spring of Year Three, there were varying levels of administrator interest and involvement across the schools. Some administrators touted the program, bringing visitors to observe, hanging students' work on the bulletin boards, and having students perform in front of other classes in the school and for outside visitors. In other schools, the staff described far less support. In one school, for example, the teachers reported that they would have liked to have more school members observe and root for them in the culminating slams. One of these teachers said, "We should have had the same support as the school's step team or chess team, but we didn't."

> *"[The POETRY Express classes] have a climate of respect for each other. There's no doubt about it."*
> POETRY Express principal

In schools where the administrators were interested and involved in the program, it was obvious to the observer immediately. At one such school, the principal described how she has students read their poems over the loud speaker and how the whole school reacts to the power of the poetry. According to her, "You can't see the movement, but the whole school just freezes because it is just so rhythmic." This principal also works to tie the programs in her school together by focusing on general themes that cut across activities. She described how her school has been focusing on enhancing students' empathy and understanding others' feelings. Of the

POETRY Express classes, she reported, "Those classes have a climate of respect for each other. There's no doubt about it."

- **Consistency of participating staff and students**

Though not necessary for quality implementation, interview and observation data revealed that consistency in the staff and students allowed for the greatest impact. One teaching artist who worked with her students for multiple years reported, "Relationships build over the years. They know you. They know what you do. They know what the lessons are." A teacher echoed this sentiment, saying, "The last marking period of [Year Three] was the best. It wasn't a guessing game anymore. The kids knew what to expect and it makes it easier when the children are ready to work and prepared to work." Other evidence of the positive impact of consistency on program implementation is the accomplishments of the students at MS 145 (which are described in more detail later). Despite the fact that this school underwent the most turnover of all the participating schools, the principal adamantly kept the students in the class intact. He also allowed the teacher, who was no longer officially the students' ELA teacher, to team teach with the teaching artist and the new ELA teacher, allowing for consistency in the program's adults over the course of the three program years. This, combined with the fact that the teaching artist remained with the class for all of the years, gave the students a comfortable and fertile space to grow as writers and performers.

Ideas for Strengthening the Program

During the end-of-year interviews, participants shared some ideas for further strengthening the POETRY Express program.

- **Program for bilingual students**

Previous years' evaluations have pointed out that the POETRY Express program has not been as strong for bilingual students as it has been for the EP students. The program did take the recommendations that emanated from the Year Two report and use them to strengthen the bilingual component in Year Three. For example, in Year Three, the teachers participated in a professional development session focused specifically on strategies to use with ELL students, and the program coordinators presented the teachers and teaching artists with more Spanish poetry that could be used in lessons. While these changes did help, they did not fully rectify the situation. The teaching artists assigned to the two elementary schools, which both had bilingual classes, did not speak Spanish. Therefore, they were unable to help the students craft the language for their poems. One teaching artist fully admitted that she had "no idea" what the students were saying but said that she looked for confidence and other performance strengths when assessing students' poems. While she felt comfortable that the students' teacher knew what the students were saying and could help them edit their poems, she did wish to be able to help them more in that area. Furthermore, the bilingual teacher from this school expressed her concern that the judges were not Spanish speakers, feeling that this put her students at a distinct disadvantage as compared to other students competing in the program.

- **More modeling with real classes**

Most teachers reported satisfaction with and appreciation for the POETRY Express professional development sessions that were held over the course of the year. The sessions allowed teachers and teaching artists to come together to discuss issues as they came up and to practice lessons that could be taught with the students. In end-of-year interviews, some teachers indicated that more modeling with real classes and students would have been helpful. One teacher said, "Show us how it is done in action. Modeling with us in the room is not good enough. We need to see how it is done with other kids. The way that I know how another teacher teaches is by watching her teach. It becomes a learning lab." This teacher described how impressive the students are from MS 145, saying, "I want to know *what happens* in that room. What do they do in there to get the kids to that point?" Another teacher pointed out that video conferencing would be helpful. Though it is not always easy to do inter-visitations, it might be possible to set up video conferencing in order to see the classes in action.

- **Enhance the "community of artists"**

Teachers in several schools suggested that there should be more communication between the participants in POETRY Express and Bronx WRITeS. According to these teachers, it would be helpful to have a listserv where lesson plans and video segments could be shared. The listserv would be a place for sharing materials, ideas, and suggestions. According to one teacher the program has "too much emphasis on slam [and] not enough about the community of poets."

- **More video logs of students performing**

In order to track the progress of students, one group of teachers suggested that it would be helpful to have more video logs of students performing their poetry. This would allow program staff to see the progress that students make in their presentation and performing skills over time.

Sustainability

Program sustainability was a key topic of discussion during the end-of-year interviews and focus groups with administrators, teachers, and teaching artists. Teachers noted that they will sustain aspects of the program by continuing to incorporate poetry and activities that they learned with their teaching artists and in the professional development sessions into their classroom activities. The principal of PS 246 also reported that she had begun conversations with DreamYard about continuing to work with them in the 2006-2007 school year. At MS 145, they also hoped to continue its connections with the arts organization. Others, however, discussed the difficulty that they would have paying for teaching artists to continue in their school. While they receive some Project Arts funds, these principals indicated that those funds were needed for staff members and arts materials. The extent to which the program is sustained will continue to be tracked during the 2006-2007 school year, through the no-cost extension of the grant.

C. Program Dissemination

Objective 3.2: By the end of the third project year, at least 12 elementary and middle school teachers from Region One will be recruited and selected to pilot the project with their own classes.

Objective 3.3: By the end of the third project year, at least two elementary and/or middle schools outside of Region One will be recruited and selected to pilot the project in the following school year.

