INTRODUCTION

The pandemic continues to take its toll on the larger Community-Word Project (CWP) community of artists, young people, schools, and staff. From research by the United Hospital Fund, as of September 2020, we know that “4,200 of New York State’s approximately 4 million children experienced a parental or caregiver death due to COVID-19”, and that “57% of children who lost a parent or caregiver live in the Bronx, Brooklyn, or Queens.” These are the boroughs where CWP does most of its work.

We know anecdotally from teachers and principals that student connectivity continues to be an issue for a variety of reasons; we know that many artists are financially hard hit for reasons ranging from the shutdown of performance venues and reduced teaching work through arts education organizations to layoffs in industries that provide vital supplemental income like restaurants and wellness centers. This change in their employment has led to many facing displacement and concerns for how they will pay for things like healthcare.

We also know that in the midst of, and in many cases exacerbated by, the pandemic, anti-Black racism continues to take an immeasurable toll on our local and national communities. 2020 brought our students, Teaching Artists, administrative staff, and board into a deeper reckoning with racism in response to the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Tony McDade and so many others as well as the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the lives and livelihoods of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

In that context, we decided to focus our spring 2020 evaluation efforts on a series of focus groups with students, teachers and school administrators, Teaching Artists, and Teaching Artist Project (TAP) Trainees to learn what we could about the remote programming we offered in the spring, the impact of COVID-19 in CWP learning environments, and the opportunities and challenges within CWP’s work to become an anti-racist organization. In this report, you’ll find key takeaways from those conversations as well as some information on the pre-data we were able to collect and will be comparing with pre-data from the 2020-21 school year when available. The 2019-20 TAP program was mostly complete when the outbreak began, so you’ll find complete pre- and post-data analysis for that program.

Thank you for being part of the CWP community.
ABOUT COMMUNITY-WORD PROJECT

Community-Word Project (CWP) is a New York City-based non-profit that inspires students to read, interpret, and respond to their world and to become active citizens, alongside providing professional learning to emerging and experienced Teaching Artists in New York City. We do this through three interconnected areas of programming:

- **TEACHING ARTIST PROJECT**
  - Year-long training program for Teaching Artists including classroom internships; summer workshops; customized training; electives across more than 15 peer organizations in NYC and nationwide

- **YOUTH PROGRAMS**
  - Multidisciplinary Collaborative Arts Residencies in NYC public schools; public library workshops; and innovative youth development programs

- **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**
  - NYC public schools, NYC public libraries, NYC Department of Education, and community-based organizations in NYC and nationwide

Note: Not all areas of our work are addressed in detail in this report. For more information, please visit communitywordproject.org.

- **3,134** STUDENTS IN ALL FIVE BOROUGHS
- **400+** TEACHING ARTISTS REACHED BY CWP PROGRAMMING
- **87+** SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES AND OTHER ARTS PARTNERS
- **57** LIBRARY WORKSHOPS ACROSS THE CITY
- **51** TEACHING ARTIST TRAINEES
- **29** MULTI-WEEK RESIDENCIES
“OUR liFE Is LiKE a tHORNY ROSe nOT PERFECT But ALwAys BEAUTIFUL, I dream: the idea of having no fear to face, I walk and feel the fresh air. The way the cans roll the way my art shows on the wall the strength of the streets coming out with no stress.”

...I dream I am powerful and gentle, a seer, a shaman, wise but still full of wonder. Without fear of the unknown and unknowable. A channel.

I dream.”

Writing and artwork by students at Long Island City High School. Teaching Artists: Pamella Allen, Erin Anderson, and Natalie Willens
YOUTH PROGRAMS

COLLABORATIVE ARTS RESIDENCIES

CWP Collaborative Arts Residencies provide unique arts-integrated experiences in NYC public school classrooms and afterschool settings. Working with classroom teachers and afterschool leaders, CWP Teaching Artists support creative and critical thinking skills and social-emotional learning through writing, music, visual art, theatre, dance, and more. Residencies often culminate in students sharing work via an anthology, culminating event, mural, and/or exhibit.

ADDITIONAL YOUTH PROGRAMS

In CWP 2.0, a college and career exposure program, students make interactive public art, interface with innovative technology, lead curriculum design, and participate in networking events. In 2019-20, 15 students from four high schools in Queens and the Bronx participated.

CWP Teaching Artists also lead workshops in libraries in partnership with New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library. These workshops invite youth to read, write, and create in their local libraries.