The POETRY Express staff continued to be very active in Year Three in disseminating the model to other districts within and outside of NYC. In Year Two, POETRY Express developed a relationship with four schools in Queens, New York, through a contact in the technology department of the Region. During Year Two, teachers from these Queens schools participated in POETRY Express professional development, teaching artists from DreamYard implemented the 10-week arts residencies, and the students participated in the culminating slams. The reaction to the program was very positive overall, leading the Queens region to continue the program in 2005-2006. According to Andrea Israel, the program's coordinator, who was interviewed by the evaluators in spring 2006, they were able to expand the program in their second year to include eight schools instead of four and were more independent from POETRY Express. They conducted their own professional development and hired a local arts organization to implement the residencies. They also had their own regional poetry slam. Winners of this slam went on to compete in the slams in which the POETRY Express students competed, which also included students from other programs. According to Ms. Israel, funding for the program was limited, as outside sources were not available. Therefore, the administrators drew from three different sources and had schools use some funds from their own budgets. Though it was challenging, they were able to sustain the program on their own and hope to continue in the future.

In addition to the Queens schools, POETRY Express also replicated the model in Year Three with eight schools in Newark, New Jersey (five middle schools and three high schools) and at Nyack Middle School in Rockland County, New York. Two professional development activities conducted by project staff and a DreamYard teaching artist were conducted in both of the new locations during the 2005-2006 school year.

Furthermore, the program at MS 145 was visited by the First Minister of Scotland, Jack McConnell, in April 2006, through a program called Project Scotland, which seeks to replicate successful educational models to motivate students in towns such as Levenmouth, Scotland. Articles about the program were featured in the BBC news and a publication from the International Society for Technology Educators (ISTE) and were made available to the public in late fall of 2006.

Finally, as mentioned earlier as well, students at MS 145 participated in performance activities with the musical artist Moby. Their work has been documented through a school blog site (http://slamfam.blogspot.com/2006/01/i-thank-poetry-for-that.html). At least three other schools in the Bronx WRITeS/POETRY Express program have begun to use web blogging as a means of publishing student work in a multimedia format.

D. Student Achievement

Objective 1.1: In each year of the project, participating EP students' gains in literacy achievement will exceed those of their similarly situated peers in comparison schools.

Objective 1.2: In each year of the project, participating ELL students' gains in English literacy achievement will exceed those of their similarly situated peers in comparison schools.

Objective 1.3: In each year of the project, the average daily attendance of participating students will exceed that of their similarly situated peers in comparison schools.

NYS ELA Analyses

In order to explore the program's impact on students' ELA achievement, the following steps were taken:

Cohort 2 (eighth-grade students):

A series of analyses of co-variance (ANCOVAs) was conducted to test for group differences (treatment vs. comparison) in Year Three (spring 2006) ELA scale scores, taking into account initial group differences in baseline (spring 2003) ELA scale scores. These analyses were conducted for the overall comparison (treatment vs. comparison) as well as for each of the four matched school comparisons (PS/MS 218 vs. PS/MS 279, MS 145 vs. MS 166, MS 325 vs. MS 166, and MS 328 vs. MS 166).

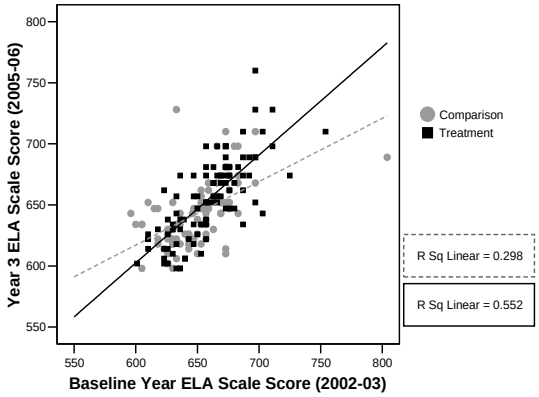
Cohort 1 (fifth-grade students):

Because Cohort 1 students were only in second grade in 2003, baseline year ELA scores are not available for them. (The ELA exam is administered to third through eighth graders.) Alternatively, Year One (2004) ELA scale scores were used as the covariate in a series of analyses of co-variance (ANCOVAs) to test for group differences (treatment vs. comparison) in Year Three (spring 2006) ELA scale scores. These analyses were conducted for the overall comparison (treatment vs. comparison) as well as for each of the two matched school comparisons (PS 360 vs. PS 340 and PS 246 vs. PS 55).

Results for Cohort 2

Figure 3 displays the results of the ANCOVA analyses for grade 8, for all treatment and all comparison schools combined. Tables 12 through 15 show the results by matched school. Bulleted summaries below each of the figures describe the results.

Figure 3
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 8 – Treatment vs. Comparison, All Schools Combined



Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[12]
Treatment	95	651.99	3
Comparison	93	646.57	2
ANCOVA Results			**Effect Size[13]**
Usefulness of Baseline ELA (2002-03) as covariate		F(1,185) = 138.93, p < .001**	1.73
Effectiveness of Treatment		F(1,185) = 2.58, p = .11	0.24

*p<.05, **p<.01

- After adjusting for pretest (spring 2003) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for all tested eighth-grade students in the treatment group was compared to the mean ELA scale score for all tested eighth-grade students in the comparison group. Although the adjusted mean for the treatment group is greater than that of the comparison group, this difference is not statistically significant ($F_{1,185}$=2.58, p=.11).
- It is interesting to note, however, that the adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the treatment group qualifies as Performance Level 3 (or "Meeting Learning Standards"), while the adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the comparison group qualifies only as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards").

[12] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English Language Arts for Grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).
[13] Effect size is a measure of the magnitude of the gains or losses, expressed in gain score standard deviation units. A gain of more than 1/3 of a standard deviation (i.e., an effect size of more than 0.33 or less than -0.33) is considered meaningful.

Table 12
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 8 – PS/MS 218 vs. PS/MS 279

School	Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[14]
PS/MS 218	Treatment	51	649.45	2
PS/MS 279	Comparison	48	647.45	2
ANCOVA Results				**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Baseline ELA (2002-03) as covariate			F(1,96) = 60.67, p < .001**	1.59
Effectiveness of Treatment			F(1,96) = 0.17, p = .68	0.01

*p<.05, **p<.01

- After adjusting for pretest (spring 2003) differences, the Year 3 (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at PS/MS 218 (treatment school) was compared to the mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at PS/MS 279 (comparison school). Although the adjusted mean for the treatment school students is greater than that of the comparison school students, this difference is not statistically significant ($F_{1,96}$=0.17, p=.68).
- The adjusted mean ELA scale scores for both groups qualify as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards"), although the treatment group (PS/MS 218) missed the cut-off for Level 3 (650) by less than one unit.

Table 13
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 8 – MS 145 vs. MS 166

School	Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[15]
MS 145	Treatment	19	677.38	3
MS 166	Comparison	45	647.51	2
ANCOVA Results				**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Baseline ELA (2002-03) as covariate			F(1,61) = 33.83, p < .001**	1.49
Effectiveness of Treatment			F(1,61) = 19.71, p < .001**	1.14

*p<.05, **p<.01

- After adjusting for pretest (spring 2003) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at MS 145 (treatment school) was compared to the mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at MS 166 (comparison school). The adjusted mean ELA scale score for the treatment group is significantly greater than that of the comparison group ($F_{1,61}$=19.71, p<.001).

[14] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).
[15] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).

- The adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the treatment school qualifies as Performance Level 3 (or "Meeting Learning Standards"), while the adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the comparison school qualifies as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards").

Table 14
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 8 – PS/MS 325 vs. PS/MS 166

School	Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[16]
MS 325	Treatment	9	649.02	2
MS 166	Comparison	45	642.11	2
ANCOVA Results				**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Baseline ELA (2002-03) as covariate			F(1,51) = 31.59 p < .001**	1.58
Effectiveness of Treatment			F(1,51) = 0.79, p = .38	0.25

*p<.05, **p<.01

- After adjusting for pretest (spring 2003) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at MS 325 (treatment school) was compared to the mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at MS 166 (comparison school). Although the adjusted mean for the treatment school students is greater than that of the comparison school students, this difference is not statistically significant ($F_{1,51}$=0.79, p=.38).
- The adjusted mean ELA scale scores for both groups qualify as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards"), although the treatment group (MS 325) missed the cut-off for Level 3 (650) by less than one unit.

Table 15
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 8 – PS/MS 328 vs. PS/MS 166

School	Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[17]
MS 328	Treatment	16	631.88	2
MS 166	Comparison	45	640.42	2
ANCOVA Results				**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Baseline ELA (2002-03) as covariate			F(1,58) = 45.36, p < .001**	1.77
Effectiveness of Treatment			F(1,58) = 2.26, p = .14	0.39

*p<.05, **p<.01

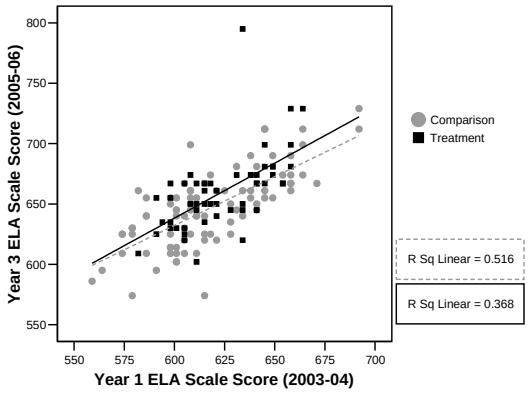
[16] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).
[17] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).

- After adjusting for pretest (spring 2003) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at MS 328 (treatment school) was compared to the mean ELA scale score for eighth-grade students at MS 166 (comparison school). This difference is not statistically significant ($F_{1,58}$=2.26, p=.14), but it is educationally meaningful with an effect size of 0.39.
- The adjusted mean ELA scale scores for both groups qualify as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards").

Results for Cohort 1

Figure 4 displays the results of the ANCOVA analyses for grade 5, for all treatment and comparison schools combined. Tables 16 and 17 display the matched school comparisons. Bulleted summaries below the figures describe the results.

Figure 4
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 5 – Treatment vs. Comparison, All Schools Combined



Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[18]
Treatment	53	656.74	3
Comparison	86	648.38	2
ANCOVA Results			**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Year One ELA (2003-04) as covariate		F(1,136) = 115.62, p < .001**	1.85
Effectiveness of Treatment		F(1,136) = 4.06, p = .046*	0.35

- After adjusting for Year One (spring 2004) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for all tested fifth-grade students in the treatment group was compared to the mean ELA scale score for all tested fifth-grade students in the comparison group. The adjusted mean ELA scale score for the treatment group is significantly greater than that of the comparison group ($F_{1,136}$=4.06, p=.046).
- The adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the treatment school qualifies as Performance Level 3 (or "Meeting Learning Standards"), while the adjusted mean

[18] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 5 as follows: Level 1 = (495-607), Level 2 = (608-649), Level 3 = (650-710), Level 4 = (711-795).

ELA scale score for students in the comparison school qualifies as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards").