2019-2020

3,134 STUDENTS IN FIVE BOROUGHS

13 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RESIDENCIES

5 MIDDLE SCHOOL RESIDENCIES

7 HIGH SCHOOL RESIDENCIES

8 AFTERSCHOOL RESIDENCIES

51 EXPERIENCED TEACHING ARTISTS

7 STUDENT-LED MURALS

Artwork from P.S. 84 Students. Teaching Artists: Felipe Galindo, Molly Goldman, Valerie Hallier
YOUTH PROGRAMS: WHAT ARE WE MEASURING?

COLLABORATIVE ARTS RESIDENCIES:

- Creative Thinking
- Critical Thinking
- Literacy
- Emotional Intelligence
- Community

COLLABORATIVE ARTS RESIDENCIES:
ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

- Authentic Voice
  The writer's unique perspective is clear. The writer uses individual point of view. The writer's culture, community, and/or identity is expressed.

- Risk-Taking
  The writer makes clear choices/uses specific details. The writer expresses emotion. The writer makes bold choices.

- Expansive Language
  The writer uses strong vocabulary words, poetic devices and writing tools such as metaphor, simile, sensory detail, alliteration, plot, character development, etc. The writer uses complex sentence structures.

You hold me up with your funny stories after I hurt myself at the park.

You hold me up when you help me realize it’s ok to make mistakes.

You hold me up when you hug me before bed.

I hold you up by caring for you and giving you hope.

Work from P.S. 84 Students. Teaching Artists: Felipe Galindo, Molly Goldman, Valerie Hallier
In preparation for the 2019-20 school year, Community-Word Project continued to refine its evaluations tools and processes. While much of our pre-data was collected as planned, the COVID-19 pandemic changed or disrupted the collection of much of our post-data. To account for the lack of post-program data and to develop a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our programming, we also conducted focus groups with key stakeholder groups, detailed later in this report.
With the lack of post-survey data in the 2019-20 school year because of the pandemic, a pre- and post-program comparison of student surveys and writing tasks was not possible. Above are insights from the social and emotional learning (SEL) pre-survey data only.

Typically, CWP Teaching Artists reflect on their individual class reports and not the whole as capacities can vary widely from class to class. Reflecting on this type of pre-program data allows Teaching Artists to use the information in a practical way while planning their residency.

For example, observe that most students scored as “Emerging” in Mastery Orientation which describes a young person’s internal motivation to acquire knowledge and skills, which can help in learning from failure, increasing resilience, and performing academically. Knowing where the majority of students score on this measure allows us to implement ideas and strategies that can support mastery orientation, including giving students more opportunities to explore their interests, try new things, and lead activities; including hands-on projects and activities; and building in time for young people to share their thoughts and ideas with each other.

For capacities like Academic Self-Efficacy, where most students scored as “Advanced,” we have the opportunity to reflect on how we can acknowledge, reinforce, and help maintain students’ strength and confidence through our programming.
In the absence of post-program Writing Revision tasks, only pre-program Writing Revision tasks were evaluated. The following observations and questions for further exploration emerged.

Revised tool: The Writing Revision Task was revised in the 2019-20 school year to increase clarity and student engagement. The revised tool performed similarly to the previous tool.

Areas for further exploration...additional revisions or proctoring strategies to increase completion rates of the writing task

Reliability: Inter-rater reliability in the 2019-20 school year was equal to 2018-19 and better than 2017-18.

Areas for further exploration...revised training methods and additional strategies for increasing inter-rater reliability

Class type and grade level: Analysis of the 2019-20 data included comparing results across class type and grade level, but the sample size was exceptionally small for some types and grade levels.

Areas for further exploration...analysis of larger samples and addressing how raters’ practices of rating students in relation to their classmates affects our ability to compare across class types and grade levels.
CLASSROOM TEACHER PRE- AND POST-PROGRAM SURVEYS
Percent of classroom teachers answering Above Average or High.

Classroom teachers reporting that students explore personally relevant topics in their lives in their writing, artwork, or discussions:

**PRE** 20%  →  **POST** 33%

Classroom teachers reporting that students make deliberate word choices in their writing:

0%  →  33%

Classroom teachers reporting that students understand that creative work involves trial and error processes that provide growth opportunities:

18%  →  44%

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

With the support of TAs trained as Peer Observers, the Classroom Observation tool was updated to improve ease of use and alignment with CWP Outcomes. Because of the pandemic there were limited opportunities to facilitate classroom observations. The charts below are compiled from five completed observations.

RATING SCALE

1: showed no evidence  |  2: showed some evidence  |  3: showed strong evidence  |  4: exceeded expectations

Overall, does the lesson teach through at least 3 modalities (ex. Kinesthetic, Visual, Auditory, etc.)?