Table 16
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 5 – PS 246 (Treatment) vs. PS 55 (Comparison)

School	Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[19]
PS 246	Treatment	24	659.07	3
PS 55	Comparison	41	634.35	2

ANCOVA Results		Effect Size
Usefulness of Year One ELA (2003-04) as covariate	F(1,62) = 37.99, p < .001**	1.57
Effectiveness of Treatment	F(1,62) = 12.66, p = .001**	0.91

- After adjusting for Year One (spring 2004) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for fifth-grade students at PS 246 (treatment school) was compared to the mean ELA scale score for fifth-grade students at PS 55 (comparison school). The adjusted mean ELA scale score for the treatment school is significantly greater than that of the comparison school ($F_{1,62}$=12.66, p=.001).
- The adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the treatment school qualifies as Performance Level 3 (or "Meeting Learning Standards"), while the adjusted mean ELA scale score for students in the comparison school qualifies as Performance Level 2 (or "Partially Meeting Learning Standards").

Table 17
ANCOVA Results: ELA Achievement, Spring 2006
Grade 5 – PS 360 (Treatment) vs. PS 340 (Comparison)

School	Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ELA Scale Score Year 3: Spring 2006	Level[20]
PS 360	Treatment	29	654.22	3
PS 340	Comparison	44	661.26	3

ANCOVA Results		Effect Size
Usefulness of Year One ELA (2003-04) as covariate	F(1,70) = 51.69, p < .001**	1.72
Effectiveness of Treatment	F(1,70) = 2.18, p = .14	0.35

- After adjusting for Year One (spring 2004) differences, the Year Three (spring 2006) mean ELA scale score for fifth-grade students at PS 360 (treatment school) was compared to the mean ELA scale score for fifth-grade students at PS 340 (comparison

[19] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).
[20] 2006 scale scores are converted to Performance Levels in English language arts for grade 8 as follows: Level 1 = (430-601), Level 2 = (602-649), Level 3 = (650-714), Level 4 = (715-790).

school). This difference is not statistically significant ($F_{1,70}$=2.18, p=.14), but it is educationally meaningful with an effect size of 0.35.

- The adjusted mean ELA scale scores for both groups qualify as Performance Level 3 (or "Meeting Learning Standards").

NYSESLAT Analyses

(ELL student performance in English literacy is assessed through annual administrations of the NYSESLAT. As previously mentioned, NYSESLAT raw scores fall into one of four proficiency levels: Level 1: *Beginning*, Level 2: *Intermediate*, Level 3: *Advanced*, and Level 4: *Proficient*. Students are considered EP when they achieve the Proficient level on the NYSESLAT. Tables 18-20 display the total number of fifth- and eighth-grade students who took the NYSESLAT in spring 2005 (Year Two) by performance level and the amount of change in their spring 2006 (Year Three) NYSESLAT scores.

Table 18
Year Two (Spring 2005) to Year Three (Spring 2006) Total NYSESLAT Score
Performance Level 1 Analysis
Treatment vs. Comparison

Grade Level Spring 2006	Group	Total N at Level 1 at Pretest (Spring 2005)	N (%) of Students at each Performance Level in Spring 2006 (Change in Level from Spring 2005-Spring 2006)			
			Level 1: Beginning (no change)	Level 2: Intermediate (+1)	Level 3: Advanced (+2)	Level 4: Proficient (+3)
5th	Treatment	5	3 (60.0%)	2 (40.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Comparison	---	---	---	---	---
8th	Treatment	---	---	---	---	---
	Comparison	---	---	---	---	---

- Sixty percent (N=3) of the fifth-grade treatment students who had performed at Level 1 on the NYESESLAT in Year Two remained at that level, while 40% (N=2) of the comparison students improved their performance by one level. No fifth-grade comparison students who scored at Level 1 in Year Two had matched data to compare in Year Three.
- No eighth-grade treatment or comparison students who scored at Level 1 in Year Two had matched data to compare in Year Three.

Table 19
Year Two (Spring 2005) to Year Three (Spring 2006) Total NYSESLAT Score
Performance Level 2 Analysis
Treatment vs. Comparison

Grade Level Spring 2006	Group	Total N at Level 2 at Pretest (Spring 2005)	N (%) of Students at each Performance Level in Spring 2006 (Change in Level from Spring 2005-Spring 2006)			
			Level 1: Beginning (-1)	Level 2: Intermediate (no change)	Level 3: Advanced (+1)	Level 4: Proficient (+2)
5th	Treatment	7	0 (0%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (42.9%)	0 (0%)
	Comparison	---	---	---	---	---
8th	Treatment	2	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)
	Comparison	13	0 (0%)	11 (84.6%)	0 (0%)	2 (15.4%)

- Approximately 57% of the fifth-grade treatment students who had performed at Level 2 in Year Two (N=7) remained at that level, while about 43% (N=3) improved their performance by one performance level. No fifth-grade comparison students who scored at Level 2 had matched data to compare in Year Three.
- Of the two eighth-grade treatment students who had performed at Level 2 in Year Two, one advanced to Level 3 and one advanced to Level 4. Of the 13 eighth-grade comparison students who had scored at Level 2 in the previous year, approximately 85% (N=11) remained at Level 2 and 15% (N=2) advanced to Level 4 in Year Three.

Table 20
Year Two (Spring 2005) to Year Three (Spring 2006) Total NYSESLAT Score
Performance Level 3 Analysis
Treatment vs. Comparison

Grade Level Spring 2006	Group	Total N at Level 3 at Pretest (Spring 2005)	N (%) of Students at each Performance Level in Spring 2006 (Change in Level from Spring 2005-Spring 2006)			
			Level 1: Beginning (-2)	Level 2: Intermediate (-1)	Level 3: Advanced (no change)	Level 4: Proficient (+1)
5th	Treatment	8	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (75.0%)	2 (25.0%)
	Comparison	13	0 (0%)	1 (7.7%)	7 (53.8%)	5 (38.5%)
8th	Treatment	7	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (42.9%)	4 (57.1%)
	Comparison	20	0 (0%)	1 (5.0%)	8 (40.0%)	11 (55.0%)

- Of the eight fifth-grade treatment students who had performed at Level 3 in Year Two, 75% (N=6) had no change in their performance level in Year Three, while 25% (N=2) advanced to Level 4. Of the 13 fifth-grade comparison students who had performed at Level 3, more than half (N=7, 53.8%) remained at this level, while 38% (N=5) advanced to Level 4 and one student (7.7%) fell back to Level 2.
- Of the seven eighth-grade treatment students who had performed at Level 3 in Year Two, the majority (N=4, 57.1%) advanced to Level 4 and 43% (N=3) remained at Level 3. Twenty eighth-grade comparison students had scored at Level 3 on the NYSESLAT in Year Two. Of these students, 55% (N=11) advanced to Level 4, while 40% (N=8) remained at Level 3 and one student (5%) fell back to Level 2.

Table 21 below displays the number and percentage of students in grades five and eight of both the treatment and comparison groups who achieved English proficiency on the NYSESLAT in spring 2005 and spring 2006.

Table 21
NYSESLAT Cross-sectional Results
Students Attaining English Proficiency in Spring 2005 and Spring 2006

Grade in 2006	Group	Spring 2005 NYSESLAT		Spring 2006 NYSESLAT	
		N Tested	N (%) Achieving Proficiency (Level 4)	N Tested	N (%) Achieving Proficiency (Level 4)
5th	Treatment	33	0 (0%)	31	2 (6.5%)
	Comparison	18	2 (11.1%)	15	5 (33.3%)
8th	Treatment	18	1 (9.1%)	24	6 (25.0%)
	Comparison	40	4 (18.8%)	38	14 (36.8%)
Total	Treatment	51	1 (2.0%)	55	8 (15.1%)
	Comparison	58	6 (10.3%)	53	19 (35.8%)

- One student (2.0% of tested students) from the treatment schools and six schools (10.3%) from the comparison students achieved English proficiency in spring 2005.
- In spring 2006, eight students from the treatment schools (15.1%) achieved proficiency while 19 students (35.8%) from the comparison schools did.

Table 22 displays participating students' changes in NYSESLAT scores from the baseline year (2002-2003) to Year Three (2005-2006). Longitudinal performance level movement analyses were conducted for treatment and comparison ELL students who had both pre-test (baseline, in spring 2003) and posttest (Year Three, in spring 2006) NYSESLAT scores to determine their progress towards achieving English proficiency. Table 22 displays the results of these analyses. Longitudinal analyses that compare the pre-established school-to-school differences are presented in Appendix C.

Table 22
Baseline (Spring 2003) to Year Three (Spring 2006) Total NYSESLAT Score
Performance Level Movement Analysis
Treatment vs. Comparison

Group	Matched *N*	Performance Level Change N (%) of Students							Test Statistics
		-3	-2	-1	no change	+1	+2	+3	
Treatment*	10	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (70.0%)	3 (30.0%)	0 (0%)	Z = 2.919 (p<.01)
Comparison*	28	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (14.3%)	10 (35.7%)	13 (46.4%)	1 (3.6%)	Z = 4.406 (p<.01)

*Denotes a statistically significant positive change at $p < .05$, based on a two-tailed, paired samples Wilcoxon signed-ranks test.

- Of the 10 treatment students who had NYSESLAT scores at both baseline and Year Three, 70% (N=7) had improved by one performance level and 30% (N=3) had

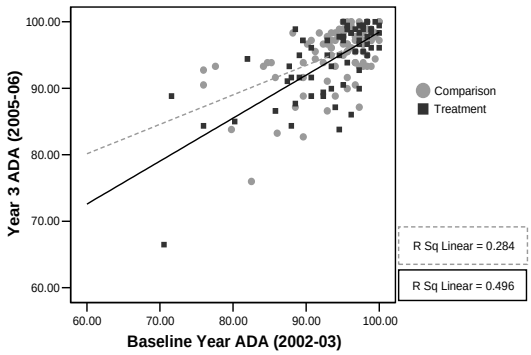
improved by two performance levels. These changes are statistically significant and educationally meaningful.

- Of the 28 comparison students who had matched scores, 13 (46.4%) improved their performance by two levels, 10 (35.7%) by one level and one student (3.6%) improved his/her performance by three levels. Four students (14.3%) demonstrated no change from baseline to Year Three. Changes in the comparison students' scores also are statistically significant and educationally meaningful.

Year Three Attendance - ADA Analyses

The ADA represents the percentage of time that students are present in school and is calculated by dividing the total number of days that a student was present by the total possible attendance days. The differences between treatment and comparison students' Year Three (2005-2006) attendance rates were compared and analyzed for significant group differences using ANCOVAs, while taking into account initial differences in baseline year (2002-2003) attendance rates. Figure 5 displays the results of this analysis for fifth-grade treatment and comparison students (all schools combined), while Figure 6 displays the results of this analysis for eighth-grade treatment and comparison students (all schools combined).

Figure 5
ANCOVA Results: Average Daily Attendance (ADA)
Grade 5—Treatment vs. Comparison

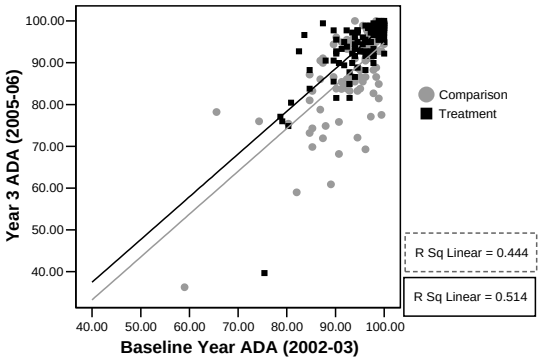


Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ADA Year 3 (2005-2006)	
Treatment	64	94.40	
Comparison	96	95.11	
ANCOVA Results			**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Baseline ADA (2002-03) as covariate		F(1,157) = 99.23, p < .001**	1.59
Effectiveness of Treatment		F(1,157) = 1.25, p = .27	0.18

*p < .05, **p<.01

- While the adjusted mean ADA for fifth-grade students in the comparison schools was slightly higher than that for the fifth-grade students in the treatment schools, the difference was not statistically significant or educationally meaningful ($F_{1,157}$=1.25, p=.27).