Overall, does the lesson encourage students to take creative risks?

Overall, does the lesson use reflection to help participants connect the lesson to their own lives and surroundings?

Overall, does the lesson support students in reframing challenges and mistakes as opportunities to grow?
A 60-minute focus group was conducted in June 2020 and included three classroom teachers and one school administrator, all of whom had worked with CWP during 2019-20 school year. The group contained a diverse mix of grade levels, years working with CWP, and residency structures. Focus group questions focused on building student engagement and classroom community online; understanding barriers to participation during remote learning; and imagining meaningful programming for the 2020-2021 school year. Also included here are responses from Classroom Teacher and School Administrator post-surveys.

What we heard:

- After the transition to remote learning, student attendance and participation was a challenge across all grades, not only with regard to CWP programming but also general education classes and content.

- The amount of time and effort that classroom teachers and administrators contributed to virtual CWP programming decreased either due to issues of capacity and overwhelm or increased due to new challenges surrounding student engagement and participation.

- Classroom teachers and administrators expressed enthusiasm for working with CWP again in the 2020-21 school year. Their requests and ideas for the following year of programming included:
  - Synchronous (at the same time) and asynchronous (at different times) engagement via both live and recorded content within a residency
  - Smaller assignments/mini projects that can be shared along the way instead of working toward a larger culminating event or anthology
  - Limited opportunities to send home art or project kits to students, though the goals, opportunities, and challenges would vary by grade level

"Only a few students were unable to access tech for a few weeks. The rest of my students were able, but not necessarily consistent."

— 9th grade teacher, The Young Women’s Leadership School, Queens

"During this program, they gained confidence to speak and use language to express their ideas. This program opened that door sooner than expected and I am very grateful for it because it helps me now in my class when we have discussions."

— 9-12th grade teacher, Long Island City High School
A 90-minute focus group was conducted in June 2020 and included four CWP Teaching Artists (TAs). The group contained a diverse mix of art forms, tenure at CWP, and experiences teaching virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics of conversation during the focus group included successes and challenges of building community online, impact of remote teaching on workload, expectations for student participation, and the future of the field of teaching artistry.

What we heard:

- Engagement was a challenge across the board, but especially for those creating recorded/asynchronous content.

- In response to the pandemic and racial justice uprisings, CWP Teaching Artists see the need for and have a desire to support social and emotional learning in their students.

- Teaching Artists appreciated CWP’s response as it related to maintaining and supplementing work, not asking Teaching Artists to volunteer their time, providing timely updates and communication, and creating transparency around pay structures.

- By bringing diverse personal and professional experiences, perspectives, and skills to the table, Teaching Artists want to move CWP to think creatively about the purpose of its programming, new teaching/learning models, opportunities to support students (e.g. art kits, etc.), and ways to be more overt and accountable in its antiracist work.

While developing asynchronous programming, there’s no way to adapt lessons and instruction techniques in the moment. At best, this can happen between lessons as assignments are completed, if that’s possible.
STUDENT FOCUS GROUP

A 30-minute focus group in June 2020 conducted with three high school students. Topics covered during the focus group included what worked and didn’t work about learning online with CWP, what kinds of learning models work best for students, and how they are experiencing connection/disconnection to their teachers and peers.

What we heard:

- Students shared that their experiences with CWP provided meaningful opportunities for self expression, processing and coping with emotions, as well as building a sense of teamwork and community.

- Multiple modes of communication (Google Meets, email, messages) were helpful for students to stay in touch with their teachers while learning remotely.

- A combination of live and recorded content seems preferable to students so they could revisit content and work at their own pace while still having an opportunity to connect with the Teaching Artist and ask questions.

- Some students experienced technical issues that interrupted participation. Other students were challenged by online collaboration with partners/small groups and were sometimes unable to complete assignments because of these challenges.

- All students agreed they felt more connected to peers while learning in person.

- Students differed on whether they felt more connected to teachers while learning in person or remotely.

- Students said they talk more to friends and family about their school work while they are learning remotely.
TEACHING ARTIST PROJECT (TAP)
Teaching Artist Project is a collective of diversely experienced arts educators training emerging and working Teaching Artists who are looking for a supportive community to engage in a self-reflective, justice-oriented learning practice in service of their teaching. The program entails a rigorous, eight-month curriculum, rich in social justice-based pedagogy that also provides supervised on-the-job experience.