Figure 6
ANCOVA Results: Average Daily Attendance (ADA)
Grade 8—Treatment vs. Comparison



Group	*N*	Adjusted Mean ADA Year 3 (2005-2006)	
Treatment	93	92.63	
Comparison	104	88.55	
ANCOVA Results			**Effect Size**
Usefulness of Baseline ADA (2002-03) as covariate		F(1,194) = 165.85, p < .001**	1.85
Effectiveness of Treatment		F(1,194) = 18.26, P < .001**	0.61

*****p < .05, **p<.01

- The ANCOVA results indicate that eighth-grade students in the treatment schools had a significantly higher adjusted mean ADA in Year Three than that of eighth-grade students in the comparison schools ($F_{1,194}$=18.26, p<.001).

E. Student Art Appreciation and Attitudes

Objective 1.4: In each year of the project, participating students will demonstrate significantly greater motivation toward literacy work and learning in general than their similarly situated peers in comparison schools.

Objective 1.5: In each year of the project, participating EP and ELL students will demonstrate improvement in the quality of their writing and performing skills.

Interviews and Focus Groups

> *"It raises the hair on your arms when you hear their poetry. It's just so incredible."* POETRY Express principal

Overall, teachers, administrators, and teaching artists who were interviewed were overwhelmingly positive about the effects of the program on student participants. They spoke about the increasing maturity of students' poetry, the students' increased comfort with performance and public speaking, and their enhanced understanding of what it means to be a good audience member and team player. Teachers, teaching artists, and administrators told multiple individual success stories of children who "came out of their shells," who found their "success zone," and who had "blossomed" into accomplished young men and women. In one case, a teaching artist told a story of an English language learner who was so shy she had not spoken at all in class for the

entire first semester but wrote a beautiful poem and, by the second semester, was selected for the slam team and was performing in front of her peers with confidence. This student also began participating in other school activities and performed a dance in front of her peers for an end-of-year talent show, which this teaching artist felt never would have happened if she had not had the POETRY Express experience.

An administrator from a participating elementary school told a story of a boy who exhibited serious behavioral problems prior to starting POETRY Express. According to the principal, this boy, who was very smart but a "real handful," found his niche in the POETRY Express program. He turned out to be an enthusiastic writer and performer and was selected to participate in the slam team in Year Three. This principal believes that he may have been bored in class and was not getting enough from everyday enrichment to keep him on task. According to her, "You put him in a situation like [POETRY Express] where he can really go wild and he doesn't misbehave because he is interested." In another elementary school, a teaching artist told a story of a boy who is a "natural writer," but also a "natural bully." This child got a lot of attention from his peers for his misbehaviors but after participating in the POETRY Express program, he started getting attention for a positive quality, his writing talent. According to the teaching artist, this experience "freed him," allowing him to express himself and to get positive feedback for his talents.

While the individual success stories are inspiring, it is clear that the program had a larger effect than on a few shy or misbehaving students. At MS 145, the impact could be seen throughout the full class. In this school, the students had the clear advantage of consistency in the teaching artist, the teacher, and, in large part, their peers. This consistency was possible because of the strong support of the school's administrator, the dedication of their teacher/mentor, and the positive relationships that formed between the adults and students in the classroom. The students at MS 145 consistently performed well in the culminating slams over the three grant years. By the end of Year Three, the students' poetry achieved a level of sophistication and intensity that caught the attention of multiple outsiders, including Moby, the famed musician, who invited several of the students to record their poetry in his recording studio, and the First Minister of Scotland (as mentioned earlier), who hoped to replicate the program in his own country. Several of the participating students at MS 145 won a "mock trial" competition held each year in the Bronx County Courthouse. During the 2005-2006 school year, students from MS 145 won against students from an elite private high school in New York. Their teacher attributed some of their success to the practice they had in performing in front of others and the ease and confidence with which they presented themselves in that situation. Furthermore, several of the participating students from MS 145 graduated and went on to elite public or private high schools inside and outside the city.

Likewise, the principal of another participating middle school indicated that she has had perfect or near perfect graduation rates over the past three years, something she attributes in part to the students' participation in POETRY Express. The school has developed a partnership with the New School for Julliard that recently opened in the city. According to this principal, students have been able to get into good high schools with drama and writing emphasis because the students "have come to a level where they really feel comfortable in front of an audience and in front of their peers without being judged."

Student Attitude Surveys

In order to measure differences over time between student attitudes and motivation in the treatment and the comparison groups, the program and evaluation staff collaboratively created a survey to be administered to students in both groups in each program year. Students were asked to respond to 20 statements as *never true, sometimes true,* or *always true* about themselves.

Group differences in responses to these items were analyzed using the Mann Whitney U Test of Significance, a nonparametric alternative to the independent sample *t*-test that allows for response options to be ordered categorically rather than continuously. Group differences in Year Three (2005-2006) responses for students in the treatment and the comparison schools were statistically significant on eight of the 20 questions. Table 23 displays the eight statements for which statistically significant group differences were found on the Year Three student survey (spring 2006) when comparing all treatment school students to all comparison school students. Table 24 displays statements for which statistically significant differences were found when comparing matched schools one-to-one. Complete survey results may be found in Appendix D.

Table 23
Spring 2006 Survey Results
Treatment vs. Comparison Group – Significant Group Differences

Survey Statement	Group	*N*	Never True	Sometimes True	Always True	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mann-Whitney U (p-value)*
I pay attention when the teacher is talking.	Treatment	174	0 (0.0%)	103 (59.2%)	71 (40.8%)	2.41	0.49	U = 13984.0 (p<.01)
	Comparison	190	8 (4.2%)	129 (67.9%)	53 (27.9%)	2.24	0.52	
I read books even when I am not at school.	Treatment	174	12 (6.9%)	104 (59.8%)	58 (33.3%)	2.26	0.58	U = 13092.0 (p<.01)
	Comparison	192	42 (21.9%)	110 (57.3%)	40 (20.8%)	1.99	0.66	
I get my homework done on time.	Treatment	172	3 (1.7%)	104 (60.5%)	65 (37.8%)	2.36	0.52	U = 13840.0 (p<.01)
	Comparison	189	13 (6.9%)	127 (67.2%)	49 (25.9%)	2.19	0.54	
I have a favorite writer.	Treatment	173	64 (37.0%)	50 (28.9%)	59 (34.1%)	1.97	0.85	U = 13952.5 (p<.01)
	Comparison	190	93 (48.9%)	54 (28.4%)	43 (22.6%)	1.74	0.81	
I keep a journal or diary.	Treatment	173	62 (35.8%)	50 (28.9%)	61 (35.3%)	1.99	0.85	U = 14604.0 (p<.05)
	Comparison	192	93 (48.4%)	43 (22.4%)	56 (29.2%)	1.81	0.86	
I enjoy visiting the library.	Treatment	171	20 (11.7%)	99 (57.9%)	52 (30.4%)	2.19	0.62	U = 12512.5 (p<.01)
	Comparison	192	66 (34.4%)	85 (44.3%)	41 (21.4%)	1.87	0.74	
I follow school and classroom rules.	Treatment	171	3 (1.8%)	98 (57.3%)	70 (40.9%)	2.39	0.52	U = 12935.0 (p<.01)
	Comparison	189	10 (5.3%)	136 (72.0%)	43 (22.8%)	2.17	0.50	
I like to write poems.	Treatment	173	30 (17.3%)	57 (32.9%)	86 (49.7%)	2.32	0.75	U = 12554.5 (p<.01)
	Comparison	192	60 (31.3%)	77 (40.1%)	55 (28.6%)	1.97	0.78	

- For all eight items listed above, treatment group students (taken all together) reported significantly more positive responses than comparison group students (taken all together).

Additional analyses were conducted to assess differences on the posttest (spring 2006) comparing matched treatment and comparison schools. It is important to note that no post-surveys were received from MS 340, PS/MS 279, or MS 328. Therefore no data comparing MS 360 to MS 340, PS/MS 218 to PS/MS 279, or MS 328 to MS 166 will be presented here. The complete frequency tables for each of the paired schools are presented in Appendix D.

Table 24
Spring 2006 Survey Results
Significant Differences between Schools

Survey Statement	Group	*N*	Never True	Sometimes True	Always True	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mann-Whitney U (p-value)*
PS 246 vs. PS 55								
I get my homework done on time.	PS 246	33	0 (0.0%)	12 (36.4%)	21 (63.6%)	2.64	0.49	U = 855.0 (p<.01)
	PS 55	75	4 (5.3%)	45 (60.0%)	26 (34.7%)	2.29	0.56	
I can work on my own.	PS 246	32	1 (3.1%)	10 (31.3%)	21 (65.6%)	2.63	0.55	U = 946.0 (p<.05)
	PS 55	75	0 (0.0%)	43 (57.3%)	32 (42.7%)	2.43	0.50	
I enjoy reading to others.	PS 246	34	3 (8.8%)	16 (47.1%)	15 (44.1%)	2.35	0.65	U = 877.0 (p<.01)
	PS 55	75	19 (25.3%)	41 (54.7%)	15 (20.0%)	1.95	0.68	
I like to write stories.	PS 246	32	0 (0.0%)	18 (56.3%)	14 (43.8%)	2.44	0.50	U = 903.0 (p<.05)
	PS 55	75	12 (16.0%)	42 (56.0%)	21 (28.0%)	2.12	0.66	
I follow school and classroom rules.	PS 246	32	0 (0.0%)	11 (34.4%)	21 (65.6%)	2.66	0.48	U = 849.0 (p<.01)
	PS 55	74	4 (5.4%)	41 (55.4%)	29 (39.2%)	2.34	0.58	
I like to write poems.	PS 246	34	2 (5.9%)	8 (23.5%)	24 (70.6%)	2.65	0.60	U = 649.0 (p<.01)
	PS 55	75	21 (28.0%)	35 (46.7%)	19 (25.3%)	1.97	0.74	
MS 145 vs. MS 166								
I pay attention when the teacher is talking.	MS 145	26	0 (0.0%)	17 (65.4%)	9 (34.6%)	2.35	0.49	U = 1178.0 (p<.05)
	MS 166	115	7 (6.1%)	88 (76.5%)	20 (17.4%)	2.11	0.47	
I read books even when I am not at school.	MS 145	26	1 (3.8%)	19 (73.1%)	6 (23.1%)	2.19	0.49	U = 1063.5 (p<.01)
	MS 166	117	34 (29.1%)	69 (59.0%)	14 (12.0%)	1.83	0.62	
I get my homework done on time.	MS 145	26	0 (0.0%)	14 (53.8%)	12 (46.2%)	2.46	0.51	U = 1034.0 (p<.01)
	MS 166	114	9 (7.9%)	82 (71.9%)	23 (20.2%)	2.12	0.52	
I have a favorite writer.	MS 145	26	5 (19.2%)	10 (38.5%)	11 (42.3%)	2.23	0.77	U = 894.5 (p<.01)
	MS 166	116	62 (53.4%)	35 (30.2%)	19 (16.4%)	1.63	0.75	
I follow school and classroom rules.	MS 145	26	0 (0.0%)	16 (61.5%)	10 (38.5%)	2.38	0.50	U = 1054.0 (p<.05)
	MS 166	115	6 (5.2%)	95 (82.6%)	14 (12.2%)	2.07	0.41	
MS 325 vs. MS 166								
I read books even when I am not at school.	MS 325	21	1 (4.8%)	13 (61.9%)	7 (33.3%)	2.29	0.56	U = 779.5 (p<.01)
	MS 166	117	34 (29.1%)	69 (59.0%)	14 (12.0%)	1.83	0.62	
I like to read the newspaper.	MS 325	21	0 (0.0%)	16 (76.2%)	5 (23.8%)	2.24	0.44	U = 874.5 (p<.05)
	MS 166	117	30 (25.6%)	70 (59.8%)	17 (14.5%)	1.89	0.63	
I keep a journal or diary.	MS 325	20	6 (30.0%)	7 (35.0%)	7 (35.0%)	2.05	0.83	U = 851.0 (p<.05)
	MS 166	117	67 (57.3%)	25 (21.4%)	25 (21.4%)	1.64	0.81	
I enjoy visiting the library.	MS 325	21	1 (4.8%)	17 (81.0%)	3 (14.3%)	2.10	0.44	U = 754.5 (p<.01)
	MS 166	117	53 (45.3%)	52 (44.4%)	12 (10.3%)	1.65	0.66	
I follow school and classroom rules.	MS 325	21	0 (0.0%)	14 (66.7%)	7 (33.3%)	2.33	0.48	U = 910.0 (p<.05)
	MS 166	115	6 (5.2%)	95 (82.6%)	14 (12.2%)	2.07	0.41	