Additional programs include Summer Institute and TAP Cohort Workshops which offer opportunities for practicing TAs to reflect and refine their pedagogy while connecting with TAs from a variety of disciplines and work experience. TAP Cohort Workshops are organized and facilitated in partnership with organizations in the TAP Cohort and are free for TAs within those organizations.

In 2019-20, Teaching Artist Project staff facilitated trainings for over 100 Teaching Artists at six organizations, including one outside of New York: National Museum of the American Indian, Reel Works, Project Create (Washington, DC), Joyaux Marisol, Matisse Foundation, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Center.

**2019-2020**

- **30** Training in 8-month Program
- **39** In-School Internships
- **19** Summer Institute Participants
- **24** Scholarships Awarded
- **17** TAP Cohort Organizations
- **27** TAP Cohort Workshops
- **313** TAP Cohort Workshop Participants
TAP: WHAT ARE WE MEASURING?

TAP OUTCOMES

- Self Exploration
- Building Strong Artistic Communities
- Cultural Experience and Engagement
- Collaboration/Justice-Oriented Process

TAP: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

TAP evaluation tools and processes were also revised and refined for the 2019-20 year. While some in-school internships and related evaluation were disrupted by COVID-19, the majority of TAP evaluation practices continued even as the program shifted to online learning.

- Trainee Pre- & Post-Program Surveys
- TAP Cohort Elective Seminar Evaluations
- Pre- & Post-Revision Lesson Plan Evaluations
- Mentor Evaluations
- Focus Group

TAP Workshop at Harlem Library, NYPL
TAP: EVALUATION INSIGHTS

SELF-REPORTED GROWTH AFTER EIGHT-MONTH PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>PRE</th>
<th>POST</th>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>PRE</th>
<th>POST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainees reporting advanced or master level skills in teaching their art form through a social justice lens</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>Trainees reporting advanced or master level skills in their ability to use an experiential teaching style</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainees reporting advanced or master level skills in classroom management</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>Trainees reporting advanced or master level skills in using reflection in the classroom</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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TRAINEE LESSON PLAN EVALUATIONS

TAP Trainees are given an opportunity to plan and co-facilitate an excerpt of a full lesson plan for a “classroom” audience of their peers. Planning and facilitation are evaluated by TAP facilitators. Trends in feedback are shared below.

STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES

- Creating opportunities for students to collaborate
- Scaffolding and modeling skills
- Co-facilitating as Teaching Artists
- Integrating art forms
- Making space for fun

AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Managing time and pacing
- Giving clear and concise instructions
- Explaining key vocabulary
- Transitioning in and out of groups
- Adjusting content and difficulty to the age group

Participant Tracks During Eight-Month Program

Student: TA or Artist currently enrolled in a college program

Emerging: TA or Artist new to or early in their career in the Teaching Artist field

Working: Experienced TA

Student 13.3%

Working 20%

Emerging 66.7%
The ways in which community was built and maintained throughout the program was central to trainees’ experiences. Moving online made it more challenging to stay connected but also more important and needed.

Trainees had varying experiences with internships transitioning online during the pandemic. Some trainees created content that was shared with students. Some didn’t feel their learning goals were met due to not being in a physical classroom.

TAP Trainees had various experiences and opinions about the success and length of online sessions. Some sessions felt too long, while others felt too fast for the amount of content. The latter may be especially true for non-native English speakers. Informational sessions worked better online than interactive/embodied sessions.

The group had split opinions on whether they would sign up for a fully online training but leaned toward yes. They also had various perspectives on how much they would pay but leaned toward paying less.

What we heard:

“I learned to be critical of how I define success for my students, and to recognize that what that looks like is different for each student.”
- TAP Trainee (Theater Artist)

“I wish I had the chance to complete my internships and experience more ‘real teaching’, as it was set in the program; however, we know that this hasn’t to do with the quality of the program but with the coronavirus issue that forced the schools to be closed.”
- TAP Trainee (Visual Artist)
In the TAP Exit Survey, Trainees were asked what percent of their employment was in the arts before COVID-19 and what percent after the pandemic struck.

Looking at this we can see that pre-COVID-19, the majority of trainees identified themselves as receiving 81-100% of their income from arts work. A couple of months into the pandemic, the majority of trainees identified themselves as receiving 0-20% of their income from arts work.

**TAP ALUMNX SURVEY**

- 83% of those surveyed reported being "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with TAP since graduating.
- 90% of those surveyed said TAP prepared them "Very Well" or "Fairly Well" to pursue a career in teaching artistry.
- 80% of those surveyed found work as a Teaching Artist or in Arts Education after graduation from TAP.