- For items where statistically significant differences were found, treatment school students reported more positive responses than did comparison school students.
- Between PS 246 and PS 55, there were statistically significant differences in the responses of students in the treatment and the comparison groups for six of the 20 questions.
- Between MS 145 and MS 166, there were statistically significant differences in the responses of students in the treatment and the comparison groups for five of the 20 questions.

- Between MS 325 and MS 166, there were statistically significant differences in the responses of students in the treatment and the comparison groups for five of the 20 questions.
- In all three school-to-school comparisons, treatment school students reported significantly more positive responses to the statement "I follow school and classroom rules" than did students from matched comparison schools.
- In two of the three school-to-school comparisons, treatment school students reported significantly more positive responses to the statements, "I read books even when I am not at school" and "I get my homework done on time" than did students from matched comparison schools.

IV. Summary and Conclusions

The POETRY Express Project had a very successful third and final year of implementation. More than 300 students participated in the treatment and more than half of these students participated in the full three years of the project. As in previous years, participating adults, including the teaching artists, teachers, and school administrators, reported on the effectiveness of the program for the student participants. According to these adults, students increased their confidence, their interest in literacy activities, their public speaking abilities, and their audience skills. Student perceptions of changes also were examined through the use of surveys of the treatment and comparison students. Results of these surveys supported evidence gained through interviews and focus groups with adults. Overall, students in the treatment group were more likely than those in the comparison group to indicate that they enjoy literacy activities (such as writing poetry, reading books, keeping a journal or diary, and going to the library). The treatment students also were more likely to indicate that they engaged in good academic practices than the comparison students (such as paying attention in class, completing homework, and following school and classroom rules).

Results of analyses of student achievement test scores were mixed. Overall, the fifth-grade treatment students outperformed the fifth-grade comparison students on the NYS ELA exam, while there were no significant differences overall between the eighth-grade treatment and comparison students. When examining the results by school, however, MS 145 performed significantly better than its matched comparison school. This is an important finding considering the support and consistency that students in this school experienced over the course of the three years.

The NYSESLAT results also are mixed. Both treatment and comparison students improved significantly in their performance from the baseline year to Year Three on the NYSESLAT. However, a greater percentage of students in the comparison group achieved proficiency on the exam in Year Three than did students in the treatment group. This finding, along with the qualitative data gathered from observations and interviews, point to the necessity of strengthening the program for ELL students. In order to have the greatest impact on ELL students, it is recommended for future projects that the teaching artist be a fluent Spanish speaker, that there be Spanish-speaking judges, and that the students in the bilingual classes be allowed to participate in the slam competition regardless of their entry point in the program.

POETRY Express is intended to impact not only on the students but also on the instructional practices of the teachers. The results in this report indicate that the program impacted on teachers' skills in teaching literacy by introducing them to new techniques and tools for differentiating instruction and motivating students to learn. While the results are positive overall for the participating teachers, the project had a fair amount of turnover in staff over the course of the three years. It is recommended for future projects that the mentoring component be continued over all of the project years so that new teachers who come on board receive the same support as those who participated from the beginning.

POETRY Express has been enormously successful in disseminating the model. By the end of Year Three, the results of the work of the project leadership were evident. Staff from schools in the tri-state area, as well as nationally and internationally, had observed the program in action and several had begun nascent programs of their own with the support of the POETRY Express staff. Regarding the POETRY Express participants, teachers and administrators discussed their plans with evaluators for sustaining the model without outside funding. The extent to which they are able to sustain the program is being evaluated through the project's no-cost extension period, the 2006-2007 school year, and will be reported on in fall 2007.