TAP creates opportunities for alumnx to stay engaged by:
- sending a regular TAP alumnx e-newsletter with jobs and opportunities
- opening TAP Cohort professional development workshops to alumnx
- Creating opportunities for TAP alumnx who are now CWP Teaching Artists to serve as mentors during Trainees’ in-school internships.
TAP COHORT

The TAP Cohort is a network of arts-in-education organizations dedicated to expanding and enhancing the field of Teaching Artistry in and beyond New York City by sharing best practices, providing professional development, and hosting networking opportunities.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

ArtistYear
Arts For All
Artists Striving to End Poverty (ASTEP)
Brooklyn Arts Council
Carnegie Hall
The Center for Arts Education
City Lore
Community-Word Project
Dedalus Foundation
DreamYard Project
Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana
Lifetime Arts
Marquis Studios
National Dance Institute
Opening Act
Teachers & Writers Collaborative
Wingspan Arts

TAP COHORT ELECTIVE WORKSHOPS PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

1- Isn’t relevant and doesn’t add value to my professional practice
2- Is somewhat relevant but doesn’t help me in my professional practice
3- Is relevant to my work and helps me as a professional in my professional practice
4- Is a critical part of my professional learning and is extremely relevant to my professional work

A PANDEMIC SUPPORT SYSTEM

Given the rapidly evolving nature of the pandemic and its impact on the New York City Department of Education and the field of Teaching Artistry, the TAP Cohort became a valuable support system for its member organizations. The frequency of TAP Cohort meetings increased, and meetings served as opportunities for Cohort members to provide organizational updates, share strategies for moving to online instruction, and brainstorm solutions to myriad challenges posed by the pandemic. The group also increased the number of virtual professional development workshops it offered to support Teaching Artists in building skills for online facilitation as well as trauma-informed and healing-centered teaching.
THANK YOU TO OUR 2019-20 TEAM

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Brandy Hill, Office Manager, Executive Assistant
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Deanna Green           Moira-Jo Trachtenberg-Thielking
Emma Greer             Natalie Willens
Valerie Hallier

This report was developed by Amanda Newman, Katie Rainey, and Leigh Wells. Community-Word Project evaluation tools and strategy are supported by Dennie Wolf, Principal Researcher at WolfBrown.
THANK YOU TO OUR 2019-20 PARTNERS

SCHOOLS

Bronx Community High School
Bronx Envision Academy
Bronx High School for Writing & Communication Arts
High School of Contemporary Arts
I.S. 126 Albert Shanker School for Visual & Performing Arts
J.H.S. 098 Herman Ridder School
Long Island City High School
New Directions Secondary School
P.S. 1 The Bergen Elementary School
P.S. 84 Jose de Diego Magnet School for the Visual Arts & Sciences

P.S. 85 Judge Charles J. Vallone School
P.S. 132 Juan Pablo Duarte School
P.S. 132 Garret A. Morgan School
P.S. 171 Peter G. Van Alst School
P.S. 220 Edward Mandel School
P.S. 315 School of Performing Arts School
P.S. 316 Elijah Stroud School
P.S./M.S. 37 Multiple Intelligence School
P.S./M.S. 279 Captain Manuel Rivera, Jr. School
The Young Women’s Leadership School, Queens

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Afterschool Reading Club | DOE
Artists Striving to End Poverty
ArtistYear
Arts For All
ArtsConnection
Asya Blue Design
Becker, Glynn, Muffly, Chassin & Hosinski LLP
Borough of Manhattan Community College
Brooklyn Arts Council
Brooklyn Public Library
Carnegie Hall
City Lore
Committee for Hispanic Children and Families
Daystar Dance Company
Dedalus Foundation
DreamYard Project
Echoing Green
Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana
Lifetime Arts
Marquis Studios
National Dance Institute
National Museum of the American Indian
New York City Arts in Education Roundtable
New York Public Library

NYC Landmarks50 Alliance
NYU | Steinhardt School of Education
Opening Act
Partnership for After School Education
Pentalog
Poets House
Police Athletic League
Red Jacket Orchards
Rochester Latino Theatre Company
Samantha Dion Baker
Teaching Artists Roc
The Avenue Blackbox Theatre
The Center for Arts Education
The Dwyer Cultural Center
The New Victory Theater
The Young Women’s Leadership Network
Urban Word NYC
Wingspan Arts
WolfBrown
Writers in the Schools Alliance
Writers & Books
YouthInc
Zone 126
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